

Free, Prior and Informed Consent

- Collaborative decision-making process linked to internal indigenous community deliberation
- Based on trust, dialogue and good faith



Source : Papillon et Rodon, 2016

Past and Present trauma

« [F]rom an indigenous perspective, these events are understood as clearly linked to historical events and patterns of trauma. Accordingly, they serve as contemporary manifestations of past assaults, which in turn dramatically heightens their emotional and cultural significance » (Evans-Campbell, 2008: 331).

Colonial Policies

- Residential Schools
- Sedentarization
- Dogs slaughter (Inuit)
- Modernization
- Shift to a wage-based economy

Impacts of Colonialism

- Breaking of family and cultural ties
- Historical trauma
- Emotional impacts
- Loss of language
- Self-esteem / Cultural pride
- Economic insecurity
- Social problems
- Access to education



Capacity for Resilience

- Healing and reconciliation processes
- Cultural pride
- Increased negotiation power (treaty, IBAs)
- Creation of political institutions
- Economic development initiatives
- Social movements (Idle no more)

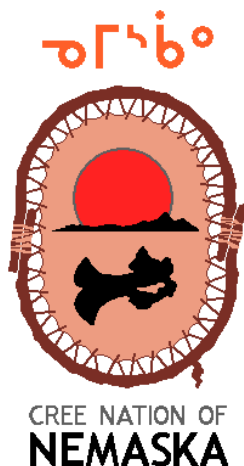


Impacts on the capacity to provide a Free, Prior and Informed Consent

- Identity
- Communicational agency : capacity to express our concerns
- Social cohesion (revive tensions, speaking with one voice)
- Relationship with institutions and companies (trust)

Nemaska "Place to Fish"

- 800 people
- Head office of the Cree Nation Government
- Whabouchi Project: Lithium mine
- Rupert River Diversion (Eastmain project)



Whabouchi Project (Nemaska Lithium)

- Lithium mine authorized in 2015
- Processing plant in Shawinigan, Quebec
- Chinuchi agreement in 2014 (IBA)
- Consultations by the Cree Nation Government before the public hearings
- A hundred names petition in support of the project
- Public hearings during community elections
- All political leaders replaced except one on the elections that followed the signature of the IBA

Cumulative Social Impacts

"The project that came from Hydro-Quebec that was a big impact, now we have this mining, and going back you know, with residential schools and all these things. It's like, I wonder sometimes people are **triggered** I think".



Cumulative Social Impacts: Trigger

Triggered : "Getting filled with hate after seeing, hearing or experiencing something you can't stand".

"to initiate or precipitate (a chain of events, scientific reaction, psychological process, etc.)".

" An emotional/psychological reaction caused by something that somehow relates to an upsetting time or happening in someone's life ".

➤ Post-traumatic stress

Eastmain Hydroelectric Project

- Lack of resources and capacities
- Difficulty to talk about the project in the community
- Fear to criticize the project (fear to be "punished" or that funding would be cut)

«The consultation has been underfinanced and rushed and I don't understand why everything is so rushed, it was almost like Hydro-Québec is afraid that the river is going to run away somewhere». – Chief Robert Weistche

Capacity to Speak up

"The last year, I went to school... in 1967, I left here with just a dollar in my pocket for 10 months and I used to get only a dime every weekend from the dollar that I took. And if I had done something wrong in school, I wouldn't get it. Now, I seem to feel that we're in the same situation, that if we do something wrong or we don't agree with something, that we'll get punished for it". (Public hearings, Eastmain project)



Capacity to Speak up

"The members added that residential school has affected the people. The people were oppressed and taught not to speak up. The people have not yet healed from the impacts of residential schools. They received money but they did not heal. The community has problems"(Working Group report, 2015: 35-36).



Communicational Agency

Focus groups to prepare community members for the public hearings:

"Happy to have take this this mediation, facilitation role. I was always neutral. I also learn to empower people by voicing themselves, so that's the big up for me, the big thing accomplished. I'm really proud of what I learn from them".



Social Cohesion

"When there's projects, any kind of projects, we're fighting each other, hurting each other. We're not connected, we're split. I've got punched, fingers, talking to me angry, but I didn't fight back".

"The members are not treated equally. This creates conflicts between family members and community members. These conflicts that are clearly caused by the development of projects on the Cree land are never addressed by the proponents of the projects. The community is left to deal with these conflicts" (Focus group with women, 2015).

Resilience / Adaptation

«We the people of Nemaska are strong, vibrant, able to adapt, I'm not intimidated by the impacts of this projects. I know there will be social, cultural and environmental impacts, but they can be mitigated and the project can be called sustainable. This is a unique agreement. On behalf of the 100 persons that approve the projects, I say please, issue the permits so that we can move forward ». – Chief Matthew Wapachee



Different perception of promoters

Hydro-Québec

«[B]eing able to trust the people that you're dealing with and that includes the institutions, [...] how do you trust something that doesn't have any feelings? Why does Hydro-Québec, for example, need a law for them to do something? Why can't they do it because the need is there?»

Nemaska Lithium

«I know how people perceive the mine won't change. How the mine has been glorified as the savior of our community».



Conclusion

- Cumulative social impacts influence, both positively and negatively, the communities' capacity to offer a free, prior and informed consent
- Can affect the community deliberation process (capacity to speak up, social cohesion)
- Are experienced and interpreted differently among community members
- Can lead to a loss of trust towards institutions and affect dialogue.

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CHAIRE DE RECHERCHE SUR LE
DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE DU NORD

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Thank you!

