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Reconciliation and Decolonization Initiatives at Non-Governmental Organizations in Canada

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Executive Summary

Introduction to the Executive Summary

Beginning in the late 17th century, Christian missionaries in what is now Canada started boarding schools to indoctrinate Indigenous children into European culture (Royal Canadian Geographical Society et al. 2018; TRC 2015a). While these boarding schools were initially run by Christian churches, these early schools became the template for the government-run residential schools (TRC 2015a). The residential school system, as run by the Canadian government, was enacted in the 1880s and continued until the last school closed in 1996 (TRC 2015a). In the century that the residential school system formally operated, it is estimated that more than 150,000 Indigenous children were forced to attend these schools (Matsunaga 2016). The residential schools were characterized by a wide range of harms, including physical abuse and the alienation of the children from their families, languages, and cultures (TRC 2015a).

In 1996, as the last residential school closed, a group of 27 survivors from Vancouver Island jointly sued the United Church of Canada and the Canadian government, who were found jointly liable for the harms of the residential school system (TRC 2015a). The outcome of this trial created the opportunity for thousands of settlements, which eventually led to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, in 2007, part of which was the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, formed in 2008 (TRC 2015a). After six years of working compiling documentation, listening to survivors, and community events, the commission compiled a final report that was released in 2015 (TRC 2015a). The Commission summarized the report's key recommendations in 94 Calls to Action (TRC 2015b), which are actionable policy recommendations to be implemented by a variety of groups and organizations, and at all levels of the Canadian government.

This Report's Aims

Although there is a record of the progress the government has made in implementing the Calls to Action (Government of Canada 2023; Jewell and Mosby 2022), there is little research on the ways that non-governmental organizations, many of whom do not have specific Calls to Action targeted at them, have implemented practices and protocols of reconciliation. The goal of our research was to better understand the ways in which Canadian organizations are engaging with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and, if they didn't think specifically about the Calls to Action, how they were practicing reconciliation and decolonization in their organizations. In doing so we aimed to contribute to closing knowledge gaps and being part of a collective approach to reconciliation and decolonization. This report shares knowledge among organizations and also includes discussions of academic literature on the topics of reconciliation and decolonization relevant for organizations' practice. We aimed to contribute to understanding the best practices of organizations' reconciliation and/or decolonial efforts.

This Report's Methods

The methods of this research draw on tenants of Indigenous knowledges and systems (Bartlett, Marshall, and Marshall 2012; Kovach 2021; Reid et al. 2021; Smith [1999] 2012; Wilson 2008) and qualitative research methods (Charmaz 2006; Lareau 2021). These knowledges have guided the data collection and analysis. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 6 employees or volunteers of various community organizations operating in Canada that have implemented initiatives aimed at reconciliation and/or decolonization. These interviews ranged from forty-five minutes to two hours. Once we concluded the interviews we conducted open coding (Charmaz 2006) for the interview transcripts to identify themes. We also reviewed literature about Canada's colonial history and decolonization efforts, the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the writing of Indigenous scholars and activists about how we as settlers can ethically conduct this research.

Core Themes

The core themes that emerged in the research are summarized in the following infographic. Descriptions of each follow.

CORE THEMES: DECOLONIZATION AND RECONCILIATION AT ORGANIZATIONS IN CANADA

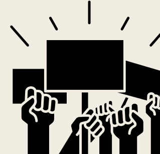
THEME 5: INTERNAL ORGANIZATION RESEARCH, CURRICULA, AND EDUCATION

THEME 1: THE STRAINS AND LEGITIMACY OF DECOLONIAL LABOUR

THEME 6: RECONCILIATION WITH LAND

THEME 2: MANY SETTLERS ARE EAGER TO CONTRIBUTE BUT ARE OFTEN UNSURE OF HOW TO PROCEED

THEME 7: BOOTS ON THE GROUND SUPPORT



THEME 3: INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES

THEME 8: PROTOCOLS OF COMPENSATION AND GIFTS, AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

THEME 4: A COLLECTIVIST APPROACH TO RECONCILIATION AND DECOLONIZATION

THEME 9: CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR CONFLICT

Theme 1: The Strains and Legitimacy of Decolonial Labour

Indigenous interviewees emphasized that the work of decolonization and reconciliation is too often exclusively placed on the shoulders of Indigenous staff, volunteers, and elders. Indigenous interviewees — and Indigenous scholars in academic literature — emphasized that if settlers are to take on more of the work of decolonial labour, diligent ethical practices are needed that still centre Indigenous desires even while settlers contribute decolonial labour. One area of labour that interviewees and scholarly literature emphasized was the work that settlers can do in educating other settlers, although still centering Indigenous voices when they do so. There are, therefore, many strains of decolonial labour for Indigenous peoples, yet settlers can legitimately do that labour if Indigenous desires and voices are still centred when doing so and careful ethical protocols are followed. One framing that many teachers and activists have emphasized is the shift from settler "ally" to settler "accomplice" — accomplice to the projects and desires of Indigenous communities.

Theme 2: Many Settlers are Eager to Contribute yet Unsure of How to Proceed

https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/land-back-movement-to-reclaim-indigenous-land-grows-1.5891912

Settlers in the study were enthusiastic about contributing to the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action. Indigenous interviewees also discussed how they encounter a great deal of enthusiasm from settlers who want to contribute. Settlers were often uncertain, however, how to take that desire and translate it into benefits for local and broader Indigenous communities. Yet some organizations were more advanced than others in the programming they have done to take steps toward translating settler desires to advance decolonization and reconciliation into tangible benefits for Indigenous communities. Developing educational curricula (Theme 5) was one way that organizations inspired employees to undertake self-organized decolonization and reconciliation initiatives. Scholarly literature emphasized that Indigenous desires are critical to centre in those initiatives that seek to advance decolonization and reconciliation — that discussions of settler desire are better shifted to discussing the desires of Indigenous communities.

Theme 3: Indigenous Knowledges

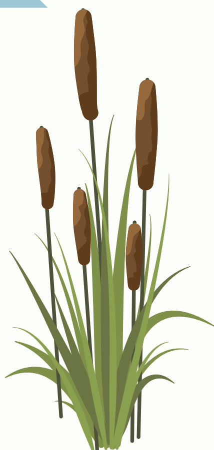
Indigenous frameworks and knowledges often remain outside of the core of settler organizations' work. This theme refers to ways that organizations can make knowledge coexistence (such as in the model of Two-Eyed Seeing), and other Indigenous knowledges and frameworks, part of organizations' practices. The Calls to Action reflect this priority, for example through emphasizing the need to bring UNDRIP into the basic framework of organizations (e.g., Call to Action #92). Indigenous interviewees and academic literature emphasized that it was important to add an "s" to "Indigenous knowledge" to reflect the plurality of Indigenous knowledges. This plurality of knowledges is one reason for the importance of settler organizations developing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities. It is through such relationships that the knowledges of local or multiple Indigenous communities may enter settler organizations without fallaciously reducing Indigenous knowledge to a single uniform framework. Using frameworks such as Two-Eyed seeing (or local concepts) can ensure that when Indigenous knowledges enter settler organizations, the knowledge is not assimilated into mainstream settler ways of knowing.

Theme 4: A Collectivist Approach to Reconciliation and Decolonization

When our community partners for this project, the Council of Canadians and Grandmother's Voice, asked us to do the research that forms the basis of this report, they emphasized how a significant value of such a project would be information sharing between organizations. Several interviewees also emphasized this theme, stating how sharing information about what other organizations are doing can help advance action in their own organizations. Sharing what other organizations have done can, for example, function as demonstrating a precedent. Organizations can also learn from each other in terms of what has been successful, the challenges they have encountered, and how they navigated these challenges. This project serves as one forum through which organizations can share this kind of knowledge.

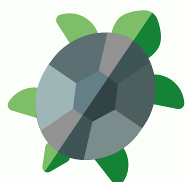
Theme 5. Internal Organization Research, Curricula, and Education

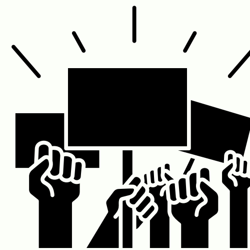
The TRC Calls to Action and Indigenous-led organizations such as Indigenous Works emphasize the importance of settler organizations educating their members. Interviewees, academics, and broader organizations that we reviewed discussed the importance of internal organization education. They also described methods for effective education programs. Settler organizations should expect to do significant amounts of in-organization work before being able to build relationships that benefit Indigenous peoples. One starting point discussed in the interviews was first doing research on one's own organization – through instruments such as online surveys distributed to the organizations' staff – to assess the initial level of understanding that staff have about Indigenous histories and knowledges. Based on that initial research, internal curricula have been developed for staff. One of the interviewees described a full year program for staff that resulted in many staff self-organizing decolonization and reconciliation initiatives.



Theme 6. Reconciliation with Land

Interviewees and the academic literature also discussed that, while reconciliation is certainly about reconciliation between people, it is also about reconciliation with land. Organizations may begin initiatives for reconciliation with land by connecting their members to the land, ideally with guidance from Indigenous teachers, elders, or scholars, either in person or through guidance from resources that Indigenous peoples produce. One of the organizations in this study focused on not only connecting with land but helping wild animals thrive in city parks by protecting nests and other habitats. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report also discusses reconciliation with land as a key part of reconciliation, a fact emphasized recently by scholars such as Deborah McGregor and Emma Nelson.





Theme 7. Boots on the Ground Support

Several of the participating organizations discussed participating in protests, civil disobedience campaigns, and the legal process as part of efforts for reconciliation and decolonization. This direct support of campaigns and legal cases is part of a strategy that pressures governments and works with the current legal system where possible. For example, several of the organizations in this study participated in the 2023 "March for the Land" that aimed to pressure the Ontario government to only proceed with plans for mining development in Northern Ontario if the free, prior, and informed *consent* of affected Indigenous communities is given. One of the organizations in the study have served as plaintiffs in legal cases that supported Indigenous land rights. Organizations in Canada can support direct action in many ways, with each organization having particular strengths that can support this action.

Theme 8. Protocols of Compensation and Gifts, and creating Funding Opportunities

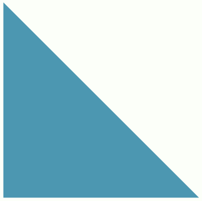
Interviewees and the academic literature emphasized the importance of compensation for Indigenous peoples who do the work of reconciliation and decolonization. This entails, first, financial compensation, and can be supplemented by other forms of compensation if requested from Indigenous teachers, in addition to following the protocols of local nations, such as the gift of tobacco where appropriate and where Indigenous teachers agree for this protocol to be followed. Organizations providing for the time for Indigenous peoples to reconnect with land and engage in activities that are emotionally regenerative was also mentioned by some of the organizations as part of recognizing how working toward reconciliation and decolonization is often emotionally draining. Organizations in the study also discussed the importance of funding Indigenous-led initiatives — through donations, scholarships, and grants — as a way to engage in decolonization and reconciliation.

Theme 9. Creating Safe Spaces for Conflict

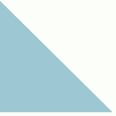
In the organizations who participated as interviewees and in the scholarly literature, it was clear that working on reconciliation and decolonization is not easy. Some scholars have attested that if decolonization seems too easy, it is likely not reaching deeply enough. Yet the likelihood of conflict was stressed by many as being a normal part of the process. Participants stressed that what is important is not the absence of conflict, but rather how communities working toward reconciliation and decolonization work through conflict, through carefully developed, and consistently revised, conflict resolution processes. Many organizations have conflict resolution processes for a variety of reasons, yet particular conflict resolution processes may often be needed for reconciliation and decolonization work. Indigenous organizations have developed and published conflict resolution processes based in Indigenous ways of knowing, and organizations can review these as well as additional conflict resolution resources, of which there are many, to develop safe spaces for conflict in their decolonization and reconciliation initiatives. This theme relates to theme 5 (internal education in organizations), in that when settlers begin to learn about “land back” and other initiatives that centre Indigenous sovereignty and rights, deep uncertainties and significant discomfort can be part of understanding and learning how to take action on these initiatives. Processes developed for engaging in reconciliation and decolonization work may also be productively combined with anti-racism education, as deep-seated racism can be part of some members or staff resisting reconciliation and decolonization work.

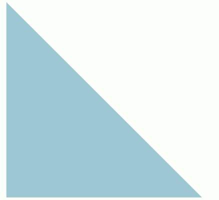
Invitation to the Detailed Report

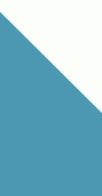
This report continues below with descriptions of each of these core themes, with more details and references to videos, websites, and academic literature. We hope this report will aid as organizations' reconciliation and decolonization projects evolve over time. We extend our deepest gratitude to the organizations who participated in this study: the Council of Canadians, Grandmother's Voice, and the six anonymous individuals who spoke with us, and the organizations in which they work.



We are grateful to have worked on this important project and extend our gratitude to those who made it possible.







About the Authors: Positionality and Land Acknowledgments

The Role of Research: Our Positionality as Researchers

This project used—and operation within — the term “research”. Authors such as Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Smith [1999] 2012), have written critical histories of research. Research has often placed the subjects (or indeed, “objects”) of the research under a magnifying glass in order to examine their lives, ways of thinking, and sacred worlds without sufficient (and often without any) consideration of the politics of research (Mihesuah 1998; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2019; Smith [1999] 2012). In other words, research has often been an invasive method of gathering information when wielded by settlers (Kovach 2021; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2019; Smith [1999] 2012; Wilson 2008). The critical literature on decolonizing and Indigenous methodologies emphasizes how important it is for settlers to move away from the colonial explanations of Indigenous histories and practices that have been perpetuated throughout history (Kouri 2020; Smith [1999] 2012). For example, critical literature on research has emphasized that one damaging way research has been used in relation to Indigenous peoples is to excessively document problems Indigenous peoples face, even while Indigenous peoples are far more complex, having experienced centuries of damage but with joy, hope, and desires also central to the communities (Tuck 2009). This report forms its framework upon the critical literature on research, and on decolonizing and Indigenous methodologies, focusing on **how this research can be of benefit to Indigenous communities**. This report aims to serve as part of the framework behind initiatives for decolonization and reconciliation in organizations, where the overall aim behind such initiatives is **benefits to Indigenous communities** (Smith [1999] 2012; Tuck 2009). We advocate for benefits to Indigenous communities as an overall goal to guide both to research and organizational practice.

