



**RES'EAU**  
**WATERNET**

An NSERC Small Water System Strategic Network

# Implementing Reconciliatory Calls to Action



Madjid Mohseni & Irving Leblanc

2nd Annual AFN National Water Symposium and Tradeshow

Niagara Falls, ON  
February 26-28, 2019

Putting rural community water systems

**FIRST**

[www.reseauwaternet.ca](http://www.reseauwaternet.ca)

# Context

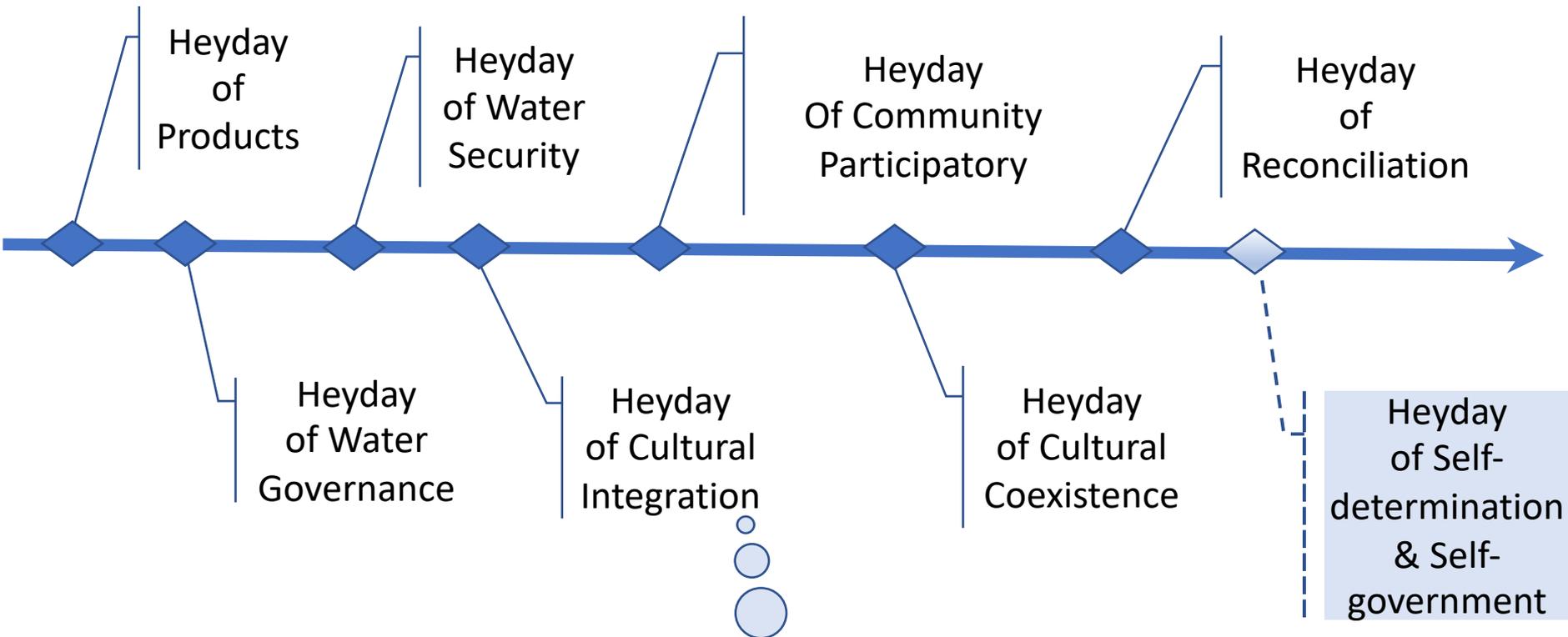
- UN Declaration of the Right of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)
- Truce & Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action

How to make things right when it comes to drinking water?

How to recast our business and innovation models and problem solving approaches?

What does the future of Indigenous water community look like?

# Last two decades



Did we get everything right?  
*Where did we place the  
**Operators?***

I learned from my mistakes and made sure I can repeat them exactly

# AFN Vision for Safe Drinking Water

- AFN advocates for the health and safety of all First Nations regardless of where they reside.
- We are directed by resolutions passed by the Assembly of First Nations
- We are also informed by Treaty obligations , inherent rights and aboriginal title, traditional ways and knowledge of how to protect our water and the environment
- And by Water Declarations passed by other First Nations
- And by International mechanisms and covenants

# Sustainable Development Goal 6

- By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.
- By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

