Indigenous Awareness and Engagement
for Community Futures Staff and Board Members

Report to
Community Futures Pan West Network

November 3, 2016
Background

Creation of the Original Draft Module

The Aboriginal Awareness Module was developed in 2006 for Community Futures offices (CFs) to build awareness and understanding, in order to connect and support the Aboriginal people of their communities. The specific objectives for the Module were to:

- Understand the history of Canada’s Indigenous people
- To dispel the myths and define realities of life as an Indigenous person
- Define methods of connecting and communicating with the Indigenous peoples in your community
- Understand and implement communication tools and strategies
- Identify actions for implementation within the local Community Future office

The need has never been greater to build capacity within non-Indigenous CFs to better serve First Nations communities.

“no relationship is more important to me and to Canada than the one with First Nations, the Métis Nation, and Inuit.”

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Remarks to the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly, December 8, 2015

The module was designed to explore the landscape of Canada based on the history and demographic changes of our Indigenous peoples. The material within the module was intended to build awareness and understanding for non-Indigenous CFs, in order to connect and support the Indigenous people of their communities.

The original delivery concept for the module was to offer the training through the CF Leadership Institute. Similar to other Leader Institute modules, it would be delivered by an approved Community Futures facilitator.

In 2006 a draft of the module was created but was never adopted due to concerns from Indigenous CFs regarding certain content within the Module. One area of particular concern pertained to cultural practices of First Nations Peoples. Given the diversity and uniqueness of cultural practices among First Nations communities, having a generalized section about cultural practices was viewed as inappropriate. There was also concern raised about how best to deliver this type of module. For example, it was identified that the module should be delivered in partnership with a local First Nation in a CF region.
Redevelopment of the Module

The Community Futures Pan West Network opted to revisit the creation of this module in hopes of addressing the original concerns identified from the draft module and see if it could be updated for adoption by Pan West. Community Futures British Columbia was tasked with conducting a review of the draft module. The methodology used to update the module was to consult with the four Indigenous CFs in BC. The consultation would help identify potential changes and updates and seek general feedback on the module.

Indigenous Community Futures Consultation

General Managers from the four Indigenous CFs were contacted to request their participation by reviewing the original draft module and providing feedback and direction for next steps. All four offices participated in this process. The Managers agreed to review the document in consultation with their staff. The four Indigenous CF offices are:

- Community Futures Central Interior First Nations
- Nuu Chah Nulth Economic Development Corporation
- Haida Gwaii Community Futures
- Stó:lō Community Futures

A draft of the original module that included suggested edits, comments and questions was provided for feedback and comments.

Original communication with Managers:

“I want to connect with each of you to discuss the draft CF Board Training Module 12 currently named “Aboriginal Awareness” – I assume a more appropriate title could be Indigenous Awareness. This was a draft board training module that was developed by Pan West however it was never completed. From what I have been able to gather thus far (Geri please correct me if I’m wrong in my understanding) there were differences in opinion in regards to methodology for delivery of the module and that there were certain sections within this module which were deemed to be not appropriate.

In talking with Colette Close, Pan West Coordinator, she would be happy to receive an updated draft CF training module from BC that may be adopted at the Pan West level. We have the ability to make any changes or edits to the module that we believe are necessary. Also, we can provide recommendations as to how this module may be utilized for training purposes. Colette has indicated that at present the plan would be to provide this module as an open-source content for CF’s to use. However, if we believe that Pan West should look to establish a delivery method more in keeping with the
existing delivery of CF board training modules she would be happy to receive our recommendations.

I’ve attached a copy of the original draft module and have inserted some initial comments in terms of potential changes and edits to the document.”

The following is a summary of the feedback from those CF offices:

- The materials are very dated, events are significantly different from when the document was originally prepared, and there needs to be new approaches.

- I would suggest that the proper approach is not a simple “cut’n paste” update, but perhaps an entirely new document with more appropriate and respectful strategies in dealing with the Indigenous communities in this Region.

- We have concerns about who would be doing the actual delivery and the fact that some of the items mentioned in the module were not inclusive of all First Nations.

- I think the one word that needs to be reiterated is DATED. I did have a good read through it and did pick up on some things I never knew but for the most part I feel this module would do very little with helping CF’s in dealing with First Nations partners.

- The stats in this module are old and dated, significant events have taken place in the last ten years that render a good portion of this document ineffectual. I also feel that these changes will be continual and it may be difficult to keep the module current.

- With over 2,567 First Nations in Canada it would be hard to create one document that reflects the different customs and traditions of the vast array of areas across Canada. I am not even sure a new document would be the meet the CF’s needs.

- My first thought would be to engage an organization that works in this area on a constant basis to bring the education to various CFs. The module could be kept up-to-date and the CFs would not need to worry about this responsibility. For training, the document could contain current information as well as specific details pertaining to the region.

