

**AFN C-19 National Task Force  
Daily Update for: June 11, 2020**

**Health Sector**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html#a1>

**Areas in Canada with cases of COVID-19, as of 2020-06-10 7:30PM EDT**

Province	Confirmed Cases	Hospitalization (ICU)*	Deaths	Recovered
BC	2,680	15 (4)	167	2,328
AB	7,276	46 (6)	151	6,754
SK	658	1 (1)	13	624
MB	300	0 (0)	7	285
ON	31,341	580 (118)	2,475	25,380
QC	53,341	914 (117)	5,081	19,841
Newfoundland/Lab	261	1 (0)	3	256
NB	151	5 (1)	1	121
NS	1,061	3 (2)	62	994
PEI	27		-	27
Yukon	11		-	11
NWT	5		-	5
Nunavut	0			
Repatriated Travelers	13			
<b>Total</b>	<b>97,125</b>	<b>1,565 (249)</b>	<b>7,960</b>	<b>56,639</b>
<b>Active Cases= 32,212</b>				

\*These are numbers of *current* hospitalizations and ICU admissions. Some sources report the total *cumulative* number of hospitalizations and ICU admissions. Also, hospitalization data are amalgamated as they are reported by various hospitals; they are therefore updated sporadically, intermittently, and are likely to be less accurate and current than other data points.

	Cases	Deaths	Recovered
<b>Globally</b>	7,414,050	417,377	3,488,251

- Data is as of June 11 at 10:55am from Johns Hopkins University:  
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>

## Epidemic Summary

As of **June 10**, 2020, the majority (**86%**) of COVID-19 cases are related to domestic acquisition. Domestic acquisition is defined as any exposure that occurred within Canada.

As of **June 10**, 2020, Canada has an overall case fatality rate of **8.0%**.

As of **June 10**, 2020, **58%** of all Canadian COVID-19 cases are reported to have recovered.

## Risk to Canadians

COVID-19 is a serious health threat, and the situation is evolving daily. The risk will vary between and within communities, but given the increasing number of cases in Canada, the risk to Canadians is considered **high**.

There is an increased risk of more severe outcomes for Canadians:

- Aged 65 and over
- With compromised immune systems
- With underlying medical conditions

## Data Sources:

British Columbia:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a6f23959a8b14bfa989e3cda29297ded>

Alberta: <https://covid19stats.alberta.ca/#cases>

Saskatchewan: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/cases-and-risk-of-covid-19-in-saskatchewan>

Manitoba: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/index.html#cases>

Ontario: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-0>

Quebec: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/donnees>

New Brunswick:

[https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc/content/respiratory\\_diseases/coronavirus/case-map.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc/content/respiratory_diseases/coronavirus/case-map.html)

Nova Scotia: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/data/>

Prince Edward Island: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/pei-covid-19-testing-data>

Newfoundland and Labrador: <https://covid-19-newfoundland-and-labrador-gnl.hub.arcgis.com/>

Yukon: <https://yukon.ca/covid-19>

Northwest Territories: <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

Additional source (national): <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/tracking-every-case-of-covid-19-in-canada-1.4852102#alberta>

## **Housing, Infrastructure, Water & Emergency Management Sector**

### **Local States of Emergencies:**

First Nation States of Emergency- As per ISC report June 10, 2020									
Region	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	ATL	Territories	Total
Confirmed	57	31	0	21	69	4	7	2	191

**WILDFIRE:** - As Per ISC EMD 2020 FN Flood / Wildland Fire Report as of June 2, 2020 - **Updates in Bold**

**\*\*Please note that given the decrease in significant incidents, this report will now be issued on a bi-weekly basis\*\***

**FLOODS:** As Per ISC EMD 2020 FN Flood / Wildland Fire Situation Report as of June 2, 2020 - **Updates in Bold**

**\*\*Please note that given the decrease in significant incidents, this report will now be issued on a bi-weekly basis\*\***

#### **British Columbia –**

- **Upper Nicola Band (697) (Chief Harvey McLeod) Population: 415**
  - **06JUN2020: 1 additional household (6 residents) evacuated. 23 total residents evacuated;**
  - 02JUN2020: 2 additional households (9 residents) evacuated. 15 total residents evacuated;
- **Leq' a: mel First Nation (579) (Chief Alice Thompson) Population: 145**
  - **10JUN2020: 58 homes remain under evacuation alert. ISC BC RO expects alert to be rescinded this week.**
  - 05JUN2020: 58 homes under evacuation alert due to freshet