# AFN Vision of Safe Drinking Water

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

## ***Article 25***

- Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

# AFN Vision of Safe Drinking Water

## **Article 32**

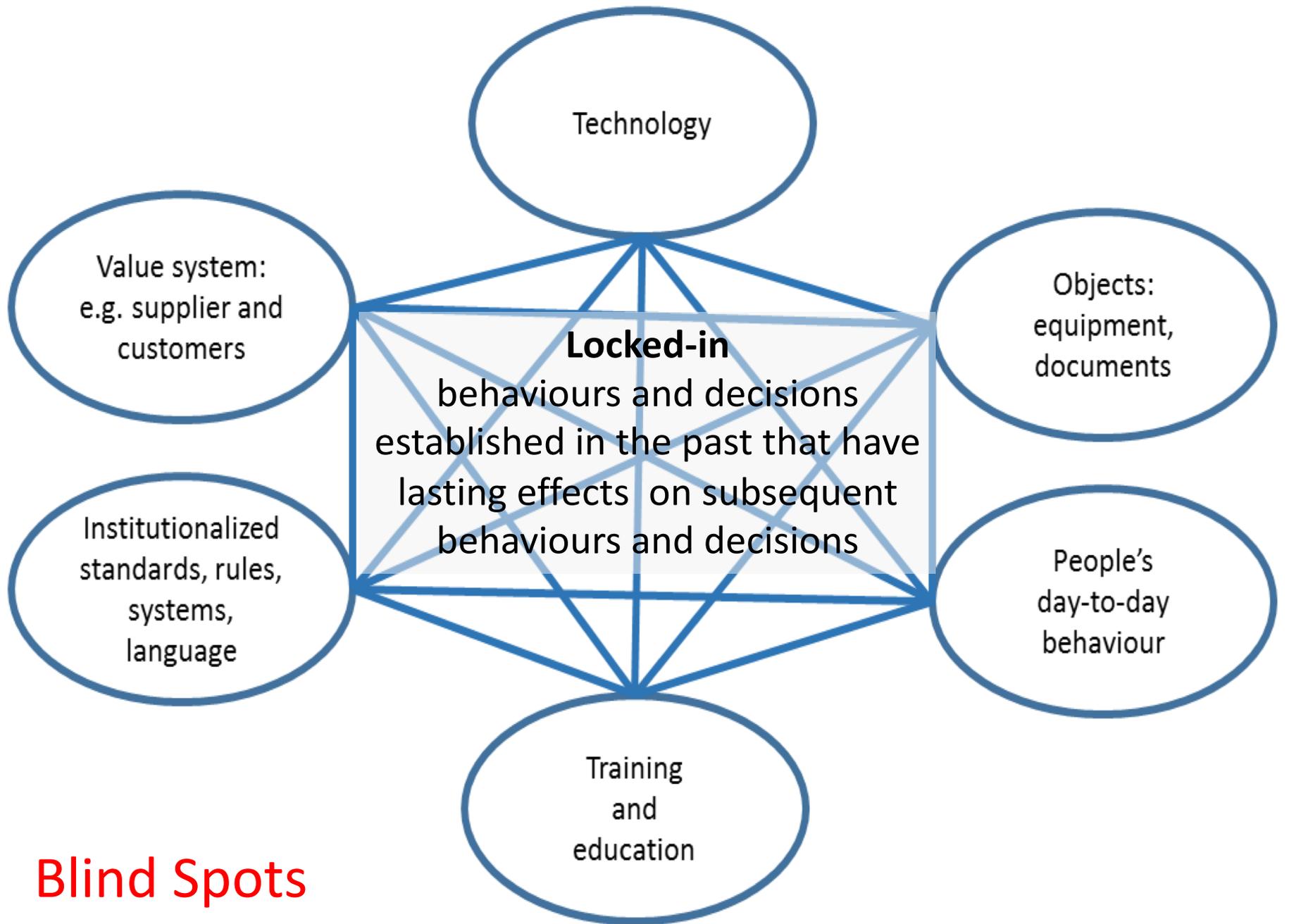
- 2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

# Relationships

- We see here at this Symposium the tremendous amount of collaboration, partnerships and innovation, all with the view of providing safe water and proper sanitation for First Nations
- We strive to realize Sustainable Development Goal 6.
- In my experience I have been fortunate to be invited to be part of the research, innovation, and policy development, e.g. RES'EAU-WaterNET, IC-IMPACTS, H2O Create, CREATE SERA, and most recently Great Lakes Water Quality Board, and others
- The Mobilization of this Knowledge acquired in the past and ongoing activity is critical to moving forward towards our end goal of safe drinking water

# AFN Vision for Safe Drinking Water

- This Symposium I believe has been successful in bringing to the forefront the importance of Women and Water.
- The importance of respect and reverence of the spiritual being of water as we heard from our New Zealand visitors
- The importance of supporting our front line workers – the operators, and provide that space for women in this career.
- So much needs to be done



