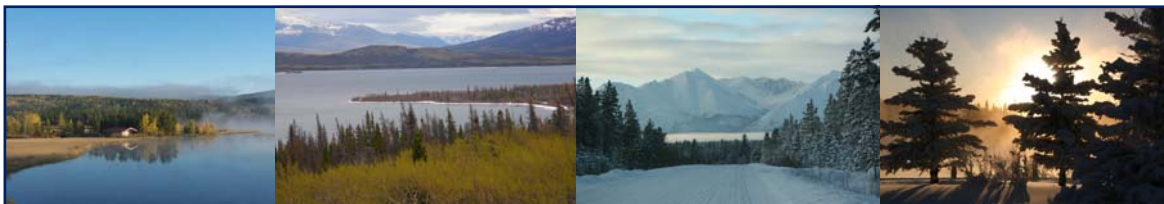


Yukon Regional Round Table



Final Report November 2008



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Over the course of this research project, there were many academic contributors: Robert Annis, Marian Beattie, Ryan Gibson and Alison Moss, students Anisa Zehtab-Martin and Lonnie Patterson and administrative staff Sylvia Henry and Bev Lischka (Rural Development Institute, Brandon University) and Jay Dobson (Yukon College, Teslin Yukon).



Members at regional round table meetings

Executive Summary

Rural and northern communities are very diverse yet they face many similar problems. Their geographical location itself poses challenges to transportation, communication and service delivery. Dependence on primary industries places limits on economic opportunities and can have unsustainable environmental impacts. The absence or reduction of public and private investment has resulted in problems with food and water security; limited access to education, health care and other important social services; and either a young, rapidly growing population or an aging, shrinking population (Troughton 2003). The impact and importance of these complex and interrelated problems on a particular community is dependant upon its history and current context.

In 2004, the Rural Secretariat invited the Rural Development Institute (RDI) of Brandon University, Brandon Manitoba, to submit a proposal to the *Models for Rural Development Research Initiative* based on the work that RDI had been doing with regional round tables in Manitoba. The proposal was accepted and the Rural Development Institute undertook the Community Collaboration Model Project from late 2004 to March 31, 2008. The Project was then extended for the Yukon Regional Round Table for an additional six months from April 1 to September 30, 2008. The research and analysis activities that the Rural Secretariat undertook under this program were intended to contribute to the understanding of what approaches to community development and capacity building worked in rural, remote and northern communities. The Rural Secretariat intended to use the information gained from the research initiative to inform all levels of government in decision-making for policies and programs (Rural Secretariat, 2007). The Community Collaboration Model Project was born out of the belief that in changing times, providing access to appropriate tools, resources and information would enable individuals living in rural and northern communities to engage in informed and meaningful dialogue and decision-making with other communities in their region, with local community-serving organizations and with governments. The Project was intended to be a process for developing linkages among project partners, and a means for exploring alternate governing relationships and new forms of governance. The overall goal of the project was to design and facilitate a multi-community, multi-agency cooperative approach for initiating joint planning and project development activities for regional social, environmental and economic community development. Objectives included facilitating processes for communities, governments and academic institutions to work together collaboratively and looking at ways for governments to better serve rural and northern communities.

The Yukon Regional Round Table became the first regional non-political forum in the Yukon that included communities and First Nations when it signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Rural Development Institute to form a regional round table. Communities, First Nations, and government departments from across the Yukon¹ committed to working together on regional opportunities, issues, and challenges. From April 2006 until September 2008, the Rural

¹ The Yukon RRT includes two communities located in northern British Columbia: Atlin and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

Development Institute provided the regional round table with facilitative and financial the support. Membership grew to include eight communities and six First Nations. At the same time as the regional round table was forming and getting organized, the Yukon Advisory Group consisting of representatives from three federal departments and four territorial departments formed to provide support and pathfinding. The partnership between the Yukon Regional Round Table and Yukon Advisory Group has been a continuous process. As the community collaboration process moved forward, the advisory group's role evolved into support and pathfinding; roles that sometimes moved advisory group members outside their comfort zones.

Relationship and partnership-building were foundational to the Yukon Regional Round Table. The creation of the regional round table brought communities, First Nations, and government together at the same table. As one member noted, *"we had very little experience working with our neighbouring First Nation, not to mention other communities and First Nations across the territory."* When asked to reflect on the regional round table experience, many members saw a key benefit table being the increased understanding between communities, First Nations and governments. Members were emphatic about the benefits and impacts of this partnership. One member stated: *"The Yukon Regional Round Table is probably the best forum ever seen for engaging First Nations because of the free flow of ideas and the non-political environment."* The participants in both the regional round table and advisory group experienced successes and challenges, both collectively and individually. Lessons learned from those experiences, related to *infrastructure, partnership development, capacity building, impact and sustainability*. The Yukon Regional Round Table also purposefully undertook activities to increase the capacity of the regional round table and its members. In conjunction with meetings, a series of capacity building sessions were held. These sessions included conflict resolution, collaborative evaluation, First Nation's self-governance, sustainability/social economy, residential school compensation, and asset mapping.

The Yukon Regional Round Table held a facilitated sustainability planning workshop in Faro in September, 2008. Members reviewed their membership criteria and reaffirmed their commitment to being an open and welcoming round table. However, at the same time, members also recognized the challenges of many communities and First Nations for active participation. In planning for their future sustainability, the regional round table participants present at this workshop suggested focusing on those members who were presently engaged in the regional round table. They were confident that as regional round table's successes grew, membership would also grow.

The regional round table positively demonstrated that communities, First Nations, and government could work together. Yukon Regional Round Table members indicated that the process of working together was time-consuming and frustrating at times; however, the results far exceeded the effort. Changes in membership in both the regional round table and advisory group created challenges: lack of continuity in members required that new relationships to be developed. One regional round table member noted that many people under-estimated the time and resources required to develop and sustain the inter-community/First Nation relationships. However, through collaborative efforts of this community collaboration process, Yukon Regional Round Table members acknowledged their strength as a collective regional voice. One member summed it up by saying, *"the regional round table has more influence than we originally recognized. Now we need to focus on how to use the influence for positive changes in our communities."*

What we've learned in this past year is that we want to stay together.



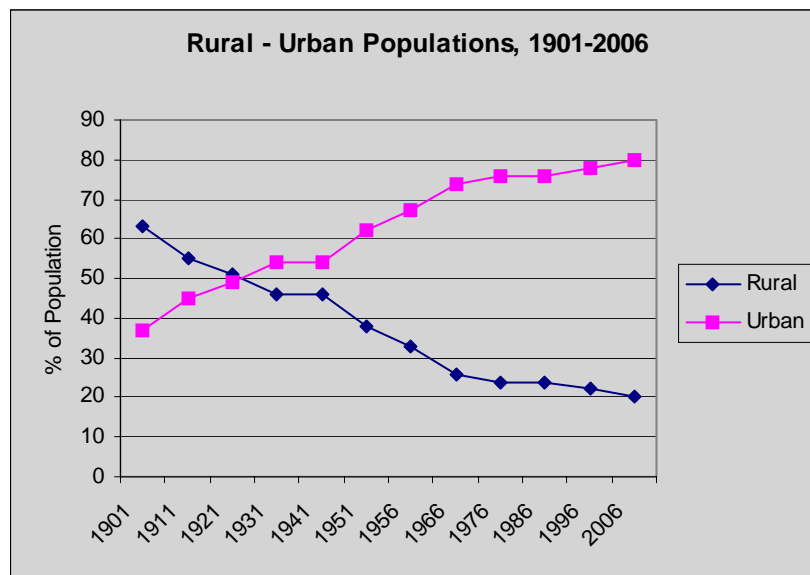
***Yukon Regional Round Table
& Advisory Group members***

We can invoke change together.