- It should be recognized that Aboriginal symbols do not mean the same in all cultures and this is only a small sampling of items that hold significance.
Recommended Next Steps

Based on the feedback provided, the following recommendations were brought forward to the Community Futures BC Networks and Partnerships Committee for discussion:

1. Abandon the idea of creating a training module or a general awareness document
2. Provide an avenue for training to CFs that cover topic areas such as
   a. Indigenous awareness
   b. Working effectively with local First Nations
   c. Indigenous consultation and engagement
3. Identify an organization or agency that could deliver the aforementioned training at provincial and local CF training events

Committee Feedback

The Committee concurred with the feedback provided by the Indigenous CFs. They discussed what would be the best strategy for moving forward that would allow greater understanding and communication between non-Indigenous CFs and their local Indigenous community. As a starting point, the Committee recommended that two actions be undertaken.

First, that Indigenous awareness and engagement training be provided at annual gatherings such as the staff training and annual conferences. This training should be provided by a recognized Indigenous training organization(s) (see example in Appendix A). Furthermore, that the training organization(s) need to be able to tailor the training for CFs in each province.

Second, an on-line Indigenous engagement resource guide be developed and housed on the Community Futures Pan West Network website. Suggested sections within the guide would include:

- Importance of Indigenous Awareness and Engagement
- Hints and tips about how to engage with your local First Nations
- Links to important resources
- Training opportunities for your Board and Staff

Potentially the guide could be developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Business Service Network.
Appendix A

Re: Indigenous Awareness and Working Effectively With Indigenous Peoples™

Thank you for your interest in training sessions offered by Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. You can find more information about the program on our website [www.ictinc.ca](http://www.ictinc.ca) or get a sample of our cultural competency based program by watching Bob Joseph's 45 minute presentation he gave to the Vancouver Board of Trade. Check out video.

Below we have outlined two of our training options:

1. **Indigenous Awareness** - This is a half day session (3 hours in length, 9am to noon or 1pm to 4pm) and provides a historical understanding to attendees of Indigenous Peoples current place in Canadian society. It includes historical information, terminology, legal status, statistical analysis, myths, and do's and don'ts in building relationships with Indigenous Peoples. You can find more information about this program on our website [www.ictinc.ca/courses/aboriginal-awareness](http://www.ictinc.ca/courses/aboriginal-awareness). The fee for this option is $3,500 per session for up to 30 attendees.

2. Our most popular course is our **Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples™** session. Our Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples™ session includes a strong cross-cultural training component to the program and we have designed the session to help individuals and organizations work more effectively with Indigenous Peoples. This full day session (6.5 hours in length, 8:30am to 4:00pm) training incorporates the information from the Indigenous Awareness session and provides additional information on the business case of working with Indigenous Peoples, interpersonal skills, relationship building through our RESPECT model, and a brief introduction to consultation and accommodation in the afternoon portion of the day. You can find more information about the program including an agenda on our website [www.ictinc.ca/courses/working-effectively-with-aboriginal-peoples](http://www.ictinc.ca/courses/working-effectively-with-aboriginal-peoples). The fee for this option is $4,500 per session for up to 30 attendees.

**Online**

In addition to our in person training we have been offering our **Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples™** training in an online format for over 9 years. The training online follows our in person format, but does not include copies of our book. The cost of providing this training is $199 per person for 1 month of unlimited access. For groups of more than 6 registrants we can offer a 25% discount in he online registration fee. We can create a course only for your team if you have more than 20 people registering for the online session. For more information check out [www.indigenousawareness.com](http://www.indigenousawareness.com).

We don’t have a minimum number of attendees in each session although we find that over 30 creates an environment where attendees no longer feel comfortable asking questions. We believe that the opportunity to ask questions is important in a learning environment and is why we base our training fees on 30 people. If you wish to have more than 30 attendees in the training we will charge an additional $100 per attendee.

All of our training is based upon our book **Working Effectively with Aboriginal Peoples®** currently in its 3rd edition. Information about our book can be found at [www.ictinc.ca/resources/working-effectively-with-aboriginal-peoples-book](http://www.ictinc.ca/resources/working-effectively-with-aboriginal-peoples-book). Each attendee to our in person (not online training) will receive a copy of our book. Additional books are available at $49.99.
All fees quoted above are subject to applicable taxes and reasonable travel costs* for travel outside the Metro Vancouver area. Evaluations for the attendees are included in the fees.

The training room with light dimming capabilities, digital projector, projection screen and refreshments (if you wish) would be provided by your organization for the on site training options. Please see below for further terms and conditions of engagement if you decide to proceed with booking the training.

If you would like to see what others are saying about our training, check out testimonials on our website at www.ictinc.ca/testimonials.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.