**Blind Spots**



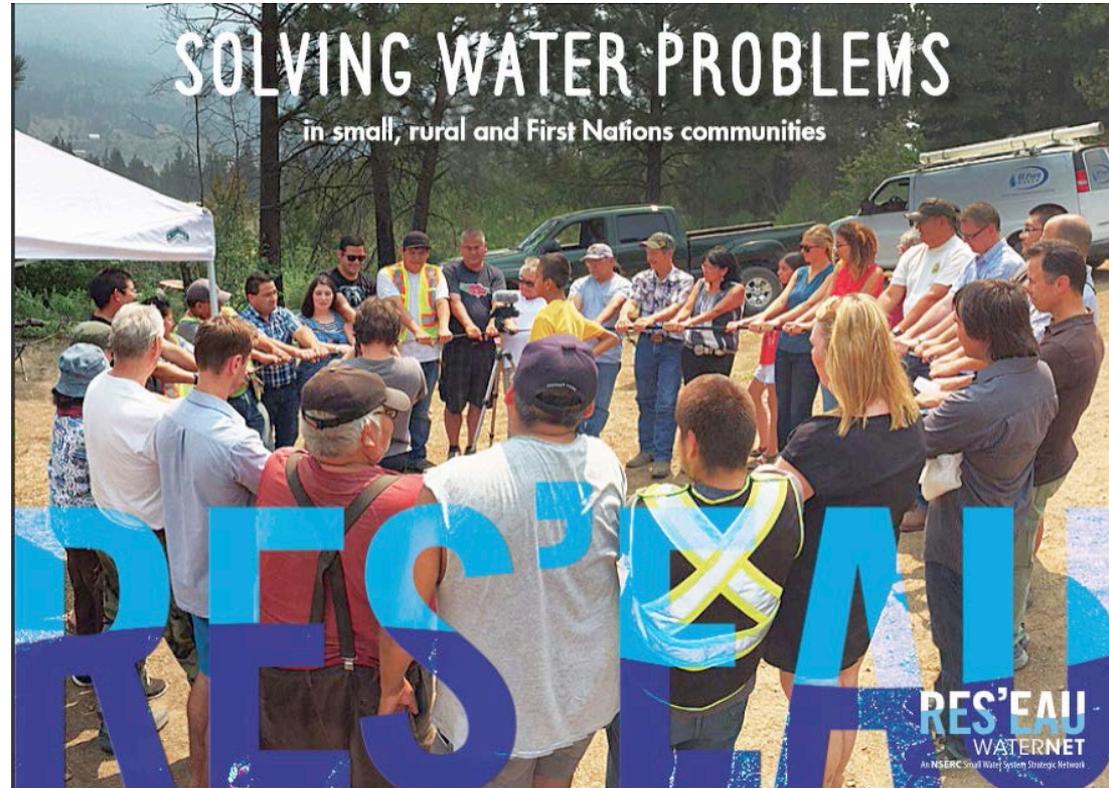
**Break the Lock-in:** Tap into the specific indicators of Indigenous and non-urban cultures that affect innovation

# Challenge

No single individual or organization possesses all the knowledge needed to truly solve the fundamental problems that are specific and very likely unique to each Indigenous and small rural community.

*Adapted from Friedrich Hayek, 1945*

It is not from the benevolence of the individuals, or sectors that we don't fall, but from their regards for their own fall. When the linkage breaks we all fall.



*“It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.”*

*Adam Smith, 1776*

# Community Circle

A model for **strategic innovation**.

It proposes customization of solutions, with decisions, practices, technologies and services being tailored to the individual community.

