Canadian Heritage   Patrimoine canadien

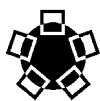# Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) Evaluation

Final Report

Canada

Contents

List of Acronyms

ACI	Avataq Cultural Institute
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
AFNA	Assembly of First Nations for Alberta
AFNNBPEI	Assembly of First Nations for New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island
AFNQL	Assembly of First Nations for Quebec and Labrador
AILC	ALI Inuit Language Committee
ALCIP	Aboriginal Languages community Initiatives Program
ALI	Aboriginal Languages Initiative
AMC	Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
APC	Atlantic Policy Congress
BC	British Columbia
CAP	Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
CH	Canadian Heritage
CYFN	Council of Yukon First Nations
DCH	Department of Canadian Heritage
DN	Dene Nation
FN	First Nation
FNCCEC	First Nation Confederation of Cultural Education Centres
FPCF	First Peoples Cultural Foundation
FPHLCC	First Peoples Heritage, Language and Culture Council
GNWT	Government of Northwest Territories
GPA	Grade Point Average
ICRC	Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
IRC	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
ITCSP	Inuit Technical Committee on Social Policy
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
KitIA	Kitikmeot Inuit Association
KivIA	Kivalliq Inuit Association
LIHC	Labrador Inuit Health Commission
MK	Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
MNA	Métis Nation of Alberta
MNC	Métis National Council
MNO	Métis Nation of Ontario
MNS	Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
MMF	Manitoba Métis Federation
MPCBC	Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia
MRC	Métis Resource Centre
MRS	Michif Revitalization Strategy
NAFC	National Association of Friendship Centres
NWT	Northwest Territories
PCH	Patrimoine Canadian Heritage
QIA	Qikiqtani Inuit Association

RCAP   Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
RFP   Request for Proposals
RIA   Regional Inuit Association
SFNLC   Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council
SICC   Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre
TI   Tungasuvvingat Inuit
TCC   Torngasok Cultural Centre

Executive Summary

Study Background & Purpose

The Minister of Canadian Heritage announced the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) on June 19, 1998 in response to the commitment made in the federal government's *Gathering Strength – Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* to preserve, protect and revitalize Aboriginal languages. The ALI provided $20 million in funding over four years (1998 – 2002). The original four-year term of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative expired on March 31, 2002. The program was extended for an additional year to March 31, 2003 under the same terms and conditions.

The decline of Aboriginal languages in Canada has reached a critical point. Analysis of 1986 to 1996 Canadian Census data revealed that 43 of the 53 Aboriginal languages in Canada were on the verge of extinction; only 3 languages (Cree, Ojibwa and Inuktitut) had more than 100,000 speakers[1] worldwide. For many languages, the only fluent speakers are elders, with knowledge and usage weakest among the young.

Preserving Aboriginal languages is an extremely high priority, because of the link between cultural preservation and language – without language, the main vehicle for transmitting cultural values and traditions no longer exists. The ALI was created to address this decline. Its immediate and long-term objectives emphasize language acquisition and retention in the home.

ALI is delivered through the collaborative efforts of the Department of Canadian Heritage and three national Aboriginal organizations and their affiliates: the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami[2] and the Métis National Council. A total of approximately 1200 community projects were funded during the first four years.

The principles guiding the implementation of the ALI are:

- Aboriginal people must design and deliver programs to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities and families; and
- Each community must choose its own goals and strategies to meet language needs.

In April 2002, the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) contracted Consilium to conduct an evaluation of the ALI. This evaluation has been

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[1] Source: Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* Lawrence Eslbaum Associates Publishing, Mahwah, N.J., 2000.
[2] Note: The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) changed its name in 2001 to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). In this report, for consistency, it is referred to by the new name.

undertaken to help ensure that the goals, objectives, structure, administration and delivery of the ALI are achieving the goals of the federal government and Aboriginal Peoples for the promotion, retention and revitalization of Canada's rich heritage of Aboriginal languages. The methodology undertaken for this evaluation included ten site visits to ALI projects across Canada, three case studies that detailed the delivery mechanism of the three national organizations that delivery ALI, key informant interviews and a file and document review.

Evaluation Findings

Rationale and Relevance
The majority of Aboriginal languages in Canada are threatened or critically endangered, with only a very few thriving and three given a good chance of continuing to flourish. In most provinces, ALI is the only funding directed specifically towards supporting Aboriginal languages. Where provincial or territorial programs exist, ALI still represents a significant portion of funding for this purpose.

The Aboriginal Languages Initiative is consistent with the objectives of the Department of Canadian Heritage and strongly supports commitments made in the recent federal government's Speech from the Throne. It states that the government will work with Aboriginal people to preserve and enhance Aboriginal languages and cultures[3].

Furthermore, the preservation of Aboriginal languages is a priority for member states of the United Nations. UN resolutions were outlined in 1999 at the 30th General Conference of UNESCO recommending that member states take strong measures to support linguistic diversity and minority language rights.[4]

The need for language revitalization is critical, and requires a long-term commitment of adequate resources. Informants were unanimous that ALI should continue and be enhanced.

Impacts and Effects
ALI has funded many community projects in the first four years of the initiative that would likely not have taken place otherwise. These include:

- Approximately 1200 community projects;
- Community and regional consultations;
- Surveys and other research;
- Language instruction; and
- Exchanges of information & linkages between language programs.

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[3] Source: The Canada We Want, Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session of the Thirty-Seventh Parliament of Canada, September 30, 2002.
[4] Source: UNESCO press release, 2002-07, 30th General Conference, 1999: resolution 12.

Outputs, as a result of the ALI projects, have included:

- Development of language strategies and plans;
- Provision of language instruction;
- Creation of language courses and programs for teaching;
- Creation of language resource materials;
- Audio and video recordings;
- Transcriptions, translations and other documentation;
- Survey and other research results; and
- Language promotion materials.

In communities that have accessed ALI funding there are more language projects than prior to the ALI. In all communities visited for the evaluation, informants reported a number of language projects that had been undertaken over the past four years directly as a result of the availability of ALI funding. Moreover, ALI has supported the development of long-term strategies to revitalize and maintain Aboriginal languages. In many regions, consultations and conferences were held to develop plans for language activities in the region.

In general, the desired outcomes of increased numbers of projects and increased numbers of communities involved have been achieved, although it is difficult to quantify these numbers since there is no baseline data. Language strategies have been developed for each language group, although there is still a need to develop a broader national strategy and framework for language revitalization.

Expected long-term outcomes include the preservation and revitalization of Aboriginal languages. This goal will take considerable time and more funds than are now available through the program. Although limited, the ALI is a necessary support for this process.

Most informants viewed the ALI as an important first step, which has achieved considerable success at making funds available to regions and communities for language projects. They were also generally satisfied with what had been accomplished and with the impact of the program on their communities, given the level of resources available.

Many took pride in the accomplishments of their individual projects, and this was reflected in the heightened awareness of the community and political leadership towards language revitalization. Projects funded through ALI have helped to increase interest in Aboriginal languages among Aboriginal politicians and community leadership, as well as among members of the general population in the communities involved. This has also led in some

areas to links between language ability and economic opportunities, as ability to speak the language becomes recognized as an advantage for employment.

Many informants are interested in sharing information and learning from other groups working in the language area. Respondents reported that the heightened language activity resulting from the program has enhanced this interest, and has led to the creation of new and expansion of existing networks among language workers.

These outcomes are encouraging, given the need and the fact that for many language groups the Elders who hold the knowledge of the language are decreasing in numbers. This creation of heightened interest and awareness, sharing of learning about language revitalization, and the completion of many individual language projects will contribute to the longer term goal of ALI: the preservation and revitalization of Aboriginal languages.

Gaps in accessing ALI funding were identified among the following groups:

- Métis people who speak First Nations languages or English or French;
- Urban and non-status First Nations people; and
- Urban Inuit.

These gaps occurred because national organizations representing these constituencies were not included in the original delivery structure, or because groups fell between agency delivery structures (as in the case of Métis who speak a First Nations language).

Program Administration and Effectiveness
The ALI has been a learning experience. The site visits and case studies confirmed the existence of a growing community of engaged individuals and organizations very committed to addressing language revitalization.

Inefficiencies within projects were most often the result of inexperience or lack of capacity at the regional or local level – people are learning how to undertake language revitalization projects, and this takes time. In some regions, language awareness and promotion were undertaken before language learning. Most projects came in within the budget, and where there were overruns, these were covered by other sponsors.

Where other programs existed for Aboriginal languages, the ALI complemented these - for example, a language coordinator would be hired through one project and the ALI funds would pay for instructors' salaries or elders' honoraria.

The implementation of the ALI was to follow several guidelines[5]; the evaluation research confirmed that ALI was successfully implemented according to these. Generally, working relationships among the various levels of organizations and PCH were good. Interaction was mainly confined to applying for funding, receiving funds and reporting. In many regions the regional delivery organization helped organize consultation meetings and supported projects by assisting with funding applications and reporting requirements where capacity was limited.

The informants in the regions spoke highly of PCH program officials and their interaction with them, although they would have liked more information in the initial years of the ALI, and more regular contact. Most community respondents felt that the application and reporting processes were appropriate, not excessively onerous, and assured a reasonable level of accountability. Delays in receiving funding from delivery organizations, and lack of multi-year funding arrangements were often cited as impediments to effective planning.

Many First Nations and several Michif informants questioned the amount of money being spent on the national organizations, as they would prefer to see this directed to the language projects themselves. However, others mentioned that national organizations did play an important role in the coordination of the development of language strategies and policy within language groups. National program staff were viewed as accessible, supportive, and knowledgeable, given their limited numbers. Communities suggested more orientation and opportunities for networking and sharing between regions and projects.

Several respondents identified a need to dedicate resources to regional and national initiatives, and to the development of a more comprehensive, longer-term national strategic approach: community-level projects alone would not preserve Aboriginal languages. For example MNC stated that this was critical for the Michif Language as literature and curriculum materials were extremely limited and many communities had no access or knowledge of how to get access to the tools required. A coordinated approach to the development of teaching aids and curriculum is absolutely essential to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

Many respondents acknowledged progress, but want to move more quickly to use the speakers who remain, and want resources allocated through the ALI and other programs to match the actual need, at the community, regional and national levels.

Some key lessons learned from the first four years include:

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[5] Source: ALI program guidelines.

- There is a massive need to reverse the decline and trend towards extinction of Aboriginal languages;

- The revitalization of many languages is a long-term prospect – paradoxically, there is little time left to save some of the more critically endangered languages;

- Funding for Aboriginal languages results in an increase in the number of projects and communities involved;

- There is also considerable scope for, and interest in, sharing experiences across regions and language groups;

- Delivery only through the current range of political organizations creates gaps in coverage and access to funds[6];

- Schools are not perceived to be adequately responding to the need for Aboriginal language instruction;

- ALI funding can help to lever and complement other funds; and

- The current level of funding for Aboriginal languages through the ALI is greatly inadequate, given the need.

Some examples of successful ideas for language revitalization projects we found include:

- Developing relationships with language specialists and institutions in order to jointly develop language projects;

- Linking with other early childhood programs and projects in order to leverage additional funding;

- Holding national and regional conferences and workshops for planning and the exchange of information;

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[6] Several of the non-participating organizations interviewed for this study felt that segments of the Aboriginal population were being missed through the current delivery structure; there is some difference of opinion as to whether the current delivery structure can be extended or enhanced to be more inclusive, or whether an alternative structure should be explored. Generally respondents were satisfied with the regional delivery organizations, while a number of people felt the national organizations should play a reduced role in delivery of ALI to reduce administration costs. The strength of this opinion varies by language group, with Inuit generally satisfied with the current structure, and some Michif and First Nations language respondents wanting most ALI funding directed to the regions or in a few cases directly to the community project level.

- Linking language immersion instruction to community and home-based cultural activities, such as sewing;

- Using modern technology, including the Internet, to support language learning and to organize and make available language resources, such as dictionaries;

- Creating a cultural foundation to raise awareness and funds for Aboriginal language revitalization; and

- Developing partnerships with private sector sponsors.

Conclusion

The Aboriginal Languages Initiative has been successful within the limits of resources available and the four-year mandate of the Initiative, supporting approximately 1200 individual projects in communities throughout Canada over the past four years. Many of these projects would not have occurred without ALI, and the participants and other stakeholders recognize this. Generally the program has worked well, although some gaps in accessing ALI funding under the current delivery model have been identified. Many informants described enhanced interest in language revitalization among the public and leadership as a result of their activities.

A number of specific suggestions for improving the program have been made, which are reflected in the findings and recommendations. Without exception the stakeholders would like to see ALI continue because it addresses a critical need which is a high priority for Aboriginal peoples: preserving and revitalizing their languages. They are unanimously agreed that greatly enhanced resources are required to adequately address these language revitalization requirements. They stress the urgency of the situation for many languages as the number of fluent speakers declines.

Recommendations

Taking into account the evaluation findings, we have developed the following five key recommendations for ALI. The rationale for each of these is provided in the main report.

Recommendation 1
The Department of Canadian Heritage should explore various delivery mechanisms, including options for an institution that could receive and distribute language funds from the federal government and the private sector, providing access to all Aboriginal language groups.

Recommendation 2

ALI should continue with funding on a longer-term basis to allow for meaningful projects to take place that foster the maintenance, revitalization and growth of Aboriginal languages. If the current ALI objectives are to be realized, enhanced funding for the Initiative is required thus addressing some current gaps.

Recommendation 3

ALI should continue to focus on community-level projects, but also provide opportunities for regional and national projects, including language research and strategic planning at the community, regional and national level; highly innovative projects; capacity building for regional and local language personnel; and resource development. These might be funded through separate program components. There should continue to be flexibility, within the context of the overall program goals and objectives and of the proposed national strategic plan, in the types of projects allowed.

Recommendation 4

The Department of Canadian Heritage should take the lead in facilitating a national dialogue to advance Aboriginal languages revitalization. Measures should be explored to better coordinate efforts and to share information. PCH could begin this process by sponsoring a national Aboriginal languages conference.

Recommendation 5

Improvements to ALI administration and delivery should include:

- *Multi-year funding arrangements to enable better planning;*

- *Ensuring that program funds are made available to Aboriginal language groups now unable to access them;*

- *Exploration of standardized, easy to use reporting systems for projects, and on-line or alternative data recording and collection systems for PCH and delivery organizations in order to facilitate application, reporting, and performance tracking;*

- *Creation of more formal, measurable outcome and output measures to facilitate future evaluations and greater involvement by PCH and delivery organizations in on-going project monitoring;*

- *Earlier distribution of program information, and targeted information to identified groups now not accessing the program;*

- *Web-based site not only for the dissemination of program and project information but also for the collection of program and project information into a national web-based database; and*

- *Research and baseline data collection on Aboriginal languages.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Study Background & Purpose

In April 2002 the Department of Canadian Heritage contracted Consilium to conduct an evaluation of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI). The Minister of Canadian Heritage announced this initiative on June 19, 1998 in response to the commitment made in the federal government's *Gathering Strength – Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* to preserve, protect and revitalize Aboriginal languages. The ALI provided $20 million in funding over four years (1998 – 2002). The original four-year term of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative expired on March 31, 2002. The program was extended for an additional year to March 31, 2003 under the same terms and conditions. It is delivered through the collaborative efforts of the Department of Canadian Heritage and three national Aboriginal organizations and their affiliates: the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami[7] and the Métis National Council.

The decline of Aboriginal languages in Canada has reached a critical point. Analysis of 1986 to 1996 Canadian Census data revealed that 43 of the 53 Aboriginal languages in Canada were on the verge of extinction; only 3 languages (Cree, Ojibwa and Inuktitut) had more than 100,000 speakers[8] worldwide. The ALI was created to address this decline. Its immediate and long-term objectives emphasize language acquisition and retention in the home.

This evaluation has been undertaken to help ensure that the goals, objectives, structure, administration and delivery of the ALI are achieving the goals of the federal government and Aboriginal Peoples for the promotion, retention and revitalization of Canada's rich heritage of Aboriginal languages.

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[7] Note: The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) changed its name in 2001 to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). In this report, for consistency, it is referred to by the new name.
[8] Source: Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, *Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* Lawrence Eslbaum Associates Publishing, Mahwah, N.J., 2000.

1.2. Study Team

The Consilium study team consisted of:

- Greg Smith (Project Manager);
- Dan David (Research Coordinator);
- Ron Ryan (Advisor);
- Terry Rudden (Writer/Researcher);
- Blair Stevenson (Writer/Researcher); and
- Valerie Assinewe (Consultation Advisor).

1.3. Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank the many individuals who took the time to meet with us and/or provide information to the project. This includes numerous dedicated people in the Métis, First Nations and Inuit communities we visited; representatives of national Aboriginal organizations and regional delivery organizations; language researchers and specialists; and representatives of the Department of Canadian Heritage. Particular thanks are due to the members of the Working Group and Steering Committee who met regularly with the research team to guide and respond to the research as it proceeded.

2. ALI Program Profile

2.1. Program History[9]

The Minister of Canadian Heritage announced on June 19, 1998 the creation of a four-year Aboriginal Languages Initiative for the preservation, protection and teaching of Aboriginal languages within Aboriginal communities and homes. The ALI fulfilled a commitment made in the Liberal Party *Red Book: Securing Our Future Together* and supported activities to preserve Aboriginal languages outlined in the federal government's *Gathering Strength – Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan*.

A total of $20 million was made available over four years. These funds ($5 million to be distributed annually) were allocated as follows:

1. First Nations/Indian languages spoken by First Nations, as well as many Non-status Indian and Métis speakers - approximately 75% of funding;

2. Michif, a language unique to many Métis communities in western Canada - approximately 10% of funding; and

3. Inuktitut, which encompasses the many dialects spoken by Inuit people in Labrador, northern Quebec, NWT, Nunavut and southern Canada- approximately 15% of funding.

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[9] Source: Canadian Heritage News Release and Backgrounder, "Revitalizing and Maintaining Aboriginal Languages", P-06/98-36, Ottawa, June 1998.

2.2. Goals and Objectives[10]

2.2.1. Objectives

The long-term objectives of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative are to:

- Increase the number of Aboriginal languages speakers;
- Expand the domains in which Aboriginal languages are spoken; and
- Increase inter-generation transmission of Aboriginal languages.

The immediate objectives of the ALI are:

- To increase the number and quality of Aboriginal language projects in Aboriginal communities;
- To increase the number of communities involved in Aboriginal languages activities;
- To support the development of long-term strategies to revitalize and maintain Aboriginal languages; and
- To focus on early language learning.

The principles guiding the implementation of the ALI are:

- Aboriginal people must design and deliver programs to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities and families; and
- Each community must choose its own goals and strategies to meet language needs.

2.2.2. Links to PCH Strategic Objectives

The Aboriginal Languages Initiative addresses the following strategic objectives of the Department of Canadian Heritage:

- *Canadian Content: Promoting the creation, dissemination and preservation of diverse Canadian cultural works, stories and symbols reflective of our past and expressive of our values and aspirations.*

The varied outputs of ALI projects, in addition to contributing to the preservation of Aboriginal language stories and legends, contribute directly to the body of Canadian content.

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[10] Source: PCH unpublished document: *Revitalizing Aboriginal Languages: Principles, Objectives and Parameters*, Ottawa, 1998.

- ***Cultural Participation and Engagement:*** *Fostering access to and participation in Canada's cultural life.*

By preserving Aboriginal languages, ALI fosters access to a range of Canadian Aboriginal cultures, as reflected through language, which might otherwise be lost forever. These cultures and languages enrich the overall fabric of Canadian culture and identity.

- ***Connections:*** *Fostering and strengthening connections among Canadians and deepening understanding across diverse communities.*

Through ALI regional and national language projects and the development of language strategies and plans, and through interaction among various Aboriginal groups and non-Aboriginals working for language preservation, these connections and understanding are being strengthened.

- ***Active Citizenship and Civic Participation:*** *Promoting understanding of the rights and responsibilities of shared citizenship and fostering opportunities to participate in Canada's civic life.*

A broad spectrum of community members are actively involved in consultations, planning and implementation of ALI projects.

2.2.3. Expected Results

Canadian Heritage documents[11] state that ALI funding will help increase the number and improve the quality of language revitalization and maintenance projects undertaken in Aboriginal communities. These represent the immediate, or short-term objectives of the program. This reports chronicles the success of the program in meeting those shorter-term objectives.

However, given the critical state of Aboriginal languages and the amount of funding available to meet the enormous need, the long-term objectives of this Initiative are not expected to be met in the near future.   Respondents, several of whom are elders who have committed their lives to the teaching and preservation of their languages, pointed out repeatedly that centuries of language loss cannot be restored over the course of a five year program.

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[11] Canadian Heritage, background documents and files provided to the researchers.

2.3. Administration and Delivery

A consultation process, led by the Department of Canadian Heritage, was begun in the fall of 1997 in which 11 national Aboriginal organizations were invited to discuss program design and delivery models and the distribution of funds. Based on options outlined during these consultations, three national Aboriginal organizations were chosen to administer the ALI funds, reflecting the three main Aboriginal language groups– First Nations/Indian, Michif and Inuktitut. The delivery agents were:

- Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to administer First Nations languages;

- Métis National Council (MNC) and its provincial affiliates to administer the Michif language funds and;

- Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (now Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, or ITK), and its regional affiliates for the Inuktitut dialects.

Each of the three national Aboriginal organizations chosen to administer the ALI funds established their own delivery structure. This devolution of responsibility is in accordance with federal government commitments to provide more flexibility and responsibility to national Aboriginal organizations to administer their own programs.

2.3.1. First Nations

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) was the only organization to sign a contribution agreement with the Department of Canadian Heritage to administer the First Nations languages funding. AFN was therefore the only organization directly responsible for administering First Nations funding and reporting to the Department on how approximately $15 million over four years committed to First Nations languages was spent.