Multi-Community Collaborations: An Overview

Rural and northern communities are very diverse yet they face many similar problems. Their geographical location itself poses challenges to transportation, communication and service delivery. Dependence on primary industries places limits on economic opportunities and can have unsustainable environmental impacts. The absence or reduction of public and private investment has resulted in problems with food and water security; limited access to education, health care and other important social services; and either a young, rapidly growing population or an aging, shrinking population (Troughton 2003). The impact and importance of these complex and interrelated problems on a particular community is dependant upon its history and current context.

Rural and northern communities throughout Canada are not homogeneous. Trends in population, employment, and income can greatly vary from region to region. According to the 2006 Census, one in five (20%) Canadians lives in a rural or northern² community (Statistics Canada, 2007a). In 2006, the total population living in rural and northern communities was approximately six million (Statistics Canada, 2007b). From 2001-2006, the population of rural and northern Canada increased by 1%; however, urban Canada increased by 5.4% (Statistics Canada, 2007c). Rural and northern communities within close proximity to large urban centre experienced higher growth rates than remote or isolated communities. The percent of Canadians living in rural and northern communities has continually declined since 1931.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2007a

² Rural and northern defined as areas located outside urban centers with a population of at least 10,000 (Statistics Canada, 2007a).

Canadian Rural Partnership Models Program

In 2004, the Rural Secretariat invited the Rural Development Institute to submit a proposal to the *Models for Rural Development Research Initiative* based on the work that RDI had been doing with the regional round tables and the steering committee in Manitoba. The proposal was accepted and the Rural Development Institute undertook the Community Collaboration Model Project from late 2004 to March 31, 2008. The Project was then extended for the Yukon Regional Round Table from April 1 to September 30, 2008. The research and analysis activities that the Rural Secretariat undertook under this program were intended to contribute to the understanding of what approaches to community development and capacity building worked in rural, remote and northern communities. The Rural Secretariat intended to use the information gained from the research initiative to inform all levels of government in decision-making for policies and programs (Rural Secretariat, 2007).

The Rural Development Institute articulated the community development practices and lessons learned that had emerged in Manitoba from 1999-2004 into a vision and model for the Community Collaboration Model Project. Foundational to the Community Collaboration Model Project was the building and sustaining of trusting and valued relationships and collaborative partnerships between and among the partners. RDI, through its networks and connections, sought community, government and academic partners to form regional round tables in other provinces and territories.

Rural Development Institute's Community Collaboration Model

Structure and Processes

The Community Collaboration Model Project was born out of the belief that in changing times, providing access to appropriate tools, resources and information would enable individuals living in rural and northern communities to engage in informed and meaningful dialogue and decision-making with other communities in their region, with local community-serving organizations and with governments. The Community Collaboration Model Project was intended to be a process for developing linkages among project partners, and a means for exploring alternate governing relationships and new forms of governance. The overall goal of the project was to design and facilitate a multi-community, multi-agency cooperative approach for initiating joint planning and project development activities for regional social, environmental and economic community development. Objectives included facilitating processes for communities, governments and academic institutions to work together collaboratively and looking at ways for governments to better serve rural and northern communities.

The Community Collaboration Model Project vision's was to encourage communities to explore and develop processes to increase their ability to address change and work toward becoming more sustainable. The overall goal of the Community Collaboration Model Project was to test whether the Community Collaboration Model, as developed in Manitoba, was applicable and able to be replicated in other areas of rural/northern Canada. Objectives included determining what conditions and circumstances were needed to bring communities together to form regional round tables and advisory groups. Other objectives including determining the role of information and communication technologies in supporting social networks for community development and in supporting universities, research institutes, and governments engaged in community research processes.



The community collaboration process involved a group of communities forming a regional round table and partnering with the Rural Team in their province/territory through a subcommittee called an advisory group and also partnering with an academic institution. For the Rural Development Institute to enter into an agreement to facilitate the development of a regional round table all of the aforementioned partners needed to embrace the process and the partnership requirements.

The roles and responsibilities of the communities included forming a regional round table of diverse stakeholders who had the desire and commitment to work together to achieve common goals. Responsibilities also included working with RDI to evaluate the progress, sharing lessons learned, contributing resources (in-kind and/or cash) and providing a financial accounting of the expenditures of funds and contributions.

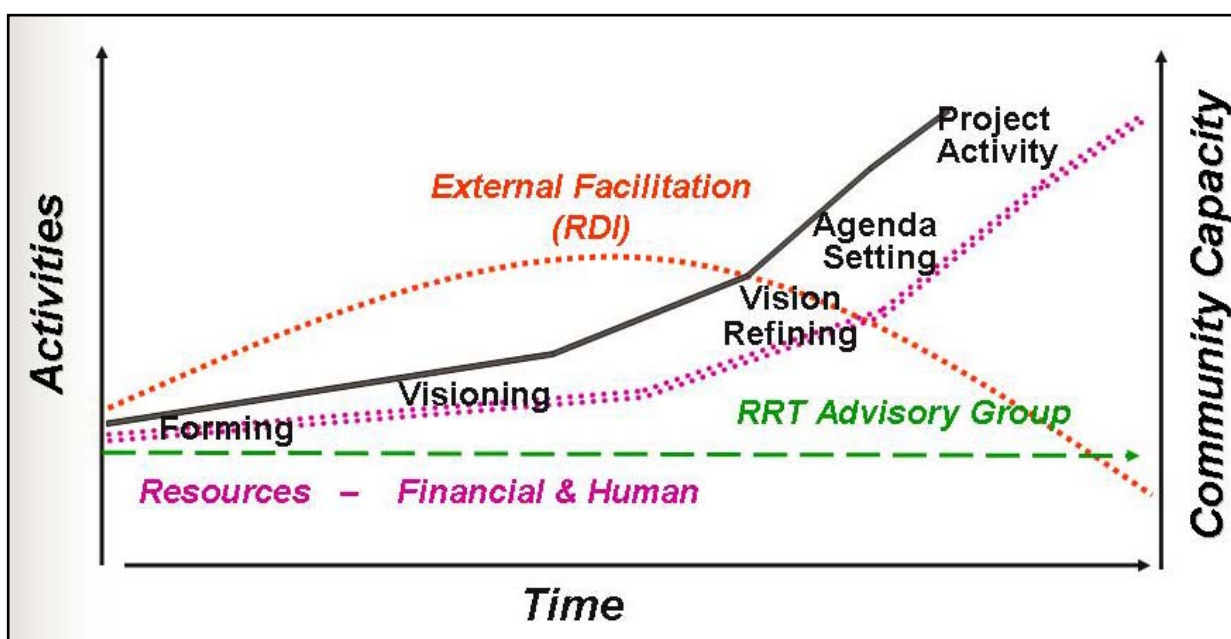
The roles and responsibilities of the members of the advisory group included providing advice and guidance for implementing the regional round table; maintaining channels of communication with the regional round table; serving as conduits for communication between members of the Rural Team and the regional round table; establishing lines of communication with other provincial/territorial Rural Team advisory groups engaged in similar processes and assisting the regional round table to access information, human and financial resources.

The academic institution's roles and responsibilities included liaising with the advisory groups and the regional round table; attending any regional round table meetings deemed critical to the community collaboration processes and assisting in strengthening the collaboration processes at the regional round table.

The Rural Development Institute also committed to strengthening and supporting regional round table by:

- facilitating the early formation and structure of the regional round table and dialogues of cross-community and/or government representatives;

- attending, when appropriate, regional round table meetings to facilitate, document, and share information and lessons learned across all regional round tables and advisory groups engaged in the project;
- making cash contributions to support the regional round table. The exact amount of the contribution depended on the regional round table's ability to leverage cash and/or in-kind contributions and was based upon need and value;
- facilitating participatory evaluation processes; and
- convening annual meetings of representatives of regional round tables and advisory groups to share experiences and lessons learned, documenting and reporting on the community collaboration process.