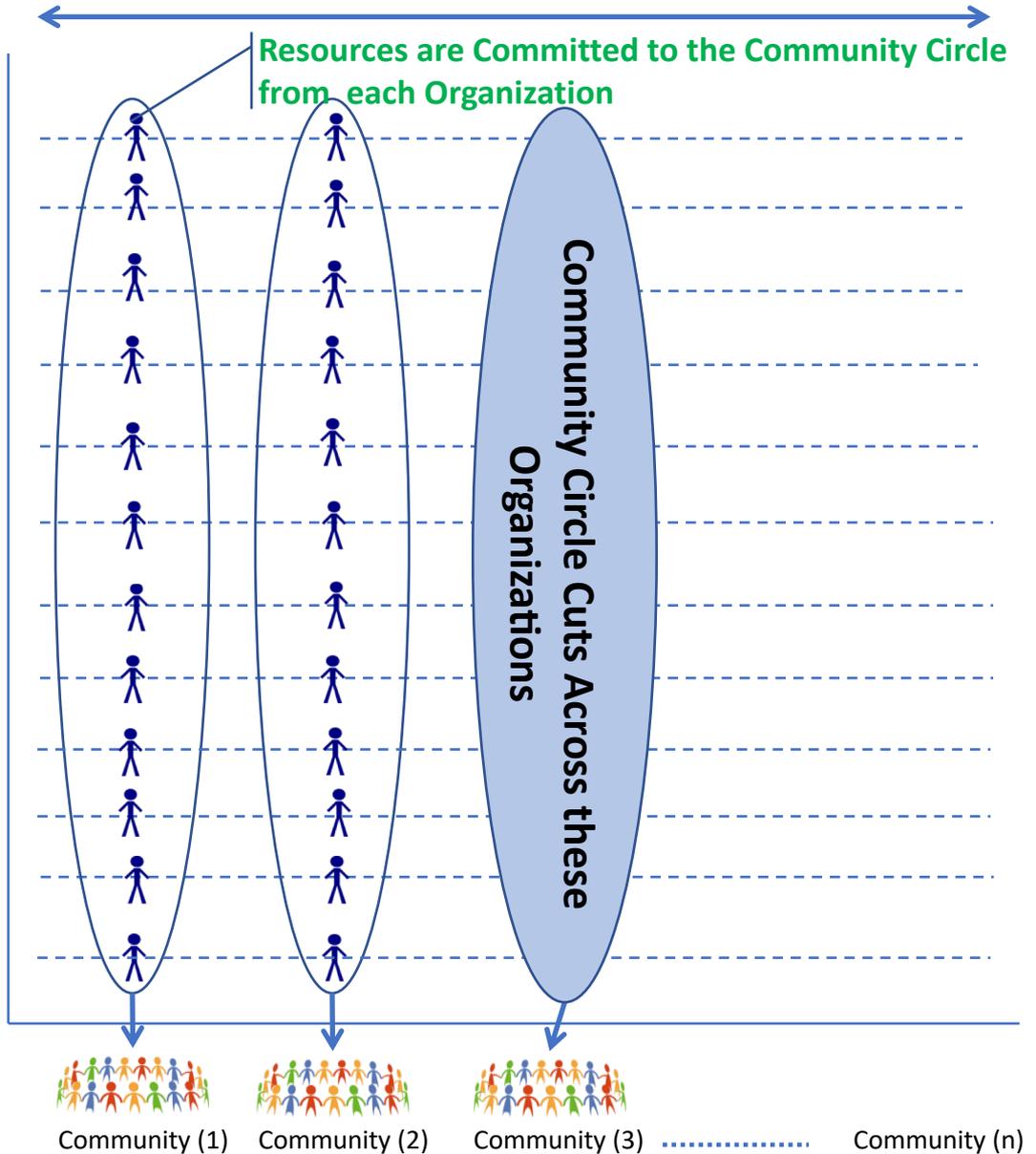
Bringing all to the table

Services and Products provided by each individual organization

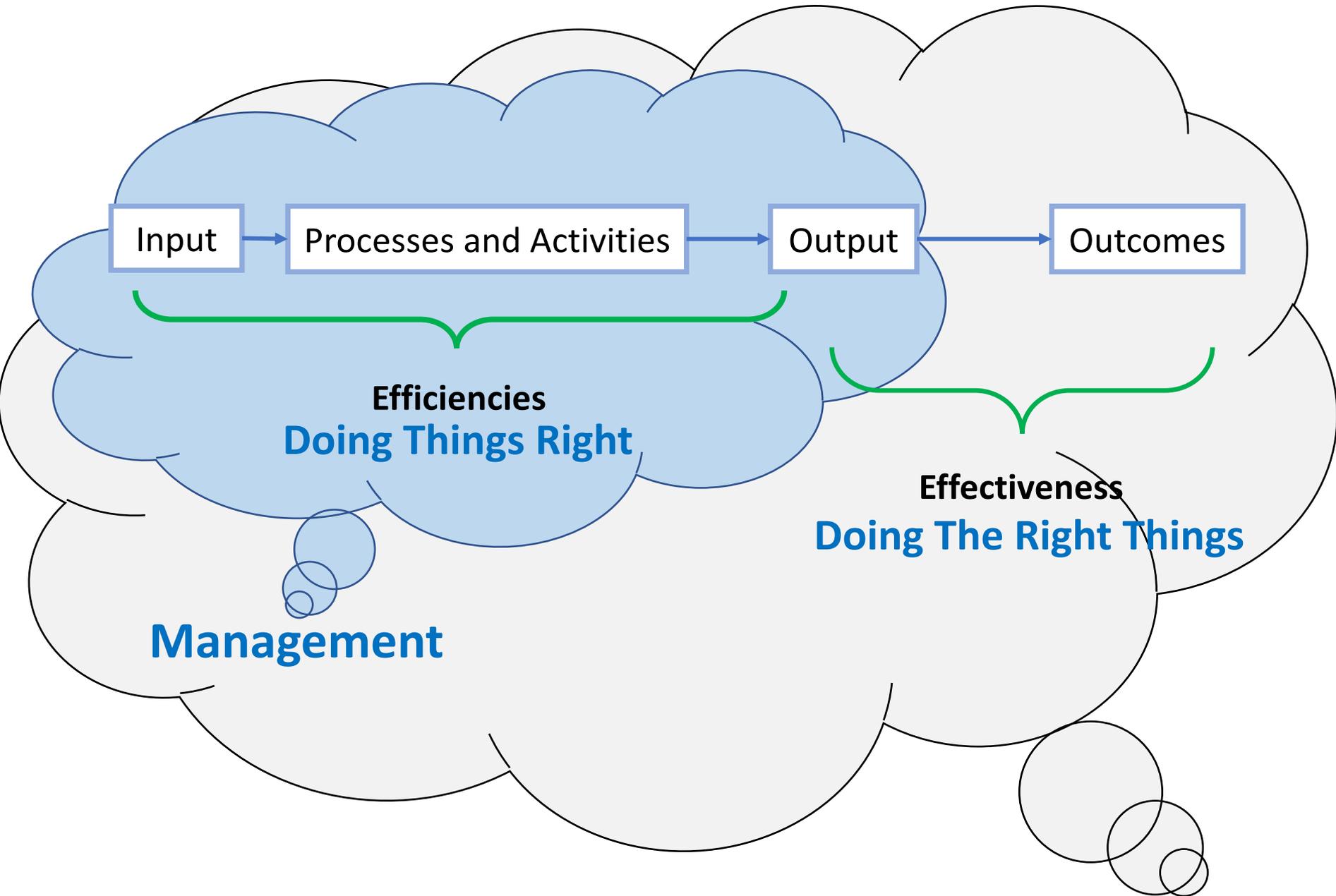
## Enablers: ingredients of success

- Indigenous Services Canada*
- Health Canada / First Nations Health Authority*
- Indigenous Water Operators Associations*
- Community representatives*
- Provincial Health Authorities*
- Local Governments*
- Major Consulting firms*
- Contractors and local suppliers*
- Major equipment and process suppliers*
- Small Water Users Association*
- Water and Wastewater Associations*
- Major Universities*