Of this total, approximately 5% went to AFN as national administrator. Of the remaining funds, 70% annually went to AFN's provincial and territorial affiliates to act as delivery agents directly funding projects. In most cases, funds at the provincial/territorial level were either divided equally among all the First Nations communities, or dispersed through a call for proposals process. Another 30% of the First Nations funding was allocated to a fund for critically endangered languages. This was administered nationally by a single organization (most recently by the Woodland Cultural Centre). Projects funded under this component of the Initiative addressed the special needs of critically endangered languages throughout Canada.

2.3.2. Michif and Inuktitut

The funding structure for Michif and Inuktitut language funding was different from that developed for First Nations. The regional affiliates of both the Métis National Council and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami signed funding agreements with the Department of Canadian Heritage along with the national organizations. As a result, the Aboriginal organizations delivering funds to the community level reported directly to the Department of Canadian Heritage rather than through a national organization. MNC and ITK played a role of national coordination and policy development.

In the case of ITK, the national organization did not fund community-based projects, but acted as a coordinating body for long-term planning and policy development for Inuktitut language strategies, in cooperation with the six regional Inuit delivery organizations.

2.3.3. Allocation of Funding

The allocation of ALI funding to national and regional organizations between 1998 and 2002 is illustrated in the following table.

Table 2: ALI Funding Allocations 1998-2002

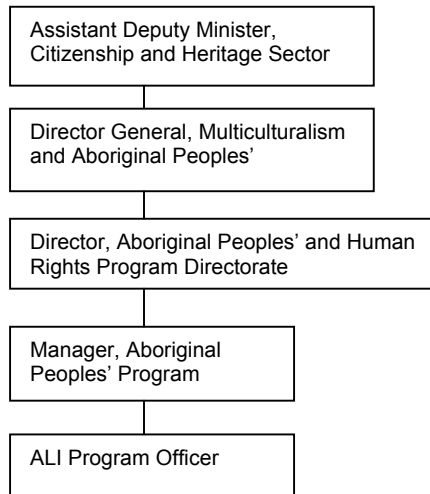| ALI Funding Allocations		1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	Totals
First Nations	AFN	110,250	222,000	214,500	184,500	731,250
	Critical Lang.	628,425	1,265,400	1,222,650	1,051,650	4,168,125
	MK	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	AFNNBPEI	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	AFNQL	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	SFNLC	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	AMC	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	SICC	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	AFNA.	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	FPCF	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	CYFN	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	DN	146,632.5	295,260	285,285	245,385	972,562.5
	Total	**2,205,000**	**4,440,000**	**4290,000**	**3,690,000**	**14,625,000**
Michif	MNC	60,000	57,000	55,000	47,000	219,000
	MNS	49,600	150,000	145,000	125,000	469,600
	MPCBC	40,000	28,711	53,500	45,250	167,461
	MNO	40,000	55,000	53,500	45,250	145,600
	MNA	40,000	125,000	120,000	105,000	390,000
	MMF	64,000	150,000	145,000	175,000	534,000
	Total	**293,600**	**565,711**	**572,000**	**542,500**	**1,973,811**
Inuktitut	ITK	63,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	273,000
	IRC	63,000	158,277	152,493	129,253	503,023
	Kit.IA	8,372	0	0	99,755	108,127
	Kiv.IA	63,000	123,018	118,506	100,460	404,984
	TCC	63,000	100,000	153,139	129,818	445,957
	ACI	63,000	121,300	116,851	99,056	400,207
	QIA	63,000	0	0	109,658	172,658
	Total	**386,372**	**572,595**	**610,989**	**738,000**	**2,307,956**
Canadian Heritage (Admin.)		60,000	80,000	280,000	80,000	500,000
Yearly Total		**2,944,972**	**5,658,306**	**5,752,989**	**5,050,500**	
ALI total						**19,406,767**

Source: annual and interim ALI reports collected from PCH, MNC, ITK and AFN.

Notes: Cells in which there are zero funds indicate that the groups did not use their allocated funds for that year. The discrepancy between the funding allocation total

quoted above and the original $20 million allocated is due to the lapsing of funds amounting to over $600,000 by regional delivery organizations. The funds allocated to PCH for the 2000-2001 year cover the cost of the program officer and the program evaluation, which the department is mandated to carry out.   For exact names of regional organizations, see diagrams 1 and 2 below.

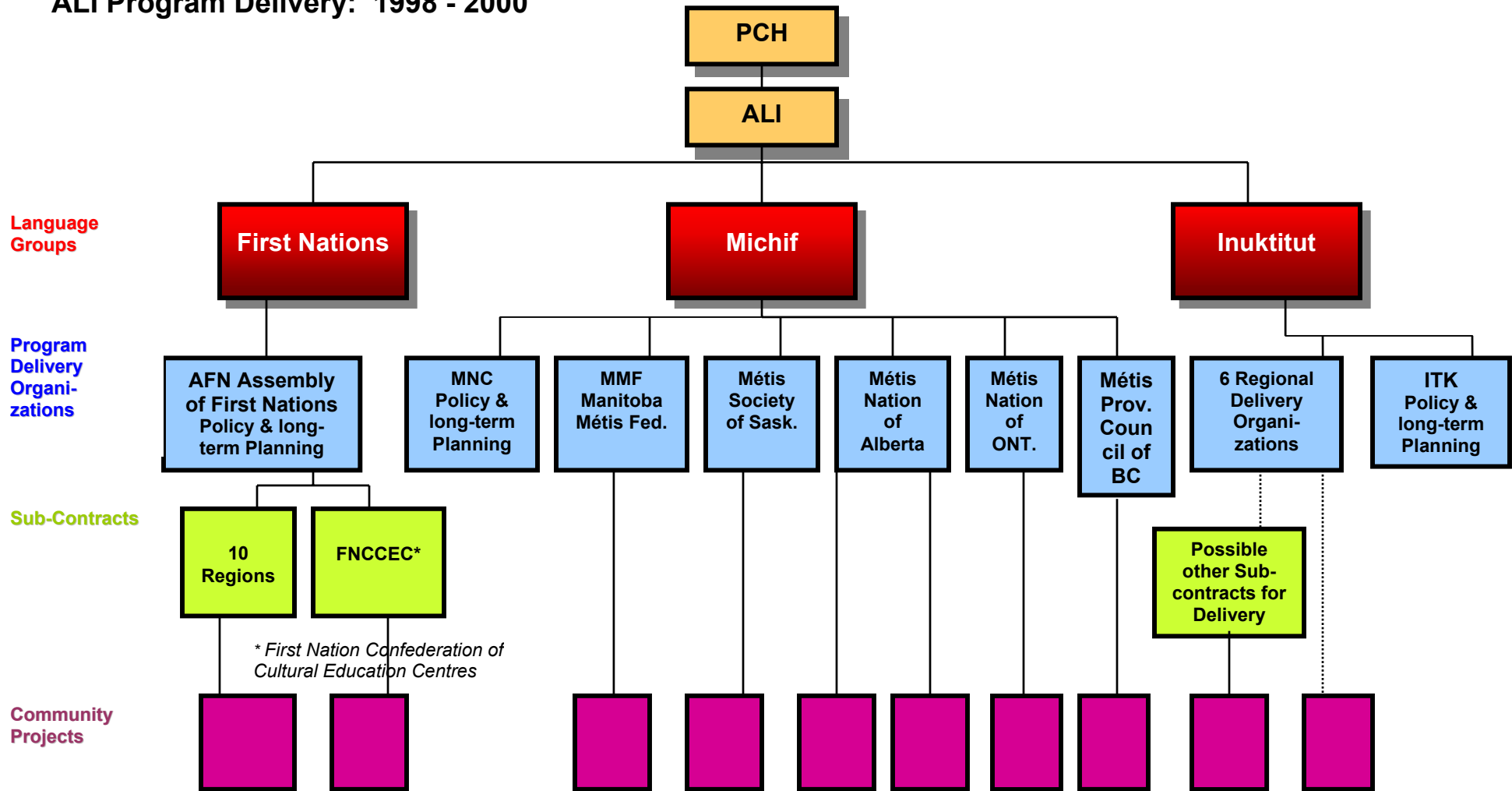Below is a figure illustrating the PCH delivery structure.

Canadian Heritage ALI Administration Structure

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┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Assistant Deputy Minister,       │
│ Citizenship and Heritage Sector  │
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           │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Director General, Multiculturalism│
│ and Aboriginal Peoples'          │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
           │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Director, Aboriginal Peoples' and Human│
│ Rights Program Directorate       │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
           │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Manager, Aboriginal              │
│ Peoples' Program                 │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
           │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ ALI Program Officer              │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
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As shown in table 2, administration funds totalling $500,000 over four years were retained according to federal policy, to cover PCH administration of the program, including one program officer position and the cost of the program evaluation which was originally planned to take place in the third year. The ALI Program Officer's salary was paid for by ALI administration funds for PCH.
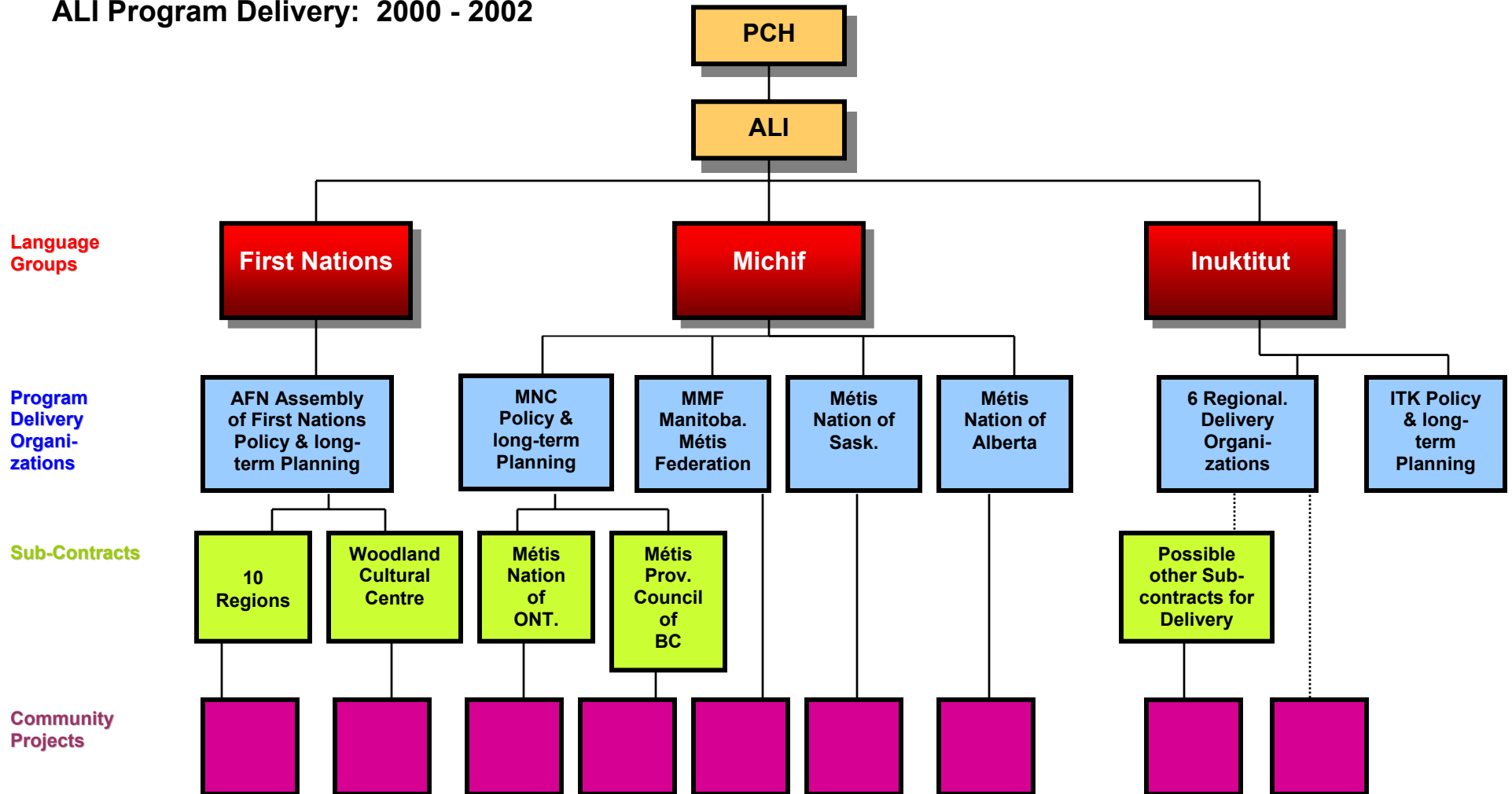
The diagrams below illustrate the program delivery structure, which remained essentially the same throughout the life of the program, with some minor variations between the first two years and the last two years.

ALI Program Delivery: 1998 - 2000

PCH

ALI

Language Groups

- First Nations
- Michif
- Inuktitut

Program Delivery Organizations

- AFN Assembly of First Nations Policy & long-term Planning
- MNC Policy & long-term Planning
- MMF Manitoba Métis Fed.
- Métis Society of Sask.
- Métis Nation of Alberta
- Métis Nation of ONT.
- Métis Prov. Council of BC
- 6 Regional Delivery Organizations
- ITK Policy & long-term Planning

Sub-Contracts

- 10 Regions
- FNCCEC*
- Possible other Sub-contracts for Delivery

First Nation Confederation of Cultural Education Centres

Community Projects

NOTE: Funds are split up by language groupings (3). Delivery organizations having program delivery agreement with PCH.

Consilium

ALI Program Delivery: 2000 - 2002

PCH → ALI

Language Groups: First Nations | Michif | Inuktitut

Program Delivery Organizations:
- First Nations → AFN Assembly of First Nations Policy & long-term Planning
- Michif → MNC Policy & long-term Planning | MMF Manitoba. Métis Federation | Métis Nation of Sask. | Métis Nation of Alberta
- Inuktitut → 6 Regional. Delivery Organizations | ITK Policy & long-term Planning

Sub-Contracts:
- 10 Regions | Woodland Cultural Centre | Métis Nation of ONT. | Métis Prov. Council of BC | Possible other Sub-contracts for Delivery

Community Projects

NOTE: Funds are split up by language groupings (3) and PCH/Delivery organizations have a program delivery agreement

Consilium

2.3.4. Projects Funded

Projects funded under the Aboriginal Languages Initiative were to be community and home-based, leading to the development of innovative new approaches and culturally relevant teaching and learning materials. In this way, the ALI was designed to complement existing federal, provincial and territorial Aboriginal languages programs and services. Any Aboriginal group was eligible to apply for funding. Under the above administration structure, applicants seeking funding for a particular language project were to apply directly to the delivery organization responsible for First Nations languages (AFN affiliates); Michif language (MNC affiliates); or Inuktitut languages (ITK affiliates).

The table below shows the estimated number of community projects funded under the ALI.[12]

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[12] Note: The use of estimates for numbers of projects in this table is due to inconsistencies in reporting formats from regional delivery organizations. In some cases, it was difficult to separate the individual projects from other activities carried out by the organizations. In some cases projects were for a single community, in others for a group of communities or a region. Some of these broader regional projects included a number of individual project elements (for example documentation, publishing, teaching) so that a single regional project may in fact be equivalent to a number of projects in individual communities. The number of individual projects does also not necessarily indicate the level of activity or effectiveness of this activity in a region. Finally, level of activity for the three language groups varied because of the varying proportion of funding allocated under the ALI formula to each group.

Table 3: Number of Projects Funded Under ALI, 1998 - 2002

Language Group		1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
First Nations	Critical Lang.	62	65	63	N/A
(actuals)	MK	8	7	10	N/A
	AFNNBPEI	17	16	16	N/A
	AFNQL	6	49	40	N/A
	SFNLC	13	29	39	N/A
	AMC	1	N/A	12	N/A
	SICC	61	67	26	N/A
	AFNA.	9	19	16	N/A
	FPCF	19	18	26	N/A
	CYFN	15	14	14	N/A
	DN	10	14	19	N/A
Michif	MNS (estimate)	0	2	2	13
	MPCBC (actual)	0	1	7	14
	MNO (actual)	0	1	6	6
	MNA (estimate)	0	5	6	N/A
	MMF (estimate)	0	6	10	N/A
Inuktitut	IRC (estimate)	N/A	4	7	7
	Kit.IA (estimate)	6	0	0	N/A
	Kiv.IA (actual)	N/A	9	8	5
	TCC (actual)	N/A	4	8	4
	ACI (actual)	1	7	7	12
	QIA (estimate)	1	0	0	N/A
Yearly total		**229**	**337**	**345**	**63**
ALI total					**974**

Final project numbers for 2001-2 will not be available until all reporting has been completed; however they would likely be at least equal to the previous year, bringing the overall total to more that 1200 projects funded.

Annual reports from regional and national organizations were available in the files of PCH and the national organizations, however detailed analysis of the **types of projects funded** were not possible, due to reporting inconsistencies from region to region. As well, earlier years of the program saw more projects aimed at consultation, research and planning (e.g., regional conferences, visits to other language projects, etc.), while in later years projects tended to be mostly community-based.

3. Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Background and Trends

3.1. Background[13]

Canada's Aboriginal languages can be divided into 11 distinct language families. There are between 53 and 70 Aboriginal languages in these families. The actual number is not clear, since the languages have not been standardized, and attempts at classification are complicated by the existence of dialects.

Up-to-date information on Aboriginal language use in Canada is sparse and incomplete. Although this is tracked through the Canadian Census, recent information is not available, and there are often differences of opinion on how accurate figures are. Many Aboriginal people do not participate in the Census, and numbers of fluent speakers identified by Aboriginal organizations were often different from those reported elsewhere. This lack of baseline data is an issue for many organizations. It is being partially addressed through surveys conducted by Aboriginal organizations nationally, regionally and at the community level. Several recommended a national language survey or census to provide comprehensive, up-to-date data to support decision-making around Aboriginal languages.

There is general agreement that many Aboriginal languages are in a critical state as the number of fluent speakers continues to decline. The 1996 *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (RCAP, 1996, pp. 604- 608) compiled figures on the state of Aboriginal languages in Canada based on the 1991 *Canada Census* and 1991 *Aboriginal Peoples Survey*. The Statistics Canada *Aboriginal Language Survey* is one of the most comprehensive surveys to date that provides data on reading and writing of the Aboriginal languages in Canada. The most recent round of surveys, however, were conducted in 2001, with results not available until 2003.

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[13] Source: Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Gathering Strength Volume 3*, Ottawa, 1996.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) report states that "only a small number of Aboriginal people speak Aboriginal languages. While more than a million people claimed Aboriginal ancestry in the 1991 census, only 190,165 said an Aboriginal language was their mother tongue, and 138,105 reported using their Aboriginal mother tongue in the home" (RCAP, pp. 605-606).

The RCAP report further notes that 92.5% of all individuals who reported having an Aboriginal mother tongue originated from three linguistic groups, namely Algonquian (especially Cree and Ojibwa/Saulteaux), Inuktitut and Athapaskan.

The following table from 1996 Canada Census data displays the number of fluent mother tongue speakers for the most commonly spoken Aboriginal languages. Aboriginal languages not included in this table likely have fewer speakers, according to the Census.

Table 4: Aboriginal Languages in Canada

Aboriginal Languages in Canada	Fluent Mother Tongue Speakers in 1996
Cree	76,475
Inuktitut	26,840
Ojibway	22,625
Montagnais-Naskapi	8,745
Micmac	6,720
Dakota/Sioux	4,020
Blackfoot	3,450
Salish languages	2,520
South Slave	2,425
Dogrib	2,030
Carrier	1,510
Wakashan languages	1,360
Chipewyan	1,305
Other Aboriginal languages	25,100
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census *Nation* tables	

3.2. Trends in Speaking and Use of Aboriginal Languages

Many Aboriginal languages are in a critical state of decline, with only three given a strong chance of survival. For many languages, the only fluent speakers are elders, with knowledge and usage weakest among the young. Preserving Aboriginal languages is an extremely high priority, because of the link between cultural preservation and language – without language, the main vehicle for transmitting cultural values and traditions no longer exists.

3.2.1. First Nations Languages[14]

In 1990 and 1991, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) conducted a survey of First Nations language conditions among reserve communities in Canada. The results were published in the reports *Towards Linguistic Justice for First Nations* (1990) and *Towards Rebirth of First Nations Languages* (1992).

This survey supports the position that 50 out of Canada's approximately 53 languages are declining, endangered or facing extinction. The reports stated that only one-third of the 151 communities surveyed (of approximately 630 total) could be classified as having **flourishing** languages (over 80% of all age groups are fluent in their native language) or **enduring** (over 60% of all age groups are fluent). One quarter of the communities had **declining** languages (the number of speakers declined in each age group).

Over three-quarters of the older age groups were fluent, with this proportion dropping rapidly to less than 10% among young children. The remaining communities had languages that were endangered or critical. 30% were **endangered** (only the older populations are fluent with few or no speakers in younger age groups) and just over 10 % were in **critical** condition (fewer than 10 speakers remain in the community).

These findings alerted people to the critical state of First Nations languages. The study noted that, among the First Nations communities that participated in the survey, only two of the 52 in which languages were flourishing or enduring were in British Columbia. On the other hand, the province had many declining, endangered and critical languages (35 of the 119 First Nations in these categories were in British Columbia) (AFN, 1992, p. 8).

The 1990 and 1992 AFN reports also found an important relationship between whether a language was flourishing, declining, or endangered, and

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[14] This section is summarised from the *Handbook for Aboriginal Language Program Planning in British Columbia*, a report prepared for the First Nations Education Steering Committee Aboriginal Language Sub-Committee Education Steering Committee, by Marianne B. Ignace, PhD, April 1998; AFN Language Strategy Report.

its degree of use in public in the community. Languages which were/are used in a wide variety and number of occasions, such as at community meetings, at the band office, in schools, and at social events, tended to be flourishing and enduring. Languages which were rarely used in public were declining, endangered or in a critical state.