The University Class

This report was completed in a 4th-year undergraduate class at the University of Toronto called "Sociology of the Environment and Social Justice". The objective of the class was to understand the links and conflicts between movements for environmental stewardship (or the many other ways of conceptualizing that idea, such as environmental protection, environmental friendliness, land stewardship, etc.) and those for social justice. One way of conceptualizing the joint production of social justice and environmental stewardship is the idea of "just sustainability" (Agyeman, Bullard, and Evans 2003). The idea of just sustainability is that there are links between social equality and environmental quality. Impoverished communities tend to be exposed to many more environmental toxins while having less access to environmental amenities like urban parks (Park and Pellow 2011; Taylor 2014). Similarly, when social justice is prioritized and practiced, it is often the case that ethical concern and action is also given to non-human beings in the world, such as in many Indigenous ways of knowing and relating to the land (McGregor 2009, 2018; TallBear 2017). Decolonization is not necessarily consistent with social justice (Tuck and Yang 2012), and the class also investigated to what degree decolonization was consistent with, or deferred from, different approaches to environmental protection and social justice. Finally, the class also aimed to understand how well-being and mental health can be more widely distributed in society while existing on the basis of just sustainability and decolonization. Therefore, the class was aimed at understanding the interconnections between well-being, social justice, decolonization or reconciliation, and environmental stewardship.

The second main aim of the class was to create research that is relevant and useful for organizations that are working on the interconnection of well-being, decolonization, social justice, and environmental stewardship. To create research with direct relevance for organizations working toward these goals, the class worked directly with two organizations. The class met with these organizations to learn about their research needs. Once the students and organizational partners had defined the research need of the organization, the students, under the supervision of the course instructor for the class, carried out the research projects.

The projects had two major elements: a review of the literature and original data collection and analysis. The following report is the outcome of the research project for two of the partners, the Council of Canadians and Grandmother's Voice. The aim of these projects was to provide an opportunity for upper-level university students to apply their skills and energy to research needs of community organizations, as a way to push forward decolonization, just-sustainability and the well-being that can be connected to it, while providing the students with real-world experience that can help prepare them for their future careers.

The Council of Canadians and Grandmother's Voice

This research was conducted on behalf of the Council of Canadians and Grandmother's Voice – the class asked these organizations what their research priorities were, and they identified better understanding how organizations in Canada are engaging in reconciliation and decolonization as a priority. The class then carried out the research. The Council of Canadians is a registered nonprofit organization that holds values based on fair and sustainable trade, clean water, climate justice, democracy, and stronger public health care. The organization works with grassroots activists across Canada to promote social and economic justice on a day-to-day basis. The Council also states within their 2023 Strategic plan that, "We understand the lands that Canada occupies are the traditional territories of its original Indigenous stewards, and as such the Council of Canadians has a responsibility to contribute to decolonization and reconciliation" (Council of Canadians 2023). Jody Harbour, one of the founders of Grandmother's Voice, described the organization as "a visionary Indigenous organization that aims to unite Indigenous voices while extending a warm invitation to individuals from all directions. With deep reverence for the timeless wisdom carried by Grandmothers, we endeavor to be a source of healing and unity within communities.
Our mission is to revive and amplify these Ancestral insights and values, nurturing them for generations to come. We extend our hand to individuals, corporations, and organizations across the public, private, and non-profit sectors, inviting them to join us in embracing the teachings of Indigenous Ancestors, Grandmothers, and Grandfathers. Through this collaboration, we aspire to craft a tapestry of Hope, Heart, and Healing that envelops all" (Jody Harbour, personal communication, October 2023).

Contributors

Hema Parhar is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto double majoring in Sociology and Health Studies. Hema is a settler whose family originated from India and currently resides on the traditional territory of the Chippewas of the Georgina Islands, Under Treaty #13 and the Williams Treaty of 1923.

Kaela Speigel Biro is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto double majoring in Diaspora and Transnational Studies and Sociology. Kaela is a settler raised on Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people, under the Peace and Friendship Treaty. Kaela is eternally grateful for being able to live and work the land which she calls home.

Micah Kalisch is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto specializing in Women and Gender Studies, majoring in Sociology, and minoring in Critical Equity and Solidarity Studies. Micah is a settler raised on the unceded territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississauga, under the Williams Treaty.

Tim Selland is a fourth-year undergraduate student at the University of Toronto studying to complete a double major in Philosophy and Sociology. Tim is an advocate for environmental justice and has a deep interest in horticulture. He studies and lives on the land of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Wendat confederacies.

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Tyler Bateman is a PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto working to complete his dissertation in sociology.

He leads the Cultural Interface Institute, a research organization working to advance decolonization, social justice, environmental stewardship, and mental health. Tyler grew up in Edmonton, Alberta, on Treaty 6 territory, in the territories of the Plains Cree, Stoney Nakoda, Blackfoot, Métis, additional Cree nations. He currently lives in the territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Wendat, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee confederacies. He is a settler with ancestors from Poland, Croatia, Ireland, Germany, and in Eastern Europe generally. The name of the Cultural Interface Institute comes from the concept of the cultural interface, a concept that frames the projects in the work of this institute. In the section below on Indigenous knowledges, this concept is defined and discussed. As a first act of being at a cultural interface, Tyler discussed the name of this institute with Martin Nakata, the author of the paper that coined the term "the cultural interface" (Nakata 2007), and Martin encouraged using the concept as the name of the institute.

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Wendy Lynn Lerat (Regional Organizer for the Prairie Provinces & NWT, Council of Canadians)

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Colin McMahon, Ph.D. (Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support, Faculty of Arts & Science, University of Toronto)

Key Terms: Decolonization and Reconciliation

This report is centered on two key terms: decolonization and reconciliation. These terms could be defined in a wide range of ways, and this report looks to Indigenous scholars to form the basis of the report's discussion of them.

Eve Tuck, who "is Unangax̂ and is an enrolled member of the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, Alaska" (Tuck 2023), and Wayne Yang, a settler of colour (Stewart-Ambo and Yang 2021:21), have defined decolonization as "the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (Tuck and Yang 2012:21). This definition has been influential, with thousands of citations and scholars such as Kim TallBear (e.g., TallBear 2020) consistently emphasizing the importance of this definition. TallBear discusses the definition as the "repatriation or restoration of Indigenous land and life" (TallBear 2020). By this, Tuck, TallBear, and others mean that efforts to decolonize should center, first, the restoration of Indigenous peoples' relationships with land, including self-determination and sovereignty over land. It is this part of the definition of decolonization referenced by #LandBack movements. Second, the restoration of "life" is meant to refer to many aspects of life, whether this is health, thriving communities, or successful careers. TallBear, for example, operates the Summer internship for INdigenous peoples in Genomics (SING), where Indigenous students interested in a career in genomics can develop networks and skills that launch successful careers (TallBear 2020).

The use of "decolonization" in too loose a form has been a cause for scrutiny. The term decolonization itself has been popularly adopted by settler-colonial institutions as a way to describe efforts of social justice and decentering settler perspectives for marginalized groups collectively (Tuck and Yang 2012). This has taken away from what Tuck and Yang (2012) emphasize as

the restoration of “Indigenous land and life.” When settlers have engaged in reconciliatory or decolonial work, they have often ended up adhering to one or more of what Tuck and Yang (2012) call settler moves to innocence.

Tuck and Yang (2012) describe settler moves to innocence as tactics used by settlers in order to settle their guilt or remove themselves from the atrocities that Indigenous peoples have suffered. An example of such a move to innocence is the idea to “free your mind and the rest will follow” (Tuck and Yang 2012:19)—meaning that, once settlers decolonize their own ways of thinking, or develop “critical consciousness”, decolonization has been achieved, instead of focusing on restoring “Indigenous land and life”. When acts, which benefit settlers by easing guilt, are performed under the guise of reconciliation, they have the potential of placing the suffering of Indigenous peoples in the past (Wark 2021). These criticisms emphasize that centering the restoration of “Indigenous land and life” is crucial for any settler engaging in decolonial work.

Reconciliation has also had a debated definition. Increasingly, Indigenous scholars are shifting to decolonization rather than reconciliation, while still respecting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s work that centered on “reconciliation” (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018; TallBear 2020). For example, in an influential article, Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) have demonstrated that since the TRC report was released in Canada, organizations (specifically, universities) have taken one of three approaches as they attempted to “indigenize”. They describe the weakest form of indigenization as “Indigenous inclusion,” by which they mean (in a university context), “a policy that aims to increase the number of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff in the Canadian academy” (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018:218). They critique this approach as this inclusion does not question the kinds of knowledge and practices in these organizations, instead expecting Indigenous peoples to assimilate to the colonial norms of the organization. The next form of indigenization, reconciliation indigenization, is also critiqued as not sufficient. Reconciliation decolonization involves (in universities), “debates such as what counts as knowledge, how should Indigenous knowledges and European-derived knowledges be reconciled, and what types of relationships academic institutions should have with Indigenous communities” (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018:219).

But many scholars have observed the reconciliation approach only leading to superficial changes: “aspirational rhetoric” ends up being more prominent than “actual changes in practice” when universities try to engage in reconciliation (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018:222). Third, Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) describe decolonial indigenization, in which they place their hope and confidence. Decolonial indigenization involves “the wholesale overhaul of the academy to fundamentally reorient knowledge production based on balancing power relations between Indigenous peoples and Canadians” (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018:219).

We believe that Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) give one important perspective on the difference between reconciliation and decolonization, but of course it can also be challenged and for some, reconciliation may still be useful and important. Reconciliation was, of course, the focus of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and we will next describe that report and how it can be adapted for community organizations.

Defining Reconciliation: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the TRC Calls to Action

The Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action (TRC 2015b) provide a source of guidance for organizations in reconciliation. However, for organizations whose work is not explicitly addressed in the document, it can be difficult to know exactly where—and how—to begin. Environmental and many types of community organizations do not have a specific set of Calls to Action that directly refer to their organizations' work. Most of the Calls to Action point to government action as what is needed. Table 2 includes all of the Calls to Action that do not exclusively include governments (federal, provincial, municipal, and aboriginal) or churches. Environmental and community organizations can look to the principles in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action and adapt principles for themselves, a practice encouraged by Indigenous scholars (e.g., TallBear 2020).

Settler organizations may be unsure whether it is appropriate to adapt principles from the report and this is perhaps why some organizations we interviewed have chosen to focus elsewhere, doing their own learning and outreach to Indigenous communities in order to incorporate decolonization and/or reconciliation into their practices. This ambiguity around community organizations in the TRC Calls to Action has led the organizations in our study in different directions in terms of reconciliatory practices and may be part of why wide scale collaboration has yet to materialize, in contrast to the collaborations among churches, for example.

Table 2. Those Calls to Action, developed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, not Exclusively Directed at Governments nor Christian Churches. Bold and italics show the actor or group focused on in each call to action.

Call to Action Number	Call to Action Text
16	We call upon ***post-secondary institutions*** to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages
22	We call upon ***those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system*** to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.

Table 2 Continued. Calls to Action not Solely to be taken up by Governments nor Churches.

Call to Action Number	Call to Action Text
24	We call upon ***medical and nursing schools in Canada*** to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.
27	We call upon ***the Federation of Law Societies of Canada*** to ensure that lawyers receive appropriate cultural competency training, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.
28	We call upon ***law schools in Canada*** to require all law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and antiracism.

Table 2 Continued. Calls to Action not Solely to be taken up by Governments nor Churches.	
Call to Action Number	**Call to Action Text**
49	We call upon ***all religious denominations and faith groups*** who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.
65	We call upon the federal government, through ***the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council***, and in collaboration with **Aboriginal peoples, *post-secondary institutions and educators***, and the **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions**, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.
69	We call upon ***Library and Archives Canada*** to: i. Fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Joinet-Orentlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools. ii. Ensure that its record holdings related to residential schools are accessible to the public. iii. Commit more resources to its public education materials and programming on residential schools.

Table 2 Continued. Calls to Action not Solely to be taken up by Governments nor Churches.	
Call to Action Number	**Call to Action Text**
71	We call upon all ***chief coroners and provincial vital statistics agencies*** that have not provided to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada their records on the deaths of Aboriginal children in the care of residential school authorities to make these documents available to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.
76	We call upon ***the parties engaged in the work of documenting, maintaining, commemorating, and protecting residential school cemeteries*** to adopt strategies in accordance with the following principles: i. The Aboriginal community most affected shall lead the development of such strategies. ii. Information shall be sought from residential school Survivors and other Knowledge Keepers in the development of such strategies. iii. Aboriginal protocols shall be respected before any potentially invasive technical inspection and investigation of a cemetery site.
77	We call upon ***provincial, territorial, municipal, and community archives*** to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Table 2 Continued. Calls to Action not Solely to be taken up by Governments nor Churches.	
Call to Action Number	**Call to Action Text**
83	We call upon ***the Canada Council for the Arts*** to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.
85	We call upon ***the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network***, as an independent non-profit broadcaster with programming by, for, and about Aboriginal peoples, to support reconciliation, including but not limited to: i. Continuing to provide leadership in programming and organizational culture that reflects the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples. ii. Continuing to develop media initiatives that inform and educate the Canadian public, and connect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
86	We call upon ***Canadian journalism programs and media schools*** to require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations.

Table 2 Continued. Calls to Action not Solely to be taken up by Governments nor Churches.	
Call to Action Number	**Call to Action Text**
91	We call upon ***the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games*** to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events.
92	We call upon ***the corporate sector in Canada*** to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following: i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects. ii. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects. iii. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

From the overview of the calls to action not directed at governments and churches (Table 2) some principles can be understood to apply to environmental and community organizations (Table 3). The principles outlined in Table 3 indicate some of the main priorities across the Calls to Action that refer to organizations beyond the government and church groups, and could serve as starting points for organizations thinking about their reconciliatory practices and anticolonial projects.

Table 3. Principles for Environmental and Community Organizations adapted from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action that do not exclusively direct their message to governments nor church groups. Quotes indicate direct passages from Table 2 and are in bold.