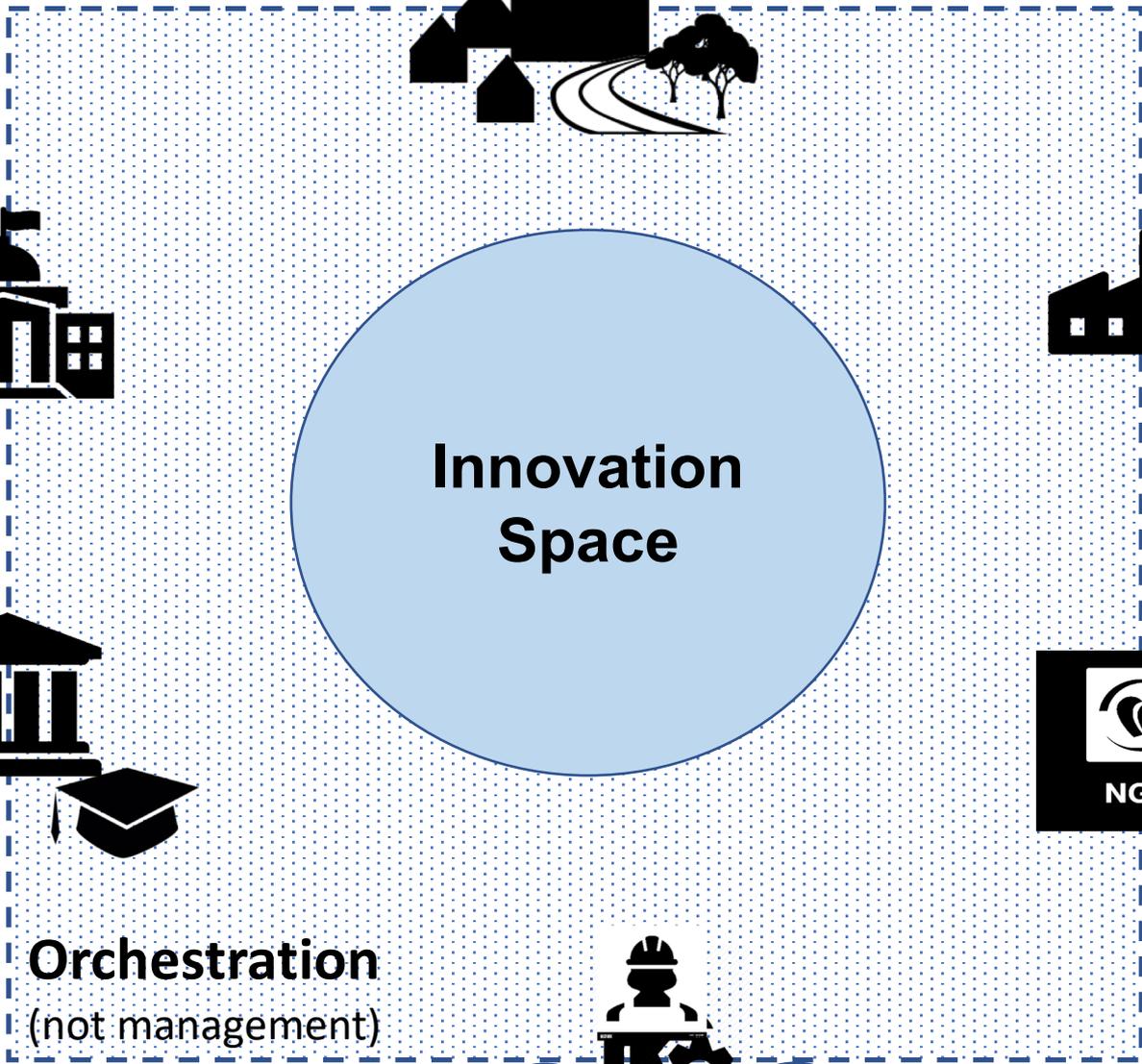
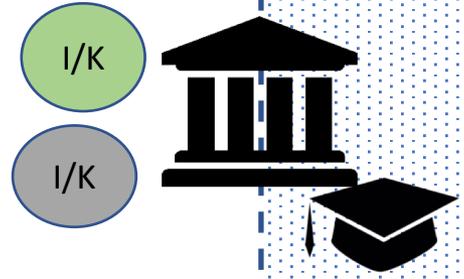
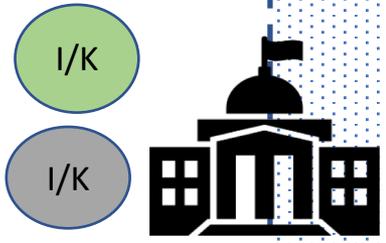
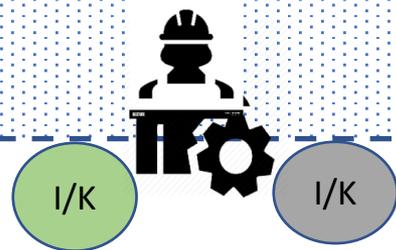
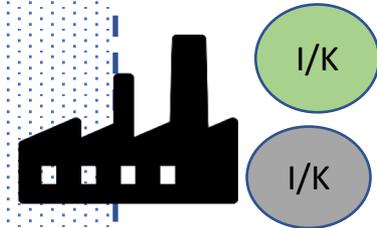
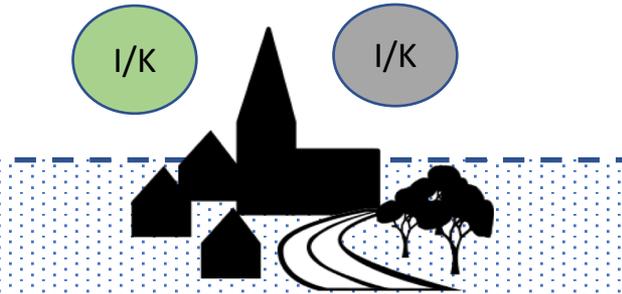
Resources are Committed to the Community Circle from each Organization