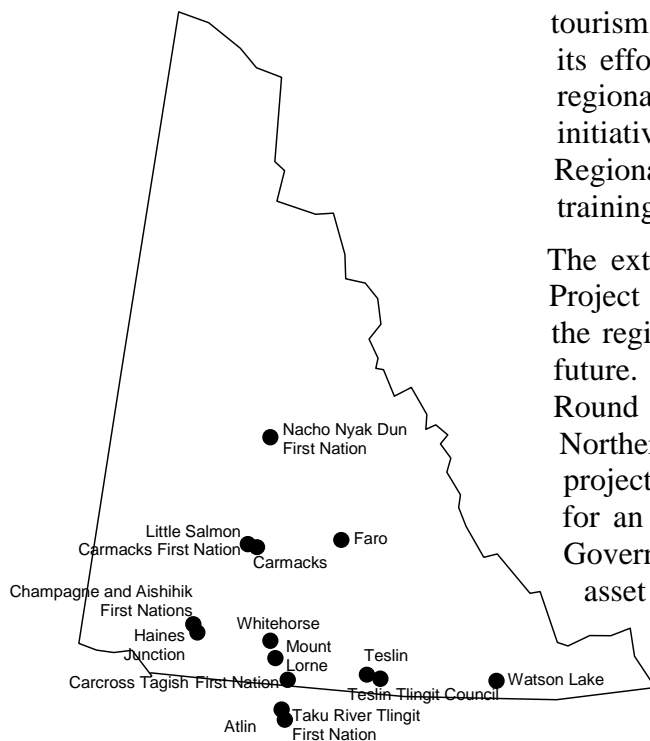
In November 2005, Rural Team Yukon formed an advisory group and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with RDI to support the formation of a regional round table in the Yukon. In December 2005, Yukon Rural Team facilitated a meeting in Whitehorse between RDI and interested communities who were Yukon signatories of the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association Alaska Highway Community Initiative. The community representatives indicated an interest in the Community Collaboration Model Project and a second meeting was held in Whitehorse in February 2006, inviting additional communities and First Nations. At the February 2006 meeting, it was decided to continue exploring this collaborative model and at a meeting held in Teslin on April 4th 2006, the Yukon Regional Round Table was officially established and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with RDI.

The Yukon Regional Round Table became the first regional non-political forum in the Yukon that included communities and First Nations. The opportunity to form this inclusive regional association and partner with Rural Team Yukon was a key reason for the creation of the regional round table.

From April 2006 until March 2008, communities, First Nations, and government departments from across the Yukon³ committed to working together on regional opportunities, issues, and challenges. Since its creation, the regional round table developed a membership of eight communities and six First Nations. In addition, the advisory group consists of representatives from three federal departments and four territorial departments.

By March 31, 2008 the regional round table had held ten meetings and undertook a number of activities, including planning for an asset mapping pilot project which will document the community assets in Carmacks. The Yukon government tourism department enlisted the regional round table in its efforts to improve its online tourism presence. The regional round table influenced the online tourism initiative for the entire Yukon. At each meeting, Yukon Regional Round Table members also incorporated a training and capacity building session.

The extension of the Community Collaboration Model Project provided additional support and time to enable the regional round table to consolidate its plans for the future. During this time period, the Yukon Regional Round Table was awarded three grants: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada \$28,215 for the asset mapping project; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, \$19,100 for an asset mapping database; and Yukon Territorial Government Community Development \$19,400 for the asset mapping project. On September 11 -12, 2008, a workshop on sustainability planning was held in Faro and facilitated by Angela Walkley and Gillian McKee of Cambio Consulting.



Members at regional round table meeting in Watson Lake

³ The Yukon RRT includes two communities located in northern British Columbia: Atlin and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

Evaluation

Integral to the project was continuously evaluating the community collaboration processes. As the Rural Development Institute began facilitating the evaluation, it became clear that the evaluation needed to be more than a process in which the members merely participated. The Yukon Regional Round Tables and advisory group needed to decide what “success” meant for them. Thus the evaluation process became a collaborative process which was *an assessment process that included all stakeholders in deciding what constituted success and how success would be measured*.

Collaborative Evaluation Principles:
Inclusion
Equal Partnership
Shared Responsibility
Empowerment
Cooperation

Principles of this collaborative evaluation process included: *inclusion* of representatives of all groups who were involved in the evaluation; *equal partnership* - recognizing that every group had skills, abilities and equal right to participate in the process; *transparency* that created a climate conducive to open communication and building dialogue; *shared power* with authority and power evenly balanced between all partners; *shared responsibility* with all partners having equal responsibility for decision-making, and each having clear responsibilities within the process; *empowerment* for

participants with special skills who were encouraged to take responsibility for tasks within their specialty, yet also encouraging others to be involved and *cooperation* by sharing everybody’s strengths. This meant that regional round tables and advisory groups were involved in determining the evaluation frameworks, the selection of indicators, data collection and analysis of findings. Another important distinction was that the Community Collaboration Model Project evaluation was a **process evaluation**, which was not linear. Evaluating outcomes as they occurred provided opportunities to adjust the processes as needed, modifying the goals, objectives and actions and creating new ones.

Before commencing the collaborative evaluation process, all stakeholders needed to have clear understanding of the ethical principles that guided the collaborative evaluation process. These principles provided clarity on the rights and responsibilities associated with collecting, disseminating, accessing, and protecting information that was collected. The Rural Development Institute submitted details of the collaborative evaluations to the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee, which reviewed the submission to ensure that all participants involved in the process understood their rights and obligations. A research ethics certificate for the Community Collaboration Model Project was granted to the Rural Development Institute in October 2006.



The Rural Development Institute invited Yukon Regional Round Table and advisory group representatives to an evaluation-planning workshop in Atlin British Columbia in August 2006. During this workshop, the representatives developed their regional round table's and advisory group's evaluation frameworks and plans, with their academic partners providing facilitation, guidance and resources. These frameworks and plans were then taken back to the respective organizations for input and acceptance. Following that, the academic partners facilitated data gathering and analysis by reviewing and analyzing meeting minutes, reports and other documents and by conducting interviews with members of the Yukon Regional Round Table and advisory group. Evaluation reports were produced in 2006 and 2007. In September, 2008, representatives of the Rural Development Institute attended and participated in a planning workshop in Faro. At that time they conducted interviews with regional round table and advisory group members discussing the Yukon Regional Round Table and advisory group impacts and the future for both groups. Ryan Gibson, an RDI Research Affiliate worked with the Yukon Regional Round Table to evaluate their processes and outcomes for the 2006 and 2007 evaluation reports. Marian Beattie, an RDI Research Affiliate worked with the Yukon Regional Round Table collecting data and writing this final report.



Members at a regional round table meeting in Mount Lorne

Lessons Learned

Over the course of the two and one-half years of the Community Collaboration Model Project in the Yukon, all participants experienced successes and challenges, both collectively and individually. These are the lessons learned from these experiences, particularly as they related to *infrastructure, partnership development, capacity building, impact and sustainability*.

Processes and Infrastructure

Vision, Goals and Objectives

The Yukon Regional Round Table developed a vision with six key themes: collaborative community economic development; accountability and credibility; healthy, respectful relations; networking; coordinated promotion; and social development initiatives (Gibson & Annis, 2008).

Objectives of the Yukon advisory group included: maintaining open channels of communication with the regional round table; serving as a conduit for communication between all members of the Rural Team and the regional round table; establishing open lines of communication with other provincial/territorial Rural Team advisory groups engaged in similar processes in other provinces; and assisting the regional round table to access information, human resources, and financial resources that will move their projects forward.