For the communities surveyed, the following table summarizes the numbers of the population in each age group that are fluent in a First Nations language.[15]

Table 5: First Nations Languages and Number of Speakers by Language Condition

AGE GROUP	FLOURISHING	ENDURING	DECLINING	ENDANGERED	CRITICAL
Under 5 years	2,877	1,861	698	200	3
6-15 years	5,985	5,311	2,532	826	17
16-29 years	7,252	8,042	5,885	511	9
30-45 years	4,617	5,005	7,419	948	9
46-65 years	2,617	2,892	5,947	1,272	25
Over 65	988	1,072	2,708	765	23
TOTAL	24,326	24,183	25,189	4,522	86
Number of First Nations	21	31	48	52	19

3.2.2. Inuktitut[16]

The Inuktitut language belongs to the Eskimo-Aleut language family. Inuktitut is a sub-branch of this family. There are approximately 16 Inuktitut dialects spoken in areas of Siberia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland.

Inuktitut is considered to be an isolated language separate from other North American languages. Western Canadian Inuinnaqtun and Inuvialuktun reach from the Mackenzie River Delta to the Central Arctic straits and islands (from Cape Bathurst to the Boothia Peninsula). Eastern Canadian Inuktitut covers

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[15] It should be noted that the 1990 Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, *You Took My Talk: Aboriginal Literacy and Empowerment*, is not considered accurate by AFN with regards to information it contains on Aboriginal language use. AFN states that the language use data in this document is inaccurate, and feels that languages are grouped together unrealistically, without accounting for the Aboriginal people that do not participate in Canada Census or other government surveys.

[16] Source: Government of Nunavut: *Nunavut Language Centre Feasibility Study*, 2001.

the Kivalliq and Qikiqtani regions of Nunavut, Arctic Quebec and northern Labrador.

According to both 1991 and 1996 Census data, the percentage of Inuktitut mother tongue speakers was greatest in the Qikiqtani and Kivalliq regions of Nunavut, and Nunavik (northern Quebec), while the percentage of speakers was lowest in Labrador and the Inuvialuit region of the Northwest Territories (see following table).

Table 6: Inuktitut Mother Tongue Speakers by Region in Canada in 1996[17].

Region	Total Inuit Population	Number of Inuktitut Mother Tongue Speakers	Percentage of Mother Tongue Speakers
Qikiqtani (Nunavut)	13,218	9,975	75.5%
Kitikmeot (Nunavut)	5,067	2,360	46.6%
Kivalliq (Nunavut)	6,868	5,475	79.9%
Inuvialuit (NWT)	3,860 (1991)	790 (1991)	20.5%
Labrador	4,265	435	10.2%
Nunavik (Quebec)	8,300	7,665	92.4%
Totals	41,578	26,700	64.2%

3.2.3. Michif[18]

As defined in the Michif Revival Strategy of the Métis National Council, Michif is a uniquely North American language, spoken in Canada and parts of the United States. "The Michif language is half Cree (Algonquin language and half French (an Indo-European language). It is a mixed language, drawing its verbs and associated grammar from Cree and its nouns and associated grammar from Michif-Cree. The Saulteax language contributes some verbs,

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[17] Source: *1996 Canada Census* and *1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey*.
[18] Source: Interviews with MNC staff and *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Gathering Strength*, 1996.

sounds and nouns to the mixture". [19] Michif is unique to the Métis Nation and the language is partly endangered by the increasing use of French and other Aboriginal languages among Métis. Of the 14,725 Métis aged 15 and over who reported speaking an Aboriginal language in the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 10,340 said they spoke Cree; 2,295 spoke Ojibwa; 840 spoke Michif; 645 spoke an Athapaskan language and 400 spoke Chipewyan. [20]

The exact number of Michif speakers today, however, is unknown, since Michif was not a language choice on the Canada Census until 2001. According to some informants, there has never been a full and comprehensive survey of Michif speakers, so informal estimates of the present number of fully fluent Michif speakers vary. [21]

3.3. Canadian Language Policies, Programs, Regulations and Other Official Support

3.3.1. Federal[22]

There is no legislated protection for Aboriginal languages. The Official Languages Act of Canada (1969) recognizes French and English as the official languages of Canada. These received further protection when they were entrenched in the Constitution of Canada (1982) in sections 16 to 23 of the Canadian Constitution's Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Aboriginal languages are referred to in neither the Canadian Constitution nor federal legislation and thus must receive funding from secondary government sources such as the present cooperation agreements between the federal government and the territories for Aboriginal and minority languages.

3.3.2. Provincial and Territorial

Only five of the thirteen provincial and territorial governments have developed policies and programs in support of Aboriginal languages[23]. Most of these support community-based projects; in the Territories funding is provided through federal-territorial agreements for official languages. These jurisdictions are:

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[19] Source: *Michif Revival Strategy, 2000-2002 and Beyond*, April 2000.
[20] Source: *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Gathering Strength*, 1996.
[21] Source: Interviews with MNC staff.
[22] Source: Fettes, Mark and Norton, Ruth: *Voices of Winter - Aboriginal Languages and Public Policy in Canada*, unpublished.
[23] Source: Ibid.

- **British Columbia**, whose First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Program was established by the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Act enacted in 1990 by the Province;

- **Quebec**, which encourages Aboriginal languages in schooling and daycare, yet does not have a formal Aboriginal languages policy;

- **Yukon**, which has undertaken an extensive community-based revitalization program funded through an agreement with the federal government; and

- **Northwest Territories and Nunavut**, which are committed to implementing the provisions of their Official Languages Acts with the help of federal funds.

Table 7: Federal/Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal Language Funding in Canada, 2001-2002[24]

Region	Aboriginal Lang. Funding
Federal[25] (ALI)	$ 5,000,000
Quebec[26]	N/A
British Columbia	$ 600,000
Nunavut	$ 1,200,000
Northwest Territories	$ 1,900,000
Yukon	$ 1,100,000
Total	**$ 9,800,000**

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[24] Sources: Territorial / Federal Cooperation Agreements on Languages, *Voices of Winter Aboriginal Languages and Public Policy in Canada* by Mark Fettes and Ruth Norton; Jacques Mernier, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Government of Quebec

[25] Note: Amount does not include INAC funding for languages in Band Schools.

[26] Quebec Aboriginal language development is difficult to sum up into one amount since various departments are responsible for various programs including daycare, education and justice.

4. Evaluation Profile

4.1. Objectives

This evaluation is intended to assist PCH in its decision-making regarding renewal of the ALI by assessing the program's:

- Rationale and relevance;
- Impacts and effects; and
- Administration and effectiveness.

It is also intended to provide recommendations on future directions for the ALI.

A substantial part of the evaluation methodology consisted of consultations with ALI stakeholders. This included a wide range of organizations and individuals at the national, regional and community levels. A full listing of persons consulted is contained in the report appendix. Members of the evaluation team were able to observe first hand ten community-based ALI projects and to meet with managers, program delivery personnel and participants.

4.2. Evaluation Issues and Questions

4.2.1. Evaluation Questions

The key evaluation questions were provided in the Request for Proposals. Additional guidance was provided by the three specific evaluation frameworks (one per language group) developed prior to the evaluation.

These questions addressed these areas:

- Rationale and relevance;

- Impacts and effects;

- Program administration and effectiveness; and

- Future directions.

4.2.2. Performance Indicators

In order to assist in answering the evaluation questions, the evaluation team identified a number of performance indicators, including:

- Numbers of projects, communities and participants involved;
- Project outputs – courses, publications, curricula, language strategies etc.;
- Delivery agency and participant perception of project and program successes and challenges;
- Ability of program funds to help leverage or complement other support;
- Researcher observation of project environment, activities and results;
- Quality of narrative reporting and financial tracking and reporting;
- Completion of projects on time and on budget;
- Quality of project selection process, and project tracking documentation;
- Attitudes towards language usage, language projects and ALI; and
- Numbers of speakers and change in use of Aboriginal languages in the communities.

4.3. Research Activities

4.3.1. Project Planning & Site Selection

Project planning was carried out through regular meetings with the project Working Group, which included representatives from each of the three national Aboriginal organizations involved in ALI, as well as representatives of PCH and Consilium. Communities chosen for site visits, based on the recommendations of the Working Group, included:

- 2 Inuktitut sites;
- 2 Michif sites; and
- 6 First Nations sites.

One project per Territory or Province was selected: one of the projects would be for a critically endangered language, and a variety of project types were

represented. The following projects were selected for site visits (languages and 2001-2 ALI funds for the project are shown in brackets):

Project Sites Visited and 2001-2 ALI Funding for the Project

- Hopedale, Labrador - Language Nest (Inuktitut) ($69,000)

- Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk, NWT – Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (Inuvialuktun dialects of Inuktitut) ($129,253)

- Duncan, B.C. – Cowichan Dictionary (Hul'qumi'num' dialect of the Coast Salish People)($15,389 incl. $9,500 from critically endangered lang. fund)

- Sydney, N.S. – First Nations Help Desk (Mi'kmaw) ($20,000)

- Selkirk First Nation, Pelly Crossing, Yukon - Language Research, Planning and Instruction (Northern Tutchone) ($16,307)

- Ohsweken, Ontario – Adult Mohawk Immersion (Mohawk) ($9,525)

- Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan –Curriculum and video project (Michif) ($20,000)

- Waskaganish, Quebec - Cree Literacy (Cree) ($50,479 – 1999-2001)

- Winnipeg, Manitoba – Manitoba Métis Federation's Michif Language Program 2001-2 (Michif) ($175,000)

- Brantford, Ontario – Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc./Woodland Cultural Centre (Critically Endangered Languages Funding)

Note: The Woodland Cultural Centre is affiliated with the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc. in Brantford, Ont., a delivery organization for Ontario. Woodland Cultural Centre is the delivery organization for the Critically Endangered Languages component of First Nations language funding.

4.3.2. Site Visits

A member of the project team was assigned to each site. Research activities at the sites included file and document reviews, direct observation, and interviews with a variety of key informants including project managers, participants and other stakeholders, and focus groups with small groups of participants and stakeholders. Some follow-up information was obtained after the visits. A draft report on each site was provided to key informants for review and comment.

4.3.3. Case Studies

The case studies were conducted through the offices of the national organizations, where much of the information was obtained. This was rounded out by information gathered during the site visits and through meetings with regional delivery organizations.   Regional delivery organizations were also contacted, in person or by telephone.

4.4. Summary

In summary, the key evaluation methodologies included:

- A file and document review;
- 10 site visits;
- 3 case studies;
- Interviews with regional delivery organizations;
- Interviews with current and previous ALI program and PCH staff;
- Interviews with language specialists;
- Interviews with non-participants;
- Input from meetings of stakeholders from the three language groups; and
- A validation workshop for the review of initial findings and recommendations with representation of the national Aboriginal organizations and representatives of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

These methodologies and the lists of sources and informants were developed and reviewed in consultation with the Working Group.

4.5. Limitations

There were a number of limitations on the ability to measure the actual impact and result of the ALI-funded initiatives, particularly using quantitative methods. There is a lack of up-to-date, accurate baseline data on language proficiency and use at the community level. Census data is somewhat out of date, and does not accurately reflect true numbers of Aboriginal speakers. Few communities have the resources or capacity to systematically survey language ability and usage, or to track changes in language use that may have resulted from ALI-funded activities. Where surveys were done, they were often very basic, asking a few questions about language ability. Similarly, there is little available data on the number, nature and impact of pre-ALI language projects that have been undertaken in communities over the years.

Another limitation is the lack of capacity at the community level, particularly in smaller communities. By the time ALI funding reaches this level, it is diluted to the point where it does not support full time permanent positions. Where other funds are available, some communities have hired language coordinators. However, they may not have extensive experience or training in linguistics, in developing and managing language projects, or in administration.

The most serious limitation of any evaluation of the ALI arises from the long-term nature of the change that the program is seeking to foster. It was noted by many respondents that the real impact of the ALI, and of other programs and initiatives to promote Aboriginal languages, would not be discernible for at least another generation. The use of more specific and common performance measures in reporting by all national and regional organizations would allow for a more consistent analysis over the course of the program. Future reporting systems at PCH should take this into account.

5. Evaluation Findings

This section summarizes the key findings of the evaluation in response to the key questions posed in the evaluation Terms of Reference.

5.1. Rationale and Relevance

5.1.1. Is there a continuing role for PCH to address the needs of Aboriginal languages? Why or why not?

The Aboriginal Languages Initiatives is consistent with the objectives of the Department of Canadian Heritage and strongly supports commitments made in the recent federal government's Speech from the Throne. It states that the government will work with Aboriginal people to preserve and enhance Aboriginal languages and cultures[27].

In most provinces, ALI is the only funding directed specifically towards supporting Aboriginal languages. For example, MNC points out that ALI funding is the sole source of funds to support Michif revitalization. Where provincial or territorial programs exist, ALI still represents a significant portion of funding for this purpose. Overwhelmingly Aboriginal informants stress that the need for language revitalization is critical, and requires adequate resources. They want the program to continue and to be enhanced. Revitalizing Aboriginal languages requires a long-term commitment, and the process has only just begun.

In the short-term there is a continuing role for the Department to play in this process, no matter what administration and delivery arrangements may ultimately be. Most respondents viewed the Department as the most logical delivery agent within the federal government; as noted in section 2.2.3, the

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[27] Source: The Canada We Want, Speech from the Throne to Open the Second Session of the Thirty-Seventh Parliament of Canada, September 30, 2002.

program is entirely consistent with government priorities and with the Department's overall goals and objectives.

The Department's role in future program delivery may include:

- Continuing to act as a principle vehicle for funding federal language initiatives,

- Coordinating the development of a national policy on support for Aboriginal language revitalization,

- Assisting to negotiate arrangements involving provinces and territories to complement federal funding, and

- Representing the federal perspective in activities in support of Aboriginal languages.

5.1.2. Do eligible projects fit the most pressing needs of communities in the area of language development?

The majority of Aboriginal languages in Canada are threatened or critically endangered, with only a very few thriving and three given a good chance of continuing to flourish. In most of the regions and communities we visited, languages were described as being endangered, or in crisis. Generally the fluent speakers are over 50, and schools are not perceived to be sufficiently active in providing curricula and teaching to enable languages to survive. The language coordinators, instructors and participants in the projects we visited were making serious efforts to respond to language needs in their communities to the best of their abilities. They were doing so with relatively limited financial resources given the overwhelming need, and relying on limited numbers of fluent speakers to act as human resources for their projects. Many of these people speak the language, but have no training as instructors. Other resources, such as curricula, dictionaries, publications, and audio-visual material were also limited.

Most projects demonstrated extensive consultation with community members, leaders and elders, as well as with outside language specialists, prior to and during development of project plans. Some communities have better access to resources than others, and many informants would like more information on how other communities are responding to language questions. But overall, the projects are seen as meaningful and appropriate, although limited compared to the need.

Strategically, one could debate whether it makes more sense to apply limited resources to languages with a better chance of surviving, or alternatively, to

those most in danger of extinction. The allocation of resources will be an ongoing debate no matter what the formula, or how much these are enhanced, and there are differences of opinions on this subject. However, most people we interviewed stated that it is the language speakers and the communities who know their own situation best. They know what the status of their languages is, and the extent of the need. What they seek are greater opportunities to learn from other sources outside their own communities what works best in revitalizing language – the success stories, experiences and examples of others working in similar fields. With access to this information, time and resources, they can continue to build on what they have begun.

- The program is generally flexible enough to enable the communities to use their ALI funding as they see fit, and the program should retain this flexibility in future.

- One additional concern under this heading was raised by a number of respondents who noted that language use groups are not usually defined by individual "communities". By dividing funds equally among a number of individual communities who may share the same language, the program may in some cases be diminishing the impact of available resources: the needs of group of communities with the same language may be better served by a collective or regional project. In some cases projects were, in fact, penalized because they were designed to address the needs of a region rather than an individual community. This issue could be addressed by:
  - reserving a percentage of project funding for regional and national initiatives; and
  - development of a national Aboriginal Languages Strategy.

5.1.3. What other federal, provincial, territorial, municipal or community-based programs offer similar services?

Only a few jurisdictions offer programs and services specifically aimed at revitalizing Aboriginal languages in communities, including the three territories (with funding through federal-territorial official languages agreements), British Columbia (which provides $600,000 per year for Aboriginal languages projects), and Quebec, through a variety of programs not specifically targeting language but which can be accessed for this purpose. In dollar terms, ALI represents approximately 50% of all funding for community language projects in these jurisdictions, and virtually 100% of available funding elsewhere.

In the territories and on many reserves there are language programs in schools, but frequently there is no immersion beyond the third year, and the lack of Aboriginal language instruction in the schools was a common concern.

Many ALI projects piggybacked onto projects funded through other federal, provincial, or territorial programs, such as initiatives directed at young children, or cultural projects. Through this leverage, the project infrastructure was supported, or in some cases provided, by these other programs. Thus the ALI funds could be directed specifically to language learning, as intended. Examples of programs which have provided project funding for other elements of a total project package to complement ALI, or directed towards supporting Aboriginal languages, include:

- Provincial and territorial funding programs for language, as described earlier;
- Canada Council for the Arts;
- Saskatchewan Department of Culture;
- First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative;
- Aboriginal Head Start; and,
- Territorial Early Childhood Education programs.

Some communities also accessed funding from local development corporations, social or cultural agencies, or departments of their local or regional First Nations, Inuit or Métis governments. However, by and large, without ALI the language component of these projects would be greatly diminished and lack continuity, since language is not the first objective of most of these other programs. A notable exception is the school system, which in many regions does provide some, however limited, language instruction, especially in the early years.

5.2. Impacts and Effects

5.2.1. What are the ALI's program activities and outputs?

Through the ALI, a large number of regional and community-based activities have taken place over the past four years. Many of these community projects would not have taken place without ALI.   Among the program funded activities have been:

- Approximately 1200 community projects;
- Community and regional consultations to assist with language strategies and planning;
- Surveys and other research to document language needs;

- Language instruction for young children, as well as for youth and adults;
- Exchanges of information through conferences or attendance at other projects; and
- Linkages between communities, regions, individuals and institutions involved in language programming.

Outputs have included:

- Development of language strategies and plans in many regions and communities (e.g. Michif Language Strategy, AFN Language Strategy);
- Provision of language instruction to children and adults;
- Creation of language courses and programs for teaching;
- Creation of language resource materials, such as dictionaries, children's books and teaching materials;
- Audio and video recordings in Aboriginal languages;
- Transcriptions, translations and other documentation;
- Survey and other research results; and
- Language promotion materials (e.g. Posters and t-shirts).

5.2.2. What are the short and long-term expected outcomes of the ALI and to what extent have they been achieved?

Expected short-term ALI outcomes relate to increasing the number and quality of language projects, the numbers of communities involved, and the development of long-term strategies for language preservation and revitalization. These objectives have not been stated in measurable terms other than the anticipation of an increase or improvement from pre-existing levels. In general, the desired outcomes of increased numbers of projects and increased numbers of communities involved have been achieved, although it is difficult to quantify these numbers since there is no baseline data. Language strategies have been developed for each language group, although there remains a need to develop a broader national strategy and framework for language revitalization.

Expected long-term outcomes include the preservation and revitalization of Aboriginal languages as a result of the support from the ALI. Many informants took pains to make the same point expressed in the original ALI program outline, which is that this goal will take considerable time and more funds than are now available through the program. The first four years (now extended to a fifth year) of the ALI are only a beginning, and it is too early to know whether the long-term outcome will be achieved. There are some hopeful signs, including the rising number of people signing up for language courses,

the growing awareness of and interest in Aboriginal languages in the communities, and the level of support for the various ALI projects demonstrated in the communities.

However, many Aboriginal languages remain in a state of crisis and continue to decline. Nevertheless, there is general recognition that, however limited, the ALI is a necessary support for this process. Monitoring the long-term outcomes will require regular and detailed measurement of change in the levels of Aboriginal language knowledge and usage, and the factors that affect this.

5.2.3. To what extent have the objectives of the Initiative been achieved?

Objective:

- *To increase the number and quality of Aboriginal language projects in Aboriginal communities*

In communities that have accessed ALI funding there are more language projects than prior to the ALI. In all communities we visited, informants reported a number of language projects that had been undertaken over the past four years directly as a result of the availability of ALI funding. In several regions the early years saw ALI funding allocated to surveys, research on other examples, and planning, although some would have liked more funds for these activities. Approximately 1200 projects have been funded through ALI, and many examples of additional language activity are given in the site visit reports. These include the creation of language nests and language instruction, the creation or renewal of language resources such as dictionaries, language conferences, and language classes for young children and adults.

Many of these communities reported that the quality of the projects has improved through experience, consultation with language specialists, the opportunity to learn from language projects in other areas, and in some cases through linking to institutions for language training. For example, Selkirk First Nation partnered with Simon Fraser University to offer accredited language courses: the Cowichan Tribes partnered with Malaspina University College to develop and offer language courses.

On the other hand, there is some criticism that a "shotgun" approach to distributing ALI funding has resulted in a variable mix, with some projects being more carefully planned and carried out than others. This is inevitable, and, in the absence of quality criteria, it is difficult to measure the achievement of this objective.

Objective

- *To increase the number of communities involved in Aboriginal languages activities;*

There is no baseline data on how many communities were involved in Aboriginal languages activities, and so achievement of this objective cannot be quantified or verified other than through the sources available during the evaluation. The records of the delivery organizations show that ALI funds represented seed money for many language programs. The actual numbers of communities involved is difficult to measure, since not all projects were in just one community, and some earlier ALI-funded projects were regional or national in scope. Based on the site visits and discussions with informants, it appears that many of the projects took place in communities where there had been few or no organized language projects in the past.