Principle Number	Principle	Call(s) to Action
1	Support "**programs in Aboriginal languages**" that Indigenous peoples lead	16
2	"**Recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices**" and support "**Aboriginal healers**"	22
3	Provide members with cultural competency and educational training on: • "**the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, Aboriginal-Crown relations**" • "**Indigenous teachings and practices**"	24, 27, 28, 86, 92

Table 3 Continued. Principles for Environmental and Community Organizations adapted from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

Principle Number	Principle	Call(s) to Action
4	Provide members with "**skill-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and antiracism.**"	27, 28, 92
5	Publicly "**repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.**"	40
6	Establish research programs "**to advance understanding of reconciliation**"	65
7	Support "**Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process**"	83
8	"**Ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in**" those aspects of "**planning and participating in**" the environmental or community organization's events (levels of participation that are appropriate given the state of the organization's relationships with Indigenous communities and given the interest that members of those Indigenous communities have in engaging with the programs of the organization)	91

Table 3 Continued. Principles for Environmental and Community Organizations adapted from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.		
Principle Number	**Principle**	**Call(s) to Action**
9	**"Adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to [the organization's] policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:** **i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with [the organization's] projects.** **ii. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to ... opportunities in the [environmental movement or community engagement] sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from [the organization's] projects.** **iii. Provide education for management, staff, [and members] on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism."**	92

Summary of Tables 2 and 3 on the TRC Calls to Action

One of the most consistent principles across the Calls to Action outlined in Table 2 is to provide cultural competency and educational training for the members of organizations, whether these are degree programs in universities and colleges (law, nursing, media) or in businesses. The most common educational priorities in the Calls to Action include developing cultural competency and knowledge on, “the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal—Crown relations”. In one call to action (#24), “Indigenous teachings and practices” is also included as an educational priority. Several of the Calls to Action for these organizations also emphasize “skill-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and antiracism” for members. The Calls to Action, therefore, call on organizations to act as educational forces in the lives of their staff, volunteers, and members and to ensure that commitment to reconciliation is shared among its members.

Consistent with the findings in the rest of the report, putting these educational priorities into action must take into consideration the labour of Indigenous peoples. When Indigenous peoples are guiding this education, they must, for example, be compensated fairly. But settlers also need to take it upon themselves to get educated, and they can do so, for example, with the wide variety of reading material that Indigenous peoples have produced. Reading and discussion groups focused on Indigenous peoples, practices, histories, and ways of knowing could be one way that organizations put these goals into practice while not exclusively placing the burden of education on Indigenous peoples themselves. While someone does need to take the lead to ensure that such discussion groups do not descend into stereotypes and superficiality, or be co-opted to create a sense of settler innocence (Wakeham 2019), they can still be an important source for education (Kouri 2020). To support such groups, settlers can also make resource lists and guides that help other settlers to learn about what reading material—and other resources such as films and TV—are available to bring settlers to a place where they are educated on the issues identified by the Calls to Action such as Indigenous law and Crown-Indigenous relations.

As has been discussed on the podcast MediaINDIGENA (2019), it may also be helpful to frame the education of settlers on decolonization and reconciliation as “settler studies” rather than “Indigenous studies,” to turn the lens on settler practices and discuss their ethical responsibilities. We discuss these themes in more detail in the discussion of Theme 1, below.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) also looms large in the Calls to Action — for this reason, we have also attached it as the last section of this report. In the Call to Action for the corporate sector (#92), UNDRIP is referred to as the most important framework for businesses as a means to develop initiatives for reconciliation. Incorporating UNDRIP into the organizational framework, including in policies and bylaws, is one way that environmental and community organizations can take inspiration from the Calls to Action in ways consistent with its recommendations for similar sectors. Members could also be encouraged to read UNDRIP and suggest ways that the organization can operate according to its principles.

When organizations work on activist campaigns, artists are also often sought to make the campaign more vivid and to deepen the meanings associated with it. One of the Calls to Action focuses on how Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists may be able to productively collaborate on work that contributes to the process of reconciliation. As organizations develop campaigns that align with reconciliation and centre it, these organizations may seek to hire Indigenous artists and in that way be supported by Indigenous artists in making the organization’s campaigns to be more vivid and meaningful while also supporting Indigenous artists financially.

Conclusion to Discussion of Key Terms

In light of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, there has been an increase in the emergence of Indigenous literature on the implementation efforts of the Calls to Action as well as ideas about what needs to be achieved in order for reconciliation to be achieved (Jewell and Mosby 2022; Trimble 2021). As introduced in this section, reconciliation as a principle has been critiqued at times by Indigenous scholars, elders, and teachers.

There has been a shift in how Indigenous ideas surrounding reconciliation have been recognized across all institutions, as some scholars believe that reconciliation efforts can bring about profound change, while others believe that the practices of reconciliation have become largely about maintaining settler normalcy that continues to reinforce practices of colonization (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018; Trimble 2021).

This section has reviewed the TRC calls to action and has discussed how some ways they may be adapted for community organizations, as an introduction to this report. The remainder of the report moves into some of the literature on decolonization and reconciliation, and also to the original data collected for this study. That data includes interviews with those involved in community organizations, where discussions included how the organizations are moving to decolonial and reconciliatory practices.

Introduction to the Interviewees

Individuals from six organizations gave interviews for this project. We briefly introduce them here, and will only refer to them by their pseudonyms for the remainder of the report. The individuals' names and the names of their organizations have been made anonymous as a standard practice of qualitative research (Lareau 2021).

Samantha is Indigenous and volunteers at a settler-led religious organization. This organization operates across Canada and internationally as well. She has a leadership role on the reconciliation committee of this organization.

Jody began collaborating with this project as an interviewee, and became an official partner – she leads Grandmother's Voice. She is Indigenous and is a co-founder of the organization. Grandmother's Voice is focused on nurturing Indigenous relationships with land and Indigenous resistance.

Louise has both settler and Indigenous relatives, and works at a majority-settler organization which is cross-Canada in scope. The organization Louise works for does research and advises governments on policy.

Alison is a settler and a co-founder of an Indigenous-led organization that works to restore animal habitat locally in Toronto.

Mary is a settler at a settler-led organization. The organization's members are mostly over 50, and it operates across Canada. Mary's organization works broadly to influence government policy.

Michael is also a settler at a settler-led organization. He works for an international organization that has branches in Canada. The organization he works for has many different environmental initiatives—it is a large environmental non-profit organization.

Table 1. Interviewees and organizations by pseudonym.

Interviewee Pseudonym	Self-Identified Relationship to Land in Canada	Interviewee Role	Organization Size and Scope	Gender of Members (Women - Men - Nonbinary)*	Age of Members	Racial Diversity and Indigeneity in Organization
Mary	Settler	Senior Advisor/ Organizer	100-499 people; Cross-Canada	60-40	Most 50+	Most White; ~5% Black
Samantha	Indigenous	Mid-level Advisor/ Organizer	1-49 people; Regional in Canada	60-40	Not answered	Indigenous (~50%); Non-Indigenous (~50%)
Michael	Settler	Mid-level Advisor/ Organizer	500+ people; International with branches in Canada	60-40	Most 30–64	White (~40%); Asian (~30%); Latinx (~15%); Black (~5%); Middle Eastern (~5%)
Alison	Settler	Senior Advisor/ Organizer	1-49 people; Provincial	Not answered	Not answered	About equal for different racial groups and Indigenous members
Louise	Settler and Indigenous	Senior Advisor/ Organizer	50-99 people; Cross Canada and participates in international collaboration	60-40	20–29 (~30%); 30–39 (~30%); 40–49 (~30%); 50+ (~10%)	White (~67%); Asian (~7%); Latinx (~7%); Black (~7%); Middle Eastern (~7%); Indigenous (~5%)
Jody	Indigenous	Senior Advisor/ Organizer	1–49 people; Cross-Canada	90-5-5	Under 30 (30%); 30–49 (30%); 50–64 (20%); 65+ (20%)	Indigenous (~60%); White (~30%); Black (~10%)

* All interviewees but Jody listed that they were unsure of how many non-binary members there were in their organizations.

The next section continues with Theme 1, starting a set of sections including more detailed descriptions of each of the report's primary themes. These descriptions of the themes are followed by a conclusion, and a final section including this report's methodology and appendices.

Theme 1: The Strains and Legitimacy of Decolonial Labour

Indigenous interviewees who participated in this study often emphasized the strain of decolonial labour. They called for more settlers to take initiative to do this labour. Yet, settlers must be careful when engaging in this labour, to not engage in common pitfalls such as settler moves to innocence, the distortion of Indigenous knowledges, and cultural appropriation.

The Strains of Decolonial Labour

This first theme that we discuss came up in both interviews and in the literature, and is about the strains and legitimacy of decolonial labour. We found that Indigenous staff at community organizations in Canada are often assigned the bulk of the work of reconciliation and decolonization in their organizations. To a degree, this reflects organizations' efforts to ensure that Indigenous ways of knowing and organizing are legitimately applied. That is, community organizations are trying to avoid cultural appropriation and the distortion of Indigenous knowledges and practices. They are also attempting to ensure that the work of reconciliation and decolonization provides employment opportunities for Indigenous peoples. For these reasons, it would indeed be strange if a settler were the sole hired employee at a community organization tasked with decolonizing it. Yet, the Indigenous interviewees in this study emphasized that more settler initiative and labour for reconciliation and decolonization—as long as still Indigenous-led—would be appreciated.

In other words, our research found how important it is to address the time, labour, and educational work that is placed upon Indigenous peoples amidst the process of reconciliation. Indigenous employees are frequently asked to take on the emotionally intensive responsibility of advocating for their peoples, educating their peers on Indigenous knowledges and histories, and advancing reconciliation.

This high emotional and cultural load at work can lead to Indigenous individuals feeling emotionally burnt out, something that has been found in other institutional spaces in Canada such as university classrooms (Park and Bahia 2022; Smyth, Linz, and Hudson 2020), sports (McLeod et al. 2023), and in the tourism industry when Indigenous tour guides help settlers take the first steps into reconciliation and decolonization (Graham and Dadd 2021). As such, a principle that can emerge for ethical reconciliation work by settlers is they ensure they avoid placing the burden of reconciliation solely upon Indigenous peoples.

One sub-theme here is that Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately burdened with the education of settlers. The impact of this disproportionate work is not easy to bear. Samantha explained that she reduced the number of invitations to speak and lead reconciliation education for settlers when,

> **I just realized how much I traumatized myself over the years trying to teach non-indigenous people about what happened to us.**

When Indigenous peoples provide learning opportunities for settlers, it is deeply emotional labour. Samantha has worked in many levels of education: at universities, as a trainer for KAIROS Blanket Exercise facilitators, and in a wide variety of community, educational, and religious organizations. As a residential school survivor, the education Samantha provided was often reliving the pain she had experienced; educational events like the KAIROS Blanket Exercise go through the trauma of residential schools and many other violent actions from the Canadian government.

The emotional strain of, and responsibility for, decolonial labour is commonly discussed by Indigenous peoples in Canada and internationally. One report on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia found that “39% of respondents reported having a high cultural load in their workplace … This came in the form of … being expected to educate their non-Indigenous colleagues about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and racism sometimes, often or all the time” (Brown et al. 2020:13).

In order to meaningfully engage in the work of reconciliation there were two main ideas that emerged. The first is that settlers can take more initiative in their education and advocacy of reconciliation efforts to reduce the workload upon Indigenous communities and activists. The Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action also call many settlers to take initiative (Tables 2 and 3), and subsequent reports on the calls to action similarly call for this settler initiative (Jewell and Mosby 2022). Samatha referred explicitly to the difficulty of re-living intergenerational traumas through educating settlers. Many elders and other Indigenous teachers are asked to share their stories and perform activities such as the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, which recounts the years of hardship and oppression that these individuals and their ancestors have experienced, which can be a retraumatizing experience. Jody shared, in reference to elders,

> **They work now, you know, probably more hours a week than any other job in the world, because they're being pulled everywhere. They're being pulled in corporate settings in the front line and you know, Indigenous organizations. And then in their own communities to heal their communities.**

There are increasing calls for settlers to engage in the work of decolonization and reconciliation from both Indigenous peoples (e.g., TRC 2015b), settlers (Bloom and Carnine 2016; Hurwitz 2017; Kouri 2020; Stein et al. 2023), and Latinx scholars and activists of mixed settler and Indigenous ancestry (Darder 2019; Torres 2019).

Settlers doing more of the work of decolonization and reconciliation is thus one way to relieve pressure on Indigenous employees, elders, and teachers. Yet when Indigenous peoples do this work, Louise emphasized the importance of supporting them. She said,

> **Make sure you have a support centre in place, and you support the wellness of Indigenous staff because it is emotional labour. I think there needs to be a recognition of that before any posting [about Indigenous-led learning] goes out.**

This is an important recommendation and may be instructive for other organizations: ensuring that Indigenous staff have support and recognizing that emotional labour involves more labour than the time it takes to prepare educational materials and give workshops. One way that may be applied in practice is to factor in time for regeneration and healing as part of the work that Indigenous staff are asked to do.

When settlers are called to take initiative, what steps should be taken? Louise spoke of the fear many settlers have in doing more of the labour of reconciliation, stating,

> **I find a lot of the hesitation to implementing reconciliation is that people don't want to make mistakes. They don't want to do it wrong ... How do I do this in a good way? And so there's this fear, but that fear can cause stagnation and no action.**

In the rest of this section, we discuss some themes in the literature about addressing this uncertainty.

The Legitimacy of Decolonial Labour

The fear Louise mentioned reflects that there are risks with settlers doing reconciliation and decolonization work. Settlers who do not have a strong understanding of the history of Canada's relations with Indigenous peoples and of the current realities Indigenous peoples face may cause more harm for Indigenous communities when they try to help. Settlers may start to teach Indigenous ways of knowing in ways inconsistent with these ways of knowing, for example, or in other ways have good intentions while creating harm. We found three-subthemes related to these issues in the literature.

Self-Determination and Sovereignty: Indigenous-led Decolonization

The first subtheme we found in relation to these issues is to maintain the principles of self-determination and sovereignty when settlers do the work of reconciliation and decolonization. This means that Indigenous peoples should still be at the lead, even if settlers are assigned to do the work of placing the reconciliation and/or decolonization initiatives into practice (Brown et al. 2020; Indigenous Action 2014). But even so, Indigenous peoples will not always be available to lead reconciliation and/or decolonization initiatives in-person (Showden, Nairn, and Matthews 2022).

