



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

FACILITATING FIRST NATIONS VOTER PARTICIPATION FOR THE 43rd FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTION

FINAL REPORT



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Executive Summary

The contract between the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and Elections Canada for the 43rd General Election sought to remove barriers and increase accessibility for First Nations' participation in the federal electoral process, and to identify barriers to participation to be addressed in the future. Through a number of different initiatives the AFN, supported by Elections Canada, led various outreach campaigns designed to inform First Nations on the recent changes to the federal electoral process brought forth through the Elections Modernization Act, the various ways to participate in the federal electoral process, both in terms of voting and employment opportunities, and to continue to identify barriers to First Nations participation.

Building on previous work that identified barriers and through building a methodology to prioritize priority federal electoral districts, the AFN focused a large effort towards directly contacting First Nations through direct outreach. These outreach efforts comprised of a call-centre, in-person events, digital, radio, print, and a focus group. The outreach efforts were a significant undertaking, notably the call-centre. The call-centre operated from June-October 2019.

Other highlights in the outreach campaign was the availability of elections information in First Nations' languages for distribution in locally organized events in almost every region.

Following the 43rd General Election, a number of follow-ups were undertaken as part of the AFN and Elections Canada contract. These items included both a survey of First Nations as well as a post-mortem meeting to determine best practices, lessons learned, and to gauge the overall initial success of the contract. While data on a number of indicators for participation and access is still in process, one key indicator of accessibility shows that the AFN's outreach efforts may have positively influenced First Nations' access to the federal electoral process; while in 2015 there were 297 First Nations with a polling station on-reserve this number increased by 68 to 365 on-reserve polling stations in 2019. This increase in polling stations on-reserve shows a continued increase in accessibility and is promising.

Despite the assumed success and positive impact that the outreach efforts brought in addressing barriers for First Nations participation in the federal electoral process, there were still a number of challenges identified by the AFN and these helped shape recommendations for the future.

It is recommended that work between the AFN and Elections Canada continue so that the foundational work conducted in previous elections including the 43rd General Election continues to be built upon and barriers to First Nations participation in the federal electoral process be regularly identified and reduced.

Recommendations

In the legislative process of Bill C-76, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments*, the AFN advocated for a number of changes to better improve accessibility for First Nations to participate in the federal electoral process. While a number of the AFN's recommendations put forth in their report *Facilitating First Nations Voter Participation in the 42nd General Election* were incorporated into Bill C-76, outstanding challenges remain in regards to accessibility:

- Ensuring that all First Nations have access to an “Aboriginal Community Relations Officer” within their First Nation during an election period, a name change of the role to reflect the shift from “Aboriginal” to “First Nation” should also be considered.
- Ensuring the hiring of local First Nations persons to carry out various duties in advance of an election. There is anecdotal evidence that well qualified First Nations applicants were not given adequate access to local Elections Canada positions.
- Introduce self-identification options in Elections Canada hiring and application processes to better gauge First Nations representation and access to election period paid employment positions offered by Elections Canada.
- Ensuring that staff running polling stations are adequately trained on acceptable forms of ID. There was anecdotal evidence that polling station staff turned away First Nations voters who had adequate ID.
- Ensuring access to polling stations on-reserve where requested. There is evidence that First Nations were not given access to requested polling stations on-reserve when requested by First Nations.
- Ensuring that EROs be available for contact prior to writ drop. This issue was a frequent concern among First Nations who sought to establish contact with Elections Canada representatives.
- Increasing communication between EROs and First Nations to establish, well in advance of the election period, who the point of contact within a community is, whether a polling station will be required within a community, possible community liaisons, and possible election period staff so as to be readily prepared and to keep a regular relationship between Elections Canada and First Nations.

More recommendations that come as a result of engagement with First Nations and staff who supported the AFN's work on the file:

- Comprehensive educational training or materials, developed in coordination with First Nations, for all Elections Canada election staff on First Nation participation in the federal electoral process, including information on historical barriers to First Nations participation, First Nation voter identification methods, and the recent effort to increase First Nations accessibility in the federal electoral process.
- Better photographic representation of First Nations in all external educational or informational materials as opposed to just digital illustrations.
- Tools and plans in the event of an unexpected federal election when in a minority government setting that outline potential First Nations electoral outreach strategies and consider the constraints of an increased level of unpredictability regarding a writ drop.