Objective

- *To support the development of long-term strategies to revitalize and maintain Aboriginal languages;*

There is no question that the ALI has supported the development of long-term strategies to revitalize and maintain Aboriginal languages. In many regions, consultations and conferences were held to develop plans for language activities in the region. Depending on the region, these plans have been developed at the regional, and/or at the community level. AFN has developed a First Nations Language Strategy, which has been discussed in some regions through ALI supported conferences; in many regions, such as the Yukon and Western Arctic, regional and community level language strategies were developed using ALI funding to hold conferences. ITK has used part of the Inuktitut ALI funds to develop national policy and strategies for Inuktitut through the Inuktitut working group on language. The Michif Language Strategy directs the MNC and its member governing organizations in increasing the number of community-level learning opportunities and increasing the use of the Michif language; to coordinate Michif language revitalization efforts; to serve as a reference point and decision making tool; and to maintain communication and information sharing on Michif initiatives. The Michif Language Working Group meets biannually.

It was noted, however, that there is so far no joint, collective national strategy, shared by Aboriginal communities and the federal, provincial and territorial governments, that integrates the various language strategies that are beginning to emerge as a result of the ALI.

Objective:

- *To focus on early language learning.*

Since one of the ALI program principles is that each community must choose its own goals and strategies to meet language needs, the communities themselves decide the extent to which they will focus on early language learning. For some, this is a second or third step in the long process of language revitalization, after initial research and planning, and documenting the language while those who can provide the information are still alive.

The extent to which ALI-funded projects focused on early language learning depended to a large degree on the priorities and plans of the communities involved. We do not have figures on what percentage of the ALI projects focus on early childhood learning; most, however, recognize that this is ultimately necessary for language preservation, and they are setting the stage by creating materials and instructors to promote early childhood learning.

5.2.4. To what extent are ALI participants (delivery partners, agencies, beneficiaries of funded activities, communities, etc.) satisfied with the program and its accomplishments?

Most informants viewed the ALI as an important first step, which has achieved considerable success at making funds available to regions and communities for language projects. They were also generally satisfied with what had been accomplished in their communities given the level of resources available, and with the impact of the program on their communities. They would like the program to continue with some modifications to the administration and delivery and enhanced funding to reflect both the need and the level of effort required to revitalize Aboriginal languages and achieve ALI long-term goals. This is seen, however, as the beginning of a long process.

Some specific concerns included:

- Funding formulas and allocation of funding among regions and language groups[28];
- Lack of ability to make multi-year plans;

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[28] MNC points out that, for Michif, the allocation of funding for the Michif envelope was determined by the Board of Governors of MNC at the beginning of ALI and this remained constant throughout the four years of ALI.

- Delays in receiving information about the program and in receiving funding;
- Limitations of having only political organizations administer and deliver the ALI;
- Percentage of funds needed by the national delivery partners for administration;
- Gaps in program coverage, meaning that some communities and groups are missed;
- Relatively small amount of funding compared to the need; and
- Need for a more comprehensive, long-term and strategic approach to language revitalization.

These and other specific comments are addressed in sections below. Despite these concerns, there is no suggestion that the ALI should not continue. There is near universal recognition that the program has made progress towards its short and long-term objectives, and has been instrumental in providing much needed support for Aboriginal languages. Many of those we spoke with took pride in the accomplishments of their individual projects, and felt that this was also reflected in the improved attitudes of the community and political leadership towards language revitalization.

5.2.5. To what extent have different types of individuals/communities/agencies benefited from the program? What types of individuals /communities/ agencies did not benefit from the program?

During the four-year period of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative, a wide range of individuals, communities and agencies benefited from the program. Aboriginal children and youth were the primary target group, as evidenced by projects ranging from early childhood language programs and the development of language reading materials to the support of land-based language camps. Adults and elders also benefited from ALI funding since they were involved in the organization of projects, building of community support structures and the production of language materials. All projects were initiated in communities with Aboriginal language speakers and administered either through community Aboriginal organizations or regional agencies contracted to administer funds.

A quantitative analysis of the types of projects funded would have been useful, however, reporting formats from community projects was not standardized. These inconsistencies did not allow for any form of overall quantitative analysis based on type of project. Instead, information on individuals and communities who benefited from the ALI was anecdotal. Perhaps more standardized reporting formats would allow for improved performance reporting in future.

With regards to individuals who did not benefit from ALI funding, some organizations indicated that they had had difficulty in accessing funds, and were given the impression that the delivery structure was not entirely inclusive of all Aboriginal people. The Department of Canadian Heritage received considerable correspondence from non-participating Aboriginal organizations over the course of the project concerning their inability to access program funds. Gaps in access to funding were identified by the following groups:

- Métis people who speak First Nations languages or French;
- Urban and non-status First Nations people; and
- Urban Inuit.

These perceived gaps occurred because of confusion or uncertainty about eligibility on the part of the delivery agencies. For example, Métis organizations providing service to Métis people who speak First Nations languages were eligible to seek funding under the ALI First Nations envelope. However, this was not clear to all parties.

5.2.6. What, if any, unintended consequences (positive and negative) have occurred as a result of the program?

Projects funded through ALI have helped to increase interest in Aboriginal languages among Aboriginal politicians and the leadership, as well as among members of the general population in the communities involved. This is a very positive sign, as this interest will be crucial for the long-term success of language revitalization. This increase in interest, and pride in language learning and usage, was mentioned by many people in the communities. This has also led in some areas to links between language ability and economic opportunities, as ability to speak the language becomes recognized as an advantage for employment.

Another interesting consequence of the program is that many informants suggested they are interested in sharing information and learning from other groups working in the language area. Although this is not a direct

consequence of ALI, the heightened language activity resulting from the program has likely enhanced this interest as well as awareness that there are many other projects going on from which people can learn. This interest has led to the creation of new networks among language workers, and to the expansion and strengthening of existing networks.

We did not hear of any negative unintended consequences of the program.

5.3. Program Administration and Effectiveness

5.3.1. What evidence is there that the human and financial resources have been used in the best way possible to produce positive outcomes and experience?

The ALI has been a learning experience for everyone involved. We found no evidence or suggestions that projects are being undertaken frivolously or with lack of attention to achieving the objectives set out by the program. The site visits and case studies confirmed the existence of a growing community of individuals and organizations seriously committed to addressing language revitalization. Most sites were very open with their information, although sometimes their files were not well organized.

Where inefficiencies within projects were identified, these were most often the result of inexperience or lack of capacity at the regional or local level – people are learning how to undertake language revitalization projects and this takes time. Most projects came in within the budget, and where there were overruns, these were covered by other funders.

A complaint from some locations was that administration costs for the political organizations was taking too much away from funds available for the language projects themselves. Administration costs for the projects themselves were well within reasonable limits, with some regional delivery organizations taking nothing for administration, or less than ten per cent. Once funds reached the provinces and territories, most flowed directly to the projects. A possible solution identified by many respondents was the creation of an Aboriginal-controlled, non-political organization established specifically to oversee the management of the ALI and to undertake other language-related initiatives. However, MNC and its governing members state that

"each community must choose its own goals and strategies to meet language needs, and any alternative delivery system must consider control of the Métis Language envelope by Métis organizations or institutions"[29].

The informants in the regions spoke highly of program officials and their interaction with them, although they would have liked more information in the early stages of the program, and more regular contact with them (a difficult challenge, given the limited number of staff). Most community respondents felt that the application and reporting processes were appropriate, not excessively onerous, and assured a reasonable level of accountability. Though these requirements were initially viewed as too "bureaucratic", there is now a heightened appreciation among the organizations for the need to monitor and account for program spending and activities.

Some inefficiency resulted from factors mentioned by many of the informants:

- Lack of multi-year funding did not allow for long-term planning;
- Many projects received funding near fiscal year-end and had to scramble to organize and implement their activities, leading to inefficiencies, poor planning, and reduced effectiveness;
- AFN stated that the reporting process was too onerous, and some regions and communities were unable to meet administrative requirements due to lack of capacity;
- A forum for exchange between projects or regions would prevent duplication and enhance learning from other successful experiences[30]; and
- Language research should have been a critical element in budgeting for the ALI to facilitate subsequent planning.

Where other programs existed for Aboriginal languages, the ALI complemented these, so that, for example, a language coordinator would be hired through one project and the ALI funds would pay for instructors' salaries or elders' honoraria.

Whether ALI funding could have been allocated in a different way is a point of discussion – all regions felt they needed more, and many felt that less funding should go to administration by the political organizations with more directed towards language projects. There were also some gaps in coverage, most notably for Métis speaking other First Nations languages than Michif, or French.

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[29] Comments provided by MNC in response to draft evaluation report.
[30] MNC notes that the National Michif Working Group was created precisely for this reason.

5.3.2. What evidence is there that the ALI projects have been successfully implemented and administered according to ALI guidelines?

The implementation of the ALI was to follow several guidelines, including[31]:

- Funding will be made available for First Nation/Indian, Michif and Inuktitut language projects on an equitable basis without regard to the gender, status or residence of the applicants;
- Funding will be in the form of contributions;
- The process of establishing funding priorities and assessing funding proposals will be open and transparent;
- Recipients will report annually;
- Projects should be consistent with the broad objectives of revitalizing and maintaining Aboriginal languages and priority will be given to projects which enhance and reinforce early language learning;
- Projects should not duplicate or replace existing federal or provincial/territorial Aboriginal languages education programs;
- Projects should include community-based activities; and
- Costs associated with administering and delivering the funding are not to exceed 15% of the total funding provided.

Funds were made available for First Nation/Indian, Michif and Inuktitut language project on an equitable basis using the 75%-10%-15% allocation agreed to. Due to the structural limitations of the delivery system, as described elsewhere, some gaps in accessing the program funds were perceived. This included Métis who spoke First Nations languages, as well as some Aboriginal peoples living in urban centres. While these groups were eligible for funding under the program criteria, funding was denied in some cases by regional delivery organizations that were not aware of their eligibility.

Otherwise, ALI was successfully implemented according to the ALI guidelines above. Funding was in the form of contributions and the process was open and transparent (although in the early years information was somewhat slow to filter out to communities). Annual reports were prepared and filed, and the projects were consistent with program objectives. Evidence that ALI projects focused on early language learning is found in the high number of immersion projects developed for Aboriginal children and youth. There is little other funding available for Aboriginal languages, and where this exists we found that ALI funds complemented rather than duplicated this. Most projects did include community-based activities; where regional consultation and planning

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[31] Source: ALI program guidelines.

sessions took place, this was with the involvement of representatives from affected communities. Our review of administration costs showed that these were well within the 15% guideline.

5.3.3. How effective were the working relationships between local community, regional and national level organizations?

The communities dealt primarily with the delivery organizations in their region, or, for critically endangered languages, with the national delivery organization (most recently Woodland Cultural Centre). There were few complaints about the relationship, although some requested more information on funding programs. Interaction was mainly confined to applying for funding (where it was disbursed by RFP) or receiving funds where they were divided equally among communities, and reporting to the regional delivery organization.

In many regions there was additional interaction since the regional delivery organization organized consultation meetings on language, and supported projects by assisting with application and reporting where capacity was limited. Generally the working relationship between the communities and the regional organizations was quite good.

The relationship between the regional delivery organizations and the national organizations varied. The Inuit regional organizations worked well with ITK and their roles were seen as complementary, with ITK not being directly involved in disbursing funding or administering community projects. Although spending for administration was within ALI guidelines, many First Nations and several Michif informants would prefer to see funds allocated to administration by the national organizations directed to the language projects themselves.

Program staff at the Department of Canadian Heritage were viewed as accessible, supportive, and knowledgeable, given their limited numbers. Communities would like to see more program officers available to service and give support to projects. Such support would include site visits from program officers. They also suggested an orientation session be provided for PCH regions on reporting requirements.

Many informants suggested that there must be more allowance for networking and sharing of knowledge between regions and projects of the same language and different languages.

5.3.4. Have ideas about results, reach and resourcing changed? If so, how?

As noted above, several respondents identified a need to dedicate resources to regional and national initiatives, and to the development of a more comprehensive, longer-term strategic approach. It was recognized that while the strong emphasis on community work was one of the strengths of the program, community-level projects alone would not preserve Aboriginal languages. A national strategy will be required to establish a framework within in which community and regional initiatives are developed.
It was noted that this would require real leadership on the part of both the national Aboriginal organizations and the federal government. Difficult decisions regarding the allocation of limited resources may be required.

The people we consulted understand that revitalizing language will take time; at the same time they see many languages in such a state of crisis that there is little time left to revitalize them. This initial stage has enabled communities to establish short-term objectives, to organize, to marshal their own resources for language work, to identify needs and desires in their communities, and to develop the tools they require (materials, people) to support their languages. They see progress in small steps, but they are frustrated because they want to move more quickly to use the speakers who remain, and to create new generations of speakers. They want enough resources allocated through the ALI and other programs to match the actual need, at the community, regional and national levels. This will require greatly enhanced funding for Aboriginal languages.

5.3.5. Should the program continue to be delivered through the existing organizations? If not, what other organization or types of organizations could you recommend?

Among Inuktitut language groups there was little dissatisfaction with the current delivery structure, which seems to work well for them, aside from non-participating organizations working with urban Inuit. However, among the other two language groups, there is some concern about the amount of funding allocated to administration at the national levels (although this was

well within program guidelines), and, for Métis in particular, a concern that there are gaps because many speak First Nations languages[32].

A number of suggestions for changes to program delivery structure aimed at eliminating the gaps and moving the funding more directly to the regions and the individual projects were made. Many suggested that funding should be distributed by language groups rather than through the political organizations, and that other Aboriginal service organizations such as those serving urban populations should be involved. Others suggested that funding should be available for larger language "nations" as well as individual communities.

Many individual stakeholders recommended that a non-political national entity should be funded, to which project applications would be sent. Projects would be selected based on national criteria and standards for eligibility by juries made up of language speakers. A number of models for this national entity were suggested, including the Canada Council, or an endowment similar to the Aboriginal Healing Institute. AFN suggested an Aboriginal Language Institute or Foundation be created. Another potential model is the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation in British Columbia, which receives and distributes language funds from federal government and the private sector.[33] This recommendation is not unanimous however, with Métis organizations supporting the current delivery system for Michif.

5.3.6. What improvements can be made to better ensure the objectives of the Initiative will be achieved?

The informants provided many specific suggestions for improving the program, including how it is funded, administered and delivered. Many of these have been reported above, and are explored in detail in the site visit

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[32] Several of the non-participating organizations interviewed for this study felt that segments of the Aboriginal population were being missed through the current delivery structure; there is some difference of opinion as to whether the current delivery structure can be extended or enhanced to be more inclusive, or whether an alternative structure should be explored. Generally respondents were satisfied with the regional delivery organizations, while a number of people felt the national organizations should play a reduced role in delivery of ALI to reduce administration costs. The strength of this opinion varies by language group, with Inuit generally satisfied with the current structure, and some Michif and First Nations language respondents wanting most ALI funding directed to the regions or in a few cases directly to the community project level.

[33] The history of two private member's bills introduced in Parliament by MP Ethel Blondin in 1989 and 1991 (Bills C-269 and C-282), as well as a summary of various other reports and recommendations for an Aboriginal or First Nations Languages Foundation is presented in the AFN publication, "First Nations Languages and Literacy Foundation: Information Handbook", undated.

and case study reports in the Appendices. Some of the key suggestions are included in the recommendations section at the end of this report.

These improvements generally related to enhancing funding and providing longer-term commitments, developing a longer and more national planning horizon, extending program coverage to eliminate gaps, streamlining application and reporting procedures, creating more opportunities for information exchange and the development of local capacity, and creating a reliable and comprehensive data base for information on languages.

Several suggested that the reporting procedures for ALI be streamlined and standardized in order to make this simpler, and to provide standard data, for example on the types of projects funded, number of participants, etc. This could be enhanced by capacity building – for example training for regional delivery staff to support communities, or by provision of explanatory guides to accompany reporting forms.

Although ALI specifically does not fund school programs, some suggested that ALI should help to explore ways in which language revitalization projects in the community could complement or interface with programs in the schools.

5.4. Future Directions

5.4.1. What lessons can be learned from this Initiative?

The ALI represents a valuable first step towards the revitalization of Aboriginal languages in Canada, and all participants recommend that it continue. The program has provided an opportunity to learn about how funding for Aboriginal languages can be delivered to communities throughout the country. Among the lessons learned from the first four years are:

- There is a massive need for Aboriginal language programming to reverse the decline and trend towards extinction of Aboriginal languages, of which very few are given a chance of survival. This is a very high priority for many Aboriginal peoples, and must be recognized as such by governments and by the Aboriginal leadership;

- Provision of funding for Aboriginal languages can result in an increase in the number of projects and communities involved, and in the enhancement of awareness and interest in these languages among Aboriginal peoples and their leadership;

- Each community and region will develop strategies, approaches and language projects based on their own needs and circumstances, but there is also considerable scope for sharing experiences across regions and language groups, and much interest in such exchanges;

- Delivery of funding to language groups through political structures and organizations creates gaps in coverage and access to funds, and has led to criticism that too much funding may be directed to administration;

- Prior to launching teaching programs, many communities need time to gather information, to develop plans, and to create resources for community language programs and training for elders teaching in non-school, community-based language projects;

- Language learning is taking place, but the revitalization of many languages is a long-term prospect – paradoxically, however, there is little time left to save some of the more critically endangered languages;

- The current level of funding for Aboriginal languages through the ALI is greatly inadequate, given the need: yet it is the largest block of funding available for language revitalization, with much of the country having little or no other alternative funding for this purpose;

- The schools are not perceived to be adequately responding to the need for Aboriginal language instruction, and while the ALI does not fund school-based projects, there must be a continuum between early childhood language education through the ALI and language instruction in the schools; and

- ALI funding can help to lever other funds, and to stretch these dollars further by providing the language component of projects such as Child Development Centres funded through other programs, in which language would not otherwise be a major part.

5.4.2. What best practices can be shared between projects?

Exchange of information, experience and examples may be more appropriate terms than "best practices". As we have shown, opportunities for networking between communities and regions, and even internationally, for the purpose of improving language revitalization projects and programs is a strong desire

of many informants. Some examples of successful ideas for language revitalization projects include:

- Travel to other sites or inviting others to visit in order to obtain insight into how their projects worked and to obtain advice and recommendations based on the experience of others;
- Developing relationships with language specialists and institutions in order to jointly develop language projects, including accredited community-based language programs;
- Linking with other early childhood programs and projects in order to leverage ALI funding by providing a language instructional component to already existing infrastructure and programs for young children;
- Holding national and regional conferences and workshops for planning and the exchange of information;
- Linking language immersion instruction to community and home-based cultural activities, such as sewing;
- Using modern technology, including the Internet, to support language learning and to organize and make available language resources, such as dictionaries;
- Creating a cultural foundation to raise awareness and funds for Aboriginal language revitalization; and
- Developing partnerships with private sector sponsors for language projects.

These are only a small handful of examples, each of which can provide a wealth of learning to other projects if opportunities are made available for such sharing of information and experience.

Regional delivery organizations could also learn from each other by exchanging processes for informing their communities, allocating funds, soliciting and processing proposals, reporting and record keeping.

6. Conclusion

The Aboriginal Languages Initiative has been successful within the limits of resources available and the four-year mandate of the Initiative, supporting approximately 1200 individual projects in communities throughout Canada over the past four years. Many of these projects would not have occurred without ALI, and the participants and other stakeholders recognize this. Generally the program has worked well, although some gaps in accessing ALI funding under the current delivery model have been identified. Many informants described enhanced interest in language revitalization among the public and leadership as a result of their activities.

A number of specific suggestions for improving the program have been made, which are reflected in the findings and recommendations. Without exception the stakeholders would like to see ALI continue because it addresses a critical need which is a high priority for Aboriginal peoples: preserving and revitalizing their languages. They are unanimously agreed that greatly enhanced resources are required to adequately address these language revitalization requirements. They stress the urgency of the situation for many languages as the number of fluent speakers declines.

7. Recommendations

Taking into account the evaluation findings, five key recommendations for ALI are as follows:

Recommendation 1

The Department of Canadian Heritage should explore various delivery mechanisms, including options for an institution that could receive, distribute and administer language funds from the federal government and the private sector, providing access to all Aboriginal language groups.

Rationale

Many respondents felt that the disbursal of ALI funding through national Aboriginal organizations was problematic as these are multifaceted organizations with large and complex mandates, whose primary focus is not language or culture. It was suggested that the issue of language preservation, promotion and revitalization is important and challenging enough to require coordination by an organization whose mandate, mission, structure, governance, staffing, and expertise reflect the specific needs associated with this challenge.

There is also a very high level of interest in improving capacity and learning about experiences in other areas through a national clearinghouse, which could be web-based as well as being based at a central institution.

A number of structural models have been suggested for such an organization in the past. As described in this report, an Aboriginal Languages Foundation or Institute has been proposed a number of times in recent years, including through private members' bills in Parliament. Many stakeholders suggested that a model such as the Canada Council might be appropriate to receive and disburse funding from government and to raise funds from the private sector. An initial step would be to examine and compare corporate models in light of the needs and issues identified in this evaluation, with the goal of determining which options would most effectively address the broadest range of needs.

Funds for language revitalization could be allocated and administered through such an entity by a national committee or board (or perhaps one per language group), which could act as jury. This would help to eliminate the gaps in program coverage created by using the political organizations. It has also been suggested that a language "Institute" could become a centre for research and documentation on Aboriginal languages and on best practices for language revitalization. PCH would still be involved in the transition period to the "Institute", and as a link between the "Institute" and the federal government, once it was created.

It should be noted that there is not unanimous agreement on alternative delivery mechanisms. The Manitoba Métis Federation and the Métis National Council, for example, are strongly in support of the existing mechanisms for the administration and delivery of ALI funding. Therefore changes to these delivery mechanisms, if any, will need to come about through a process of discussion and debate.