As has been argued by a settler team of researchers in Aotearoa (New Zealand), "Settlers need to do decolonizing work in partnership with Indigenous people[s], whether that partnership comes in the form of a bicultural board, bringing in Indigenous consultants, or an in-depth reading of Indigenous work" (Showden et al. 2022:680). That is, Indigenous peoples taking the lead can mean settlers taking the lead from published material and Indigenous media organizations like MediaINDIGENA (e.g., MediaINDIGENA 2019), although settlers must seriously and deeply engage with such material to ensure they are acting as appropriate allies (Whyte 2018a) or accomplices (Indigenous Action 2014). In this report, we have not consulted directly with Indigenous peoples on the definitions of decolonization and reconciliation, for example, but have taken the lead from Indigenous scholars on defining them, and also in defining central terms like the cultural interface and Two-Eyed Seeing. We will discuss those latter two concepts in the next sub-recommendation.

The Cultural Interface and Two-Eyed Seeing: Protocols for Coming Together Respectfully and Knowledge Coexistence

The second sub-theme is the use of concepts like the cultural interface (Nakata 2007) and Two-Eyed Seeing (Bartlett et al. 2012; Reid et al. 2021) to frame what it means for settlers and Indigenous peoples to be working together. These concepts also frame our discussion of Indigenous knowledges, another theme in this report. The cultural interface, described by Torres Strait Islander Martin Nakata (2007), is "this contested space between the two knowledge systems" (Nakata 2007:9). When an Indigenous person and a settler sit down at a table to talk about reconciliation and/or decolonization, they are at a cultural interface: a space where two distinct ways of being come together and come into dialogue. Thinking about principles for this cultural interface and putting them into practice—such as respecting sovereignty and avoiding cultural appropriation of Indigenous ways of knowing—is one way settlers can work in productive ways with Indigenous communities (Nakata 2007). As an example, this report itself represents working at the cultural interface between settlers and Indigenous peoples, and developing principles of doing this work in respectful ways while centering Indigenous peoples' well-being and the restoration of "Indigenous land and life" (Tuck and Yang 2012:21).

Similar to the idea of the cultural interface with the focus on maintaining distinct ways while coming into dialogue, Two-Eyed Seeing emphasizes self-determination, sovereignty, and knowledge coexistence. Two-Eyed Seeing is a Mi'kmaq teaching shared by elder Albert Marshall, and means,

> **"learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all" (Bartlett et al. 2012:335; Reid et al. 2021:245).**

The cultural interface and Two-Eyed Seeing can enable settlers to understand what it means to do reconciliation and decolonization work in ways that do not descend into problematic cultural appropriation and the distortion of Indigenous knowledges. Both the cultural interface and Two-Eyed Seeing emphasize that Indigenous ways of knowing and settler ways of knowing are distinct and cannot simply be incorporated into each other: they emphasize knowledge coexistence and sovereignty. Two-Eyed Seeing is increasingly applied in practical resource management contexts (Reid et al. 2021). It has proven repeatedly to be an effective means to bring settlers and Indigenous peoples together in ways that ensure mutual respect and Indigenous sovereignty (Reid et al. 2021).

We recommend settler organizations use frameworks such as Two-Eyed Seeing (Reid et al. 2021) and the cultural interface (Nakata 2007) to understand how to engage with Indigenous knowledges while not engaging in distortion or cultural appropriation. The principles in these concepts were also recognized as important by the Indigenous colleague we worked with at the Council of Canadians (Wendy Lerat) and Samantha, who both emphasized the importance of using both Indigenous and settler ways of knowing collectively. One organization not in our study that has used an approach that brings Indigenous and settler perspectives together while respecting distinct ways of knowing is the environmental education organization Natural Curiosity (Anderson et al. 2017). In the second edition of their guide to facilitating environmental education, the settler-led organization completely re-centered, with Indigenous teachers and Indigenous knowledge becoming a central feature of their approach (Anderson et al. 2017).

As a distinct image to help visualize the cultural interface, we describe here a photo Linda Tuhiwai Smith in one of her academic presentations showing Māori peoples and a group with Jacques Derrida facing each other with a space in the middle (Smith and Tuck 2013, minute 31, available on YouTube — see the reference list at the bottom of this report for a link). The Māori group and Derrida's group were coming together in dialogue, and Smith talks about how in that space of dialogue Indigenous peoples and settlers can develop ethical principles for action.

> **"This photograph here is actually a welcome to the French philosopher Derrida, who is the figure in the gray suit, but this is not really about him ... I took this photo so you will see from my position where I'm standing [with the Māori group]. I'm standing behind the group that is welcoming Derrida onto our space. And you will see that between the group that Derrida is part of and our group there is a space. And that space over the next few minutes or next 40 minutes is negotiated through a series of protocols that walk Derrida and that group [of non-Māori] across the space to where we are. It seems to me that space of negotiation is a really important space where we're trying to shift where ... the centre is. It's easy to think it's all about Derrida. But in this particular ceremony, it's all about the space. And it's about moving people through space, through a series of protocols, that then join people together. And when you're thinking about changing — how do you change a perspective? — it's really trying to understand that space in which perspectives are created and shaped and formed in which they interact."**

Smith's understanding of moving through space through a series of protocols is similar to that space described by Nakata in the concept of the cultural interface. We see knowledge coexistence as the key to bringing Indigenous ways of knowing and settler ways of knowing together (Nakata 2007; Reid et al. 2021). It would be harmful for Indigenous knowledges to be made merely an accessory to Western colonial ways of operating under the guise of reconciliation or decolonization. This is a focal point of the discussion with Jody, as she shared that her work has sometimes faced,

> **resistance [from settlers] because we have to do things this way or that way, but it's not our way. We didn't get to where we are now by way of the system ... Everything we have done has been guided by elders. They have come into our community to teach us how to live and be and move towards healing.**

The practice of reconciliation, therefore, necessitates engagement with, reflection upon, and embodiment of Indigenous Knowledges in their own right and on their own terms, with the perspective of knowledge coexistence. Reid et al. (2021) offer helpful diagrams for understanding this principle deeply.

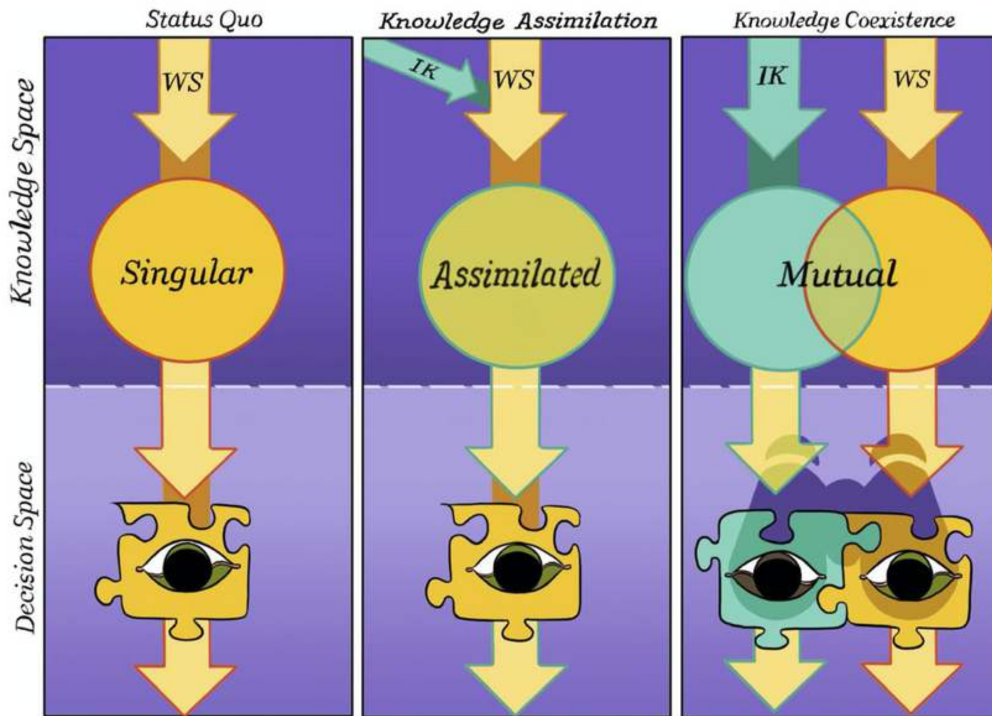

Figure 1. Reid et al.'s (2021) demonstration of what knowledge coexistence means. IK indicates "Indigenous Knowledge," and WS is "Western Science." The two eyes in the right panel are a visual representation of Two-Eyed Seeing. Image by illustrator Nicole Marie Burton. Used with permission of Andrea Reid.

Figure 1 emphasizes that knowledge coexistence is not knowledge assimilation. Knowledge coexistence means avoiding phrases like "incorporating Indigenous knowledge" into settler organizations, instead emphasizing the principle of knowledge coexistence and using multiple perspectives. Knowledge coexistence is using two (or more) distinct knowledge systems simultaneously without subjugating one to the other.

Next we discuss a principle that we found in the literature—in addition to the restoration of "Indigenous land and life" (Tuck and Yang 2012:21)—as relevant when discussing how settlers should be engaging with Indigenous peoples: centering Indigenous peoples' well-being.

This is one principle, but more would ideally be added by each organization that engages in this work—each settler organization will need to learn about local Indigenous protocols for coming together in productive and respectful ways. We understand it as one of the main responsibilities of settler institutions wanting to work in ethical ways with Indigenous communities to find out about the best ways for "moving people through space, through a series of protocols, that then join people together," as Smith said.

Indigenous Peoples' Well-being as a Principle at the Cultural Interface

The principle we highlight here is centering Indigenous healing and wellbeing (Tuck 2009; Tuck, McKenzie, and McCoy 2014; Tuck and Yang 2012). This is one way to understand the importance of attending to the labour of reconciliation and decolonization. Since there has been an increase in demand for educational services related to Canada's history of anti-Indigenous violence, displacement, and genocide (e.g., Gaudry and Lorenz 2018; Jewell and Mosby 2022), Indigenous labour is sought, but Indigenous well-being can still be highlighted at this cultural interface between settlers wanting to learn about colonization and Indigenous teachers.

As Jody said, "[Elders are] being pulled everywhere", but continued saying, "In order to move forward, we have to sit in it, we have to understand it, we have to remember it [the violences of colonization] ... But we [Indigenous Peoples] don't have to be there. We don't have to be in the pain." Indigenous peoples always having to lead decolonization can mean having to re-live pain in a way that does not end up centering Indigenous healing and well-being.

To use the principle of centering Indigenous healing and well-being, settlers may find the action imperative to do more of the work of decolonization, especially when it comes to learning about Canada's violent history. Transparency and education concerning the extensive histories of violence toward Indigenous Peoples by the Canadian state are vital. But to exist at this cultural interface while centering the principle of Indigenous healing and well-being, considering how the emotional well-being of Indigenous peoples is affected by reliving centuries of violence is necessary.

However, to apply the principles of centering Indigenous peoples' wellbeing and self-determination at the same time, Indigenous peoples must still be consulted about when they would like to participate, yet not expecting Indigenous teachers to relive trauma. This is just one example of how centering Indigenous peoples' healing and well-being can lead to a recommendation. It is a principle that can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

When discussing concepts such as the cultural interface and Two-Eyed Seeing, the issue of positionality, or in other words, standpoint, is also central. Nakata (2007) describes in detail what Indigenous standpoint theory can be about, and scholars such as Kim TallBear (TallBear 2014) are among many Indigenous scholars who have stressed the importance of understanding one's standpoint. Reflections on standpoint lead to the third sub-theme here.

Settler Studies

The third sub-theme is to think about what settlers are doing when they educate each other as being "settler studies" (MediaINDIGENA 2019). Indigenous knowledges have their own sovereignty and can only be fully appreciated by people from each Indigenous group, nevermind being fully appreciated by a settler (Todd 2022)—for example, an Anishinaabe person will not be able to immediately and fully appreciate the cosmology of a Blackfoot person (Todd 2022). Settlers should still do their best to understand Indigenous cosmologies, but when thinking of what settlers should be doing as they educate each other within the framework of reconciliation and decolonization, one priority is for settlers to understand their own communities and trajectories—to do "settler studies." Settler studies are valuable even if settlers also engage with the books, podcasts, and other work of Indigenous peoples and build relationships with Indigenous peoples in ways that that benefit Indigenous communities. When taking the initiative on settler studies, settlers can ask questions such as: "What does it mean to migrate to a place and become an oppressor?" Or, "What does it mean to flee oppression in Europe or another place, but then become part of an oppressive settler structure? What lies have settler families accepted from the Canadian government, such as terra nullius (e.g., the promise of "open" farmland)?"

Or, "What has the Government of Canada done in terms of trying to reduce Indigenous sovereignty and rights (e.g., as discussed by Manuel and Derrickson 2021)?"

As questions such as this are answered, and settlers gain a deeper appreciation of their own positionality—their own standpoint (Nakata 2007) —it clears some of the path toward connecting in genuine ways with Indigenous peoples. Understanding one's settler trajectory allows settlers to come to the questions of Indigenous resurgence, sovereignty, and self-determination in more genuine ways, reckoning with their family's trajectory and making commitments for building more just and sustainable societies together (Bloom and Carnine 2016). Principles for settler engagement with Indigenous peoples' priorities can also be developed in settler studies, such as thinking of oneself as a "foreigner" and an everyday practice of questioning the validity of the Canadian state and understanding a need to work with first peoples (Leblanc 2021). It is also essential that settlers are not on a quest to find their innocence (Tuck and Yang 2012)—settler privilege, especially for white settlers, will always require settlers to exist beyond searching for innocence, and instead understanding value in standing on principles and protocols that build better futures for Indigenous peoples in Canada (Indigenous Action 2014; Tuck et al. 2014).

Some of the organizations we studied have already done settler studies initiatives in their organizations, although not using that exact term. Louise's organization has undertaken many initiatives, such as a year-long curriculum for staff on Indigenous-Crown history in Canada. She said,

> **[Settler] staff really do go into a lot of detail. The reflexive means —something we talk about a lot internally—not just talking about the land, but where it is where you come from, and being reflective of your identity and power and privilege in that.**

It is important to emphasize, when talking about settler studies, that not all settlers came to the Americas by choice—different positionalities in the history of slavery, most prominently, is one of the ways settlers are far different from each other (King 2019).