# Implementation

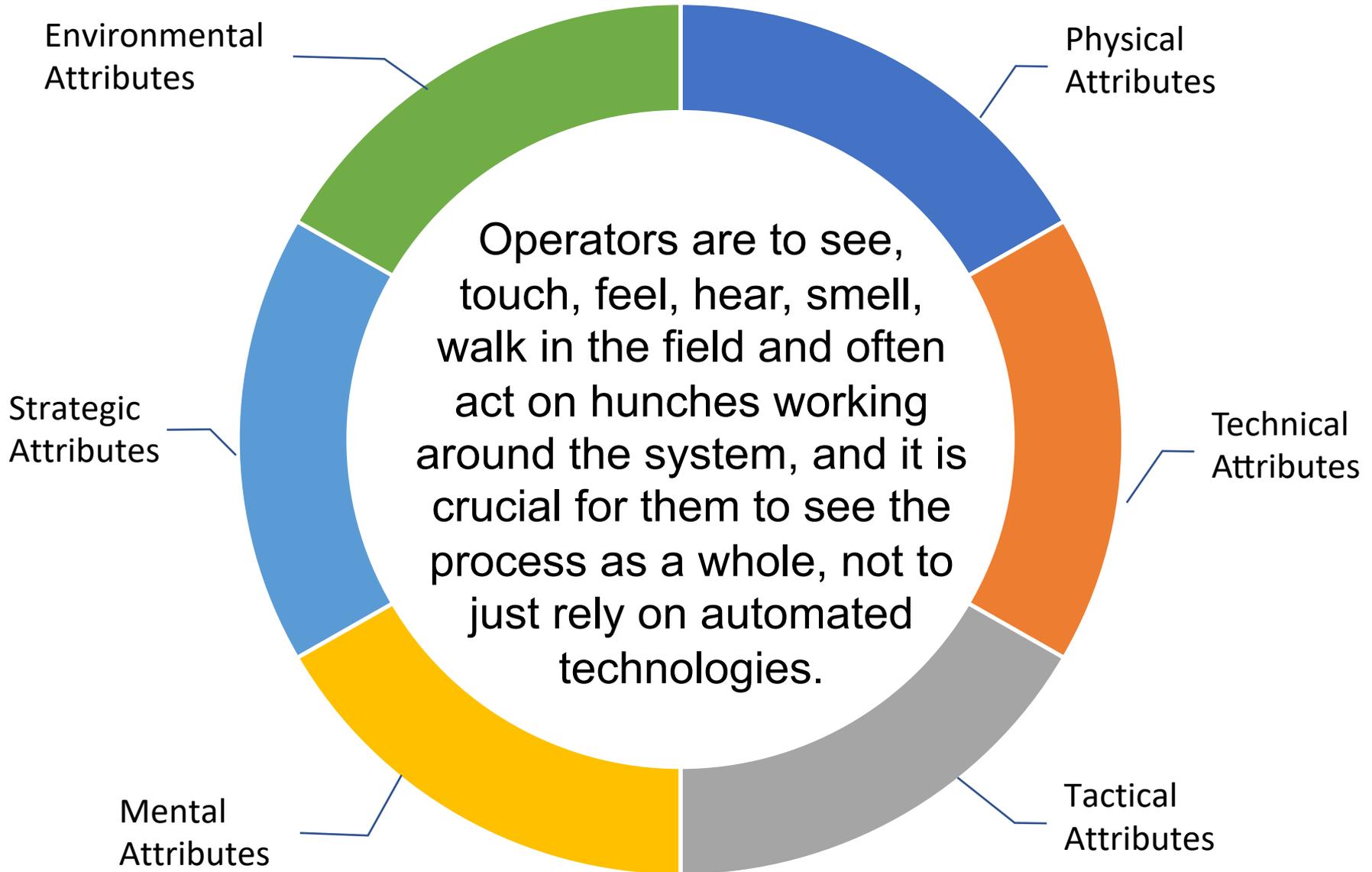


Doing The Right Things Right! ↔ **Orchestration**



**Orchestration**  
(not management)

# Operators' Job Characteristics



# Community Circle

- Supports the AFN's stated goal of creating transparent and consent based approach to building, improving, and providing drinking water, as well as care and control of water infrastructure
- Government response to the society's changing expectations on what research and development (R&D) partnerships should deliver

# Community Circles

- Lytton First Nation
- LhoosK'uz Dene Nation
- Tl'azt'en Nation
- ʔaąam
- Siska Indian Band
- T'it'q'et First Nation

## After 14 years, Middle River celebrates official end to boil water advisory



Remote northern B.C. community hopes more people will move home now that the water is safe to drink

Chantelle Bellrichard · CBC News · Posted: Dec 15, 2018 8:32 PM ET | Last Updated: December 15, 2018



To mark the end of a long-term boil water advisory, the sign at the entrance to Middle River in northern B.C., was cut down with a chainsaw. (Chantelle Bellrichard/CBC)

## Finding a solution to Canada's Indigenous water crisis

🕒 26 August 2018



Lytton's water operator Warren Brown

Many First Nation communities across Canada have been under long-term boil water advisories. One community is trying some innovative solutions. Graduate students from the University of British Columbia report from Lytton, British Columbia. This project is in collaboration with the Global Reporting Centre.

## B.C. First Nation latest to take control of water problems



Lytton First Nation among small but growing number finding solutions to drinking water problems

Tim Fontaine · CBC News · Posted: Mar 22, 2017 4:10 PM ET | Last Updated: March 22, 2017



A small, mobile water treatment plant is lowered into place on Lytton First Nation — ending years of drinking water advisories. (RES'EAU-WaterNET)