Recommendation 2

ALI should continue with funding on a longer-term basis to allow for meaningful projects to take place that foster the maintenance, revitalization and growth of Aboriginal languages. If the current ALI objectives are to be realized, enhanced funding for the Initiative is required thus addressing some current gaps.

Rationale

ALI addresses pressing needs for which there are few, if any, alternatives. The need for language revitalization has been amply documented, and given the declining numbers of fluent speakers, the window of opportunity for many languages will close unless adequate resources are made available. In many jurisdictions there is no alternative to ALI, yet the amount of money available per community through the program allows for only relatively limited projects to be undertaken. Where territorial or provincial funding for language revitalization is available the federal ALI funds are complementary, helping to leverage the impact of this funding. Unfortunately, as noted, there are some "gaps" in the current delivery system, whereby some groups are unable to access ALI funds. The evaluation has demonstrated that there is a direct relationship between funding for Aboriginal language revitalization and the numbers of language projects. There is also a direct effect on stimulating interest and support for language revitalization. The goals and objectives of the program are ambitious but achievable, assuming a longer-term funding commitment. Additional funding should be sought from other sources, including foundations and the private sector.

Recommendation 3

ALI should continue to focus on community-level projects, but also provide opportunities for regional and national projects, including language research and strategic planning at the community, regional and national level; highly innovative projects; capacity building for regional and local language personnel; and resource development. These might be funded through separate program components. There should continue to be flexibility, within the context of the overall program goals and objectives and of the proposed national strategic plan, in the types of projects allowed.

Rationale

Funding should be made available for some regional or national programming such as language conferences, planning exercises, workshops or orientation, training, publications, or other activities which service more than one community or region. An amount could also be set aside for particularly innovative language projects, perhaps distributed on the basis of so much per language group based on proposals from applicants. Some improvements to capacity - nationally, and regionally - could also be addressed through broader projects to support project application and reporting; regional and local coordination; exchanges and tours for training, upgrading of skills, or to view other examples and models. Some communities pointed to the linkages between their projects and school based language programs, and flexibility needs to be maintained so they can provide the language activities that best meet their own community needs.

Recommendation 4

The Department of Canadian Heritage should take the lead in engaging a national dialogue to advance Aboriginal languages revitalization. Measures should be explored to better coordinate efforts and to share information. PCH could begin this process by sponsoring a national Aboriginal languages conference.

Rationale

Many informants spoke of the lack of a national strategic plan for Aboriginal languages. Plans have been developed for each language group, and language-specific plans could form the foundation of a national revitalization plan. There is some debate as to how resources should be allocated – whether priority should be given to the most endangered languages, to enduring or declining languages with a better chance of survival, or made available equally to all. Decisions must be made so that the available resources can be utilized strategically, to maximum effect. A national conference, organized under the leadership of PCH and involving various

stakeholders including Aboriginal representative and cultural organizations, language specialists, provincial/territorial governments, private sector partners could initiate the process of developing a national strategic plan for the revitalization of Aboriginal languages. This would support the individual plans of the three major language groups now funded under ALI. AFN has called for legislation to protect Aboriginal languages and to support language policy, programming and funding. This might also lead to securing commitments of support from federal, provincial and territorial governments as well as the private sector. The national strategic plan should be revisited, evaluated and updated on a regular basis (at least every five years), and progress tracked based on coordinated record keeping and research.

Recommendation 5

Improvements to ALI administration and delivery should include:

- **Multi-year funding arrangements to enable better planning;**

- **Ensuring that program funds are made available to Aboriginal language groups now unable to access them;**

- **Exploration of standardized, easy to use reporting systems for projects, and on-line data recording and collection systems for PCH and delivery organizations in order to track performance and progress;**

- **Creation of more formal, measurable outcome and output measures to facilitate future evaluations and greater involvement by PCH and delivery organizations in on-going project monitoring;**

- **Earlier distribution of program information, and targeted information to identified groups now not accessing the program;**

- **Web-based site _not_ only for the dissemination of program and project information but also for the collection of program and project information into a national web-based database; and**

- **Research and baseline data collection on Aboriginal languages.**

Rationale

There have been many individual suggestions for improvements to ALI administration and delivery, which are detailed in the report and the site visit reports in the Appendices. The above are some key ones, which we believe will help to extend the reach of the program, to improve project planning, reporting and evaluation in future, and to enhance accountability and the flow

of information. Stable, multi-year funding in sufficient amounts is required to address language needs in an efficient and systematic fashion. Without multi-year funding, projects are unstable and often cannot be planned or executed until well into the fiscal year. The standardization of reporting and data collection, and the creation of baseline data on languages is important to monitor and evaluate progress. And on-line information services, flowing both ways, can help to streamline the process of collecting and disseminating information.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Site Visits

Appendix B – Case Studies

Appendix C – People Consulted

Appendix D – Documents Reviewed

Appendix A
Site Visits

1.0   Hopedale Language Nest, Labrador
2.0   Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, N.W.T
3.0   Cowichan Tribes Cultural & Education Centre B.C.
4.0   First Nations Help Desk, Nova Scotia
5.0   Selkirk First Nation, Yukon
6.0   Washaganish (Cree Literacy Program), Quebec
7.0   Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa Program – Ohsweken (Six Nations Territory, Southern Ontario)
8.0   Michif Languages Program, Manitoba
9.0   Métis Nation, Saskatchewan
10.0 Sweetgrass Language Council Inc. (Woodlands Cultural Centre), Ontario

1.0 The Hopedale Language Nest, Labrador

The Torngasok Cultural Centre and the Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC) operate the Hopedale Language Nest jointly. Torngasok is the cultural affiliate of the Labrador Inuit Association, mandated to promote, preserve and protect Labrador Inuit language, customs, and culture. The LIHC addresses the health concerns of Labrador Inuit, delivering programs and services in the areas of mental health, non-insured health benefits, community health and safety, addictions, public health, and family services.

1.1 Languages in the Community

Languages spoken among the Inuit of Labrador are English and Inuktitut. In all Inuit coastal communities, the Inuktitut language is in serious decline. Among over 2,000 people of Inuit ancestry, just under 500 claim Inuktitut as their sole mother tongue. Almost 300 of these live in Nain, where most are in the older age group. Even in Nain Inuit children rarely use Inuktitut in their everyday interactions; English is the primary language of most Inuit both at home and in the workplace.

Emerging trends may promote language revitalization. These include:

- A growing recognition by political and social organizations of the importance of language, and of the critical link between language and culture; and

- Increased status associated with fluency in Inuktitut, linked in part to the growing accrual of power to Inuit in Labrador through the Land Claim and self-government initiatives.

1.2 Goals and Objectives

In 1994, the Labrador Inuit Association held a major conference in Hopedale on the preservation and promotion of the Inuit language. The Maori model of "Kohanga Reo", or language nests, was discussed. After much research and consultation, the program opened its doors in May 2001.

The goal of the Language Nest is "to promote, advance and conserve the Inuktitut language through an Infant Care Program that offers intellectual, emotional, social and cultural development offered unilingually in Inuktitut."

The objectives of the Language Nest are:

- To offer an Inuktitut Infant Care Program at the critical time of language development, between birth and the toddler years;

- To provide an opportunity where parents are encouraged to revive the use of the Inuktitut language at home;

- To provide an opportunity where the community realized the importance of language retention for cultural survival and offers its support; and

- To establish and enhance pride the use of the Inuit language.

The Language Nest operates as an unlicensed, unregulated, cost-free Infant Care program. It accepts infants between the ages of three months and two years. Inuktitut speakers care for the babies throughout the working day, and speak solely Inuktitut in the presence of the infants. A comprehensive program of activities sets out in detail dozens of activities intended to promote development of the infants' fine and gross motor, cognitive, sensory and linguistic skills and abilities. Three children participated in the program in 2001-2.

1.3   Funding

When the Aboriginal Languages Initiative was announced in 1998, a total of $383,000 was committed to the Labrador Inuit Association for language projects in Labrador.

The project budget for fiscal year 2000-2001 operations was $111,580.

- Torngasok Cultural Centre contributed $75,000. This paid the cost of two Inuktitut speakers' salaries, supplies, and translation.

- LIHC contributed approximately $24,000 for the salary of a trained Early Childhood Educator.

- LIHC contributed an additional $12,000 (approximately) for consumables, utilities, and other incidental costs.   Other contributions by LIHC (including administrative support, materials) were not tracked.

The ALI contribution to this project was provided to the Torngasok Cultural Centre. The ALI contributions were:

- 1999-2000: $35,434.00[34], of which $15,660.00 was spent on the Language Nest Project.

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[34] This amount includes a carry-over of $14,116 from fiscal year 1998-99

- 2000-2001: $96,592.00, of which $40,285.00 was spent on the Language Nest Project.

- 2001-2002: $129,818.37, of which 69,000.36 was spent on the Language Nest Project.

The ALI contribution is used to pay the salaries of two Inuktitut speakers who staff the Language Nest.

1.4   Impacts and Effects

- Respondents felt that the goals of the project have been met, and thus that the goals of the ALI were being supported through the work of the Language Nest.

- Respondents cited as evidence of community interest the increasing number of parents interested in registering their infants in the Language Nest.

- It was also noted that parents' commitment of their child to the daytime care of others for the duration of the one-year program is a strong vote of confidence.

- The critical link between language and culture was noted by several respondents. Infants are learning the fundamentals of both Inuktitut and Inuit culture in the language nest, elements respondents considered to be inseparable.

- Staff and parents report that the families of the infants are all making an effort to speak the language whenever possible in the infants' presence.

- The 1–to-1 ratio of childcare workers to infants ensures an exceptionally high level of care and attention.

- Respondents commented that National Program staff at Canadian Heritage are accessible, supportive, and knowledgeable.

- The community takes great pride in these infants. People in public…stores, church, on the street…will approach the babies and speak to them in Inuktitut.

- The project has provided the opportunity for a project co-managed by LIHC and the Torngasok Centre, a precedent that will provide a planning and management template for future joint initiatives.

- The program has created employment opportunities, and provided recognition for fluency in Inuktitut as a marketable skill.

- Respondents were unanimous in emphasizing the importance of the program, and the need for its continuation.

Program needs that should be addressed in the future include:

- Need for a long-term, strategic approach and multi year funding for language revitalization and retention.

- Need for capital support. In some regions provincial governments will provide capital funds to match federal programs: however, no such funds are available in Labrador.

- Respondents felt that the level of funding available, both regionally and nationally, was inadequate in light of the scope and scale of need.

- Projects should be funded on a multi-year basis.

- Program and Policy staff from Canadian Heritage should visit the regions and programs.

- Program staff at the national level should explore strategic linkages between linked programs and departments.

- There should be a national clearinghouse, preferably online, for the materials and models produced nationally.

- It was suggested that more formal, measurable outcome and output measures should be defined early in each program to facilitate evaluation.

2.0 Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC), Inuvik N.W.T.

The Inuvialuit Settlement Region consists of six communities: Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik, Holman Island, Sachs Harbour, and Paulatuk. The approximately 3500 Inuvialuit are Inuit who speak three dialects of Inuvialuktun.

2.1   Languages in the Communities

Inuvialuktun is strongest in the more remote communities of Holman Island and Paulatuk, and weaker in the others. Only in Holman Island is the language heard daily. English has become the common language, to the point where most Inuvialuit under 40 do not speak their language fluently if at all.

According to a report provided by the ICRC in April, 2002, "Inuvialuktun … is on the brink of extinction...we believe there are less than 400 fluent speakers left. Most of these speakers are Elders divided between six communities. The language is endangered and no new speakers have been added for the last two generations."[35]

According to ICRC, "language loss is further complicated by the fact that the school language programs are extremely weak. In addition, most parents do not speak Inuvialuktun at home, so children have relatively few opportunities to learn and practice the language. Statistics provided by the GNWT in April 2000, based on 1996 census data, showed that only 160 of 4,131 Inuit in the territory (4%) listed Inuktitut (including Inuvialuktun and Inuinnaqtun) as a home language."[36]

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[35] ICRC, *Summary Report-Aboriginal Language Initiative, Canadian Heritage*, prepared for ITK meeting in Iqaluit, April 18 & 19, 2002. Other documents provided by ICRC included copies of Regional and other Language reports, the *Inuvialuit Language Plan, Draft V*ersion, April 1999; *Memorandum of Understanding*; and *Language Survey*; and copies of publications. The Tuktoyaktuk Child Development Centre provided various documents on its operations as well.

[36] Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment, *Revitalizing, Enhancing, and Promoting Aboriginal Languages: Strategies for Supporting Aboriginal Languages*, Yellowknife, undated.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

In 1999 ICRC took a lead role in developing a draft Inuvialuit Language Plan, which described the issues relating to language loss and revitalization, and laid out a strategy for the survival of Inuvialuktun. The priorities identified in the Language Plan included:

- Creating awareness and changing attitudes and values;

- Strengthening existing programs;

- Development of new initiatives;

- Capacity building; and

- Language and traditional knowledge preservation through recording, translation of oral histories and print publishing.

2.3 Funding

ALI funds are received through the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, which provides accounting services for ICRC. ICRC develops project proposals and budgets, and administers the funds.

ICRC also receives funding from INAC's Cultural Education Centre Program, the GNWT's Early Childhood Education Program, and the Beaufort Delta School District. The Muttart Foundation provides funds for a Child Development Trainer serving all of the communities.

During the period 1998-2002 the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre received a total of $503,023 from ALI, including the amounts in the table below.

Table 8: ALI funding for ICRC

1998-1999	$63,000
1999-2000	$158,277
2000-2001	$152,973
2001-2002	$129,253
Total	**$503,023**

The ALI funding has been allocated to paying salaries for language instructors at the four Child Development Centres in Inuvialuit communities, as well as salaries and honoraria, database, translations, rent, book publishing and a regional language conference. The number of participants in the five communities varies depending on enrolment. The childcare centre in Tuktoyaktuk is licensed for 6 infants and 20 preschool children. Average attendance at the four centres currently operating totals 57 children.

Over the four years of the ALI program, ICRC estimates it has spent ALI funds in these areas:

Pre-school programs	50%
Salaries and honoraria	22%
Database, translations and rent	14%
Book Publishing	10%
Regional Language Conference	4%

The projects have operated within budget each year, and ICRC provides a narrative and financial report directly to the Department of Canadian Heritage each year. These are concise but sufficiently detailed to provide information on the various activities undertaken, including objectives, staffing, activities and outputs, and actual to projected costs. Overall, ICRC has never lapsed funds.

In the year 2001-2, the ALI funds were allocated as follows:

- **Child Development Centre Language Program**: $98,175
    This includes salaries and resource materials.

- **Administration**: $31,078
    This includes salaries for coordination and translation, as well as the production of resource materials including books, a dictionary, CD ROM and video.

2.4   Impacts and Effects

The program and projects are generally viewed as successful, with noticeable language gain by children. Although this is difficult to measure quantitatively, many informants related stories about children who come home and speak to their parents in Inuvialuktun, or greet their elders in the streets. The ALI has helped to create awareness of language issues, including among the political leadership, and it has helped to put money for language development back into the hands of the communities.

Participants feel the ALI should continue as it is important and complements other programs. Stable funding helps with planning. Change takes time and success can mean different things to different communities.

3.0 Cowichan Tribes Cultural & Education Centre, Duncan, B.C.

The Cowichan Tribes, a member of the Coast Salish people, are made up of six groups: Halalt First Nation, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Chemainus First Nation, Penelakut Tribe and Lyackson First Nation. According to 1996 Census figures, the total Cowichan Tribes population was 3,144. Of these, about one-third live off reserve. The Aboriginal population in the region is fastest growing in the 5 to 19 age group, and the aging population is declining.

3.1 Languages in the Communities

Many Aboriginal languages in British Columbia face a serious challenge if they are to survive. The Cultural and Education Centre estimates that fewer than 200 people are fluent speakers of Hul'qumi'num, the Cowichan dialect. Approximately 60 understand but cannot speak the language. There is ongoing loss of fluent speakers due to age and there are no young adults or teens that speak the language.

In the Cowichan Tribes area the language has been promoted through a number of initiatives:

- The original and revised Cowichan Dictionary;
- Six pilot schools in the district with language programs;
- Planned curriculum for more advanced teaching;
- Plans to develop ongoing community language sessions;
- Qwi'qwal speakers program, focusing on longhouse, funerals, weddings, family relationships etc.;
- Malaspina University College's accredited course for 20 people, for which 40 people applied; and
- Use of Hul'qumi'num' language songs in local churches.

3.2 Goals and Objectives

The Cowichan Dictionary project (Hul'qumi'num' dialect of the Coast Salish People) was carried out through the Cowichan Tribes Cultural and Education Centre. The goal is to revise and expand upon the first Cowichan Dictionary published in 1995. This phase (2001-2) was to begin the process of revision.

A group of eight elders and four alternates met to review the words and their translations. Through this process many new words were added to the dictionary, and many spelling corrections were made. Some words, which have been forgotten, were identified and the elders consulted with others to try to bring back their meaning. The language project coordinator, a linguist and other language workers or speakers also advised

The Language Coordinator also worked with a computer information technician to input the Hul'qumi'num' words in an organized manner, and to resolve problems with the Hul'qumi'num' font.

Project outputs include:

- A printout of new and additional words for the dictionary developed through the project;
- Input of the Dictionary revisions into a Hul'qumi'num' font and computer data base
- A Beginning Hul'qumi'num' Language Guide for Parents Teachers and Learners; and
- Update and reprinting of Hul'qumi'num' Sound Drills and audio tapes.

3.3 Funding

The Regional Delivery Organization for British Columbia is the **First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC)**, formed in 1990 to administer a B.C. government program, the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Program. In 2001-2 the Council distributed $357,965 in B.C. program funds, besides the ALI funds it administers, to community projects.

During the period 1998-2002 the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council received a total of $972,562.50 from the ALI. Of these amounts, around 5% was retained for administration in the first two years and 10% in the last two years, while the rest was allocated to community projects.

Table 9: FPHLCC (BC) ALI Funding, 1998-2002

	Total for FPHLCC	Admin.	First Nations Community Projects
1998-1999	$146,632.50	$7,343.00	$139,289.50
1999-2000	$295,260.00	$10,260.00	$285,000.00
2000-	$285,285.00	$28,528.00	$256,757.00

2001				
2001-2002	$245,385.00	$24,385.00		$221,000.00
Total	**$972,562.50**			

Through the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council, the ALI funded a total of 29 community projects in 2001-2. This is an average of $7,620 per community. Actual amounts ranged from $433 to $19,107.

The Cowichan Dictionary project received $5,889 in 2001-2 from ALI funds disbursed through the Council. The project also received $15,580 from the provincial program administered through the Council, for a total of $21,469. ALI funds were used for a second revision and publication of the Hul'qumi'num' Dictionary, including costs for consultants (linguist and computer technician) and honoraria for elders.

The final financial report for the dictionary shows that the ALI portion of the budget was used for consultants ($1,582) and honoraria ($5,235), a total of $6,817. This is $928 over budget. The Cultural and Education Centre will absorb the deficit.

An additional $9,500 was received from ALI through the Woodland Cultural Centre-administered funds for critically endangered languages. This was used for a separate but related project, the development of 15 Hul'qumi'num' lesson plans and audiotape/CD and language classes for adults.

Table 10: Cowichan Tribes Cultural & Education Centre: 2001-2002 ALI and First Peoples' Project Budgets

ALI – Critically Endangered Languages Fund (Woodland Cultural Centre)	ALI Provincial Allocation	TOTAL ALI	First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Program (BC)
$9,500	$5,889.00	**$15,389.00**	$15,580.00

3.4 Impacts and Effects

Among the successes of the project cited by the participants were:

- When the dictionary was started one person could read and write the language – now there are at least 12 who can do so;

- Increasing interest in the language, as indicated by the number of people applying for language courses at Malaspina University College;

- Development of cultural pride and the growth of positive self-concept among First Nations children and youth;[37]

- Children are using the language more in school and it is being heard more in the communities;

- More families are now interested in tracing their genealogy back to find out their original family names;

- The first Cowichan Dictionary has sold out and is being used: there is a lot of interest in the second, revised edition; and

- Personal impacts: "I have learned so much …my education in my language is ongoing. I've been hired to speak by/for a couple of families. The work is split between two funerals and one memorial in the long house and one honouring in the long house."[38]

Among the main challenges for the project are lack of funding, the limited number of elders who can speak the language well enough, the time it takes to make revisions, problems in working with Hul'qumi'num' fonts to enter the words into a computer data base, and need to revise the published version regularly until there is a 'living dictionary' (computer based and interactive).

Participants agreed that ALI is definitely needed, and they had a number of recommendations relating to enhancing funding for their community and for B.C. due to the number of Aboriginal languages there. They proposed that funding should be provided earlier, and that administration of the program should be simplified. They would also like more opportunities to learn from the experience of other regions.

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[37] Letter of support from Bruce Cooke-Devlin on behalf of the Community Advisory Committee, Child and Youth Care First Nations, May 23, 2002.
[38] Letter of support for language programs by Tthules (Charles Seymour), March 27, 2002.

4.0 First Nation Help Desk, Nova Scotia

The First Nation Help Desk is operated under the guidance of Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK), the organization mandated to oversee the operation of Mi'kmaw schools and the delivery of Mi'kmaw programs to Mi'kmaw of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. First Nation Help Desk provides a wide range of services, including website design and maintenance: phone support for computer, network and access planning, installation and troubleshooting: training: and web page hosting.

4.1 Languages in the Community

Three Aboriginal languages are spoken in the service region: Mi'kmaw, Maliseet, and Passamaquoddy. This project currently supports Mi'kmaw language users and instructors.

Findings of a 1999 survey of Mi'kmaw language usage in the Mi'kmaw communities of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland the conducted by the Center for Excellence confirm a pattern familiar in many Aboriginal communities.

- The group in which language skills are strongest remains the elders (50+), with fluency increasing by age. This group is declining in numbers.

- Adults (20-50) often understand the language, but may not speak or write.