Yet, Black communities can still do important work that respects Indigenous sovereignty over knowledge and land—Tiffany Lethabo King, for example, is one of the Black scholars and activists leading in respectfully working with the cultural interface between Indigenous peoples and Black communities (King 2019). Her work—which is itself the theory and practice of decolonization—has led to other initiatives by Black activists for decolonization that respect Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination (velez 2022)*. To avoid a colonization of decolonization, however, settler studies still should center Indigenous peoples and not lose sight of Indigenous peoples' priorities in discussion of settler histories (Davis, Denis, and Sinclair 2017). Yet a great deal of collaborative work is taking place, including a collaborative book written by Robin Maynard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson where the authors talk about collaborative organization such as "constellations of co-resistance" (2022:7).

One part of settler studies is understanding settler histories, including the Government of Canada's actions throughout history. It is incumbent upon settlers to do the work of learning settler history, including their own migration histories but also the actions of the Canadian state over time. With the 1969 White paper (Government of Canada 1969), and consistent efforts by Canadian governments since then, the Canadian government has consistently tried to completely assimilate Indigenous peoples into Canadian society, removing treaty and land rights (e.g., as described by Manuel and Derrickson 2021). In our experience, most settlers do not know this history, and it is an important place to start with settler studies.

Summary of Theme 1

To conclude this section, we want to emphasize that if settlers can do the work of reconciliation and decolonization in respectful ways, they can avoid relying on asking Indigenous peoples to do every part of reconciliation and/or decolonization, avoiding placing the responsibility of decolonizing solely on Indigenous peoples, and thus taking on some of the very emotional and time-consuming work of decolonizing (Daigle 2019). Building and nurturing ethical relationships with Indigenous communities remains a critical priority, but that work can exist alongside settlers working on better appreciating Indigenous ways of knowing and better understanding their own settler histories.

*bronte velez chooses to not capitalize her name.

Effort also needs to be expended to ensure that reconciliation or decolonization efforts are not performed for the purpose of assuaging settler guilt or promoting settler innocence, but instead centering the restoration of "Indigenous land and life" (Tuck and Yang 2012:21). Even settlers dedicated to decolonization do not become innocent (Rosa 2020; Tuck and Yang 2012) and retain settler privilege (Whyte 2018a).

Settler Initiative in Practice

As an example in practice, the organization Samantha now volunteers for has many settlers who are engaged in reconciliation. The settlers at this organization build relationships consistently with different Indigenous communities and provide resources and opportunities for Indigenous peoples to facilitate Indigenous-led initiatives. Samantha appreciates the work these settlers are doing, who in several ways are supporting Indigenous-led initiatives to heal. Samantha emphasized that residential schools were not simply teaching subjects like math and science—they were teaching the Catholic religious cosmology that deeply influenced children at vulnerable moments in their upbringing. Finding spiritual paths to healing has been critical to Samantha's Indigenous-led healing initiatives, which have led to embracing the loving Creator, in contrast to the Catholic God and clergy that demanded so much of Indigenous children and left many with deep wounds.

Settlers from the Catholic Church have supported Indigenous healing initiatives that Samantha has been part of and have played a role in Indigenous-led spiritual resurgence. Part of this work is settler leaders—such as priests—speaking to other settlers and admitting fault in Canada's residential school system. Many Canadians do not believe that residential school abuses happened, or that residential schools were problematic. But when the settler Catholic leaders come to settler communities, admit fault, and talk about how the organizations are trying to remedy past harms, this legitimizes Indigenous peoples' claims for those settlers and helps to move reconciliation forward.

Yet in the work Samantha does with the Catholic organizations, self-determination and sovereignty are prioritized. Many Indigenous community members are skeptical of working with the Catholic Church. As Samantha explained,

> **They don't want somebody coming in there and trying to convert them again. They don't want somebody coming there and talking about their ceremonies in a negative way. We don't want that. We've had that. That's been done. But if you want to walk with us, you're going to accept us for who we are and not try to change us.**

This underlines the importance of sovereignty and self-determination, and how settlers walking with Indigenous people means following protocols that avoid negatively evaluating Indigenous knowledges and ways of being. The cultural interface and Two-Eyed Seeing could be part of settlers understanding the importance of this respect for sovereignty and self-determination. Any notion of settler superiority must be jettisoned in favour of sovereignty, dialogue, and co-existence if decolonial work is to avoid harm.

Theme 2: Many settlers are Eager to Contribute to Reconciliation and Decolonization but are Often Unsure of how to Proceed

Across our interviews, it was clear that there exists a palpable willingness—and, often, eagerness—to engage in the work advanced by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. "People come and they want to do the best that they can from their heart," reflected Jody, "They show up because they have big hearts and they want to make change". Desire is an important first step in the work of reconciliation and decolonization. Since 2015, the language of reconciliation has become common in settler institutions, such as governments, universities, public service organizations and corporations (Trimble 2021).

But many organizations are still struggling with implementing meaningful action for reconciliation that benefits Indigenous peoples in concrete ways (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018). Sometimes this appears to be out of simple lack of knowledge of the next step forward, but sometimes there are deep institutional trends like using as much funding as possible on increasing the organizations' status among other settler organizations (such as through university rankings) rather than increasing deep reciprocity with Indigenous peoples (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018). Yet there remains a consistent theme that settlers want to do something.

Some organizations are struggling to implement meaningful changes through practices, policies, and action (e.g., as has been found in the literature, in Gaudry and Lorenz 2018). Mary said, "And you know, I think most of us in [our organization] are saying, oh, we've got to do something, but exactly how?"

Louise's organization has found that after doing a one-year education program for staff on Indigenous-Crown history, staff began to take initiative, because they had more understanding of the context they were living in. Louise said that since the one-year curriculum finished, staff,

> **bring really strong recommendations and reports. They've done a lot, and they haven't required any guidance. They're doing that themselves. They're self-learning, they really want to advance Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty and are putting forward recommendations that create impactful change.**

This quote shows that the eagerness that organizations earlier in the process of reconciliation and decolonization find (such as Mary's organization) may often continue after settlers gain more information about more concrete ways they can participate. One of the ways to put eagerness into more concrete terms is to ask staff to envision the future, which Louise facilitates at her organization.

> **We said, "What do you envision reconciliation or decolonization looking like in the future?" And people had huge dreams. They were like, we want 50% Indigenous staff. We want this. There were so many suggestions of what people could potentially make happen. And I think we're on a journey to make them happen.**

It is important to know that settlers are motivated to do the work of reconciliation and decolonization. It is also important, throughout decolonial work, to emphasize Indigenous peoples' desires. As a close to this second theme, we mention something Samantha said in the interview, which was "We want to be heard and respected and honored as human beings".

As settlers think of their own desires to help, the interviewees and authors in the literature we reviewed emphasized that is important to consistently turn to what Indigenous peoples say—such as in published books or other published material, and in relationships between settlers and Indigenous peoples—to ensure that research does not overemphasize settler frameworks (Tuck 2009). These settler frameworks often emphasize damage in Indigenous communities while not adequately depicting the complexity of them, including desires, joy, practices of community, and hope. Samantha emphasized how she and others working with the settler organization wanted to "be heard and respected and honored as human beings," something that has so often been denied by settlers. Settlers may find reflecting on how they can deeply listen to, respect, and honour Indigenous peoples—and how they can meet other expressed desires of Indigenous communities—generative in their decolonial work, and make sure that their own desires do not overshadow those of Indigenous peoples.

Theme 3: Indigenous Knowledges

Indigenous frameworks and knowledges often remain outside of the core of settler organizations' work. This theme led us to consider ways that organizations can make knowledge coexistence, and Indigenous knowledges and frameworks part of organizations' visions and practices. The Calls to Action reflect this priority, for example through emphasizing the need to bring UNDRIP (p.97) into the basic framework of organizations (e.g., Call to Action #92, see Table 2).

Common Ground and Knowledge Co-existence

There may be some shared ground between Indigenous ways of knowing and those of environmental movements (Whyte 2018a, 2018b), due to their similar agendas and objectives, such as a critique of capitalism (Simpson 2017b). Community groups, especially those with environmental goals, often work towards the similar goals as Indigenous land sovereignty movements, such as reducing the power of transnational corporations. However, these goals will not always align (Whyte 2018a, 2018b) and environmental organizations are sometimes the adversary of Indigenous peoples (Alcorn 2010; Sunuwar 2018). The cultural interface and Two-Eyed Seeing emphasize that mainstream or settler ways of doing things do not have to align with Indigenous ways for Indigenous knowledges to become part of a settler organization. Sometimes the task is ensuring inconsistent systems can both exist and guide an organization's actions while in dialogue.

Using a Framework Document to Assess Organization Policies

Yet despite the possibility of explicitly working at cultural interfaces or using Two-Eyed Seeing, organizations often do not bring Indigenous concepts into the core of their organization. Samantha, an Indigenous interviewee, emphasized the importance of more people learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and having it inform their policies and frameworks.

Louise, who works at a settler-majority organization, talked about how her organization does bring a framework document—developed in response to the TRC Calls to Action—to bear on each of their policy documents. They have a specific document developed for this purpose, an internal policy, and any other policy they draft is read against it to determine whether it aligns with the Calls to Action. Creating a framework document that is used internally to gauge whether an organizations' policies and actions are in line with the Calls to Action and UNDRIP is one important way for Indigenous knowledges to become part of settler organizations.

Internal Advisory Boards

Louise's organization also has an ad-hoc advisory board of Indigenous-identified individuals, who provide guidance for the organization's initiatives. Having an internal advisory board is a step that changes the organization internally and is a consistent way that settlers in the organization are educated through what the advisory board recommends. Having an advisory board, or having Indigenous staff that are in consistent dialogues with settlers in the organization about whether the organization's initiatives align with Indigenous priorities, is both what Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) call inclusion Indigenization and reconciliation Indigenization: inclusion because Indigenous individuals are included in the organization and reconciliation because the organization provides a leadership role for the advisory board. For the inclusion of such an advisory board to push into decolonial Indigenization (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018), the recommendations of such an advisory board would need to be followed in-depth, and indeed Louise's organization also does put many initiatives into practice to facilitate decolonial Indigenization.

In terms of Indigenous knowledges, having an internal advisory board is another way that Indigenous knowledges can consistently enter into an organization's plans and policies. For Louise's organization, the Indigenous advisory board is not part of the organization's basic structure; rather, it is an ad-hoc board that meets about twice a year when particular issues make it highly relevant. The board then discusses all of the initiatives currently underway, as well as the central issue that led to the formation of the ad-hoc board.

In the bylaws and charter of organizations, anticipating an Indigenous advisory board, and incorporating it into the formal structure of the organization, is one way to make Indigenous oversight more consistent and deeply ingrained.

Learning Indigenous Peoples' Priorities

Another important point of knowledge is for settlers to listen to Indigenous peoples and find out what they need most. Louise's organization also does social research, and for the research that seeks engagement with Indigenous communities, they start this research by asking what Indigenous communities are prioritizing and work on initiatives that meet those priorities. They learned what Indigenous communities were prioritizing in research by conducting an initial research project that assessed what these research priorities were. Research, therefore, when seeking to provide value to Indigenous communities, can first start with projects that find out what kinds of research Indigenous peoples actually need, or what other supports they need if research is not a priority (Tuck 2009). As introduced at the end of theme 2, therefore, understanding Indigenous peoples' priorities and desires is a critical point of Indigenous knowledges to bring into settler organizations.

Knowledge that Requires Action

This brings us to our next sub-theme in this section, which is that in many Indigenous knowledge systems, knowledge does not exist as an entity separate from action: knowledge requires action. Most Indigenous epistemological conceptualizations of environmental justice center around a "deep reciprocity" between humans and all non-human beings (Simpson 2017b:75–76).* The epistemology of reciprocity with all beings is deeply ingrained in the work of the Indigenous organizations interviewed. This deep reciprocity is not simply a point of knowledge—is is an action imperative. When Reid et al. (2021:249) discuss the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, they note that "[c]entral to Two-Eyed Seeing is the notion that knowledge transforms the holder and that the holder bears a responsibility to act on that knowledge" (and they cite Hatcher et al. 2009 when they discuss this dimension of Two-Eyed Seeing).

*"Living things" refers to both living beings in the Western understandings (like plants and animals) but also beyond that to include water and other beings (TallBear 2017).

The action imperative of Two-Eyed Seeing is relevant to reconciliation and decolonization because it highlights how knowledge coexistence is not an end goal in itself:

> **"Two-Eyed Seeing uniquely moves beyond "unified-knowledges" as the end goal, to "unified-knowledges-and-here-is-what- we-are-compelled-to-do" as the ultimate realization of the framework" (Reid et al. 2021:249)**

So while knowledge coexistence is a critical protocol for reconciliation and decolonization, this knowledge coexistence is ultimately meaningless without thinking about what Indigenous knowledges compel organizations and individuals to do. Jody has described how the work of teaching settlers the violent history of Canada is often harmfully draining for Indigenous peoples. This is one point of knowledge that we have come across in our own work in this project that put Two-Eyed Seeing into practice. For us, this point of knowledge from Jody (and Samantha, as described earlier in the report) compels us to recommend the action we have described often in this report: to avoid placing the burden of teaching settlers about traumas of colonization on Indigenous peoples. It also moves us to recommend the action of settlers immersing themselves with Indigenous ways of knowing and histories through settler learning from published material by Indigenous writers and speakers. Not everyone learns best through reading, but we have consciously cited several YouTube videos—as an accessible source—in this report to emphasize how much there is on YouTube as well from Indigenous teachers (e.g., Smith and Tuck 2013; TallBear 2020; Todd 2022).

There are many ways that Indigenous knowledges can come into settlers' lives and into settler institutions, and published books, articles, and videos—along with learning directly—are some of the ways settlers can learn. Greater commitments by settlers to work on decolonization and reconciliation will come with deeper commitments to read, listen, watch, and learn from Indigenous teachers through these many conduits. Yet with this point we want to emphasize that this knowledge comes with action imperatives, and ideas like Two-Eyed Seeing explicitly include that action imperative, as does the idea of deep reciprocity.