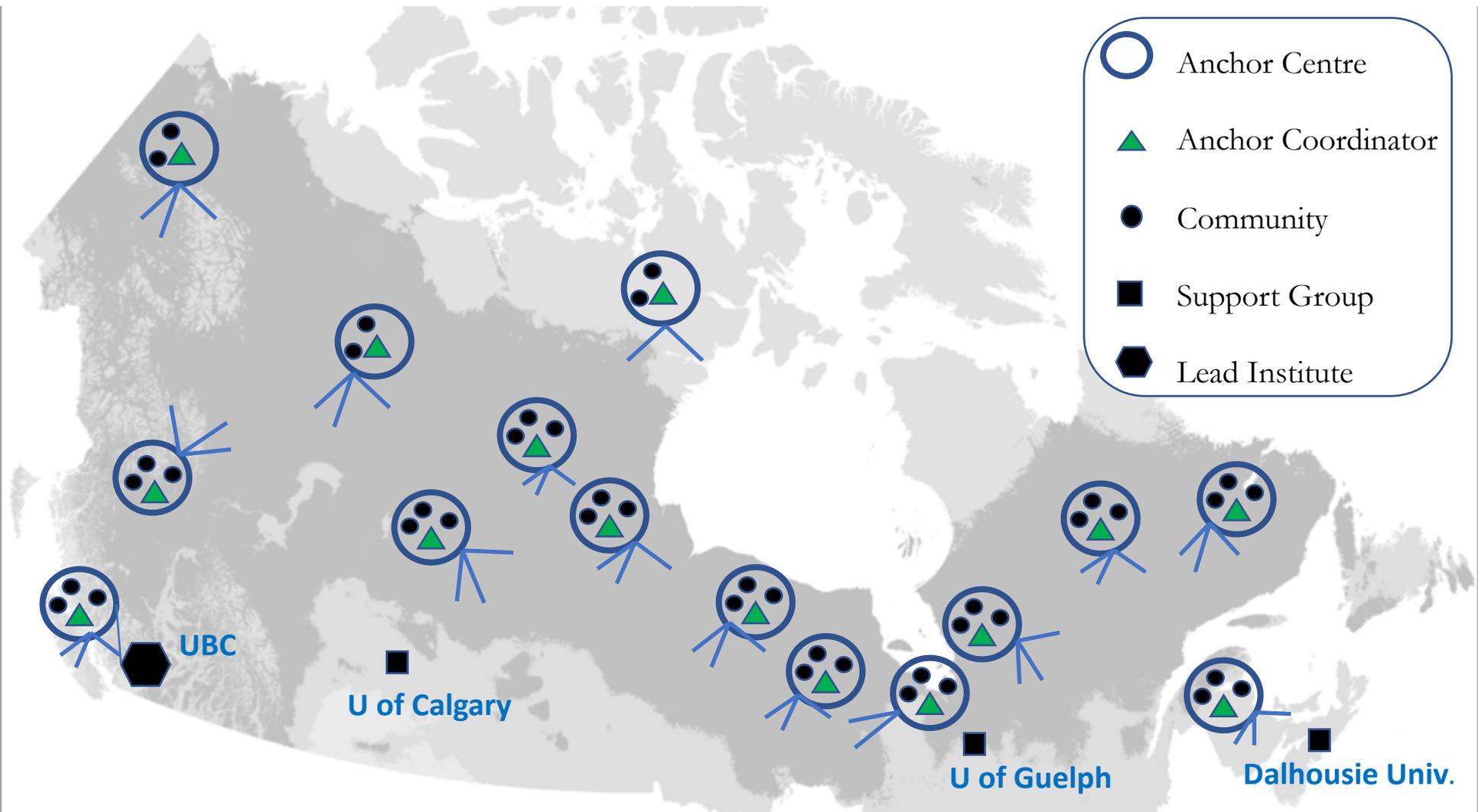
## Two decade boil-water advisory ends for First Nations communities using UBC tech

Thanks to an innovative water treatment system created by UBC engineering professor Madjid Mohseni, five families on two reserves are able to drink water from their tap, some for the first time in their lives.

RANDY SHORE Updated: February 15, 2018

# Completing the Circle

Sometimes *Celebration* and  
*Frustration* exist as opposite  
sides of the same coin



# Anchor Centres

- are to find ways to stretch our collective activities to fill gaps in the communities experience
- are coalitions of community groups driven by a desire to be of service to another and improve some aspects of the communities' well-being
- act as a stabilizing force once they are formed, helping to make choices pertaining to self-government and self-determination, as well as sustainability.
- pave the path towards scale-up

# Anchor Coordinators

- Organizations (or individual within organizations), who will be flexible and mobilized where prevailing conditions demand.
- They facilitate communication and coordination within the whole system (infrastructures, services and utilities, logistics, and with a pool of management and innovators).
- They link experts with communities and with each other and providing guidance for transformations.

# Product vs. Service

- Community Circle model looks at the solution as “*Service*” as opposed to “*Product*”
- Elevating the relationship between providers and users

# Next step?

- Establishment of *Anchor Centers*
  - Criteria?
  - Locations?
- Potential Organizations as *Anchor Coordinators* for building connections across communities, support centres and other public and private organizations to accelerate and streamline mobilization of promising knowledge and practices



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