- More people in all age groups are fluent in spoken rather than written language.

- There are sub-regional variations in language use and fluency as well. In Nova Scotia, communities on Cape Breton tend to be stronger in preservation and use of the language. In New Brunswick, there is moderate use of Mi'kmaw and Maliseet among older people, but it quickly erodes among younger people.

4.2 Goals and Objectives

The Help Desk began operations in December 1999. The ALI-funded elements of the First Nation Help Desk consist of resources intended to promote and assist learning of Mi'kmaw language. The materials are intended for use:

- At home, by individual learners
- In community centres
- In classrooms, by teachers and instructors
- Offline by teachers, instructors and curriculum developers

The material is not curriculum-based: it is intended to support and enrich curriculum development.

The objectives of the Help Desk ALI project set out in their funding 2001-2002 funding application were:

- To expand the existing lesson, vocabulary and songs section of the website (developed with funding from ALI in 2000-2001);

- To adapt materials produced by content developers in other media for use on the website, including materials produced by the Centre of Excellence; and

- To begin the creation of a talking Mi'kmaw-English, English Mi'kmaw dictionary on line with an initial 200 "speaking" words and phrases.

As of June, 2002, the following elements were online:

- A popular **monthly contest** that invites students to focus on an important aspect of their culture, their community, or their history.

- An online **talking dictionary**

- An online **coloring book**

- **Talking Books** online

- Illustrated **Prayers**

- Twenty eight downloadable **Songs,** with lyrics and translations

- **Online Language Lessons**, illustrated and featuring downloadable audio files in conversation format for a wide range of common social occasions.

4.3   Funding

The project receives funding from several sources. In the last fiscal year (2001-2002), these were:

- From **Industry Canada**: $50,000 for operation of the Help Desk

- From the **Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs**: $20,520 (570/yr to be contributed by each of 36 bands)

- **Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey**: administration, facilities, and management support, and contribution to cover shortfalls in project funding.

- **Aboriginal Youth Initiative**: grants for summer student and part time salary support.

- **Centre for Excellence**, **Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs**, and individual authors and performers. Materials provided free for online publication

- The Help Desk also generated limited revenue from the sale of CDs produced from music on the site.

ALI funds the language development component of the First Nation Help Desk service, which represents the largest component of the Program's online component.   ALI has contributed for two consecutive years to the Help Desk Project.

- In 2000-2001: $27,000
- In 2001-2002: $20,000

Financial reports for the period 2001-2002 indicate that the project remained within its $20,000.00 budget.

4.4   Impacts and Effects

Respondents noted that the actual impact of any given initiative on the quality and quantity of language use would not be measurable for a number of years. Nevertheless, all agreed that the program is tremendously popular: in one month alone the site received over 109,000 hits.

Respondents cited as evidence of community support the high level of volunteer commitment through contribution of materials from authors, designers, and musicians. The project is viewed as an important medium for supporting a number of organizations with language initiatives by facilitating the distribution, publication or promotion of their materials (e.g., Centre For Excellence, the APC, etc.) It was noted that the FN Help Desk also supports the delivery of a number of federal and provincial programs.

Finally, it was noted by several respondents that this project, and the ALI program itself, have brought for language issues into higher prominence within political organizations.

Program needs that should be addressed in the future include;

- The need for a long-term, strategic approach to language revitalization and retention;

- A level of program funding that reflects the actual level of need, and not the level of political will;

- Provisions that permit groups to carry over lapsing funding in order to avoid year-end "binge" spending;

- Multi-year funding agreements;

- A streamlined planning/budgeting cycle;

- A forum for resource and information sharing among ALI-funded groups;

- Greater use of strategic linkages between linked programs and departments.

5.0 Selkirk First Nation, Yukon

Selkirk First Nation is located at Pelly Crossing, approximately 285 km north of Whitehorse. In 2000 there were 555 registered members of the Selkirk First Nation. Of these nearly half (255) lived outside the community, which had a population of 297 in 1998.[39]

5.1 Languages in the Communities

Along with the little Salmon Carmacks and Nacho Nyak Dun, Selkirk is one of three First Nations that speak Northern Tutchone. The language is described as being in crisis. Mainly elders speak it, but they are gradually disappearing. The language is weakest among the youth and children. A community survey in 2000 found only 12% of the membership spoke the language, and all of these were 40 years of age and older. The latest survey showed there were only 11 fluent speakers, and since that time two elders had died.

There is recognition that reviving the language will take time: "it took the government 50 years to take away our language and they want us to learn it back in five years." Language is a regular topic of discussion at the annual general assembly, and direction was given last year to provide more language education for young people.

Selkirk First Nation has promoted the language through language activities, and via word of mouth, flyers and posters, meetings and conferences, and presentations to the annual general assembly. Selkirk First Nation also worked with an outside facilitator and the community to develop a five to ten year language plan, and sent six people to Kamloops, BC for a language conference.

5.2 Goals and Objectives

The community is concerned about deterioration of the language, and sees its preservation as a priority. For a number of years projects were carried out using funds from the Council of Yukon First Nations Education Commission, for approximately $15,000 per year. By 2000, the community had decided to take a different approach, and to develop a comprehensive five-year strategic

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[39] Information found in Yukon First Nations Tourism Association, Welcome: Visitor Guide 2001/02, Whitehorse, 2001; Yukon Territorial Government Website; and SFN ALI Proposal , August 2000.

plan. The community has therefore placed considerable emphasis on research and planning, using the ALI funds.

Specific objectives included:

- Documenting the current status of the language;
- Building interest and awareness;
- Providing opportunities for community members to participate in workshops and conferences;
- Involving elders and young people; and
- Teaching the language.

5.3 Funding

Along with ALI funding, territorial funds were accessed to fund a newly created full-time position for a Language Coordinator in 2000-2001. Activities of the project have included research and conferences in Yukon, B.C. and Alaska, consultations and meetings, and development of the plan (phase one).

In 2001-2002, the ALI-funded language project involved three main components:

- **Language Research and Data Collection.** The Language Coordinator and another resident completed a language survey of community residents, which found there were 11 fluent speakers, of whom two have since passed away.

- **Sewing Immersion Class.** Sewing immersion classes were organized in which two elders taught eight students.

- **Mentorship program.** Four elders taught five students (of 15 who applied) in a 40-hour program accredited through Simon Fraser University.

At the June 2000 general assembly of the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), the Regional Delivery Organization, a resolution was passed directing CYFN to research the establishment of a House of Language to teach Aboriginal languages using immersion concepts, and to establish a committee and working group for this representing the eight First Nation languages. However, CYFN has since lost its Education department, which coordinated language programming, due to lack of funding.

The Yukon Territorial Government also undertakes a number of initiatives in the area of language, including:

- Yukon Native Language Centre, a training and research facility; and
- Funds for community language programs of up to $50,000 through the Aboriginal Languages Community Initiatives Program (ALCIP).

During the period 1998-2002 CYFN received a total of $972,562.50 from the ALI. Of these amounts, some was retained for regional activities such as development of a workplan and language conferences and for administration, while the rest was divided equally among the fourteen Yukon First Nations communities, including Selkirk First Nation. A smaller allocation was given for the Tagish language, as shown below:

Table 11: Yukon ALI Funding, 1998-2002

	Total for CYFN	Regional Projects	Administration	Allocated to 14 First Nations plus Tagish
1998-1999	$146,632.50	N/A	N/A	N/A
1999-2000	$295,260.00	$56,240.00	$2,812.00	$236,208.00
2000-2001	$285,285.00	$46,265.00	$2,812.00	$228,334.40
2001-2002	$245,385.00	$7,800.00	$1,376.55	$236,208.00
Total	$972,562.50			

The communities have received just over $16,000 per year in ALI funds for each of the past three years. In the last fiscal year, 2001-2002, Selkirk First Nation received $16,309.60 (as did the other 13 First Nations), while $7,837.60 was allocated for the Tagish language.

The ALI funding retained by CYFN in 2001-2002 was allocated to paying for development of a proposal for the Yukon First Nation House of Language and First Nation Public Service Initiative (to be directed towards FNCCEC); just over half a per cent was also for CYFN administration, while over 96% was allocated to community based language projects.

In Selkirk First Nation, ALI funds were used as shown below:

Table 12: Selkirk First Nation: 2001-2002 ALI Project Budget

	Language Survey	Sewing Immersion	Mentor Program	Total
Salaries	$1,107.60			$1,107.60

Honoraria		$1,200.00	$11,000.00	$12,200.00
Materials		$3,000.00		$3,000.00
Total	$1,107.60	$4,200.00	$11,000.00	**$16,307.60**

At the time of the site visit, no details were available on actual spending compared to budget, but the Director of Education and Training, Mary McGinty, stated that the mentoring portion of the project had overspent by about $2,000. Her department would cover this difference.

The Selkirk First Nation also receives funding for language from the Yukon Territorial Government's Aboriginal Language Service's Aboriginal Language Community Initiatives Program (ALCIP), which is capped at $50,000 per year. This covers wages and some travel for the language coordinator. ALI complements this by paying for certain direct project expenses.

5.4   Impacts and Effects

Outputs from the project include:

- An evolving community language plan;
- Five graduates of the mentoring program who received university credits;
- Language survey results;
- Eight people who learned Tutchone through sewing immersion;
- Recordings of the mentoring sessions on cassettes (to be transferred to CD for listening in vehicles, and to be transcribed); and
- Products created while learning the language through the sewing immersion classes.

The project has also helped to create awareness and interest in the language in the community, and there are a number of applicants for level two mentoring and other future projects. While the various efforts are seen as successful, they are also viewed as only the beginning. There is still concern about the declining number of fluent speakers, and a realization that revitalization will be a long process.

The participants agreed that ALI is needed and should continue, since territorial funds are capped, and there are no other funding sources. Multi-year funding would assist planning, and more funds would help. The program is good and flexible enough. Several communities, however, are unaware of the criteria for the critically endangered languages funds administered by the Woodland Cultural Centre.

6.0 Waskaganish (Cree Literacy Program)

The Cree of James Bay and Northern Quebec live in nine communities: Whapmagoostui, Chisasibi, Wemindji, Eastmain, Nemiscau, Waskaganish, Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougamou and Mistissini. All communities have benefited from ALI funding which is administered through the Cree Literacy Program of the Cree School Board.

6.1 Languages in the Communities

Twenty years ago, anthropologists identified Cree as one of only three Aboriginal languages expected to survive to the year 2000 (of the 60 or so Aboriginal languages in Canada). Despite this, the Cree themselves considered their own language endangered.

Since signing the James Bay Agreement in 1973, and regaining control over much of the education system in Eeyou Istchee (Cree territory), officials with the Cree School Board say the language is once more "strong… and rich."

The respondents credit the emphasis the Cree School Board has placed upon making Cree instruction mandatory in the elementary schools from Kindergarten to Grade 3. The Cree Literacy Program has also been instrumental is raising the level of Cree fluency not only among grade school students but adults as well. The Cree School Board developed the Cree Literacy Program in conjunction with the Office of First Nation and Inuit Education at McGill University. In seven years, 134 people — mostly school instructors — have graduated with Certificates in Aboriginal (Cree) Literacy Education.

6.2 Goals and Objectives

The Cree Literacy Program is only part of an overall strategy developed by the James Bay Cree to strengthen their language. They planned to:

- Make Cree the language of instruction in all primary schools under Cree authority from Kindergarten to Grade 3;
- Increase the number of instructors able to teach in Cree; and
- Designate Cree the official language in all Cree offices and businesses.

The James Bay Agreement of 1973 initiated this movement by stipulating that "The teaching of languages shall be Cree…" The creation of the Cree School Board, and the resources flowing from the land claim settlement, made this possible.

The Grand Council of the Cree and the Cree Regional Authority have in recent years passed resolutions to make Cree the official language of business in all Cree offices.

6.3 Funding

The Cree Literacy Program ran from 1999 to 2002 in all nine Cree communities. It had two "cohorts." The first began in 1995, before the existence of the ALI Program. The second cohort ran from 1999 to 2002 and benefitted to some extent from ALI funding.

Originally intended to bring Cree teachers and teaching assistants to a certain level of fluency in Cree, it broadened eligibility during the ALI funding period to include "anyone in the Cree communities" who met two conditions:

- The applicants must speak Cree to some degree
- They must be a status member of a Cree community

Another factor in the final selection of participants was whether the applicant worked in some official capacity for the Cree Regional Authority or the Cree School Board.

McGill University had 200 applicants and accepted about 150 people to the program. The students had to complete ten courses, held mostly at night and on weekends, in order to qualify for graduation. Many of the Cree graduates from the first cohort became instructors for the second cohort.

In June of this year, 84 students graduated. For the first time in McGill's history, the convocation ceremony took place outside the University and was held instead in Val d'Or. Also for the first time, the ceremonies were held in the Cree language.

Some of the graduates were teachers. Most, however, were band council employees, secretaries, and directors of various Cree agencies, business owners or parents wishing to speak with their children in their own language. One of the graduates was a 64-year old grandmother.

The students had to log 500 hours of instruction, much of it on weekends or in night courses because many of the students held full-time jobs or were

teaching in the schools during regular work hours. Many weekends would consist of 25 hours of instruction. The CSB and the Office of First Nation and Inuit Education of McGill in Waskaganish, Mistissini and Chisasibi delivered the courses. The students earned a Certificate of Aboriginal Literacy Education (Cree) upon graduation.

Five students made the Dean's Honour Roll, achieving not only the highest marks in the Cree Literacy Program but also were ranked among the highest achieving students (GPA) in McGill University.

ALI funding supported most of the fees paid to language instructors for this second cohort.

Table 13: ALI Funding to the Cree Literacy Program

# of Cree Instructors	11
Cost per Instructor	$5,085.00
Subtotal salaries	*$55,935.00*
Program delivery costs	$8,741.70
Subtotal program costs	$64,676.70
ALI Funding	*$50,479.20*
Total	**-$14,197.50**

* figures according to Debbie House-Cox, Report on the Aboriginal Languages Initiatives Project, June 2001

The Cree School Board provided the balance of annual funding needed to cover the cost of the Cree Literacy Program that cost approximately $150,000 for the second cohort.

The Cree respondents to this survey stated that ALI funding constituted a relatively minor — although welcome — part of the overall budget of the Cree Literacy Program. Their main suggestion to ALI was to provide additional and separate funds specifically for the creation of instructional materials in Aboriginal languages, including Cree.

6.4 Impacts and Effects

The respondents say they have witnessed a remarkable change in attitude in their own Cree communities about their language. Even during the relatively short period of time that the ALI program has been in place, there have been more students learning Cree and speaking Cree in their everyday activities.

Respondent:

The children play in their own language in the community now. Before, when we were growing up, we all played in half-Cree, half-English. Now, the children walk around the community speaking Cree, in the stores, at the school, in the restaurants. They fish together and speak Cree. They speak it all the time.

They still know how to speak English but Cree is their first language and the one they speak most of the time.

Where once they felt the language dying, the respondents said they felt much more confident of its survival today. While they praise ALI, the funding they receive from this program is minimal compared to the amount invested by the Cree School Board to this effort. Still, the respondents said, this amount was welcome. It allowed the Cree School Board to do more than it might otherwise be able.

They also say the emphasis on Cree instruction in the community — most especially among adults — has created a energy and a momentum that cuts across age groups to revive the Cree language in their nine communities. They say that even sceptics, who criticized the efforts to retain Cree in the past, appear to have been won over by the success of the program to date.

Respondent:

The Cree Literacy Program has opened the eyes of people in the community. There used to be lots of people who thought it [Cree Language of Instruction Program or CLIP] wouldn't work. They thought it would be a waste of time and money. However, the students have shown what they can do, not just the children but the adults as well.

6.5   Recommendations

There were two recommendations from the Cree Literacy Program:

- Increase ALI funding; and

- Direct a portion of the fund to support the development of instructional material for use in language (Cree) programs.

7.0 Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa Program – Ohsweken (Six Nations Territory, Southern Ontario)

Ohsweken is the name of the Six Nations Territory just south of Brantford, southern Ontario. It has a population of approximately 20,000, half of whom live on-reserve with the other half living in various other parts of Canada.

7.1 Languages in the Communities

There were six Iroquoian nations at Ohsweken:

- Mohawk

- Oneida

- Onondaga

- Cayuga

- Seneca, and

- Tuscarora

Ten years ago, a survey conducted by the Woodlands Cultural Centre found there were only 76 fluent speakers of the Iroquoian languages in Ohsweken. Mohawk is the strongest partly due larger numbers of Mohawk at Ohsweken than any other of the Six Nations Iroquois.

Today, there are no reliable statistics on the number of speakers of any Iroquoian language at Ohsweken. Although a "best guess" by some place it at "less than 50 people who can still speak their own language."

7.2 Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa Program is to "create Mohawk speakers with a basic level of conversational fluency in the language."

7.3 Funding

The Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa Program applies each year for a grant from the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc. to deliver a Mohawk immersion program located on the Six Nations territory at Ohsweken, in southern Ontario. Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council is the ALI delivery agent designated jointly by the Assembly of First Nations and the Department of Canadian Heritage in Ottawa.

Hours of instruction scheduled:

	Day classes	Night classes
Immersion	186	29
(7 hrs/day)	1302 hours	
(3 hrs/nights)		87 hours

Hours of instruction completed:

	Day classes	Night classes
Immersion	141	18
(7 hrs/day)	987 hours	
(3 hrs/nights)		54 hours

Over the four years of the ALI program, the Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa has received:

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Amount	$18,000	$14,000	$12,000	$9,525
% Decline previous year		-22%	-14%	-25%

The funds were spent on:

Purpose	amt approved	amt spent	Balance
Speaker honorariums	**$9,025**	$10,605	-$1,580
Supplies/materials	$500	$509	-$9

7.4 Impact and Effects

From the information available, these are the rates of success:

Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa

	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Begin	11	9	8
Completions	9	6	6
Completion rate	82%	67%	75%

To both participants and providers of the Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa program at Ohsweken, the impact of the ALI-funded program is attitudinal rather than statistical. They say the impact of the program is goes far beyond the relative handful of "graduates" and is difficult - if not impossible - to quantify.

Most of the "evidence" they point to is anecdotal in nature:

- The newly elected band chief requests band meetings to be in Mohawk

- Increasing expressions of interest in the adult Mohawk immersion

- More signs about the community in Mohawk

- More people speaking Mohawk in everyday affairs in the community

According to the respondents, there's been a slow but marked shift in community attitudes about their indigenous languages as well. They say that, in the past, people took for granted that learning English was more important than learning their own Mohawk language. They say that attitude is slowly beginning to turn around due in part to the example set by the participants of the adult Mohawk immersion program. Today, the coordinators of the program say there are more people applying for their program than they have the capacity to deliver.

Perhaps most importantly, they point to the increased self-esteem and self-awareness by the participants about their Mohawk language and culture. Tim Thompson "graduated" from the Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa program at Ohsweken this past year. He credits the program for helping become more secure in his Mohawk identity and more aware of his own culture.

> "Taking this program has made me proud again. I've always been proud of being Mohawk but it helps when you know there

are other people who feel the same way you do about the language and culture. And they speak the same language."

7.5 Recommendations

- Provide more funding to those delivering the programs at the community level;

- End or cap the amounts of funding charged to "administration" by the national or provincial organizations administering ALI;

- Allow a certain amount of "admin" funding for community-based programs;

- Make the funding cycle more predictable and allow multi-year funding;

- Develop and implement clear guidelines on what constitutes a "critical" language;

- Conduct a survey to determine the present state of Aboriginal languages; and

- Develop and institute a system of "triage" on Aboriginal languages:
  - Be prepared to declare some Aboriginal languages beyond repair or "dead";
  - Declare some languages injured but non-critical; and
  - Recognize that some languages are in drastic and critical need of immediate attention and of ALI support.

8.0 Michif Languages Program – Manitoba Métis Federation, Winnipeg

The Manitoba Métis Federation administers the Michif Languages Program. Of the 46 000 Métis in Manitoba, more than half (approximately 26,000) live in Winnipeg. [40]

As defined in the *Michif Revival Strategy* of the Métis National Council, Michif is a uniquely North American language, spoken in Canada and parts of the United States. "The Michif language is half Cree (Algonquin language) and half French (an Indo-European language). It is a mixed language, drawing its verbs and associated grammar from Cree and its nouns and associated grammar from Michif-Cree. The Saulteax language contributes some verbs, sounds and nouns to the mixture". [41] Michif is unique to the Métis Nation and the language is partly endangered by the increasing use of French and other Aboriginal languages among Métis. According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, of the 14,725 Métis aged 15 and over who reported speaking an Aboriginal language in the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 10,340 said they spoke Cree; 2,295 spoke Ojibwa; 840 spoke Michif; 645 spoke an Athapaskan language and 400 spoke Chipewyan *(Dene)*.[42]

The exact number of Michif speakers today, however, is unknown, since Michif was not a language choice on the Canada Census until 2001. According to some informants, there has never been a full and comprehensive survey of Michif speakers, so informal estimates of the present number of fully fluent Michif speakers vary.[43]

8.1 Languages in the Communities

Michif was nearly extinct but is making a comeback. The language suffered from a hundred years of negative attitudes toward the Michif language and Métis culture. It had also been weakened by the lack of a defined "community" that resulted with the dislocation and dispersal of the Red River Métis following the 1885 Northwest Rebellion. The language is strongest among older people, 60 years of age and older, and in those communities

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[40] Canada. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Communications Branch. *Words First: An Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*, Ottawa. December 2000 (unpublished).
[41]: *Michif Revival Strategy, 2000-2002 and Beyond*, April 2000.
[42]: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Gathering Strength*, 1996. Ottawa
[43] Source: Interviews with MNC staff.

situated near to First Nation reserves. It is weakest among younger people, generally under the age of 35, regardless where they live.[44]

8.2   Goals and Objectives

The aims of the Michif Languages Program are outlined in the Métis National Council's *Michif Revival Strategy* developed by the Michif Working Group at its first meeting in Saskatoon on March 30 and 31, 2000.