Plurality of Indigenous Knowledges

One crucial aspect of Indigenous knowledges that was brought up in the interviews with Indigenous participants and in the literature (e.g., Todd 2022) was that many different Indigenous communities have very different cosmologies and bodies of knowledges. However, as Samantha discussed, due to the legacy of residential schools and the cultural genocide that occurred, many have lost large amounts of their cultural practices and knowledge. Today, Indigenous peoples are often associated as one large collective group in state discussions which skips over the critical concept of knowledges, as a plural concept, denoting the different communities and their differing world views (Todd 2022). Samantha understood knowledge from many different Indigenous communities as being necessary, stating, "[i]t's indigenous knowledge from all of Indigenous peoples from all over the world that will heal people".

Knowledge of—and Connection to—Land

This discussion brings us to the next sub-theme we found in terms of Indigenous knowledges, which were knowledges about land. Land is an issue of treaties, rights, spiritual connection, and resources, but it is also a set of relationships of reciprocity, as we introduced in the previous sub-theme. Alison spoke about holding a relationship with the land as a crucial part of the work they do at their organization and that for their Indigenous-led organization, reconciliation with the land is their focus, rather than reconciling with any particular government. Alison's organization focuses on aiding urban wild animals to be more secure from encroachments onto their habitat and by protecting those parts of the habitat the animals need to reproduce.*

This involves stopping people in urban parks from damaging the habitat or disrupting the animals by keeping watch and informing people about the importance of the animals' habitat and about Indigenous teachings that emphasize the importance of right relations. They also build local infrastructure that protects animal habitat. Alison's organization has also set up a hotline for animal habitat damage, and has collaborated with local schools to create infrastructure that protects animal habitat. Alison's organization highlights how important it is to have close connections with

*The type of animal they protect has been anonymized, as it is a type of animal that could identify the organization.

non-human relatives in a place, and supporting those Indigenous peoples restoring good relations with those non-human relatives, as a priority for settlers wanting to engage in decolonization.

Alison's experience suggests that organizations can ask questions such as the following as they think about reconciliation and decolonization initiatives: How can Indigenous peoples teachings about land be part of organizations? How can settlers learn to connect with land at our organization, but in ways that foreground Indigenous peoples' sovereignty and knowledges of land? Many organizations in Canada work on conservation initiatives, and such considerations are of particular relevance to such organizations. But given the centrality of land in Indigenous systems of knowledge and practice, all organizations may consider how their organization not only relates to Indigenous peoples' land claims but also to the different plants, animals, fungi, and other creatures that their organization is in relationship with (Simpson 2017a; Tuck et al. 2014). Learning about land and connecting deeply with non-humans out on the land is important for understanding why land is so significant (Simpson 2017a; Tuck and McKenzie 2015; Tuck et al. 2014). Methods of connecting with land, such as those practiced by the settler organization Natural Curiosity, for example, facilitate connections with land through Indigenous frameworks and teachers (Anderson et al. 2017).

Despite many differences, Samantha emphasized that one teaching that is held across Indigenous groups is their relationship with the land that they reside on—recognizing that land is a set of ethical relationships, a theme also reflected in the literature (McGregor 2009, 2018). Using the ideas of "Two-Eyed Seeing" (Bartlett et al. 2012; Reid et al. 2021) and the cultural interface (Nakata 2007), settler environmental organizations could look to the land ethics of Indigenous communities and bring these into dialogue with the ways of knowing they have learned in Western environmental contexts, such as the land ethic of Aldo Leopold that holds importance for some conservation-oriented settlers (Leopold 1949). Since, as mentioned above, Two-Eyed Seeing emphasizes "learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of

knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all" (Bartlett et al. 2012:335; Bujaki et al. 2022), it provides an overall organizing framework for bringing Indigenous knowledges into settler organizations in a way that does not conflate two very different ways of relating to land.

Even what we call the land is an example of how Two-Eyed Seeing can be put into practice: Indigenous peoples emphasize the word "land," which means all the different species and habitats, including water, in it, and all the political relations that have existed on the land, while settlers use words like "environment" and "nature" that often remove humans from the picture (TallBear 2017; Tuck et al. 2014). Land and environment/nature are two ways of understanding what it is out there in the "natural world" that emphasize different aspects of it. Connecting with the land beyond land acknowledgements (Stewart-Ambo and Yang 2021; Tuck et al. 2014) could help settler-led environmental organizations connect with Indigenous epistemologies of upholding deep reciprocity.

Many organizations, such as Indigenous Language Revitalization (https://www.indigenous-languages.ca/) and Anishinaabemdaa (https://anishinaabemdaa.com/) are working to revitalize Indigenous languages.

Indigenous Languages

One critical part of Indigenous knowledges are Indigenous languages, as the Indigenous participants in this study emphasized. As with reconciliation and decolonization initiatives in general, supporting Indigenous languages can both be done internally and in externally-directed campaigns and projects. Internally in organizations, Indigenous languages can be supported by offering translation services, which is currently being practiced in Louise's organization and other organizations that Louise works with. Externally, organizations have increasingly been supporting language revitalization initiatives, such in actions by Samantha's organization. Residential schools have many destructive legacies, but one of them was the loss of Indigenous language knowledge in children who attended the schools, and for their descendants (TRC 2015b, 2015a). When thinking about Indigenous knowledges and reckoning with the legacy of residential schools, therefore, one primary objective is supporting Indigenous language revitalization. Samantha emphasized that,

> **We're still here. We still have our languages. However, a lot of us don't speak them anymore. A lot of us are going back and relearning our language, a lot of us are going back to our own ceremonies, learning the teachings that come from the ceremonies, and learning how to love a different God.**

The organization Samantha works with supports language revitalization programs with funding and providing other resources such as space. If wanting to address the knowledge impacts of residential schools, supporting Indigenous languages is one important initiative.

Land Acknowledgments and Indigenous Knowledges

As a final thought in this section, we turn to the practice of giving land acknowledgments. A critique that Indigenous scholars and settler allies have made of land acknowledgments is that they are often performative (Stewart-Ambo and Yang 2021) and a missed opportunity (Reys 2022)—that is, they end up being an example of reconciliation indigenization (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018). As introduced in the previous sections, land (or nature) is understood differently between Indigenous peoples and Eurocentric cultures. In Indigenous ways of knowing, land is a set of relations to which ethical obligations are required and where land is also central in constructing the ways of knowing (McGregor 2009, 2018; Tuck et al. 2014). This highlights how important land is for reconciliation (Matsunaga 2016; Tuck and Yang 2012). As Paul Pritchard, a Métis scholar who gave a guest lecture in our class emphasized, a "land" acknowledgment is not merely an acknowledgment of whose physical land one is standing on; rather, it is an acknowledgment of the entire set of relations, and the history of those relations, in a place. Settlers often see land as a physical object that someone should have ownership over, but not as the complex interweaving of human and non-human relationships over time emphasized by Indigenous peoples when talking about "land" (Tuck and McKenzie 2015; Tuck et al. 2014).

The Aboriginal scholar Shelly Reys, a Djiribul woman from the Atherton Table Lands in Cairns (in what is now known as Australia) also makes important points about land acknowledgments—or, as they are called in Australia, "Acknowledgments of Country." Reys describes the Acknowledgment of Country as, "a beautiful, respectful pause of thanks. Thanks to the people who have looked after the land and water on behalf of you and me, for more than 70,000 years" (Reys 2022). Reys laments how Acknowledgments of Country are often rushed over, and says that a good acknowledgement has two parts. First, who are the traditional owners and what is their story? And second: what is your story and what is your connection to the land? In this way, some of the

complex interweaving of relationships are made visible. For Reys, she is not Indigenous to the lands now known as Sydney, and for her as well, she talks about both the traditional caretakers of the land in Sydney and her own relationship with the peoples and lands there. If we turn again to thinking about settlers, by educating themselves and learning from Indigenous knowledges, such as what "land" means and how that matters for land acknowledgments, settlers can use the "eye" of Indigenous knowledges to view the land around them in different ways and have a greater appreciation for Indigenous communities that can help aid in reconciliation efforts.

Conclusion to Theme 3

Some organizations have started this work of making Indigenous knowledges part of their organization, and in this section we reviewed some ideas as to how to approach Indigenous knowledges. We center Indigenous scholars and teachers in this section, in keeping with the principle of Indigenous-led recommendations. Indigenous knowledges are vast and we cannot do justice to them in this report, but a continual engagement with ideas such as ways of relating to land, the idea of land itself as a set of human and non-human relations, and understanding knowledge plurality, are some of the knowledges that may come into dialogue with settler ways of knowing. By using the two eyes of Indigenous and mainstream or settler ways of knowing using a Two-Eyed Seeing Framework, both of these knowledges can contribute to organizations and help create meaningful change.

Theme 4: A Collectivist Approach to Reconciliation and Decolonization

In our discussions with interviewees and in reading literature, we found that collectivist approaches—by which we mean community and increased communications between organizations—can be a means for decolonial practices while taking some of the labour off Indigenous peoples. We recommend settler organizations use a collectivist approach to engage directly in education and relationship building with other organizations, Indigenous peoples and communities, and the land.

We see the participation of Council of Canadians' and Grandmother's Voice' in this project, as well as that of the 6 organizations interviewed, as a move toward this more collectivist approach, as these organizations have created this space where learning between organizations is possible. As Louise stated, that they have the framework document they use to assess their policies, but that,

> **I hope in the future we actually have a trail map of all the work we've done to share outwardly, so that other organizations, if they're interested or haven't started on that journey, can start to see: "Okay, well here's an example of what one organization has done. It's worked for them" ... We want everyone else to see it, because maybe it'll work for you, which I think is refreshing, especially since looking back, doing literature reviews about what organizations are doing, about what they're implementing can be rather difficult. And there is a lack of published information about how different organizations are implementing the calls to action and addressing Truth and Reconciliation, which I think makes it hard for you know, people to mirror and people to see what everyone else is doing and to get ideas for how they do that.**

Doing this work of linking organizations and their methods for decolonization or reconciliatory practices has dangers to be avoided, such as settlers absolving themselves of the colonial past rather than dismantle systems of oppression, which can further perpetuate colonialism through settler moves to innocence (Tuck and Yang 2012). Sharing between organizations can (among other functions) help organizations avoid these pitfalls. In general, a more collectivist approach would allow greater information flows among settler organizations, which both allows greater reciprocity and may alleviate some of the work of reconciliation from Indigenous peoples.

Sharing knowledge and experience among community organizations could be part of a stronger approach to reconciliation and decolonization for them. We found that settlers can take an active role in reconciliation and decolonization, and one of these acts can be settlers facilitating more collaboration between organizations so that organizations can learn from each others' experience with this important work. We also see more collaboration between organizations as one way to reduce the labour called for from Indigenous elders, teachers, and community leaders. Council of Canadians' and Grandmother's Voice's collaboration with us in this project is an example of this collective approach to organizing, since this project has linked a set of organizations together—Council of Canadians, Grandmother's Voice, and the organizations participating as interviewees—to facilitate this process of collaboration. We also have begun, because of this project, to liaise with organizations who did not participate directly by giving interviews. Several organizations did not participate because they felt they were not yet doing enough, and we will also be continuing this conversation with them. Therefore, this report aims to strengthen the network that exists already between community organizations, and specifically on the work of reconciliation and decolonization.

Within the settler-colonial organizational and institutional landscape, there is a risk for reconciliatory or decolonization work to be overly individualized. There is still a necessity of rich self-reflection within one's journey of unlearning and re-learning. On this point, Jody recalls a common saying she would hear from Indigenous elders, which proposed that, "Sometimes, the longest journey is from your heart to your mind."

At the same time, approaching reconciliation and decolonization on an entirely individualistic basis—whether as individual organizations or people—may not be effective. "I was told that if you have an idea, then you have to share it," reflects Jody. "Because if you can't do it [put into place an initiative you think is important], somebody else might be able to. So whether you're the one that made it happen or it was your idea, you're still a part of the bigger system, the collective." The determination to act as a collective—to exchange ideas, stories, hopes, and plans—is one important principle for reconciliation and decolonization. In this more collective approach, conversation is elevated over competition. "It is this knowledge that will heal the world. We just have to get that knowledge to the people, bring them along for the ride, and do the heart work together. [...] Many voices, one song," as Jody said.

All organizations we interviewed are already involved in local networks. Alison's organization is in relationship with several others in the urban parks where it operates, and hers is a good example of how a network of stewardship organizations can strengthen individual initiatives, but also how making relations between settlers and Indigenous peoples can lead to tensions. The organization collaborates with settler park supervisors to gain resources and approvals needed to protect the habitat of wild animals. But the control of some of the invasive species in urban parks is one point of conflict. Land managers from the City of Toronto who use pesticides on invasive plant species are sometimes seen by Indigenous land protectors as damaging the habitat needed by important animal relatives. Taking care of the habitat of urban animals is, therefore, one case where different ways of thinking about chemical control of invasive or weedy species come into dialogue. Yet there are several Indigenous organizations operating in the parks where Alison's organization works that support each other and provide organizing capacity. There are also organizations in these parks, and beyond them, that are settler-led and have good relationships with Alison's organization, such as in providing best practices guidelines that help in successfully conserving the animals' habitats. Inter-organization networks and support is, therefore, an important part of Alison's organization.

Greater information flows between organizations would allow greater reciprocity as well as alleviate the burden from solely Indigenous peoples.

To build a collectivist approach, we recommend settler organizations continue to work to build relationships with one another, as well as with Indigenous people and communities.

Theme 5. Internal Organization Research, Curricula, and Education

The TRC Calls to Action (Tables 2 and 3) and Indigenous-led organizations such as Indigenous Works (2023) emphasize the importance of settler organizations educating their members. In this theme, we reflect on the importance of internal organization education and methods for effective education programs.

Indigenous Works was created in response to the 1996 Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples to improve employment for Indigenous peoples in Canada. Part of this work is with settler organizations, that helps these organizations create better employment conditions for Indigenous workers and facilitate partnerships between settler and Indigenous organizations. The Inclusion Continuum (Indigenous Works 2023) that the organization uses has 7 stages and also a 7 stage partnership growth model. Moving up either the continuum or the model requires that the organizations do work internally.

For example, to move from stage 1 of the Inclusion Continuum, which is described as “Indifference – Inclusion is not on the radar”, through to stages such as stage 3, “Image – Inclusion as public relations”, up until stage 7, which is “Inclusion is fully embraced as the cultural norm”, requires internal work that moves members through the stages (Indigenous Works 2023). Similarly, to move from the partnership model from stage 1, “Partnerless” to stage 3, “Partnership readiness” requires internal organization work that educates members (Indigenous Works 2023). Consulting organizations such as Indigenous Works are one of the key partners for settler organizations seeking to move toward inclusion and Indigenous-settler partnerships.