We are an all inclusive, non-political, open and honest forum that collaborates to evoke change, address issues, share knowledge, ideas, and practices through consensus to improve the quality of life in the Yukon.

On September 11 and 12, 2008, the Yukon Regional Round Table held a facilitated workshop in Faro, with nine regional round table and three advisory group members in attendance. The theme for this workshop, facilitated by Cambio Consulting, was *Emerging from the Cocoon: Creating a Viable and Sustainable Strategy for the YRRT*. At this two-day workshop those present spent time taking stock of where they were, and then looked for strategies and solutions for sustainability.



The regional round tables restated their vision, mandate and objectives to guide them in the future (Cambio Consulting, p. 3-5):

Vision

We are an all inclusive, non-political, open and honest forum that collaborates to evoke change, address issues, share knowledge, ideas, and practices through consensus to improve the quality of life in the Yukon.

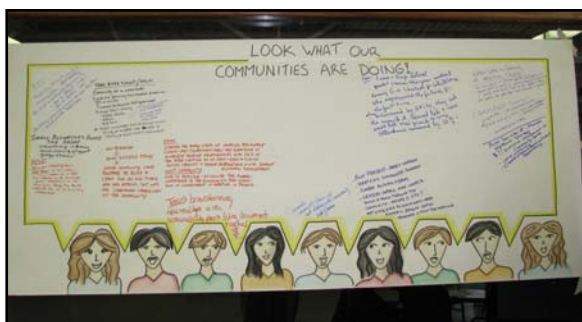
Mission Statement

Collaborating together to create opportunities and address community issues.

Purpose

- Share knowledge and best practices
- Identify community gaps and needs
- Build trust and appreciation
- Bridge gap between First Nation and non-First Nation
- Build community capacity
- Provide services (take advantage of economies of scale)
- Improve efficiency of projects or initiatives
- Undertake projects that invoke positive change
- Take relevant, common issues to the federal and territorial government

Building Relationships



The YRRT has built relationships among communities and between communities and First Nations where they were previously absent. The YRRT has a unique, open and honest dynamic that has allowed members to remove walls that have been in place since the inception of many communities. Removing these walls improves the dynamic within individual communities and also creates a more unified Yukon.

Developing Best Practices

The YRRT promotes sharing that allows members to discuss common interests and concerns and to identify solutions based on their own experiences. Identifying best practices for YRRT members saves everyone significant time and financial resources.

Spontaneous, Unpredicted Outcomes

The positive group dynamic created by the YRRT facilitates opportunities for innovation and creativity and frequently leads to unanticipated beneficial outcomes.

Outreach and Dissemination of Information

In addition to the benefits for YRRT members, the Yukon Government has benefited from the YRRT on a day-to-day basis. The government resource people have found it to be a good tool to access communities and an effective way to distribute and solicit information to member communities and First Nations. It is also a very effective information gathering tool for learning what is happening at the community level.



Collaboration

The YRRT participated in the development of the Yukon Government Tourism website. YRRT members were able to work together and to communicate clearly their needs and ideas during their regular YRRT internal communication. Had Yukon Government undertaken a community-by-community information gathering process, they would have been looking at thousands and thousands of dollars in expenses. If they had proceeded without community involvement, they would have had a product that didn't reflect community needs and interests.



Services

In the future, the YRRT foresees having the ability to provide services, such as asset mapping, insurance, Integrated Community Sustainability Plans. Similarly, YRRT members could offer to share their services or resources such as technical expertise, so each member would not have to find the resources on its own.

Structure and Responsibility

At the sustainability planning workshop, members also discussed their organizational structure and responsibilities (Cambio Consulting p. 5-6):

Flat Structure

The YRRT has a flat structure. Every member on the Round Table has an equal voice. The Chair rotates and the role is appointed to the community representative responsible for hosting the next meeting.

At a previous meeting, the YRRT had raised the possibility of creating a formalized structure such as non-government organization status. However, that possibility was ruled out due to First Nations YRRT members being unable to represent their First Nation in that capacity.

Protocol

The non-formal status of the YRRT assists the organization in being inclusive; however it does create challenges related to accountability and follow through. The YRRT will develop protocols that identify responsibilities and accountability.



Yukon Regional Round Table members meeting in Faro

Decision-Making

The YRRT intends to make its decisions based on consensus. Where consensus is not possible, the group relies on majority rule with the proviso that there should be no decisions that leave someone who cannot live with the decision.

Most major decisions will be made during YRRT meetings; however decisions may also be made via email. The person requesting feedback from the group will specify a time period for response and if they do not hear back from YRRT members, they are to assume that the non-response means “no objection”.

The YRRT intends to make its decisions based on consensus. Where consensus is not possible, the group relies on majority rule with the proviso that there should be no decisions that leave someone who cannot live with the decision.

Continuity and Commitment

While the YRRT would like to engage all Yukon communities and First Nations, it is primarily important that those that are involved are consistently attending meetings and following through on their commitments. This kind of commitment is often dependent on the individual having the support of their community. The YRRT suggests that representatives seek a letter of support from their community or First Nation. Seeking such support has the added bonus of raising awareness of the value of the YRRT to the community or First Nation.

Perception of Duplication

(Cambio Consulting, p. 9)

It is up to the YRRT to clarify how it differs from other organizations and that it does not duplicate the Association of Yukon Communities and Council of Yukon First Nations. The YRRT is not political and is the only organization where both First Nations and municipalities can work together on common interests for their communities. This value needs to be put front and centre.



Yukon Regional Round Table members meeting in Faro

Membership

The regional round table deliberately strived for inclusive membership for all Yukon communities and First Nations. Communities and First Nations were welcomed to join the regional round table at any time. It was decided at the February 2006 meeting that each community and First Nation could send two representatives to the regional round table. The suggested representation was one elected and one administrative representative. Fourteen out of eighteen Yukon communities and First Nations are now members of the regional round table.

At the sustainability planning workshop, Yukon Regional Round Table members reviewed their membership criteria and reaffirmed their commitment to being an open and welcoming round table. However, members present also recognized the challenges of many communities and First Nations for active participation. The participants present decided to focus on those members who were present. They were confident that as their successes grew, membership would also grow. They also decided to continue being a non-formal organization with every member having an equal voice and they re-affirmed their consensus-building decision-making process. In order to

ensure continuity, those present stated that there needed to be commitment from the leadership of the member communities, and members were encouraged to seek letters of support from their community leaders. The members also decided to hold quarterly one-day meetings with the location and meeting chairperson rotating between the member communities. The agenda would be set collaboratively, with the host community chairperson taking the lead in building the agenda and recording the meeting. In the workshop report it was noted (Cambio Consulting p. 5):

Any community or First Nation in the Yukon or Atlin is welcome to join. Whoever considers themselves to be a community will be welcome to be a member of the YRRT.

Start Small and Committed

The present YRRT members believe the YRRT would benefit greatly from having every community and First Nation represented. However, significant capacity issues could be limiting the involvement of potential members. Some First Nations, incorporated and unincorporated communities have reported to the YRRT that, while they appreciate the value of the YRRT, due to a number of responsibilities they are unavailable to participate due to time constraints and other priorities. The large travel distances for meetings can be a hindrance, both due to time and due to the cost of travel.

The workshop participants decided that the best course of action for the YRRT is to focus on those members that they have at present. YRRT members are confident that as the successes of the YRRT increase and grow, membership will grow. In addition, the YRRT will work to raise the awareness of the YRRT and to reach out to communities who have not previously participated.