#### **Alberta –**

**10JUN2020: High Stream Flow advisories in effect for the North Saskatchewan river, Athabasca river and Swan Hills area basins.**

- **Chipewyan Prairie First Nation (470) (Chief Vern Janvier) Population: 406**
  - **10JUN2020: 2 homes impacted on the far north of the reserve. 7 residents evacuated;**

- 08JUN2020: One home, farmland and farm machinery impacted by flooding due to rainfall
- **Whitefish Lake First Nation (459) (Chief Albert Thunder) Population: 1,644**
  - **10JUN2020: 63 homes impacted. 50 driveways washed out. 8 households (approx. 24 residents) evacuated;**
  - 08JUN2020: Main road washed out, 15 driveways washed out and 25 homes impacted by flooding due to rainfall. 1 household evacuated

#### **Other Events –**

##### **Environmental Contamination – Water Treatment Plant**

- **Fond du Lac FN (351) (Chief Louis Mercredi) Population: 1166**
  - **10JUN2020: Barge sitting near dock on Lake Athabasca leaking crude oil. FN water intake in close proximity to the spill. FN on boil water advisory.**

### **Communications Sector**

#### **How the pandemic has revealed underlying inequalities in Montreal**

**CBC - June 11, 2020**

<https://ca.news.yahoo.com/pandemic-revealed-underlying-inequalities-montreal-080000005.html>

**Healthy food is harder to come by for the racialized and vulnerable amid COVID-19. Here's who stepped up to help**

**TorStar - June 11, 2020**

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/06/11/healthy-food-is-harder-to-come-by-for-the-racialized-and-vulnerable-amid-covid-19-heres-who-stepped-up-to-help.html>

#### **COVID-19 lockdown shows importance of food traditions in northwest Saskatchewan**

**MSN – June 10, 2020**

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/return-to-the-land-covid-19-lockdown-shows-importance-of-food-traditions-in-northwest-saskatchewan/ar-BB15iuJD>

#### **COVID-19: How the Crisis Can Call Us Toward Reconciliation with Indigenous Communities**

**Zoomer - JUNE 10, 2020**

<https://www.everythingzoomer.com/general/2020/06/10/indigenous-issues-and-covid-19-how-the-crisis-can-call-us-toward-reconciliation/>

## **Numbers**

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1581964230816/1581964277298#chap5>

### **Confirmed cases of COVID-19**

On First Nations reserves in provinces, as of June 10, ISC is aware of:

- 237 confirmed positive COVID-19
- 22 hospitalizations
- 207 recovered cases
- 6 deaths

Case numbers per region:

- British Columbia: 43
- Alberta: 53
- Saskatchewan: 54
- Ontario: 52
- Quebec: 35

## **Full Stories**

### **How the pandemic has revealed underlying inequalities in Montreal**

**CBC - June 11, 2020**

<https://ca.news.yahoo.com/pandemic-revealed-underlying-inequalities-montreal-080000005.html>

Since the start of the pandemic, Montreal districts with higher numbers of Black people and more cramped housing have registered the most cases of COVID-19, according to an analysis by CBC News.

The findings echo similar observations made in other major North American cities, where the novel coronavirus has disproportionately affected the poorest and most racially diverse neighbourhoods.

"This says the conditions in which people are living leave them exposed in a very serious, excessive way to COVID-19," said Tiffany Callender, executive director of the Côte-des-Neiges Black Community Association.

Unlike in some other jurisdictions, in Canada, public health officials have not disclosed data on the race of COVID-19 patients. That has frustrated community activists like Callender, who says such information could have been used to identify and protect vulnerable communities.

"As Black people, our shared lived experience is not considered. The only way to prove it is with race-based data," she said.

"We need data because they are not going to believe it just because we said so."

Though the provincial public health director, Dr. Horacio Arruda, promised in early May the government would begin collecting race-based health data, the Health Ministry acknowledged Wednesday there are no immediate plans to do so.