Indigenous Works' resources highlight that settler organizations should expect to do significant amounts of in-organization work before being able to build mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous peoples. These interviews all demonstrated an awareness of the significance of this work and the need to do more. The organization Mary belongs to provides educational opportunities for their members to learn about Indigenous peoples, histories, and worldviews, but the organization is trying to find effective ways to expand this program.

Louise's organization had a more extensive program of internal work with staff. Louise explained that the organization started this learning process by doing research on their own staff, by sending staff a survey with the aim of "getting an understanding of what everyone's lived or learned' in terms of "Indigenous peoples, history, context, and reconciliation." Most staff had not learned about Indigenous history in the formal education system, and a few staff had learned some of this history informally. In response, the organization designed a "one-year learning curriculum for staff that focused on decolonization and reconciliation." Part of that curriculum was to work with staff on their positionality through land acknowledgments, but working to ensure that it was "beyond that checkbox" and more trying to ensure that when positionality and relationships with Indigenous peoples were discussed, that it was done in a way that had a bearing on each specific issue being addressed by the organization.

The curriculum also involved teaching staff about treaties, including learning the history of the treaties of lands staff had lived on. This integrates with the teachings on land acknowledgments: when staff give land acknowledgments, they are encouraged to discuss treaty history of the lands on which they have lived. Settler staff are encouraged to be deeply reflective on their identities and where they come from, and to think through the privileges that they have. The curriculum also involved bringing in guest speakers. As described in earlier themes, Louise's organization also has an ad-hoc board of Indigenous advisors, which makes internal education of members a consistent practice. Louise thinks that there is much more work to be done, but the organization has demonstrated a long-term and highly organized commitment to educating its members.

Samantha's organization has taken the approach of building partnerships with several Indigenous groups and also creating an internal advisory board of Indigenous peoples so that education of members is a natural part of everyday organization practice. Samantha is part of that board, and she liaises with Indigenous peoples inside and outside of the organization to continually maintain partnerships that have arisen and build new partnerships.

Speaking from Indigenous-led organizations, Jody and Alison described a different context than the settler-led organizations. Internal education about Indigenous history and topics such as those discussed by Indigenous Works (2023) were inherent at every stage of the work of Jody and Alison's organizations. Volunteers at Alison's organization are often taught, by the Indigenous leader of the organization, about right relations and respectful relationships between human and non-human relatives, and deep reciprocity, for example. Those Indigenous teachers are the foundation of the work that the organization does.

Organizations that we spoke with, therefore, are at different stages of what Indigenous Works (2023) calls the Inclusion Continuum and the Partnership Growth Model. Internal organization work is necessary before mutually beneficial partnerships can arise, and inclusion is a key part of building partnerships. While Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) describe inclusion Indigenization as the first step toward decolonial Indigenization, inclusion is still a key part of building networks that create long-term contributions to reconciliation and decolonization. Moving members through the Inclusion Continuum and through the Partnership Growth Model are ways to understand the state of one's organization and what next steps may be. Ideally, settler organizations will also be able to hire consultants such as Indigenous Works to help facilitate the process and build inter-organizational networks.

Theme 6. Reconciliation with Land

Interviewees and scholarly literature described how connecting with land and supporting non-human relatives is part of reconciliation with the land. It is important that this connection is done with Indigenous leadership about how to connect with land.

As the 21st century unfolds, earth's ecosystems are unraveling (Cunsolo and Ellis 2018; Kolbert 2014; Whyte 2018a). Indigenous scholars have described "ecological grief" as an emotion increasingly felt by Indigenous peoples when experiencing, or knowing about, the effects of the damage done to the land. Reconciliation with land is also an important theme in academic literature on reconciliation, where scholars such as Deborah McGregor and Emma Nelson (2022:123) describe that "[o]ne of the limitations of current Canadian conceptions of reconciliation is the underlying assumption that reconciliation applies, virtually exclusively, to relationships among peoples". The Canadian discussion on reconciliation has been almost exclusively on reconciliation among peoples, despite the TRC report addressing this theme (McGregor and Nelson 2022).

Similarly, Alison emphasized that at her organization, what they are concerned about is not only reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and settlers, but reconciliation with all non-human relatives as well. Settler organizations tend to cordon off "the environment" as a specialized topic reserved primarily for environmental or conservation organizations. But Indigenous peoples often do not bracket off the environment, or land, in this way (e.g., Simpson 2017a; TallBear 2017; Todd 2016). As ecological economists and environmental sociologists also emphasize, all organizations and the economy are nested in environmental relations (e.g., Foster, Clark, and York 2010). Settler colonialism, therefore, has also been characterized by violence toward the land, and healing relationships with land is a critical part of reconciliation.

Alison spoke about holding a relationship with the land as a important part of the work they do at their organization and that for their Indigenous-led

organization, reconciliation with the land is more important than working in government frameworks of reconciliation. Alison's organization focuses on aiding urban wild animals to be more secure from encroachments onto their habitat and by protecting those parts of the habitat the animals need to reproduce. This involves stopping people in urban parks from damaging the habitat or disrupting the animals by keeping watch and informing people about the importance of the animals' habitat and about Indigenous teachings that emphasize the importance of right relations. They also build local infrastructure that protects animal habitat, have set up a hotline for animal habitat damage, and have collaborated with local schools to create infrastructure that protects animal habitat.

Learning about land and connecting deeply with non-humans out on the land is important for understanding why land is so significant. There may be ways for settler organizations to encourage their members to connect with land. But to ensure this is part of a reconciliatory or decolonial project, connecting with land may be done in a way that does not take settler environmental education and settler connection with nature methods as its basis. As this report has mentioned, environmental education organizations such as Natural Curiosity designs programs to connect people with land in ways that foreground Indigenous ways of knowing (Anderson et al. 2017), and Tuck and co-authors (2015; 2014) have frequently emphasized how important it is to avoid taking a purely settler approach to connecting with land in North America.

Alison's organization highlights how important it is to have close connections with non-human relatives in a place, and supporting those Indigenous peoples restoring good relations with those non-human relatives, as a priority for settlers wanting to engage in decolonization. While Alison's organization is centered on repairing connections with non-humans, organizations with broader mandates might also consider how connecting with land may be part of their process of reconciliation and decolonization.

Theme 7. Boots on the Ground Support

Protests, civil disobedience, law, and other forms of direct support for Indigenous campaigns are part of reconciliation and decolonization.

In our interviews, we also found that settler organizations are providing support for Indigenous-led initiatives by providing support during protests, civil disobedience actions, and in the legal system. An organizer at Mary's organization calls this "boots on the ground" action. These forms of support directly intervene into political processes and are part of creating strong coalitions for reconciliation and decolonization.

Mary's organization understands protests as one of the primary means to bring government and the public's attention to important issues and gauge how motivated people are to make change happen in Canadian society. The organization acts as an information distributing resource for members, informing its members of upcoming protests led by Indigenous peoples, such as protests around mining in Ontario. When these protests occur, the organization also organizes members to attend and they support the protest throughout. The organization often has high turnout for its events, reflecting the energy the organizers put into mobilization. Protests are also key places where education occurs (Haluza-DeLay 2008), demonstrate to members new ways to support Indigenous initiatives, and provide opportunities to build relationships with Indigenous organizers.

Michael's organization also supports Indigenous-led political campaigns. One form this takes is collaborative organizing and planning with the aim to create policy changes in governments. His organization works collaboratively on political strategy with Indigenous organizations. Michael's organization also channels some of that collaborative work into fighting legal cases. The organization has a long history of supporting Indigenous peoples in legal cases in Canada, and internationally in other countries. This support of Indigenous peoples in legal cases refers specifically, in the case of Michael's organization, to those that also involve the environment. The cases they intervene into, therefore, are less about individual tort or criminal

cases and more about those that pertain to legislation that affects Indigenous peoples and the environment, such as when legislation that protects Indigenous land rights is threatened.

The organization's legal counsel intervenes directly in these cases, serving as plaintiffs and main actors throughout the legal process. Michael's organization also supports Indigenous peoples' campaigns to block industrial, transport, and residential development when it encroaches on Indigenous lands that have important cultural significance. One form this support takes is providing resources and staff at camps that stand in the way of the developments. Therefore, the organization supports civil disobedience campaigns that often comes with risks that the organization helps to bear.

Supporting protests, legal cases, and land protection encampments are three ways that settler organizations in this study provided "boots on the ground" support for Indigenous peoples' campaigns. Engaging in actions like these—the actions of political resistance—and time consuming and draining tasks. Settler organizations may consider ways to provide further support in these acts of resistance. The TRC Calls to Action also emphasize that supporting Indigenous artists in resistance campaigns is one other way to channel organizations' resources. When the artistic materials used in campaigns—on websites, infographics, and art that is brought to protests, for example—is needed, Indigenous artists may be commissioned to produce these art and design products. These artists should, of course, be compensated, which links with our theme #8, protocols of compensation and gifts.

Theme 8. Protocols of Compensation and Gifts, and creating Funding Opportunities

The organizations we interviewed and the academic literature emphasized that appropriate compensation is important for Indigenous peoples who engage in the labour of education and reconciliation efforts with settlers. Compensation is required for the labour required for educating settlers and to recognize the long history of colonizers taking Indigenous knowledge for their own benefit and power (Posey 1990). This includes financial compensation, which may also be complemented with forms of compensation if requested from Indigenous teachers, in addition to following the protocols of local nations, such as the gift of tobacco where appropriate and where Indigenous teachers agree for this protocol to be followed (Carlton University 2023). The importance of financial compensation was emphasized by Alison, as a non-Indigenous identifying person at an Indigenous-led organization, who stressed the importance of compensation for the labour of the Indigenous peoples at the organization. Alison emphasized that it was important that the settlers at her organization were all volunteers, while the one paid staff member is an Indigenous person.

Compensation often takes the form of simple financial remuneration, yet when honoraria are the form of gifts, where the honoraria are sourced from is also significant. Louise said,

> **we developed our honorary document and protocol and practice within the organization, and we wanted to ensure that any gifts that we do provide are also a procurement practice that is rooted in Indigenous organizations, or marginalized, racialized organizations. So that's something that we've also embedded into our HR policies.**

Louise's organization provided honoraria to guest speakers, but thought about these honoraria deeply: they sourced gifts that served as honoraria from organizations with members predominantly from Indigenous, marginalized, and/or racialized groups. Yet overall, following local Indigenous peoples' protocols, such as the protocols around giving tobacco as a gift, are important alongside compensation in the form of honoraria, salaries, or other forms of compensation.

In this report, we have discussed Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) spectrum of Indigenization, going from inclusion through to decolonial Indigenization. Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) talked about inclusion Indigenization as an important but basic form of Indigenization where organizations hire or otherwise include Indigenous peoples in their organizations. Reconciliation Indigenization goes further and seeks to create deeper change, such as in organizations' guiding visions. Decolonial Indigenization is the most comprehensive, requiring deep change throughout organizations that means Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous "land and life" are central to the organization's everyday practice. We also saw that some organizations donate to Indigenous organizations, which is perhaps another mode of Indigenization, which we propose describing as "funding Indigenization", which fits under theme 8. Mary spoke about how their organization takes a portion of membership fees and donates them to Indigenous groups working on environmental action.

Louise's organization also donates to Indigenous researchers to fund their research projects. Louise's organization also goes further by supporting Indigenous-led research beyond the organization. Similar to Kim TallBear's SING initiative that supports beginning Indigenous genomics researchers (TallBear 2020), Louise's organization links one of the Indigenous advisory board members with an Indigenous organization and Indigenous researchers, to fund Indigenous-led research. The organization Samantha works with also funds many different Indigenous-led initiatives, especially supporting healing for residential school survivors.

Theme 9: Creating Safe Spaces for Conflict

Our final theme is the topic of many entire organizations' reports; this is a brief sketch of a complex topic (e.g., Deutsch 1973; Holt and DeVore 2005). It is the topic of the importance of creating safe spaces for conflict, as working on reconciliation and decolonization is difficult work that requires significant learning of participants. Indigenous methods of conflict resolution are part of conflict resolution literature (Lundy, Collette, and Downs 2022; Tait 2007) and are an important source for those members of organizations who are responsible for the organization's conflict resolution processes.

As an example from our interviews, Louise discussed how conflicts have arisen around reconciliation and decolonization. As Tuck and Yang (2012) discuss, if an organization's methods for decolonization are too easy, they are likely not reaching deeply enough and making significant change. Louise stated that even though there have been disagreements, "having that conversation and feeling safe to have that conversation, that should continue to be had, no matter what." There is an important commitment to putting into practice ethical guidelines to help people feel safe, while being open to the uncomfortable emotions involved in reckoning with settler colonialism.

In our own class, we also experienced conflict. The class had final presentations on Zoom and invited members of several organizations to attend, including rank-and-file members (that is, not only the leaders of the organizations but also regular members). At one time in this event, a settler rank-and-file member from a settler organization became uncomfortable with the comments of a Indigenous leader from another organization about settler organizations' culpability in colonial structures. He said so in the Zoom chat. His comment was addressed, and there were several ways we followed up with ensuring that the Indigenous leader felt the situation had been resolved (she emphasized that this was part of the work) and that the settler member's actions had been addressed by his own organization's conflict resolution process. Conflicts are an inevitable part of raising complex issues (Deutsch 1973; Holt and DeVore 2005).

The conflict that came up in the class's final presentations highlighted the importance of having protocols prepared for managing conflict, which can emerge at unexpected times and can be emotionally laden (Mayer 2012; Yarnell and Neff 2013). Some of these protocols must be put into practice before events begin, others at the start of events, others in moments of conflict and finally, yet others after events. During events, such protocols can include how to respond to aggressive comments and after events, protocols can be created for implementing consequences for problematic behaviour or going through conflict resolution processes. Protocols can also be put in place before interaction takes place, through reiterating a set of community guidelines that those participating in an event agree to adhere to. Having participant agreement in a set of behavioural guidelines before an event takes place creates a way to intervene into any conflicts that appear later, as those leading such discussions can refer back to the guidelines and ask how the conversation can be adjusted given them (Bercovitch 2020).