> *The recognition and promotion of Métis language and culture is advocated throughout the Métis Nation, at all levels of government and publicly. The Council provides the communication link between the Department of Canadian Heritage and its ALI delivery organizations and participates with other national Aboriginal organizations in the evaluation of the Initiative. The MNC fulfills its role with financial support provided by Department of Canadian Heritage by way of a Contribution agreement.*
>
> *The Métis National Council established a working group of Michif Language technicians and speakers consisting of 2 representatives from each of the member governing organizations and two from the Council. The principle goals of the working group are:*
>
> • *To develop a draft strategy for the revival of the Michif Language;*
>
> • *To prepare a national work plan to focus, coordinate and guide the work and activities of Métis organizations in the revitalization of the Michif language; and*
>
> • *To present a copy of the Strategy and Work plan to the Board of Governors for ratification.[45]*

The MMF interprets its own Goals and Objectives thus:

> *The objectives of the MMF's Michif Language Program are the following:*
>
> 1. *To preserve knowledge of the Michif language(s) for posterity, including the vocabulary, grammar and syntax of the language as it is spoken in the Métis Homeland, especially Manitoba;*

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[44] Fleury, Norman. *ALI Evaluation Interview*, June 24, 2002. Winnipeg
[45] Métis National Council, *Michif Revival Strategy, 2000-2001 and Beyond*, April 2000.Ottawa. p. 6

2. *To promote the knowledge and use of Michif in the Métis population, and particularly among our children and youth, as well as within the general population; and*

3. *To take the steps necessary to revitalize the use of Michif in Métis families, in Métis communities and among the Métis population generally.[46]*

8.3 Funding

The Manitoba Métis Federation's Michif Languages Program receives ALI funding through a Contribution Agreement that it negotiates directly with the Department of Canadian Heritage.   Its annual allotment within the Michif envelope, however, was determined by the Board of Governors of the Métis National Council at the introduction of the program, for its duration.

The figure for fiscal year 2001-02 in Table 14 (below), shows the total funding for the MMF's Michif Language Program for that year, including funding for the cost of the International Michif Language Conference. The Manitoba Métis Federation explains:

> *In fiscal year 2001-02, the MMF received a total $175,000 from Heritage Canada for its Michif Language Program. This was made up of our regular ALI contribution of for that year of $125,000 plus an additional $50,000 one-time payment, which represents Canadian Heritage's contribution to the cost of the International Michif Language Conference that was organized and hosted by the MMF and which took place in Winnipeg on April 19-20, 2002. Our Contribution Agreement under the ALI was amended to add this $50,000 to our total allocation for fiscal year 2001-02, even though the conference was held in April 2002…*

> You should be aware that the MMF, the MNC and all other Member organizations of the MNC also contributed to the cost of the conference: together they put in $50,000, which was matched by the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Table 14: Manitoba Métis Federation - Michif Languages Project

1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	total
$64,000	$150,000	$145,000	$175,000	$484,000

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[46] Manitoba Métis Federation, *MMF Response to Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) Evaluation Draft 2 Report*, September 2002. Winnipeg. p.3

8.4 Impacts and Effects

Twenty years ago, few people in Canada were aware the Métis had a language called Michif. Today, it is internationally recognized as a distinct language and not merely a dialect of Cree or Saulteaux. Michif is studied abroad by one of the world's experts in Michif, Peter Bakker, who is based at the University of Aarhus in Denmark.

The MMF employs Norman Fleury as its Michif Language Program Coordinator. The Project Coordinator has produced or helped produce most of the resource materials developed by the program, including the Michif Language Dictionary. He has also represented the MMF and Michif language speakers at key functions, such as federal-provincial conferences, national Michif language working group conferences, Batoche celebrations, Métis Days and school events.

The Project Coordinator works under the direction of the Michif Language Portfolio Committee, a sub-committee of the MMF Board of Directors. The Committee sets policy and supervises program activities under the MMF's Michif Language program. It is assisted in this regard by an Elders' Committee, made up of Michif language speakers resident in Manitoba.

The activities undertaken by the MMF's 2001-2 Michif Language program include:

- Volume 1, Michif Language Dictionary;

- Video "Speaking-Up Michif";

- Introductory Michif Language Classes (paid for by the MMF and provided through the Métis Resource Centre; materials produced; 11 classes placed on MRC web-site);

- Michif Training for MMF Staff (paid for by the MMF and provided through LRI; materials produced);

- Adaptation of Computer Game to Michif (in cooperation with certain European universities);

- Volume 2: Michif Language Dictionary (in production); and

- International Michif Language Conference (Winnipeg, April, 2002)[47].

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[47] ibid. p.6

The MMF has developed an integrated approach to its language program in that it many of its activities in support of Michif go beyond the confines of the Michif Language Program. For example, Pemmican Publications has produced a glossy book entitled *"Métis Legacy,"* a book on Métis history and culture. As well, Pemmican Publications has encouraged and supported the production of books by Métis authors in fiction, non-fiction and as well as books for young people and children. These activities, while not funded by the Michif Language Program, are part of the overall effort by the Manitoba Métis Federation to resurrect the language.

Much of this development is due to the efforts of a handful of dedicated people. They have devoted much of their personal time and energy to preserving their language and culture and to pushing their own organization to recognize the importance of their work. It is also due to the Manitoba Métis Federation recognizing the need to commit its own resources to save Michif and making the Michif Language Program a priority.

There are no figures available to measure an increase in the numbers of Michif speakers. There is, however, a growing fear that those who speak Michif - mainly older Métis - are gradually dying, along with the language. Thus, there is a sense of urgency in the program and that they are "in a race against time."

The MMF is raising awareness of its Michif Languages Program by holding events such as the International Michif Language Conference (held in Winnipeg in April 2002). It invited Professor Peter Bakker to be the keynote speaker. Professor Bakker is considered one of the world's authorities on the Michif language and is working with the Michif Languages Program in Manitoba to develop Michif grammar tools and a dictionary.

At the Annual General Assembly of the MMF, the Project Coordinator of the Michif Languages Program, Norman Fleury, presented a report to the delegates on the need for more initiatives and more spending by MMF to save Michif. He does the same at many regional council meetings as well.

At these meetings, the Michif Languages Program distributes surveys to find out how many Métis communities in Manitoba still have Michif speakers and how many support the program.

Respondent

> There were 2,500 people at the last AGA. We got them all to fill out the questionnaire on Michif. We haven't processed all of the questionnaires but we can tell you that there is overwhelming support among the delegates from every regional of Manitoba for the Michif Languages Program.

> We send our materials, published by Pemmican Publishing, to every library in the province and to every school as well. In Brandon, we've attended "development days," set up a booth and made our materials available there. We should be doing a lot more but it comes down to time and money; it costs money and it takes time to attend these things. Sometimes we don't have either.

The respondents say, however, that people are becoming increasingly aware of the Program due to promotion by staff, by word of mouth, as well as a growing awareness of and appetite for Michif by people. The Program has approached some school divisions, particularly where there is a large Métis student population, to encourage school officials and school boards to offer classes in Michif.

There are intangible results as well, as explained by some of the people who work with the Manitoba Métis Federation and support the Michif Language Program:

Respondent:

> "There isn't that shame anymore. If you passed, if you looked white, you had a chance to survive; to have a job, to keep your home, to feed your children. That's what people did back then. We shouldn't blame them for doing that. They were doing the best they could to survive, for the times. But today, we're openly speaking our language again. We need to pass along what we've found again. It comes down to two words that haven't gone together for a long, long time - Métis pride."

Respondent:

> "We went to Montana to follow the route that Riel took. A lot of Métis people followed those steps after the conflict. Many Métis families went south to escape the persecution. We found one old lady who was 97 years old. She didn't know there was anybody else who was Métis. She hadn't spoken her language in years and years. But we spoke to her in Michif. You should have seen her face - the sparkle in her eyes when she heard the language. After all of those years, this was the first time she'd heard anyone speak it. Her eyes just lit up. That's how much it meant to her. And how much it means to us."

8.5   Recommendations

The recommendations in this summary reflect the fact that the personal opinions of some respondents, provided in interviews, may not be consistent

with the "official" position of the Manitoba Métis Federation. In interviews, the respondents unanimously supported the continuing existence of the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI). However, some expressed personal opinions and offered individual recommendations. These may be summarized thus:

- The Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) should increase ALI funding for Michif;

- De-politicise the funding process;

- Make the funding process more stable and predictable by establishing multi-year funding; and

- ALI-supported programs and funding should be "status-free" in order to allow access to Métis who speak a First Nations language.[48]

The official recommendations of the MMF are stated in its response to a draft of this report:

1. *First, the MMF believes that a certain portion of the funds allocated to Cree and Saulteaux, in particular, should be apportioned to Métis organizations. As matters presently stand, the funds allocated to Métis organizations can be used only for Michif. We want to continue to spend on Michif language revitalization, and funds allocated to Michif should not be reduced. However, many Métis speak Cree, Saulteaux or Dene and we would like to promote the use of these languages as well, particularly among the younger generation.*
   Our position is simply that the share of ALI funding allocated to the MNC and its Member Organizations should be increased from 10% (the share reserved for Michif) to a higher percentage in order to provide us with resources to act in the area of North American Indian languages spoken by Métis (primarily Cree and Saulteaux). What that percentage should be in a renewed program should be left up to negotiation.

2. *MMF would like to see a rationalization of the funding reserved for Michif so that the MMF could obtain a share of the funding commensurate with the role of Manitoba as the heartland of the Michif language and the only province with a significant number of Michif speakers today. The MMF has de facto assumed the primary role in Michif language revitalization, but we see limited resources being distributed to organizations and regions where Michif does not have the historical importance or anywhere near the strength that it has in Manitoba. Rectifying this situation would involve changing the manner in which the MNC allocation is internally distributed among Governing*

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[48] Fleury,Norman, et al. *ALI Evaluation Interviews*, June 25, 2002. Winnipeg

Member organizations, and this would be greatly facilitated if other Member organizations could access funding for Aboriginal language initiatives besides Michif.

3. *MMF wants to continue to have a direct relationship with PCH on the ALI and the Michif Language Program.*

9.0 Métis Nation — Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan's Michif Languages Project is the provincial component of the national Michif Revitalization Strategy (MRS). According to figures provided by the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, prepared for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, there are 36,600 Métis in Saskatchewan. This same survey shows there are a number of northern villages that are predominantly Métis, among them communities such as La Loche, Ile-à-la-Crosse, Pinehouse and Buffalo Narrows to name a few.

It must be stated that such figures are often disputed as inaccurate or incomplete. The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, for example, suggests the Métis population in the province is twice that number (between 60-80,000). There are few Métis households in Saskatchewan, however, in which Michif is the first language.

MNS receives funding for its Michif Language Project from the federal Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH). It administers this funding through a committee called "The Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Cultural Committee." It directs the Michif Languages Project in Saskatchewan. The Committee is comprised of regional directors of the MNS and the Executive Director. It meets periodically to examine project proposals from groups around the province, evaluate the progress of these projects, and make changes where it deems necessary or preferable.

9.1 Languages in the Communities

In Saskatchewan, Métis speak nine languages and several dialects, many of them First Nations languages or a mix of Michif and First Nations language:

- Michif
- French
- English

- Cree (Plains, Swampy and Bush)

- Assiniboine

- Dene

- Saulteaux (Ojibway)

There has been no reliable survey to determine the number of Michif speakers in Saskatchewan. The language is strongest among elderly Métis; most fluent speakers are in 60-years and older. It is weakest among people younger than 40-years of age. Communities nearest to First Nations communities are more likely to have retained Michif. They are most likely to have abandoned Michif if they live in urban areas. To support the language, a Michif Speakers Association of Saskatchewan has been created.

9.2 Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Michif Language Project at the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is to:

- Develop strategies and plans for the maintenance and restoration of the Michif language[49]

9.3 Funding

Figures from the Department of Canadian Heritage show that in the four years between 1998 and 2002, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan received a total of $474,936 in ALI funding.

Table 15: ALI Funding to MNC

1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Total
$49,600	$150,000	$150,000	$125,336	$474,936

A copy of the Michif Language Final Report, filed to the Department of Canadian Heritage on June 25, shows 2001-2 activities supported by ALI funding:

- A two-day Michif language workshop in April 2002 ($10,000);

- A two day Michif language workshop held by the MNS Senate in January 2002;

- Development of a survey form to determine the number of Michif speakers in Saskatchewan;

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[49] Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, *Michif Language Project – Annual Report*, June 2002. Saskatoon.

- Production of video taped interviews on Métis culture and in Michif language in the Clearwater Lake Region with translations published as a booklet;

- Interviews with elders in Batoche, Duck lake, Debden and Prince Albert on the history of their communities;

- Creation of a "simplified" Michif dictionary ($25,534);

- Funding for a meeting of the Provincial Métis Council on ALI on January 25;

- Funding for a meeting of the MNS – Cultural Committee that approved eight projects;

- A Michif Language Festival on March 25 at Rossignol School, Ile-a-la-Crosse;

- Recording of Métis songs on audio tape in Yorkton Region; and

- Michif Teacher Resource Manual" in the Yorkton area by Kondrat Educational Services ($20,000).

The ALI-funded project at the Gabriel Dumont Institute was worth $20,000. GDI is located at 917-22nd Street in Saskatoon. It's a two story building in the heart of the Aboriginal section of town. It conducts vocational training and delivers some academic courses for adult learners. It is primarily funded by the Saskatchewan Department of Education and has accreditation through the University of Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon. It is "the education arm of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan," overseen by an independent board with regional representation across the province.

The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan contracted the Gabriel Dumont Institute to produce two documentary-style video productions of recorded interviews with elders on personal stories and the histories of the Michif communities in the Crescent Lake region (The Road Allowance People) and Ile-a-la-Crosse area.

9.4   Impacts and Effects

It is difficult to assess the effects and impacts of ALI funding in Saskatchewan due to the limited scope of the study in this province. The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and the Métis National Council agreed that this evaluation would address the project at the Gabriel Dumont Institute. Unfortunately, as a result, there was no overview of the Michif Language Project.

However, it is evident from the comments of respondents, as well as information gleaned from an annual report of the Michif Language Project, that there is progress.

There are pockets of activity in places such as a Michif awareness-raising program at Rossignol School in Ile-a-la-Crosse. There is the development of a teaching manual for Michif classes developed in the Yorkton area. Much of this activity involves the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute prides itself on providing outreach programs that are delivered to Métis communities around the province. Because the Institute goes into Métis communities to deliver many of its programs, it has earned the trust and an enviable reputation among many Métis in the province. Just as important, much of the Institute's focus is on developing materials in Michif and otherwise supporting community projects including many language and cultural projects.

9.5   Recommendations

The recommendations in this section do not reflect the official position of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. As mentioned, MNS officials declined to be interviewed for this evaluation.

The recommendations, therefore, are the personal opinions of the people who agreed to be interviewed: Leah Dorion-Paquin, Program Director in Curriculum Development at the Gabriel Dumont Institute, and Bruce Flamont, a founding member of the Michif Working Group and the former Director of MNS' Michif language Project.

The list below is a compilation from both respondents:

- Increase ALI funding;
- Allow access by Métis to First Nations language programs where possible and appropriate;
- Designate some funding for the translation of existing language material into Michif;
- "Cut out the middle-man" by replacing the Métis National Council with a national, volunteer body of Michif language speakers to act as a jury to evaluate applications for funding;
- Make it a priority to fund programs that "create speakers";
- The Department of Canadian Heritage should monitor the program more closely and with much more frequency;
- Encourage a two-way flow of information that allows for practitioners to benefit from the example and experience of other program deliverers and discourage duplication; and

- Make the funding cycle more predictable and allow multi-year funding.

10.0 Sweetgrass Language Council Inc. (Woodlands Cultural Centre, Brantford, Ontario)

The Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc. was incorporated in 1989 and has served as a delivery agent in the province of Ontario for both the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) with the regional allotment of funding for the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI). This past year, Sweetgrass approved and funded 29 projects serving 13 major language groups across the province.

Table 16: ALI Funding Ontario Region

	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council, Ontario	$146,632.50	$295,260	$285,285	$245,385

The average grant awarded by Sweetgrass in the past year was approximately $7000. The largest grant was $10,000. Sweetgrass employs a jury system to determine the success of an application and the amount of the grant. Sweetgrass disbursed the grants in stages to each community group in order to ensure a measure of financial accountability. Most of the 29 groups in the fiscal year 2001-02 had completed their projects and provided examples along with a final report.

10.1 Languages in the Communities

In Ontario there are about 150 Status Indian or First Nation communities. Among these reserves are spoken the Aanishnaabeg and Onkhwehonhweh languages. These two language families are also commonly referred to as Algonkian and Iroquoian languages.

The Aanishnaabeg languages were originally spoken by what is known as the Three Fires Confederacy Nations. They are:
- Ojibwe,
- Potawatomi; and

- Odawa.

The Cree and Delaware languages are also grouped within the Aanishnaabeg language family. There exists also a language that has evolved and is currently called Oji-Cree which comes from the Ojibwe and Cree languages.

The Onkhwehonhweh languages are spoken by the Six Nations Confederacy people and they are the:

- Seneca
- Oneida
- Cayuga
- Mohawk
- Onondaga, and
- Tuscarora

Finally, there are the three Cree Nations comprised of:

- Swampy Cree;
- Bush Cree; and
- Oji-Cree.

10.2 Goals and Objectives

The Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc acts:

> As a delivery agent for the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Assembly of First Nations to administer a portion of funding for the Aboriginal Language Initiative program. This program is designed to preserve, protect and teach Aboriginal languages within Aboriginal communities.

10.3 Funding

Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council has funded various numbers of community-based groups (i.e., 29 groups in 2002 and 38 groups in 2001) across Ontario throughout the life of the ALI program. They include:

- o Development of Aboriginal language books, videos and audio tapes;
- o Recording and archiving of languages;

- o Development of instructional materials for language classes; and
- o Delivery of language classes.

Community-based groups submit applications for ALI funding to the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council on an annual basis. Sweetgrass employs a "jury system." It summons a panel of jurors to review applications, accept or reject proposals, and to determine the amount of the grant if successful. Sweetgrass disbursed funds in instalments to successful applicants in order to encourage financial and administrative accountability.

Each group that received funding had to file a report upon completion of the project along with copies or examples of any materials it produced.

Sweetgrass files a detailed annual report of its activities to the Assembly of First Nations each June along with an audited financial statement. Other activities supported by Sweetgrass at the Woodland Cultural Centre include:

- The founding of the first ever Cayuga and Mohawk Language Immersion Schools at Six Nations (Ohsweken);

- A Cayuga Language Thematic Dictionary and Mohawk Lexicon;

- Assisted in the founding and support of community radio in southern Aboriginal communities;

- Published a number of language primers for the primary level;

- Lobbied for pay equity for language teachers as well as for their better training;

- Lobbied and advocated for Aboriginal communities to have the right to teach Aboriginal languages in the classroom; and

- Supported the development of the Native As A Second Language Guideline of the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Education.

10.4 Impacts and Effects

The Woodland Cultural Centre, the Critical Languages Program and the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council all reside in the same building and have the same person as executive director: Amos Key, Jr. It would be natural to expect, then, that the mandates of these organizations on Aboriginal languages would be similar and overlap to some extent. However, they operate separately. Each program has its own priorities and procedures.

The comments from respondents at the only project this group visited, the coordinators and a participant of the Onkwawenna Kentyahkwa Mohawk

Immersion Program at Ohsweken (Six Nations), made clear their appreciation of the work performed by Sweetgrass. While they said there was a chronic lack of funding, they complimented Sweetgrass for the way it administered the ALI funds in Ontario. They considered the jury process at Sweetgrass fair and honest.

They did, however, raise questions about whether the funding should be 'spread so thinly" instead of directed to where it was most needed. While they acknowledged the lack of ALI funding, they suggested the formation of Centres of Excellence be created instead. This method of delivery, they suggested, would concentrate the funds for use by all communities in the province instead of parceling relatively meagre amounts of money to this smaller project or that.

10.5 Recommendations

- o Increase ALI funding;
- o Conduct a national survey on the present state of Aboriginal languages;
- o Clarify the difference between 'language" and "dialect";
- o Rewrite the definition of what constitutes a "critical" language;
- o Base the criteria for ALI funding eligibility upon the percentage of actual speakers in the community or language group;
- o Clarify the term "First Nation" and its usage;
- o Fund language groups as "nations" rather than reserves or bands as "First Nations";
- o Devote more resources to critical languages and change the funding ration from 70/30 (enduring/critical) to 50/50;
- o Develop and apply national criteria and standards to determine the eligibility for ALI project;
- o Have consistent and multi-year funding cycles;
- o Direct INAC to take its responsibility to fund in-school language programs; and
- o Establish a national jury system, similar to the Canada Council, administered by the Department of Canadian Heritage to ensure fairness and effectiveness of ALI funding.

Appendix B
Case Studies

1.0 Assembly of First Nations
2.0 Métis National Council
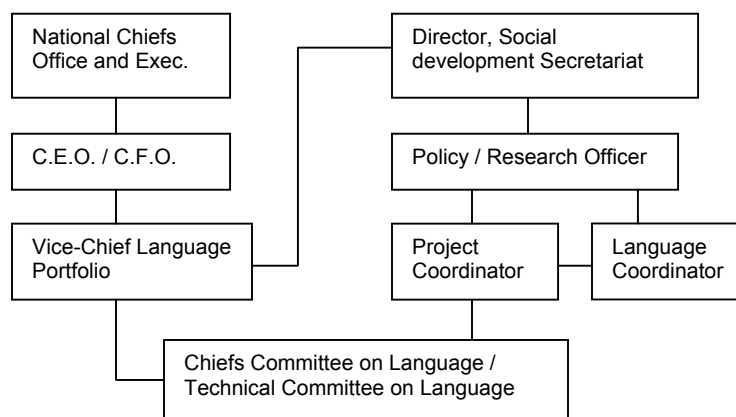**3.0 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)**

1.0 Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

1.1 Description[50]

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is the national representative/lobby organization of the First Nations in Canada. There are over 630 First Nations communities in Canada. The AFN Secretariat presents the views of the various First Nations provided through their leaders in areas such as Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, Economic Development, Education and Languages.