"We understand the importance of this information and are sensitive to it," the ministry said in a statement to CBC News.

For the moment, the ministry said, "all our efforts are being put toward protecting the population and those infected."

In order to get a more accurate picture of how race and other socio-economic factors have played a role in the outbreak, CBC News cross-referenced census data with case numbers for each borough or municipality, released daily by the public health authority for the island of Montreal.

We performed a simple statistical procedure known as a linear regression to establish which correlations are the strongest.

Of the 24 socio-economic factors we tested, the strongest correlation was between cases per 100,000 residents and the percentage of Black residents.

We also found strong correlations for concentrations of health-care workers, low-income earners and unsuitable housing (a measure of whether there are enough bedrooms for the size of a household).

"The pandemic has really helped to reveal some of the structural inequalities we know have been around for a long time in Montreal but haven't done anything about," said McGill University Prof. Sam Harper, a social epidemiologist who reviewed CBC's findings.

"In some respects, this is consistent with what we've been hearing both in Canada and in the U.S., which is that places that are already disadvantaged in terms of their social circumstances are also experiencing a heavier burden of COVID."

A correlation study such as the one performed by CBC does not determine what factors cause the relationship, nor does it explain how several different factors may interact with each other. Harper cautioned that it can be difficult to draw strong conclusions about how any one factor can put people at risk, because "many of these indicators of disadvantage can occur together in the same neighbourhoods."

Our correlation study also can't adequately represent the experiences of communities that don't make up significant proportions of a neighbourhood population.

### **Healthy food is harder to come by for the racialized and vulnerable amid COVID-19. Here's who stepped up to help**

**TorStar - June 11, 2020**

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/06/11/healthy-food-is-harder-to-come-by-for-the-racialized-and-vulnerable-amid-covid-19-heres-who-stepped-up-to-help.html>

Leticia Deawuo spent years advocating for better housing conditions and eradicating poverty in her Jane-Finch neighbourhood, but it wasn't until she joined Black Creek Community Farm that she fully realized how much food was part of the equation all along.

"When you talk about housing, you talk about food and minimum wage because when you look at where people live, it impacts your access to food," says Deawuo, now the director of Black Creek Community Farm, an eight-acre urban farm in the area. "Here at Jane-Finch, we have fast-food restaurants at every corner but you pay more for fresh food. I remember when people told me to eat organic because it was better for you. I filled my cart and when I brought it to the counter I embarrassingly had to put it back because I couldn't afford it."

Deawuo points out that Black communities also have [higher rates of diabetes and high blood pressure](#) in Canada and also notes the lack of high-paying jobs in her neighbourhood. The city of Toronto has also recently declared [anti-Black racism a public health crisis](#).

It's why organizations like Black Creek Community Farm as well as FoodShare, a Toronto-based food-advocacy group, connects the issue of hunger with race, class, health, housing and politics through programming such as community kitchens and educational workshops (much of it postponed or moved online due to COVID-19). Since the city went into lockdown in March, the directors of both organizations say they've seen a surge in demand for their boxes of fresh produce. Also, with the pandemic particularly restricting food access for vulnerable, often racialized residents and those with precarious employment, both organizations also started specific programs to help put food on their tables.

Just before the provincewide shutdown of non-essential businesses in March, Deawuo and FoodShare executive director Paul Taylor saw that people were hoarding groceries of all kinds at supermarkets. "We thought what's going to happen to the aunties who can't afford, or have the space, to stock up," says Deawuo.

She and Taylor pulled enough funding to supply an initial 200 emergency boxes of fresh produce to seniors. That number soon grew to 2,500 households. By the first week of June, Taylor says they've partnered with 50 other local agencies and community organizations to fundraise and deliver 20,232 emergency food boxes, or 370,000 lbs. of produce, at no cost to recipients. Black Creek Community Farm started [an online campaign this week](#) to raise money for more boxes.

Taylor says a few boxes went specifically to 500 Foodora workers who lost their jobs when the food delivery app [ceased Canadian operations last month](#). "They were essential in getting food to people in the city, but they were being neglected," says Taylor. In partnership with Not Another Black Life, food boxes were also sent to Black and Indigenous families who had to self-isolate after attending the [Justice for Regis march](#) at the end of May. For those who can afford it, the food boxes are also available for purchase.