Over the two days of the workshop, attracting and retaining members was an underlying theme. It was summarized as follows (Cambio Consulting, p.9):

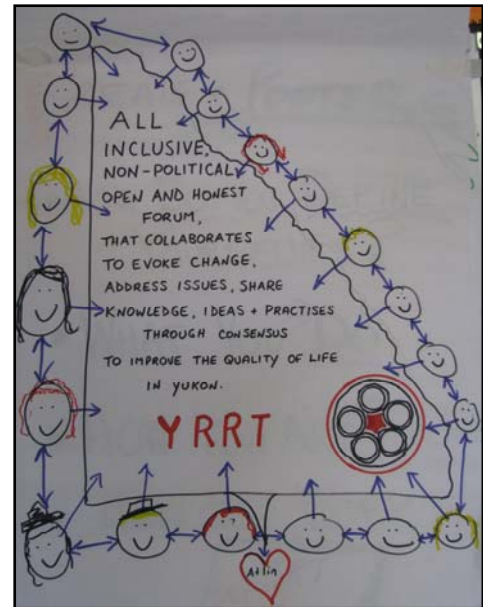
Build on Successes

The best way for the YRRT to get others interested is to build on their successes. By starting with the current projects and members, the YRRT will attract other interested people. Members can raise awareness by sharing their success stories through casual conversations and through media and communication material. It is equally important to share these stories back with the communities who support the involvement of their representatives in the YRRT.

The best way for the YRRT to get others interested is to build on their successes.

Coordination and Administration

At the outset of the regional round table formation, RDI recognized that the long distance between Brandon Manitoba and the Yukon would necessitate enhancing the facilitation process. To this end, RDI sought and engaged local community development professionals to assist with meeting organization, facilitation and recording. As time went on, and a core group of communities came together to form the regional round table, the need for local facilitation



diminished. RDI continued to retain a meeting organizer and recorder on behalf of the regional round table until June 2006 when the regional round table engaged a part-time facilitator to coordinate and facilitate regional round table activities. Initially this person took on the financial administrative tasks for the regional round table. The financial administrative role was transferred from the facilitator to a contracted financial administrator for a few months. The Village of Haines Junction then volunteered to handle the financial administration for the regional round table. After approximately one year, the financial administration function moved to the Village of Teslin, which, at the writing of this report, is still providing the financial administration for the regional round table.

During the sustainability and planning workshop in September 2008, the members discussed the idea of engaging an Executive Director (Cambio Consulting, p. 6):

The YRRT does not presently have an executive director. Such a position would be dependent on securing funding. An Executive Director could take on the responsibility of fund raising, coordinating meetings, moving projects along, and assisting with communication. The YRRT is committed to having its membership maintain control of the direction of the organization. As such, the Executive Director would play primarily an organizational support role, and not that of spokesperson or agenda setting.

They also discussed often they should meet and the responsibility for organizing and reporting on their meetings (Cambio Consulting, p. 6-7):

The YRRT will host quarterly, one day meetings. The location of the meeting will shift each time and the host community will chair the meeting. In addition to chairing the meeting, the host is responsible for coordinating the meeting logistics and informing communities about the meeting arrangements and agenda.

YRRT members are very interested in learning from other communities and First Nations. Each meeting will serve as an opportunity to profile the host community and to meet staff and community members, which can be done at a gathering the night before the meeting.

The agenda for the next meeting will be set collaboratively by members at the end of each meeting, and refined through communication between members following the meeting.

Yukon and Federal Government advisors will be informed of the meeting dates and will be invited as appropriate for relevant items on the agenda.

In order to increase the number of communities that benefit from and know about the YRRT, it was suggested that funding and support be secured to host meetings in communities that had not yet been involved with the YRRT, if they were interested in having it in their community. It was also suggested that meetings should be dove-tailed with other non-YRRT meetings to take advantage of people traveling. In particular it was suggested that opportunities be explored to have YRRT meetings coincide with First Nations events to promote the YRRT in those communities. In summary:

- One day meeting to be held quarterly
- Meeting will start the evening before with social community activity
- Host community will coordinate/disseminate information
- Collaborative agenda set at previous meeting, with additions over email
- Rotate the meeting locations and encourage new communities to participate
- Invite key advisors

Resources

Both the regional round table and advisory group noted resources were required for the regional round table to effectively function. It was noted, “the regional round table can not be done off the corner of someone’s desk. It needs to have real resources and recognition of person’s involvement” (Gibson & Annis, 2008). Member communities and First Nations financially supported members to attend meetings and absorbed costs of hosting meetings. Numerous in-kind contributions, such as contributions of time and supplies, were made to the regional round table and advisory group.

Shortly before the sustainability planning workshop, the Yukon Regional Round Table received word of being awarded three grants: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada \$28,215 for the asset Mapping Project; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, \$19,100 for an asset mapping database; and Yukon Territorial Government Community Development \$19,400 for the asset mapping project.

During the workshop, there was much discussion on funding (Cambio Consulting p. 7):

The YRRT is in a transition period with the end of its previous stable funding from the Rural Development Institute. The YRRT has \$7000.00 in savings and some remaining RDI funds which must be committed by September 30th. The YRRT has a separate dedicated fund for the Carmacks Community Asset Mapping Project,

The YRRT has identified several cost saving strategies to keep the YRRT going in the interim without a stable source of funds. The YRRT will use the funds currently available to them to contract a proposal writer to secure funding for the administration and meetings of the YRRT and will contract a writer to raise awareness about the YRRT. The YRRT considers these two strategies key to the financial sustainability of the YRRT. The following provides additional details on funding.

The members achieved consensus on the need to secure a person whose skill-set identifying applicable sources of funding, and then writing proposals to granting bodies to secure funding (Cambio Consulting, p. 8):

In the short term, a proposal writer will be contracted to identify applicable sources of funding for the YRRT, and to develop proposals to cover the needs of the YRRT for administrative support, an executive director, participation in meetings, general communication and outreach, and possible project funding.

Members also discussed how to be financially sustainable. They discussed members’ financial commitments, as well as brainstormed other possible sources of funding (Cambio Consulting, p. 7-8):

Member’s Financial Commitment

- Where possible, self fund our own attendance costs: travel, accommodation and meals (when possible find funding for those communities who can not afford the cost but are very interested in participating)
- Provide in-kind time for hosting meetings in your own community
- In-kind time for meeting participation
- If funding is secured, communities interested in participating but unable due to financial limitations will have their meeting attendance costs covered.

Corporate Sponsorship

Corporate sponsors could be solicited to cover meeting costs or to support the attendance of communities at meetings. This would not give any corporation ownership of meetings or any part of the YRRT, but would provide the corporation with valuable publicity.

Yukon Government Support

YRRT has been valuable for Yukon Government and could be an effective way for Yukon Government to gain community input in a cost effective, streamlined way. As a result, the YRRT proposes to solicit permanent funding from Yukon Government. In addition, the YRRT will apply for funding through relevant proposal driven granting programs (as above).

Other Ideas

- Act as business to sustain themselves – raise money
- Reciprocal agreement – one window for funding/service provision – what does YRRT offer to communities; develop a template for communities to use; maybe communities pay services, but use reciprocal agreements to get it done
- Economies of scale – act as broker and collect fees, eg ICSP, insurance, asset mapping
- Community Futures is a federally funded initiative that is not presently found in the Yukon. Dene Naye Ventures is looking at the Community Futures model and other Round Tables have taken advantage of partnering with organizations supported by Community Futures. However, Community Futures is aimed at providing loans for economic development activities and might not be an appropriate match for the purpose of the YRRT.
- Granting Foundations such as the Gordon Foundation may be a good possibility that should be explored by the proposal writer.

A member of the advisory group cautioned against being too funding-focused. This Advisory Group member stated:

“The worst thing you could do is plan your work actions around funding...determine your purpose first and then figure out how to give it legs.”