Another conflict protocol, one that can be put into place before any discussions or events begin, is ensuring that those who participate in a dialogue have done the work of learning about Indigenous history and issues, and have a productive relationship with each other, before broaching complex issues that can be emotionally difficult. When settler organizations have not done extensive internal work on education, it is also the case that facilitators likely must conclude that the settler organization is not ready to come into dialogue with Indigenous leaders or Indigenous rank-and-file members of organizations.

Reports such as Tait's (2007) discussion of conflict resolution within Indigenous communities include many important principles that can be reviewed as part of developing conflict resolution processes.

Therefore, theme 9 also relates back to theme 5, where we discussed internal organization education. First, conflicts can be reduced when enough education and knowledge capacity has been developed at settler organizations. Second, doing that education will be one of the times when a conflict management process is needed, as some members will be irritated, may become aggressive, and that is a flash point for learning and development. Such opportunities can only be successfully worked through with extensive work on conflict management processes specifically about the work of reconciliation and decolonization. Settlers often have unexamined assumptions and deeply held filial attachment to settler structures, and will need to be guided as they reorient to these structures, as they redefine them as violent and oppressive.

In an organization such as that of Louise, which has undergone extensive internal education, they find extensive support for decolonization and reconciliation. It is mostly when encountering, in Louise's words, "industry" and "capitalism," that the more significant conflicts take place. This conflict between capitalism and Indigenous peoples has often been discussed in the literature as well (Simpson 2014). When profitable settler developments are staked against Indigenous land rights, tensions often arise (Manuel and Derrickson 2021). Throughout the 20th and now in the 21st century, economic developments that seem positive for settlers—such as pipelines, logging, residential developments, and ski resorts—have been directly against Indigenous peoples rights (Manuel and Derrickson 2021). This is one general case how what is profitable for settlers can be directly opposed to Indigenous peoples' land rights.

Other general cases around this issue include difficult discussions around who is hired at an organization and how to distribute organization resources, which will often lead to conflicts among at least some members. Building organization capacity around working through conflict and conflict resolution is, therefore, an important part of doing the work of reconciliation and decolonization. If reconciliation and decolonization is too easy, it is likely not deep enough (Tuck and Yang 2012). All of the organizations we worked with recognize that, in Louise's words, they still have "a long way to go," but

they remain committed to doing the necessary work to continue with reconciliation and decolonization initiatives. With this final major theme, we want to emphasize that having that commitment also requires a protocol around conflict management.

Conclusion

This report presents the findings of literature reviews and original data collection on the topic of how community organizations in Canada can engage in reconciliation and decolonization. The report presented 9 themes that came up in our research, and these are a first sketch of a complex topic. This project will be ongoing, and with additional interviews and literature work, these findings will be expanded and strengthened.

There has been little research conducted on how settler-led community organizations are working toward reconciliation and decolonization in Canada. While we found significant amounts of literature about barriers Indigenous organizations faced, there was a gap in literature discussing what settler-led organizations were doing to decolonize and the barriers they face. Given our findings, one avenue for future research could be on how organizations could effectively build a collectivist approach (theme 4) that centers Indigenous knowledges (theme 3) without placing an undue burden on Indigenous peoples and while centering knowledge coexistence (theme 1).

Given our findings around settlers doing more of the work of reconciliation and decolonization, future research could explore options for settler organizations to engage more consciously with education, such as through settler studies initiatives. Many organizations will likely face challenges and go through important learning experiences if they engage in more settler studies and initiatives like anti-racist education. Making that process public (while also making it anonymous) could help other organizations in their own processes, which is one reason we perceive a continued role for social science research that allows for both knowledge sharing and anonymity.

We want to emphasize how important it is that settlers engaging in reconciliation and decolonization initiatives do not aim for a state of innocence (Tuck and Yang 2012). When settlers engage in this important work, an important principle is transparency (e.g., when possible, settlers making sure to indicate where their family comes from) and that they take a

supportive role rather than telling Indigenous communities how reconciliation and decolonization should proceed. In this connection, there has been a discussion of using the term “settler accomplice” rather than “settler ally” to emphasize the importance of Indigenous leadership (Carroll et al. 2020; Indigenous Action 2014; Kilawna 2022; McGuire-Adams 2021; Oostindie 2020; Segal Centre 2018).

Settlers doing this work must remain vigilant against taking on a position of innocence if they are to contribute productively to the work of decolonization (Tuck and Yang 2012). Settler moves to innocence occur if reconciliation efforts are performed for the benefit of settlers as means of absolving themselves from their colonial past rather than productively contributing toward dismantling the systems of oppression that exist within their society (Tuck and Yang 2012). This is a potential issue in many settler-colonial organizations and institutions, but further research is necessary to determine the extent of these moves to innocence in Canada and requisite solutions.

Overall, our research sought to understand how organizations across so-called Canada engage in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and in reconciliation and/or decolonization more broadly. We found that settler-led organizations wanted to be doing more, and were looking for means of putting their goodwill into action. Communication and resource sharing surrounding organizational reconciliation and decolonization initiatives, we found, could be increased to help organizations in doing this important work. Collective organizing, in which settlers take an active role in engaging in and learning more about anti-colonial practices, but do so in broad discussions and collaboration, is what seems to be called for, given our discussions with organizations and review of the literature. Indigenous program leaders we spoke with emphasized that settlers can do some of the work of decolonization, especially around understanding the traumatic history of Canadian colonization, which is draining work for Indigenous peoples. The report discusses several guiding principles and protocols, perhaps most importantly that reconciliation and decolonization work centers benefits to Indigenous peoples, not benefits to settlers. Finally, in terms of Indigenous knowledges, we emphasize here that Indigenous ways

of conceptualizing knowledge coexistence, such as Two-Eyed Seeing and the cultural interface, can help avoid common problems in settlers beginning to be guided by Indigenous ways of knowing.

This report has been a collaborative effort. Wendy Lerat and Angela Giles from Council of Canadians, and Jody Harbour at Grandmother's Voice, identified the research question at the basis of this report—how have organizations in Canada been placing reconciliation and decolonization initiatives into practice?—and the five other participating organizations have contributed important insights. We see this report as helping facilitate the work of bringing organizations together to share important knowledge on these crucial issues, and as a contribution to the theory and practice of decolonial indigenization (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018).

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Appendix 1: Research Methods

Research Ethics

Our team combined the ethical procedures required by the University of Toronto's Research Ethics Board and—as a group of settlers working to meaningfully engage in reconciliation work—a set of ethics and research protocols which draw on decolonial research ethics developed by Indigenous scholars and settler allies. As such, we applied the Mi'kmaq concept of Two-Eyed Seeing (Bartlett et al. 2012; Reid et al. 2021) to the research ethics process. As described by Mi'kmaq elder Albert Marshall, Two-Eyed Seeing involves "learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all" (Bartlett et al. 2012:335). Utilizing Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle, the research is a commitment from us as researchers to decolonial pursuits and building meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples.

In order to meaningfully draft our ethics protocol, we underwent training and completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE) and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+). Utilizing feminist and decolonial research ethics we have identified the following guiding principles as crucial to our work:

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and transparency
3. Collaboration and mutuality
4. Choice, autonomy, and empowerment
5. Cultural, historical, and colonial relevance
6. Positionality, accountability, and adaptability

Understanding positionality, for example, means that everyone stands

somewhere, and to recognize how where we stand influences what we notice (TallBear 2014). Being skeptical about objectivity of science is, then, part of an ethical principle that takes positionality seriously (TallBear 2014, 2020).

While we undertook this research in a “social science” class, and have done our best to be accurate in our summaries of what our respondents told us, we also recognize that other people would ask different questions and notice different themes in the answers. Our commitment to positionality highlights, therefore, how important it is to have continued collaborations between people of many different backgrounds as work on decolonization expands, while ensuring to centre Indigenous peoples’ ways of knowing and experiences. We recognize that ethical principles for decolonial research, on the one hand, and ethical principles for decolonial practices in community organizations, on the other, are in many ways part of the same discussion. As a small community in our class, we were a group of settlers doing research to forward reconciliation and decolonization, and thinking through the ethical protocols and principles Indigenous scholars have discussed were central in guiding our practice.

Literature Review Methods

The literature review involved three types of document searches. The first focused on the documents produced by environmental community organizations on their relationships with Indigenous communities as well as their current efforts in incorporating the Calls to Action into their work. This first part of the literature review was conducted by looking at websites of environmentally focused community organizations in order to identify their strategies and goals toward reconciliation. Forty-three (43) organizations were identified, and thirteen (13) contained adequate information about the organization's reconciliation efforts to be included.

The second type of information we searched for were publications in the scholarly literature on Indigenous knowledges, decolonization, and reconciliation. This second section allowed broader insight about these topics. This second stage was completed using the database Web of Science. In order to narrow our scope of research two separate searches were conducted.

- The first search combined the keywords “Indigenous”, “Reconciliation”, and “Businesses.” These keywords were used in efforts of finding information regarding the current strategies being implemented in businesses and community organizations in Canada. This search resulted in three articles that were relevant to our topic.
- The second search was conducted to broaden our research, expanding the scope from looking at community organizations and their current efforts to instead focusing broadly on publications by Indigenous peoples regarding reconciliation and decolonization. To gather this data the keywords “decolonization”, “land acknowledgements”, “reconciliation”, and “Canada” were used. In order to gather as much literature as possible, we did not limit the date range or the particular fields of the search as the content that we were looking at was not time sensitive and could range across multiple fields of study. These searches resulted in over 987 articles that were then further narrowed by looking at the content of the articles to determine whether or not they were useful for the project.

The final aspect of the literature review involved reading those sources on our class reading list. Once these sources were identified and analyzed, we coded common themes between the sources using qualitative analysis methods (Charmaz 2006). The themes we identified consisted of ensuring that settlers are actively engaging and educating themselves on Indigenous histories and practices without disproportionately burdening Indigenous peoples with the labour, the importance of turning understanding into action, and the need to listen to Indigenous voices and use models of knowledge coexistence to expose more settlers to Indigenous ways of knowing while avoiding distorting and appropriating Indigenous knowledges.

Original Data Methods

Our primary data was collected through a series of 6 open-ended interviews. Interviewees were recruited through a combination of email outreach and existing network relations. Interviews were conducted over Zoom ranging from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Our team reached out to 26 organizations and individual employees/volunteers through email. Approximately 5 of these outreach emails went to existing network

connections. Of those 26 organizations, individuals from 10 organizations responded to our initial emails, and from that 10, we were able to schedule interviews with individuals from 6 organizations.

The majority of organizations initially contacted are settler-led, however, several of the organizations interviewed were Indigenous-led, with one interview from an Indigenous-led initiative within a settler organization. The interviewees filled out an online pre-interview questionnaire with questions pertaining to the demographics of their organization in relation to age and race demographics, as well as the overall size of the organization (Table 1).

Interviewers followed a guide of 15 questions (Appendix 2). Questions varied slightly between settler-led and Indigenous organizations. For settler-led organizations, questions included "can you tell me about how your organization understands/approaches reconciliation?" and "Does your organization collaborate with Indigenous partners? If yes, can you tell us about those relationships?" in addition to a number of questions aimed at understanding if and how the organization understands reconciliation by asking about Indigenous relationships, workshop education, and other forms of engagement. The interviews with Indigenous organizations were slightly different, as their understandings of reconciliations were broader—interviews with Indigenous-led organizations were more open ended.

Interviews were recorded through Zoom and then transcribed. In each transcript, all names were changed to pseudonyms and all identifying information was changed or removed. Once the interviews were transcribed, the recordings were deleted. After the first three interviews were complete, we analyzed the transcripts using open coding (Charmaz 2006), while also cross-referencing with the themes from the literature review. As the final three interviews were completed, we continued open coding, with the original codes and themes of the first three interviews in mind. Through this process, we found three major themes across the interviews. After the three major themes were found through open coding, we went through the transcripts of all six interviews to find direct quotes that matched each theme, through a process of focus coding (Charmaz 2006).

Conclusion to Appendix I

In this appendix we have described our methodological framework for ethics, literature review, and qualitative data collection and analysis. As research methods are a critical site for application of decolonization and reconciliation principles (e.g., Kovach 2021; Smith [1996] 2012), we carefully scrutinized our methods and will continue to iteratively evaluate these methods critically.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

The following questions were a general guide for the interviews in this study. The questions were not necessarily asked in this particular order – while the earlier questions were often asked directly, the interview often naturally addressed these questions as the conversation developed. The questions served as a guide for the interviews, to ensure that if an interview didn't address a particular topic, the interviewers were able to refer to the guide and ensure that the major questions were asked.

1. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? How do you relate to the work you do?

2. How long have you worked with your organization?

3. Can you tell us a little bit about your organization
    a. What have been the broader missions and goals in the initiatives you have participated in?

4. Can you tell us about your position and the work you do?

5. Can you tell us about any initiatives in/by your organization specifically dedicated to addressing and promoting reconciliation?

6. Can you tell me how your organization understands and approaches reconciliation?

7. Does your organization have a position specifically dedicated to addressing and promoting
    - The TRC calls to action?
        - Yes - can you tell me what kind they do (initiatives, relationship building?)
        - Reconciliation?
        - Building relationships with indigenous community groups, local first nations?
    - What specific tasks and goals are tasked to this position?
    - Is it something your organization is considering?

8. In your organization do you collaborate with Indigenous partners?
    a. can you tell me about those relationship/ processes, how you built those relationships?
    b. are there challenges to building relationships?

9. In what ways is your organization working to address reconciliation?

10. Can you tell me about if you have an internal or public education around reconciliation?
    a. Treaties
    b. Local Indigenous issues
    c. Land Acknowledgments/Whose land you are on/what that means/why it's important?

11. Does your organization have a land acknowledgement?
    a. If yes, can you tell us about the process of creating the land acknowledgement for your organization?

12. Does your organization provide training or workshops specific to reconciliation?

13. Does your organization provide training or workshops specific to Indigenous solidarity and/or the importance of building relationships with Indigenous Peoples of this land?

14. Does your organization do work to educate the members and or public about existing treaties?
    a. Have you seen any changes in relation to the application of TRC Calls to Action during your time at the organization?

15. Does your organization do any direct work on any of the TRC Calls to Action?
    a. If yes, which ones?

16. What challenges has your organization faced in addressing reconciliation?

17. Are there resources that could support your work in addressing reconciliation?

18. Do you see any opportunities for change?