Still, Taylor says charity doesn't fix the income inequality and racial discrimination that tie into food insecurity.

"We have a two-tier system where if you're poor, you get people's leftovers and more often than not it's food that is high in sugar and preservatives and not high in protein," he says. "It doesn't solve issues of income and poverty. Go sort out policy. There's enough food, it's the income that can't be sorted at a food bank."

Taylor notes that FoodShare also started giving out free [balcony gardening kits](#) to families in rental apartments in Flemington Park, Black Creek and York-South Weston, communities that have lower income and racialized residents.

"Growing food is a beautiful thing to watch, and to taste something that's so fresh. For many racialized communities, we've been removed from the ability to grow food. When you look at who has backyards and green space, they're in overwhelmingly white communities," says Taylor. "We started with 250 kits, but received over 340 orders and that number will continue to grow."

Both Deawuo and Taylor hope that, as more people sign up for weekly produce boxes and support smaller, local farmers during the pandemic, that it leads to the creation of more

farmers' markets and urban farms that can address immediate needs of the neighbourhoods they're in, long after [COVID-19](#) recedes.

"Communities always fed themselves and when the borders are closed, every municipality has to ask how they can feed themselves and look at food resiliency — not just climate change, but how it can grow even 10 or 20 per cent of its own food," says Deawuo.

Both directors also say there needs to be better representation of Black and Indigenous people at non-profits and discussions around policy making. (FoodShare's board chair is Crystal Sinclair, founder of Indigenous movement Idle No More Toronto.) In particular, Black women have been under-represented in decision-making roles for too long, says Taylor.

"We're talking publicly with race and how it intersects with food, we're talking about migrant workers and the need for government intervention. It's a conversation that has long been missing," he says. (Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, two Mexican migrant workers have died in Canada, with [at least two others in intensive care this week](#) and more than 280 confirmed COVID-19 cases among migrant farm workers in Ontario.)

In Canada, Black households were already found, before the pandemic's arrival, [more likely to experience food insecurity](#) compared to their white counterparts. Now a [map of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Toronto](#) shows a higher number of cases in neighbourhoods where residents are low-income earners, racialized and live in denser housing with longer commutes. They are also the [people who make up a large portion of essential workers during the pandemic](#), but are earning less than the national average.

[The TTC, meanwhile, resumed fare evasion fines last week](#) despite critiques that it targets low-income riders.

### **COVID-19 lockdown shows importance of food traditions in northwest Saskatchewan**

**MSN – June 10, 2020**

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/return-to-the-land-covid-19-lockdown-shows-importance-of-food-traditions-in-northwest-saskatchewan/ar-BB15iuJD>

Knowing it was just a matter of time before the novel coronavirus presented in northwest Saskatchewan, a group of Dene hunters and trappers from English River First Nation began gathering wild meat in March.

Although there were no COVID-19 cases being reported in the region, "we got on it right away," said band member Lisa Janvier, who was also working on the regional pandemic response plan. "We were prepped for what was going to happen."

The entire community was involved in the harvest, she said. There were three moose and caribou as well as muskrats and fish. Most of the meat was divvied up among the nation's 200-plus households, with elders the priority. The remainder was added to the emergency stockpile of donated food at the local hall.

In April, the virus arrived on the reserve. It didn't spread beyond the one family, which, despite having 15 people under one roof, managed to contain it to just a few members.

But elsewhere in the northwest, new cases were being confirmed each day. Throughout May, under a provincial public health order, no one was allowed in or out of the region.

"We were pretty much well ready," Janvier said.

English River is served by a Northern Store in the village of Patuanuak and a handful of confectioneries. Unable to travel south to large urban centres for food, the lockdown



emphasized the strong relationship the band has maintained with the land and its traditions of gifting and sharing remain essential to survival.

Despite the forest fires that burned through the area in 2015, the relative isolation of English River First Nation and its traditional hunting grounds has helped keep much intact, Janvier said. Priscilla Settee, an Indigenous studies professor at the University of Saskatchewan and a native of the northeast Saskatchewan community of Cumberland House, pointed to the pseudo-settled land grabs and extraction of natural resources that have disrupted and destroyed animal habitats in areas that people once relied on for food.