Communication

In the past, there was no regular forum for communications between communities and First Nations. One Yukon Regional Round Table representative noted, “this type of forum has been long overdue in my opinion.” The value of face-to-face meetings was emphasized by a number of regional round table members as being of great importance. The communications between meetings was identified as a challenge. With the open membership approach, the regional round table had to be proactive with their communications. As not all communities and First Nations are able to participate in each meeting, the regional round table had to be able to communicate effectively between meetings.

The value of face-to-face meetings was emphasized by a number of regional round table members as being of great importance.

To address communication issues, the regional round table utilized an online project management website called Basecamp⁴. Through this program, members of the regional round

⁴ Further information on Basecamp is available at www.basecampHQ.com.

table and advisory group were able to post key documents, messages and collaborate on proposal development. Each member received personalized access to the website and the website became a central depository for all documents, meeting notes, proposals, and discussions. Members were divided on their opinion of the usefulness of this online tool. For many, Basecamp was seen as a good way to communicate information to all members. They felt the website helped create transparency within the group as all documents were available to everyone. A number of members noted they used online tool sparingly or were reluctant to use the website. Reasons cited for not using the online tool include not having the time to explore the program to understand it, lack of confidence with computer programs, and the lack of Internet access at home (Gibson & Annis, 2008).

At the sustainability planning workshop, members discussed communication strategies (Cambio Consulting, p. 7):

The YRRT members will communicate internally amongst themselves primarily by email. If possible, the YRRT may explore producing a newsletter as a mechanism for sharing information.

They also discussed raising awareness of the regional round table (Cambio Consulting, p. 8-9): While the YRRT has been of value to those involved over the last two years, the YRRT does not have a high profile among those not directly involved. The YRRT members will communicate the vision, mission, and purpose clearly articulated from this workshop to their communities, Yukon Government and to the general public.

Within Yukon and Federal Government

- YRRT will write a letter to the Ministers thanking them for the support that their advisory committee has provided to them over the last several years. The letter can serve emphasize the importance that the government support has been and to raise awareness of the future plans of the YRRT and the need to continue the support. The letter will include a suggestion that the Advisors be rewarded for their contribution
- Through the above letter and through communication by Advisory members themselves, the YRRT will let Government know how the YRRT can improve YG/Fed efficiency.

Partnerships and Relationships

A partnership is an agreement to combine resources, ideas and talents to do something together that will benefit all involved. The partnership adds value to each partner's respective situation and there is give and take with shared decision-making, risks, resources, investment, power, benefits, burdens and accountability. Successful partnerships have: a *reason* to come together; a common vision and goal; *rules* – ways of doing business together; *responsibilities* – every partner is responsible for and contributes to the outcomes; *respect* – every partner is respected and valued; *reward* – every partner understands their gain; a trusting *relationship* – partners have developed a trusting relationship between and amongst themselves; *results* – the partnership accomplishes its collective vision and goals; *rejuvenated* – the partnership is evaluated, successes are celebrated and reflected upon; and *re-tooled* – the partnership is adjusted as needed (Annis, *et al.*, 2006).

At the beginning of the regional round table process members viewed the regional round table as an opportunity to build respect and trust among participating communities, First Nations, and government representatives. At an early meeting, a First Nation member addressed “the wall” they perceived that existed between First Nations and non-First Nations communities. Since that meeting the regional round table intentionally addressed building understanding between First Nation and non-First Nation communities. The regional round table's agenda included capacity sessions on Aboriginal self-governance and conflict resolution. A member noted the regional round table was currently building relationships that would assist in building trust among the group. A member indicated, “this has definitely been one of the best byproducts of the entire process. Communications and trust between communities, First Nations, and government is still building but we are starting to see benefits”. A regional round table member expressed the regional round table has helped build understanding between government departments, communities and First Nations. This understanding will be a key asset toward building trust (Gibson & Annis, 2008).

The regional round table has helped build understanding between government departments, communities and First Nations. This understanding will be a key asset toward building trust.

In thirty years, this has been the most effective way [for municipal and non-incorporated communities] in engaging First Nations people. The beauty of it is that each component can move independently so long as there is sensitivity. This process allows it to happen – to establish comfort levels and trust.

Engaging in the consultative process and developing trust is the real value of this endeavour. Just being able to talk to each other is a tangible measurable, in my opinion. It is really important to acknowledge that this process has proven to work.
(regional round table member)

The creation of the regional round table brought communities, First Nations, and government together at the same table. As one member noted, “we had very little experience working with our neighbouring First Nation, not to mention other communities and First Nations across the territory.” A key benefit of the regional round table to date is the increased understanding of communities and First Nations. A prime example cited was the understanding of Aboriginal self-governance. A number of members indicated they did not understand Aboriginal self-governance until

the capacity session organized by the regional round table. One member said, “I grew up here but have never understood the structures of local First Nations. This is the first time I have heard a

clear message about First Nation self-governance.” Another member noted “ I was much more involved with my local First Nation since the formation of the regional round table. The regional round table has been influential in assisting local collaboration between the community and the First Nation” (Gibson & Annis, 2008).

There is the potential to join forces to do something that benefits all of us...we need to continue this collaboration for strategic thinking of the Yukon as a whole... we are speaking with one voice.
(regional round table member)

Relationship and partnership-building has been foundational to the Yukon Regional Round Table. Members of the regional round table interviewed by the Rural Development Institute representatives in September 2008 were emphatic about the benefits and impacts of this partnership. One member stated:

The Yukon Regional Round Table is probably the best forum ever seen for engaging First Nations because of the free flow of ideas and the non-political environment.

This member went on to state:

In thirty years, this has been the most effective way [for municipal and non-incorporated communities] in engaging First Nations people. The beauty of it is that each component can move independently so long as there is sensitivity. This process allows it to happen – to establish comfort levels and trust. Engaging in the consultative process and developing trust is the real value of this endeavour. Just being able to talk to each other is a tangible measurable, in my opinion. It is really important to acknowledge that this process has proven to work.

Another member stated:

I now know people in other communities. I have physically met them – so I now trust them. This is a serious benefit. Trust is a big deal.

Another member stated:

There is the potential to join forces to do something that benefits all of us...we need to continue this collaboration for strategic thinking of the Yukon as a whole...we are speaking with one voice.

And finally another member stated:

This [partnership] could supersede politics. It could last.

This [partnership] could supersede politics. It could last.
(regional round table member)

At the September 2008 sustainability planning workshop, regional round table members concluded (Cambio Consulting, p. 4):

The YRRT has built relationships among communities and between communities and First Nations where they were previously absent. The YRRT has a unique, open and honest dynamic that has allowed members to remove walls that have been in place since the inception of many communities. Removing these walls improves the dynamic within individual communities and also creates a more unified Yukon.

The regional round table was not exempt from conflict, although all members were unanimous in describing the conflicts to date as healthy. A member noted the regional round table did not leave conflict unresolved at meetings. When conflicts occurred, members took time to discuss the issues and find consensus. “By and large, people are respectful of opinions. Every opinion is valued and we look for consensus. Personal ideas and agendas are usually put aside”. It was also

noted “the consensus format of the group has been advantageous as we are able to understand the various perspectives from across the region.” A member described the regional round table meetings as venues for “open and frank discussions, but this was the intention from the beginning.”

The partnership between the Yukon Regional Round Table and Yukon Advisory Group has been a continuous process. As stated earlier in this report, certain members of the advisory group facilitated the initial exploratory meeting. As the process moved forward, the advisory group’s role evolved into support and pathfinding. This type of role sometimes moved advisory group members outside their comfort zone.

Members of the Yukon Advisory Group who were present at the sustainability planning workshop reflected on their own experiences and determined how they contribute to the direction the Yukon Regional Round Table was now taking. And considered their own strategies for sustainability. During a workshop exercise, the Advisory Group members discussed their role(s) and then depicted their conclusions in a poster. They used an electrical metaphor. They see their members as having a pathfinding role that connects communities and governments.