The executive committee is in charge of administering ALI funding. The AFN management structure involved with ALI decision-making is as follows[51]:

AFN ALI Administration Structure

```
National Chiefs                          Director, Social
Office and Exec.                         development Secretariat

C.E.O. / C.F.O.                          Policy / Research Officer

Vice-Chief Language          Project              Language
Portfolio                    Coordinator          Coordinator

          Chiefs Committee on Language /
          Technical Committee on Language
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[50] Source: www.afn.ca, Description of the AFN, 2001
[51] Note: ALI programming is administered under the education portfolio as a result of staffing restrictions occurring in 2001

1.2 Program Delivery

AFN retained 5% of the ALI funding for administration. 70% of the remainder was provided in equal amounts to the AFN regional offices to dispense to their respective communities as they saw fit. The remaining 30% was disbursed through a critically endangered languages fund set up by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Language to support those communities at most risk of losing their language. These funds were provided to the First Nation Confederacy of Cultural and Education Centres to dispense from 1998 – 2000, and subsequently to the Woodland Cultural Centre from 2000 – 2002.

1.3 Regional Information

Each region under the AFN structure determined whether it would administer the ALI funds available to the communities itself, or would contract out the service to a delivery agent. The following table outlines the 11 regional organizations used to administer the First Nations portion of the ALI funding for the year 2000 –2001; the percentage of funds used for administration out of the $285,285 that each region received; and the form of distribution of project funds.

Table 17: AFN Regional Delivery 2000-2001

AFN regional delivery 2000-2001[52]			
Region	**Name of Organization**	**Percent Administration Costs**[53]	**Form of Delivery**
Ontario	Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc., Brantford	15%	Call for Proposals
Nova Scotia / P.E.I.	Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey Sydney Nova Scotia	7%	Call for Proposals
Alberta	Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta, Edmonton	10%	Call for Proposals
British Columbia	First Peoples' Heritage Language and Culture Council, Saanichton	11%	Call for Proposals
Yukon	Council of Yukon First Nations, Whitehorse	17%	Equally divided among all communities in jurisdiction
Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre, Saskatoon	5%	Call for Proposals
Manitoba	Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Winnipeg	15%	Call for Proposals
Quebec / Labrador	Secretariat of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, Wendake	13%[54]	Dispersed between three sub-regional organizations

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[52] Source: Assembly of First Nations 2000-2001 Annual Report

[53] Note: Administration fees include all funds not going towards community programs.

[54] AFNQL contracted out to three other delivery agents to administer funds.

	Labrador, Wendake		
Northwest Territories	Denendeh National Office Communications Centre Yellowknife	15%	Call for Proposals
New Brunswick	Union of New Brunswick Indians, Fredericton	15%	Equally divided among all communities in jurisdiction
Critically Endangered Languages Fund	First Nations Cultural Centres and Education Centres, Maniwaki, Quebec	10%	Call for Proposals

1.4 Assessment

AFN staff agreed that communities should ultimately decide where ALI funds should be allocated. They also felt that the short-term ALI goals of initiating community based language programs were reached. However the funding amounts available through the ALI were entirely insufficient to address the long-term goals of language revitalization.

Administrative Effectiveness

Corporate restructuring at AFN due to large cuts from Indian and Northern Affairs on October 16, 2001 had a severe impact on ALI administration mid-way through the program. AFN staff believed they had an open relationship with the Canadian Heritage head office, although they felt there had been substantial miscommunication at the beginning of the program relating to how communities accessed funds. Many communities first applied directly to the Department of Canadian Heritage before learning where to apply.

The annual and interim reporting process took too long; communities and regions were reporting for most of the year, but not receiving funds in sufficient time to distribute these to the communities. Some communities lacked capacity to properly administer these reporting requirements, and several project managers complained to AFN that the reporting format was too onerous.

Overall, First Nations communities were more comfortable dealing with the regional AFN offices, where they could also access other funding sources for language at the same time.

Impacts and Effects

AFN found that overall funding levels were far too low, and felt the ALI's impact was unnecessarily limited because projects within schools were not encouraged. This is limiting since so much community based language work takes place in liaison with the schools. Comments from AFN included:

- Any future capacity building should be at the regional and community level rather than at national level since greater capacity at these levels directly influences success in the community.

- Dispensing funds to communities equally allows them to know that they will have long-term commitments and encourages networking, whereas proposal driven projects depend heavily on program awareness, capacity to write proposals and the ability to interpret changing funding criteria.

- There was no forum for exchange between projects or regions in the ALI program.

Recommendations

AFN general recommendations called for:

- A permanent, multi-year program, and a much larger amount of funds;

- Creation of critical success factors for communities to gauge the success of their programs (e.g. reporting templates for community projects and regional delivery agents);

- Greater communication between all levels of administration and communities;

- The creation of an Aboriginal Language Institute or endowment similar to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation; and

- A 'kick-start' conference after this evaluation report is tabled for regional delivery agents funded by PCH.

11 Métis National Council (MNC)

11.2 Description[55]

The Métis National Council (MNC) is the national representative of the Métis Nation in Canada. The Métis National Council was established in 1983, following recognition of the Métis as a distinct people with Aboriginal rights in the Constitution Act, 1982. The MNC has been recognized as the voice of the Métis Nation in constitutional negotiations at the national level, and acts as an advocate and negotiator for the Métis people with the Government of Canada and at national conferences and forums.

The senior policy and programs advisor at the MNC office in Ottawa administers ALI programming. Other staff at MNC with responsibilities for culture were also included. Most provinces have also assigned additional tasks under ALI to regional employees charged with the responsibility of addressing Métis culture and heritage.

11.3 Program Delivery

Since each provincial MNC affiliate also had their own contribution agreement with the department of Canadian Heritage, Métis National Council's role set out under their own agreement was limited to setting up a national Michif language strategy and organizing Michif language workshops through the Michif Language Working Group. The Michif Working Group held its first meeting in Saskatoon on March 30 and 31, 2000. This group was made up of Michif speakers and language technicians from each of the Métis governing organizations and the Council. The goals of this working group were: to develop a draft strategy for the revival of the Michif Language; to prepare a national work plan; and to present this strategy and workplan to the Métis Board of Governors. MNC also coordinated the administration of ALI funding for its British Columbia and Ontario affiliates for the 2000 – 2002 period due to the lapsing of those organizations' funds in the first two years of the initiative.

11.4 Regional Information

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[55] Source: www.Métisnation.ca/MNC/about_MNC.html, 2001

The provincial affiliates of the Métis National Council delivering Michif language funds are outlined in the following table. In most cases regional affiliates have established Michif Language Committees, which are responsible for issuing Requests for Proposals and the review and recommendation of community projects to the respective Board of Directors.

Table 18: Michif Regional Delivery of ALI Funding, 2000-2001

Michif Regional Delivery, 2000 – 2001				
Region	**Name of Organization**	**Percent Administration Cost**	**Total Funds Allocated**	**Form of Delivery**
Alberta	Métis Nation of Alberta	N/A	$105,000	Call for Proposals
Saskatchewan	Métis Nation of Saskatchewan	N/A	$125,000	Call for Proposals
Manitoba	Manitoba Métis Federation	N/A	$145,000	Call for Proposals
British Columbia	Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia	N/A	53,500	Call for Proposals
Ontario	Métis Nation of Ontario	N/A	53,500	Call for Proposals
All regions	Métis National Council	12%	$55,000	National Policy, Planning and Co-ordination

Note: As an interim measure the Métis National Council (MNC) assisted British Columbia (MPCBC) and Ontario (MNO) to develop workplans for the periods 1999-2002. Funds were then designated and allocated based on these, and MNC did not retain any portion for administration. Some funds from these regions during the 2000-2001 year were also contributed toward an international conference on the Michif language.

11.5 Assessment

The ALI funding for Michif language was very important since there is very little official support at the federal or provincial level for Michif language development across Canada. MNC staff believe that the short-term goal of initiating Michif language strategies and projects was successful, even though funds were insufficient to address the long-term goals.

Administrative Effectiveness

MNC states that regional delivery agents were under pressure from the beginning as the ALI was operationalized late in the fiscal year and funds were required to be spent prior to year end. They also indicated that program funding was often delivered late into the fiscal period throughout the four year life of the Initiative At times this was due to late application and at other times the work of the Department was backlogged.

Hampering the administration were capacity issues at the regional level since there were a limited number of staff and resources allocated to the ALI. Throughout this time, however, the call for proposal process worked well, allowing the regional organizations to be strategic in their allocation of funds.

Impacts and Effects

MNC staff credited the ALI program for leading to a more coherent vision for the revitalization of the Michif language in Canada through the development of the Michif Language Strategy and National Working Group.

Recommendations

MNC's general recommendations for Michif call for:

- Multi year agreements for delivery agreements;
- Sufficient funds to produce curriculum, teaching aids and literature in the Michif language;
- Establishing a Clearing House for Michif curriculum, teaching aids, literature and learning tools;
- Funds to train and engage Michif Language instructors; and
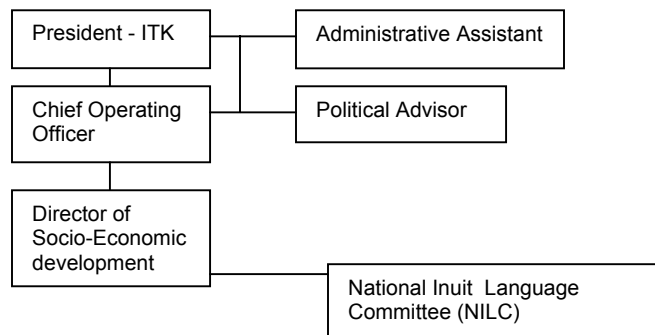- Training of Michif translators.

3.0   Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)

3.1   Description[56]

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) has represented the interests of the Inuit of Canada at the national level since its incorporation in 1972. Working primarily as a lobbying organization, ITK has been actively involved in a wide range of issues, enabling Inuit to pursue their aspirations and take control of their destinies.

The director of socio-economic development is the individual responsible for the daily administration of ALI programming at ITK. The staffing at ITK responsible for ALI administration is outlined in the diagram below.

ITK ALI Administration Structure

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President - ITK ───────────── Administrative Assistant

Chief Operating ───────────── Political Advisor
Officer

Director of
Socio-Economic
development ─────────── National Inuit  Language
                       Committee (NILC)
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4. Program Delivery[57]

During the initial year of this initiative, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) co-ordinated a process with the Inuit regions of Canada, and worked towards the establishment of seven agreements. Six transfer agreements were negotiated, for service delivery – one for each of the six Inuit regions: Inuvialuit, Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, Qikiqtani, Nunavik and Labrador. The seventh was a contribution agreement for ITK to play a co-ordination and facilitation

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[56] Source: www.itk.ca/english/itk/issues/index.htm, 2001
[57] Source: ITK Aboriginal Languages Initiative 2001-2002 Annual Report.

role under this initiative. This was done through the Inuit Technical Committee on Social Policy (ITSCP), composed of a technical representative from each of the six regional Inuit associations (RIAs) for the above-mentioned regions.

During the first year (1998-99) ITK, in collaboration with the ITCSP, developed an allocation model for the disbursement of funds amongst the regions based upon a number of variables: a base amount of 50% for each of the regions with the remainder being allocated based upon population (30%) and for loss of language (20%). In the second year of the initiative (1999-2000), each of the Inuit regions undertook responsibilities as defined in contractual agreements with the Department of Canadian Heritage. Some of the Inuit regions achieved a considerable degree of success; others did not meet their earlier expectations.

In the third year and fourth years (2000-01 and 2001-02), ITK continued to provide support to the regions by working through the ALI Inuit Language Committee (AILC) and acting as a link between Canadian Heritage and the Inuit regions. ITK also concluded an arrangement with Canadian Heritage by which none of the funds allocated for Inuit would be lapsed, and took on the responsibility of apportioning unused funds from two regions in the 2000-2001 year to language programs previously funded under the ALI in other regions. The total amount allocated to Inuktitut language over the four years of the ALI was $2.925 million with ITK using $280,000 (approximately 9.6%).

5. Regional Information

The six Inuit regions in Canada (Inuvialuit, Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, Qikiqtani, Nunavik and Labrador) were responsible for either administering the ALI funds themselves or contracting out to other regional organizations to deliver the funding to communities. The following table outlines the regional structure for the administration of the Inuktitut portion of the ALI funding:

Table 19: Inuktitut Regional Delivery of ALI Funding, 2000-2001

Inuktitut Regional Delivery, 2000 – 2001				
Region	Name of Delivery Organization	Percent Administration Cost	Total Funds Allocated	Form of Delivery
Inuvialuit	Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, Inuvik	20%*	$129,253	Call for Proposals

Kitikmeot	Kitikmeot Inuit Association	0	0	Call for Proposals
Kivalliq	Kivalliq Inuit Association	5%	$100,460	Call for Proposals
Qikiqtani	Qikiqtani Inuit Association	0	0	Call for Proposals
Nunavik	Avataq Cultural Institute, Montreal	10%	$129,566	Call for Proposals
Labrador	Torngasok Cultural Centre, Nain	11%	$150,748	Call for Proposals
All Regions	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami	5%	$84,023	Coordination/Secretariat Function

Note: K.I.A. and Q.I.A. funds were administered through ITK between 1999-2002 and reallocated to proposals in other regions.

*ICRC administration funds appear higher since they include translation and the production of resource materials such as books, a dictionary, CD ROM and video.

6. Assessment

ITK agreed that the Inuktitut language should be supported with adequate funding and that communities need the support to initiate their own programs and services. ITK staff members suggest that the ALI was successful at building and seeding language programs in Inuit regions, although funding amounts were too low to have a long-term impact.

Administrative Effectiveness

ITK stated that there is a general lack of capacity at the regional level to meet administrative requirements for the ALI. Relating to the issue of capacity, the ALI also did not take into account the higher cost of doing business in the Arctic in such areas as travel and elders' income for committee work.

In general, ITK found that there was a lack of effective communication from Canadian Heritage to the Inuit regions with regards to the ALI requirements. This was reflected in the low level of public awareness for the Initiative.

Impacts and Effects

ITK staff and regional Inuit organizations regretted that there were no funds allocated for language research. Language research should have been a critical element in ALI budgets. In general, the impact of ALI funds was as seed money for some language activities.

Recommendations

ITK general recommendations call for:

- Long-term funding for at least a three-cycle commitment (15 years);

- More allowance for networking and sharing of knowledge between regions / projects of the same language and different languages;

- Recognition of and allowance for the higher cost of program operation in the North;

- More program officers to service and give support to communities; and

- An administrative orientation for regions on Canadian Heritage reporting requirements for ALI.

Appendix C
People Consulted

List of People Consulted

Organization	Name
Federal Government	
Canadian Heritage	Anna Blauveldt, Director
	Audrey Greyeyes, Program Policy Officer
	Debra Young, Past Director
	Brenda Thomas, Past Program Officer
National Organizations	
Assembly of First Nations	
Métis National Council	
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami	
Regional Delivery Organizations	
First Nations Languages Delivery Organizations	
Mi'kmaw Kina'matneway Sydney, Nova Scotia	

Organization	Name
Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Brantford, Ontario and First Nations Confederacy of Cultural and Educational Centres	
First Peoples' Cultural Foundation, Victoria, B.C.	
Michif Language Delivery Organizations	
Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.	
Inuktitut Language Delivery Organizations	
Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, Inuvik, NWT Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Labrador Inuit Association Qikiqtani Inuit Association Kivalliq Inuit Association Avataq Cultural Institute	

Representatives of Non-participating Aboriginal Organizations (3-5)

Congress of Aboriginal Peoples	
Tungasuvvingat Inuit	

Organization	Name
Toquaht First Nation Heritage Society National Association of Friendship Centres	

ALI Funded Projects

First Nations Language Projects

Cowichan Dictionary Project, Duncan, B.C.	
First Nation HelpDesk, Sydney Nova Scotia Mohawk Adult Immersion Program, Ohsweken, Ontario Cree Adult Language Program, Waskaganish, Quebec	

Organization	Name
Peigan Language, Calgary, Alberta Selkirk First Nation, Pelly Crossing, Yukon	
Michif Language Projects	
Metis Resource Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatoon, Sask.	
Inuktitut Language Projects	
Tuktoyaktuk, NWT Holman, NWT (teleconference)	

Organization	Name
Hopedale Language Nest, Hopedale, Labrador	

Others Consulted

Aboriginal Language Academics

Appendix D
Documents Reviewed

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**Aboriginal Peoples' Program
Aboriginal Languages Initiative
Management Response and Action Plan**

Overall Conclusion

Canadian Heritage, Aboriginal Peoples' Program (APP) finds the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) evaluation findings to be consistent with the approach the Department has proposed towards developing a strategy that will ensure the preservation of Aboriginal languages as valuable and integral elements of Canada's heritage. The findings provide constructive advice for the improvement to the terms and conditions as well as the administration and delivery mechanisms piloted under the ALI. The enhancement of the capacity of the Department to facilitate the maintenance, growth and protection of Aboriginal languages is crucial to the realization of its mission statement and strategic objectives and strongly supports the commitments made in the *2002 Speech from the Throne*.

Aboriginal Peoples' Program
Aboriginal Languages Initiative
Management Response and Action Plan

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Management Response and Action Plan

Evaluation Recommendations	Management Response/Action(s)	Implementation Schedule
Recommendation 1 The Department of Canadian Heritage should explore various delivery mechanisms, including options for an institution that could receive, distribute and administer language funds from federal government and the private sector, providing access to all Aboriginal language groups.	♦ The Department has proposed the institution of an approach that will facilitate the preservation, revitalization and promotion of Aboriginal languages over the long term. As the first phase of the three part approach, the Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) will continue within its current terms and conditions and delivery framework.♦ The institution of the proposed framework is to be developed in consultation with	♦ Announcement - December 2002. ♦ Announcement - December 2002. ♦ Establishment of terms of reference and time frame for the consultation

	to be developed in consultation with Aboriginal people.	mechanism - March 2003.
Recommendation 2 Aboriginal Language Initiative should continue with funding on a longer-term basis to allow for meaningful projects to take place that foster the maintenance, revitalization and growth of Aboriginal Languages. If the current ALI objectives are to be realized, enhanced funding for the Initiative is required.	♦ The ALI will be included in the comprehensive review of the terms and conditions of all the programs and initiatives that constitute the Aboriginal Peoples' Program (APP) as the ALI evaluation findings will make a valuable contribution to the work being undertaken. One element of this review is to consider options for realizing greater efficiencies in the administration and delivery of this programming. ♦ Enhanced funding for ALI is part of the overall examination of a federal approach for supporting Aboriginal language retention/protection.	♦ Options for the restructuring of the APP programming proposal - fall 2004. ♦ Announcement - December 2002.

Recommendation 3 Aboriginal Language Initiative should continue to focus on community-level projects, but also provide opportunities for regional and national projects, including language research and strategic planning at the community, regional and national level; highly innovative projects; capacity building for regional and local language personnel;	♦ The ALI is premised on the principle that Aboriginal people are in the best position to establish priorities for addressing their Aboriginal language needs which are established by the Aboriginal delivery organizations. ♦ The ALI terms and conditions allow for national and regional Aboriginal organizations as eligible recipients	♦ No action necessary. ♦ No action necessary.

regional and local language personnel; and resource development. These might be funded through separate program components. There should continue to be flexibility, within the context of the overall program goals and objectives and of the proposed national strategic plan, in the types of projects allowed.	organizations as eligible recipients under ALI as well as allow for types of projects being recommended. Aboriginal delivery organizations establish the priorities for the types of projects being supported in each year of their ALI agreements. ♦ The ALI terms and conditions will be examined within the framework of the comprehensive review of the APP.	♦ Options for the restructuring of the APP programming - late fall 2004.
Recommendation 4 The Department of Canadian Heritage should take the lead in engaging a national dialogue to advance Aboriginal languages revitalization. Measures should be explored to better coordinate efforts and to share information. PCH could begin this process by sponsoring a national Aboriginal Languages conference.	♦ The Department has proposed the institution of a framework that will include consultation with Aboriginal people on measures to advance Aboriginal languages revitalization. ♦ The Department will examine ways that will start to facilitate the sharing of information from the initial five year pilot of the ALI. ♦ The proposed new framework will include extensive consultation with Aboriginal people and communities.	♦ Announcement - December 2002 ♦ Action plan by March 2003. ♦ Establishment of terms of reference and time frame for consultation mechanism - March 2003

Recommendation 5 Improvement to Aboriginal Language Initiative administration and delivery should include: - multi-year funding arrangements to enable better planning; - ensure that program funds are made available to Aboriginal language groups now unable to access them; - exploration of standardized, easy to use reporting systems for projects, and on-line data recording and collection systems for PCH and delivery organizations in order to track performance and progress - creation of more formal, measurable outcome and output measures to facilitate future evaluations and greater involvement by PCH and delivery organization in on-going project monitoring; - earlier distribution of program information, and targeted information to identified groups now not accessing the program; - Web-based site not only for the dissemination of program and project information but also for the collection of program and project information into a	♦ The comprehensive review of the programs and initiatives of the APP will examine the issues raised in this recommendation as these issues are relative to all or some of the other APP programs and initiatives. ♦ A consultation strategy forms part of the comprehensive review process to ensure that Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal and other stakeholders have the opportunity to input into the development of options for a restructured APP.	♦ Options for the restructuring of the APP - fall 2004. ♦ Consultation strategy is in place.

national web-based database; and - Research and baseline data collection on Aboriginal languages.		