“Naturally, it is going to and it is having an impact on food sovereignty, food security,” she said. “I’m really concerned that the development policies have really taken the control of food right out of the hands of communities.”

A lot of people in Indigenous communities have come to rely, at least in part, on the factory farms and the chain grocery stores of the industrialized food system. But because of geographic and socio-economic challenges related to colonialism, many are unable to access the best or the healthiest items, Settee pointed out.

University of Regina professor Donica Belisle, who teaches food history, also casts a critical lens on how the industrialized system in place can generally perpetuate oppression.

“I think we’re in an interesting moment historically when we’re seeing kind of the negative sides of the way we’ve organized food distribution for over 100 years now,” she said

Supports for local food initiative fall short

Although some federal and provincial policies have been put in place in response to the pandemic, they aren’t necessarily reaching the local food initiatives in Indigenous communities, like the ones in northern Saskatchewan.

John Belanger is the general manager of the commercial Île-à-la-Crosse Fish Company, a unique venture partially owned by fishermen who fish the local Churchill River system. The walleye, pike and jackfish are sold throughout the Prairies, including from the processing plant directly to locals.

Although there were some limited funding options available for small enterprises that could have potentially helped, the Île-à-la-Crosse Fish Company closed when the novel coronavirus presented in the region because the 10 to 20 employees work in such close quarters, Belanger said.

That meant fishermen weren’t able to fish out the lakes’ quotas before ice began breaking up, making it dangerous to go out. While they could approach the province for an extension, it’s now spawning season.

“We can’t just do 10 pounds at a time. We have to do a hundred pounds,” Belanger said.

“There’s the heat, there’s the power, there’s the wages. You have to pay the fishermen. There’s a huge overcost.”

As a business that only operates in the winter and spring, there’s not much the Île-à-la-Crosse Fish Company can do now other than wait for the season to change, he said.

Coming together

Amid the novel coronavirus outbreak and throughout the subsequent regional lockdown, the people of northwest Saskatchewan have relied on their traditions and their neighbours.

“It brought the community closer,” Janvier said. “It opened up a lot on learning to get along and respect one another.”

With travel restrictions lifted, people can travel south again for groceries. An executive vice-president of the company that runs the Northern Stores in the region expects many probably will. But the pandemic has changed how it thinks about serving the area, said Gary Merasty, also the chief development officer.

“We’ve started thinking internally a bit as a company: how can we work with communities?” he said, noting the North West Company would be open to consider partnering on both local gardening and meat initiatives if and where possible. “How can we help them lobby and advocate at a federal level or provincial level to help make that reality?”

La Loche Mayor Robert St. Pierre said during the lockdown, “the First Nations and Métis Nation really stepped up the game... on food security.”

With so much focus on how to contain the novel coronavirus, he said he hasn’t had crossed those bridges with higher levels of government, yet.

Saskatchewan Government Relations Minister Lori Carr said the province is open to working with the region.

“As we have those discussions with the leaders and issues come up, we’ll work with them on that,” Carr said.

### **COVID-19: How the Crisis Can Call Us Toward Reconciliation with Indigenous Communities Zoomer - JUNE 10, 2020**

<https://www.everythingzoomer.com/general/2020/06/10/indigenous-issues-and-covid-19-how-the-crisis-can-call-us-toward-reconciliation/>

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadians have shown their support for front-line workers. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other political leaders have told Canadians “[we are all in this together](#)” and “[no expense will be spared](#)” to ensure the health and safety of Canadians.

Yet, when it comes to the persistent and glaring inequities facing Indigenous communities in Canada, many of these same leaders, as well as Canadians, have fallen drastically short. The stubborn tendency of non-Indigenous Canadians to turn away from “Indigenous issues” and seek a return to “normalcy” remains an ongoing barrier to change.

Dryden Mayor Greg Wilson said some councillors felt it was beyond their jurisdiction to comment on federal matters. But as Fort Frances town councillor Douglas Judson pointed out: “Municipal resolutions comment or call for action by other levels of government all the time.”