They articulated their strengths (Cambio Consulting p. 26):

- Good tool to access communities
- Access to other non-governmental networks
- Intelligence gathering – learn what communities are up to
- Facilitating connections
- Support apolitical aspect

They also articulated their challenges (Cambio Consulting p. 26):

- government silos - government is mandate driven, so we work in our silos, we need to be able to communicate what the RRT benefit is
- government fear of the new - fear is that this is another level of government; what will you ask for? The YRRT is new territory so lot of fear about it.
- pushing the envelope may cause more checking within government, may mean having to do more selling of the concept in government, especially if it crosses mandates. When YRRT brings in new ideas – new to go and check with many depts. Because the ideas cross into many mandates of government, we have to bring this concept to these departments.
- perception of duplication with other mechanisms that engage communities – Association of Yukon Communities, Council of Yukon First Nations, need to get support for definition of what this YRRT is – not political

Government is mandate driven, so we work in our silos, we need to be able to communicate what the RRT benefit is.

- ministerial buy-in is missing - need to get buy-in to this new model of engaging with communities; if we don't get buy-in at that level, [the Advisory Group] can't help the YRRT
- appropriate funding

Concrete ideas for achieving the goal of continuing the good experiences, benefits, and potential of YRRT that came out of this exercise included (Cambio Consulting p. 26 -27):

- Raise awareness of the YRRT
 - Clearly define the YRRT
 - YRRT write letter to the Minister to raise awareness and also to get buy in from the necessary departmental Ministers
 - Let government know how YRRT can improve YG/Federal government efficiency
 - Award recognition for advisor contribution
- Advisory people
 - sell the YRRT model to get Ministerial buy in so RTRT and Advisory Council are supported and can get other departments to participate
 - Advisors to write a paper on the benefits they've observed and a position paper on Advisory Council role and YRRT role
 - Separate meetings among the advisory people
 - Maximum of 2 or 3 advisory people at YRRT meeting
 - Advisory reps take YRRT issues back to relevant departments, Ministers; ensure and communicate follow through and accountability



Advisory Group members & other supporters

They see themselves as conduits into various places, especially for horizontal issues such as those that emerge from the Yukon Regional Round Table. The advisory group members recognized the need to be efficient and effective, and that they should meet, occasionally among themselves, and at that meeting determine who and how many should attend the regional round table meeting (Cambio Consulting p 30).

They [Advisory Group] see themselves as conduits into various places, especially for horizontal issues such as those that emerge from the Yukon Regional Round Table.

From 2006 – 2008, the regional round table entered into one formal and five informal partnerships with external organizations. In addition, the regional round table strengthened many existing relationships between communities and First Nations. The formal partnership is:

Yukon Tourism and Culture – A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the regional round table and Yukon Tourism and Culture to assist in developing the new Yukon online tourism calendar of events. In addition, a representative of Yukon Tourism and Culture has been a member of the advisory group from the beginning.

Informal partnerships include:

Arctic Health Research Network Yukon (www.arctichealth.ca) –The Arctic Health Research Network Yukon is part of a Canadian tri-territorial health research network linking northern regions to improve health outcomes through research. Two members of the Network attended a regional round table meeting and expressed an interest in the asset-mapping project the regional round table was undertaking.

Crime Prevention Yukon (www.crimeprevention.yk.ca) - As a non-profit organization that encourages activities and networks that lower crime in communities, Crime Prevention Yukon was interested in learning about the regional round table and a representative attended the September 2006 meeting and made a presentation about her organization.

Community Development Institute, University of Northern British Columbia (www.unbc.ca/cdi) - In building the asset mapping, the regional round table established a connection with the Community Development Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia, which had been active in research in northern communities. The regional round table met with an Institute representative who provided suggestions on the asset mapping process.

National Rural Research Network – In February 2008 the regional round table had the opportunity to co-host the Northern Dialogue Session with the National Rural Research Network. The Northern Dialogue Session focused on the themes of regional governance, Aboriginal self-governance, understanding and working with diversity, and capacity building. Through the workshop, members had the opportunity to network with researchers, community development practitioners, and government representatives from southern Canada.

Yukon College (www.yukoncollege.yk.ca) – In 2007, RDI partnered with Yukon College to assist in the collaborative evaluation. Yukon College also served as host for one regional round table meeting.

The regional round table positively demonstrated that communities, First Nations, and government could work together. Yukon Regional Round Table members indicated that the process of working together was time-consuming and frustrating at times; however, the results far exceeded the effort. Changes in membership in both the regional round table and advisory group created challenges: lack of continuity in members required that new relationships to be developed. One regional round table member noted that many people under-estimated the time and resources required to develop and sustain the inter-community/First Nation relationships.

*Members at regional round table meeting
in Haines Junction*



Capacity Development

The Rural Development Institute's approach to capacity development is through community development. Community development has been defined as *a philosophy, a process, a project, or an outcome, and perhaps all four at once*. As a philosophy, community development entails the fundamental belief that *people can identify and solve their problems*. As a process, it *supports citizens as they find their power to effect change*. As a project or an outcome, it *involves working with citizens to bring about change in their community*. The community development process involves engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. While this circular process may become convoluted at times, it remains continuous. Throughout community development processes, products for communication and mobilization regenerated and disseminated first within the community and eventually beyond the community for research, practice, and policy purposes (Healy & Racher, 2008). "Community Development is community-based and people-centred: is inclusive; promotes good practice; builds on strengths; ensures the decision-making comes from the community; recognizes and develops expertise of community residents; requires assessment and does not rely on assumptions; and is understood by those involved" (Frank, 2001).

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The Yukon Regional Round Table purposefully undertook activities to increase the capacity of the regional round table and its members. In conjunction with the meetings, a series of capacity building sessions were held. These sessions included conflict resolution, collaborative evaluation, First Nation's self-governance, sustainability/social economy, residential school compensation, and asset mapping.

As stated in the 2008 evaluation report, (Gibson & Annis, 2008) all regional round table members noted they personally gained skills and knowledge through the regional round table although some were difficult to describe and count. Knowledge and skills gained included:

- I learned a lot about asset mapping. Prior to the regional round table I had never heard about this. After learning about asset mapping through the regional round table meetings, two groups I am involved with are now looking at this kind of model. I have been able to bring much of the information I learned from the regional round table to these groups.*
- I learned and refined my active listening skills.*
- I gained a better relationship with First Nation communities through the territory that I have never had in the past 20 years I have lived here.*
- Travelling to each of the communities and First Nations has been a huge learning [experience] for me. Prior to the regional round table, I had never been to many of the other communities. As I travel I am learning about each community, their assets, their opportunities, and their challenges.*

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Prior to the regional round table, I had never been to many of the other communities.

As I travel I am learning about each community, their assets, their opportunities, and their challenges.
(regional round table member)

- *A key capacity I gained is I realize we, as communities, do not have to work alone. Working together with neighbouring communities and First Nations was rare in my community.*
- *The regional round table process is a bit like ‘herding cats’. Through the process I have gained many skills in group facilitation.*
- *I learned to allow others to speak and hear other people’s thoughts and opinions.*
- *I gained a better understanding of tourism and how to relate to the Department of Tourism.*
- *I gained an appreciation and understanding for the different ways things are done among the municipalities and First Nations.*
- *The training session on First Nations self-governance was an eye-opener. Since that training session I am better able to understand the roles and responsibilities of the local First Nation, which has changed my approach to working with the First Nation.*
- *I learned to communicate with people. I was quite shy and did not speak well in public. At the regional round table meetings I now feel comfortable speaking, something I was definitely not anxious to do when I first started with the regional round table!*
- *I try to apply regional round table meeting techniques to my local town council.*

Although capacity development as a topic unto itself was not addressed at the September 2008 sustainability development workshop, it came out in the many discussions (Cambio Consulting p. 4):

Developing Best Practices

The YRRT promotes sharing that allows members to discuss common interests and concerns and to identify solutions based on their own experiences. Identifying best practices for YRRT members saves everyone significant time and financial resources.