On April 27, 2020, for example, the Dryden town council in northwestern Ontario [voted 5-2 against a motion](#) calling for the resignation of Conservative Sen. Lynn Beyak. Beyak made national headlines last year when she refused to remove racist letters from her website and was subsequently [suspended from the Senate](#) for failing to take sensitivity training seriously. Leaders from the Grand Council Treaty 3 (GCT3) and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) publicly condemned Dryden council’s decision. [NAN Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler said](#): “As leaders we must seize every opportunity to support reconciliation and speak out against racism ... it is the duty of all Canadians to stand against racism and bigotry ... hurtful comments that ignore our shared colonial history must be denounced.”

#### **COVID-19 highlights Indigenous Inequities**

COVID-19 has illuminated longstanding inequities in Indigenous communities, such as the lack of clean drinking water, overcrowded housing and inadequate health-care access in dozens of

First Nations, as [Cindy Blackstock and Isadore Day](#) recently explored in an op-ed for the *Globe and Mail* and [documented by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives](#).

These conditions, created by decades of colonial policies and actions and inactions, make it much more challenging to follow basic public health guidelines, such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing.

Moreover, [the federal government recently acknowledged](#) that its funding for Indigenous organizations has “fallen short” and its COVID-19 data on Indigenous peoples is “limited.” The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is suing the federal government for “[inadequate and discriminatory funding](#)” to respond to COVID-19 among off-reserve and urban Indigenous people.

Some companies, meanwhile, seem to be exploiting the pandemic to [build pipelines or extract resources](#) on Indigenous territories that Indigenous people staunchly oppose. Alberta’s energy minister even said: “Now is a great time to be building a pipeline [because you can’t have protests of more than 15 people](#).”

Widespread avoidance

I conducted interviews and fieldwork over 18 months in the Rainy River District in northwestern Ontario to explore the attitudes of people like Beyak and her supporters. I found out they are not as rare as some would like to think.

In fact, in my book, *Canada at a Crossroads: Boundaries, Bridges, and Laissez-Faire Racism in Indigenous-Settler Relations*, I show that non-Indigenous Canadians, whatever their personal views, seek to avoid discussing racism and colonialism at all costs.

Part of the issue is about language and self-perception. Far too many Canadians do not see themselves as settlers when that is clearly the case.

Many settler Canadians routinely express a sense of group superiority and entitlement and feel threatened by Indigenous people who stand up for their rights, defend their lands and publicly assert their Indigenous identities and cultures. Perhaps even more common is the unwillingness of settlers to say or do anything about the racism in their midst.

Inter-group contact is not enough to overcome these racist and colonialist structures as these attitudes often coexist with a history of intermarriage and cross-group friendships.

Many settlers in northwestern Ontario refer to Indigenous friends or family members as “good Indians,” exceptions who prove the rule. Some even look to Indigenous people for validation of their racist views. Most commonly, racism and colonialism remain elephants in the room, and Indigenous-settler relations can be friendly so long as no one talks about “politics.”

Reconciliation: A way forward

The silver lining in my research is that many Indigenous and settler people are interested in finding new ways of relating to one another.

Crises are often an opportunity for groups to develop new ways of working together to protect their mutual interests and to find a new footing on which to grapple with Canada’s past and move forward on a more equitable and sustainable path. Positive Indigenous-settler alliances exist. In Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, the [Freedom Road](#) campaign brought together activists, evangelical Christians, business people and urban and rural Indigenous people to create a 24-kilometre route to link Shoal Lake 40 First Nation to the Trans-Canada Highway. In the Rainy River District, First Nations and municipalities worked together to protect their shorelines from flooding or pooled their resources to purchase medical equipment at the Fort Frances hospital.

The COVID-19 pandemic represents one such crisis: for settlers and their governments, it could be an opportunity to live up to all the recent talk of reconciliation. This would mean respecting Indigenous nations' political autonomy and jurisdiction, including the right to regulate who enters the community and on what terms. It would also mean providing the necessary funding and other supports to prevent and manage disease outbreaks.

Although there may be regions where this is happening locally in Canada, we continue to see instances like Dryden where settlers overlook or oppose the call to rectify these inequities. It is imperative to speak out against racism — whether interpersonal or institutional. We must build new relationships based on respect for Indigenous sovereignty, fulfilment of treaty obligations, and a spirit of partnership.

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