Spontaneous, Unpredicted Outcomes

The positive group dynamic created by the YRRT facilitates opportunities for innovation and creativity and frequently leads to unanticipated beneficial outcomes.

Influence and Advocacy

Stemming from a lack of understanding of community-based tourism initiatives in the region and the lack of a year-round online source of tourism events, the Yukon Regional Round Table pursued building a coordinated regional approach to an online tourism calendar. The culmination of the regional round table's discussions was a proposal to Yukon Tourism and Culture for the development of a regional website and to build capacity within local communities and First Nations for updating key local information such as upcoming events and tourist attractions. This proposal was not funded; however, the regional round table received the attention of Yukon Tourism and Culture which was in the process of a large scale review of their website. The department approached the regional round table to provide suggestions and comments for the re-development of the tourism website. These efforts culminated in a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the regional round table and Yukon Tourism and Culture. The initial reaction of the members was disappointment because the department did not accept the proposal. However, the meaningful contributions towards the re-development of the territorial tourism website and the Memorandum of Understanding were acknowledged as "success". One regional round table member noted this was the first tangible output the regional round table had produced and a "very significant achievement".

The regional round table has more influence than we originally recognized. Now we need to focus on how to use the influence for positive changes in our communities.
(regional round table member)

Through collaborative efforts such as these, regional round table members acknowledged their strength as a collective regional voice. A member noted, "the regional round table has more influence than we originally recognized. Now we need to focus on how to use the influence for positive changes in our communities." During the earlier meetings, the regional round table explored two formal structures: a registered non-profit society and an incorporated group. The regional round table decided to pursue neither option. A member noted, "We already have more power as an organization than we would ever have as a non-profit."

At the September 2008 sustainability planning workshop, Yukon Regional Round Table members decided to proactively contact governments (Cambio Consulting p. 8-9):

While the YRRT has been of value to those involved over the last two years, the YRRT does not have a high profile among those not directly involved. The YRRT members will communicate the vision, mission, and purpose clearly articulated from this workshop to their communities, Yukon Government and to the general public.

Within Yukon and Federal Government

- YRRT will write a letter to the Ministers thanking them for the support that their advisory committee has provided to them over the last several years. The letter can serve emphasize the importance that the government support has been and to raise awareness of the future plans of the YRRT and the need to continue the support. The letter will include a suggestion that the Advisors be rewarded for their contribution.
- Through the above letter and through communication by Advisory members themselves, the YRRT will let Government know how the YRRT can improve YG/Fed efficiency.

There are so many of us represented at the table, they have to listen.
(regional round table member)

During evaluation interviews and at the sustainability planning workshop in September 2008, when asked to reflect on the Yukon Regional Round Table's influence, regional round table members stated:

We can invoke change together.
(regional round table member)

- *There are so many of us represented at the table, they have to listen.*
- *Ministerial buy-in is missing - need to get buy-in to this new model of engaging with communities; if we don't get buy-in at that level, can't help the YRRT (Cambio Consulting, p.26).*
- *We can invoke change together.*

Resiliency and Sustainability

At the beginning of the process, the Yukon Regional Round Table was provided process funding through the Rural Secretariat's Models Program until the end of March 2008. In February 2008, regional round table members were unanimous in expressing their desire for the regional round table to continue beyond March 2008. In reflecting on the past two and half years, the regional round table members agreed the benefits have outweighed the costs of participating in the regional round table. From the community perspective, the costs of participating in the regional round table have been low. Many members were quick to note they believe the value of the regional round table is still to be discovered. In moving forward, members identified three items to address. First, the regional round table members need to have active leadership from all members with each member assisting the regional round table in accomplishing its goals. Second, the regional round table needs to continue building relationships among communities and First Nations. Third, the regional round table needs to explore methods to keep communities and First Nations engaged that couldn't participate in the meetings.

On April 1, 2008, the Yukon component of the Community Collaboration Model Project was granted a six-month extension that enabled the regional round table to specifically focus on sustainability planning. A facilitated workshop to create a viable and sustainable strategy for the Yukon Regional Round Table was held in Faro Yukon on September 11-12, 2008.

During this workshop, the Yukon Regional Round Table members formulated both immediate and longer term strategies and actions. The sustainability plan that emerged from the workshop is as follows (Cambio Consulting (p. 10-12):

Immediate Commitments

1. Share outcomes from this meeting and about the YRRT
 - a. Email, list serve distribution list to circulate information about upcoming opportunities we might want to collaborate on, e.g., Alaska 50th birthday. Can also be used to develop proposals when there are deadlines that fall in between YRRT meetings. **Action:** Sheila Dodd will create email distribution list.
 - b. Newspaper ad or story with call to join. **Action:** by a communications person (see #2).
2. Hire proposal writer and communications person. Proposal writer will seek ongoing funding for YRRT and write to government Ministers to seek ongoing support. Communications person will develop newspaper and other media material about RRT with a call to join. **Action:** Shannon, Christine Smith, Marian Power, Wes will work on getting this in place. The RT agrees through consensus for Wes to prepare a contract(s) for communications and proposal writing.

3. Decision-making – will use email to discuss issues that require decisions and use email to ask for input to decisions, with a set time frame. Each is responsible for indicating their decision – if no response, will assume consent.
4. Next Meeting
 - a. Teslin, Wes Wirth as Chair, will also advertise the meeting to all YRRT members and organize
 - b. Second week of January
 - c. Agenda Items:
 - i. Tourism opportunities of Alaska 50th birthday and Sarah Palin VP candidacy;
 - ii. Conference participation – possible funding from Tourism Marketing Program to develop YRRT display; Business and Trade Branch funding;
 - iii. Community column for Yukon News, other media – what messages;
 - iv. Workshop report – content, distribution, on track with YRRT model;
 - v. Update on proposal writer and communications hiring from the sub-committee;
 - vi. Fundraising;
 - vii. Financial report;
 - viii. Asset mapping;
 - ix. Networking and social time built in.

Longer Term:

- Host meeting in new community - Carcross could be approached for a future meeting. They have indicated interest in the aspect of bridging gaps between FN and non-First Nation. Need to approach community directly – don't make any decisions to hold it in their community without approaching them first.
- Future meeting could focus on the topic of bridging the gap between First Nation and non-First Nation, since it is within the purpose of the YRRT.
- Hire executive director
- Administration services contract to build on existing contract for proposal writer/communications. An existing staff person could have their salary boosted to cover off the responsibilities of organizing meetings and covering off the administrative responsibilities of the YRRT. This would have the added advantage of supporting a community or First Nations capacity and contributing to local economic development.
- Dovetail meetings with other community events where YRRT can have a presence
- Regular Yukon news column. Increase visibility on news, TV, What's Up Yukon, other media
- Sell products – asset mapping; produce Yukon gold coin
- partnerships – corporate (Lotteries, Air North); operational partnership – (Teslin – financial services); external partnership (government departments - Economic Development, Community Services).

*What we've learned in this past year is that we want to stay together.
(regional round table member)*

During evaluation interviews in September 2008, when asked to reflect on sustainability of Yukon Regional Round Table, regional round table members stated:

- *What we've learned in the last year is that we want to stay together*
- *Will the regional round table survive? I would like to see it survive as long as it keeps non-partisan and free-flowing.*
- *We seem to think we need [external] money to do things. The regional round table should get to a point where it is worthwhile on its own...or what is the point?*

We seem to think we need [external] money to do things. The regional round table should get to a point where it is worthwhile on its own... or what is the point?
(regional round table member)



Participants at the September 2008 sustainability planning workshop in Faro Yukon

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