1. AFN Mandate, Background and Objectives

AFN Mandate

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is the national, political representative organization for First Nation governments and their citizens, including those living on and off reserve. Every Chief in Canada is entitled to be a member of the AFN, and the National Chief is elected by the Chiefs in Canada, who in turn are elected by their citizens. The role and function of the AFN is to serve as a nationally delegated forum for determining and harmonizing effective collective and co-operative measures on any subject matter that First Nations delegate for review, study, response or action, and to advance the aspirations of First Nations.

The National Chief is the official spokesperson of the AFN – distinct from Regional Chiefs or other political representatives – and in this regard represents the views of the national organization. The AFN's official position on a particular subject may or may not reflect the individual perspectives held by its membership. The AFN's official position is drawn through resolution supported by Chiefs in Assembly. In addition to the National Chief, the AFN secretariat provides the research and technical expertise necessary to fulfill its function as a national First Nation political representative organization.

Project Background

For the past four federal general elections (GEs), the AFN has worked with Elections Canada (EC) to help inform First Nation individuals and communities on various elements of the electoral process in Canada. The focus for the last three elections has been on addressing information barriers to First Nations participation in federal elections, undertaking a range of initiatives to ensure that First Nations on-reserve residents have the information they need to participate if they choose to, and conducting research to assess the impacts of those initiatives. The current contract for the 43rd GE was the second consecutive election in which a call-centre was a major focus of the contracted work.

Research shows that First Nations vote at a lower rate in federal GEs than the overall Canadian population (44% compared to 61.4% between 2004 and 2011).¹ In 2015 voter turnout in the population as a whole increased by about 12% to 68.5%, and First Nations turnout rose to 61.5%, an increase of about 28%. Qualitative data gathered by the AFN in 2006, 2008 and 2011 suggest that numerous barriers contributed to the lesser comparative turnout in First Nations, including a lack of culturally relevant information (e.g., political and language barriers), challenges in meeting the requirement for voters to prove residency and identification, and a lack of information regarding EC programs and services.²

¹ Jean-Sebastien Bargiel, Federal Voter Turnout in First Nations Reserves (2004 – 2011), Elections Canada, 2012

² Additional information can be found in 41st Federal General Election Assembly of First Nations Call Centre Final Report, May 26, 2011, and Increasing Voter Turnout of First Nations Voters: Phase 2 Project Summary, March 9, 2009.

While the evidence points to the existence of barriers for First Nation electors, a lack of data and research makes understanding the specific nature of these barriers and their relationship to First Nation electoral participation challenging. It is important to recognize that the AFN represents a number of different First Nations with a number of different voices and perspectives and should not be interpreted as a solitary one. Each region, nation, and community has its own unique cultural, political, geographical and socio-economic concerns. These factors, as well as many others, can impact the voting experienced by First Nation electors.

In 2014, the Canadian federal government passed Bill C-23, the *Fair Elections Act*, legislation that amended the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA). These amendments included a prohibition on the use of the Voter Information Card as identification (which had been piloted as a measure to address identification barriers in 2011), changes to vouching, as well as a narrower mandate for Elections Canada's (EC) outreach activities. These changes were identified by the AFN and others as being catalysts for EC and the AFN to work together to address information and identification barriers to voting for First Nations.³

Following the changes to the CEA in 2014, EC reached out to the AFN to explore the delivery of an extensive information campaign through a contract for the 42nd GE. The AFN, as the national representative for First Nations, was uniquely positioned to help provide information to First Nation electors and communities across Canada about the changes to the CEA and to help EC fulfill its mandate to ensure that First Nation electors understood the ways in which they could register and vote. These discussions led to a contract between the AFN and EC for work that was carried out in the lead-up to, during and following the 42nd GE in 2015.

Based on this success, and also on further legislative changes to the identification and vouching rules, EC called up the option to renew the contract with the AFN for the 2019 GE, to continue to share information on registration and voting. In 2018 the federal government's *Elections Modernization Act* made further changes to the identification and vouching rules, re-introducing the option of using the Voter Information Card as a proof of address, and making vouching easier. Together with EC and AFN election initiatives these measures were expected to further reduce barriers for First Nations electors to participate in the election should they choose to.

An important element of context for the contract for the 2019 Election was the ballot shortages that were experienced at some polling places on reserve in 2015. A combination of high rates of polling day registration, high turnout and the formula used to allocate ballots to each location contributed to the ballot shortages. Also, some communities had requested polling places on their reserves for the 2015 Election but did not succeed in arranging them, as Returning Officers were unable to recruit sufficient staff to work the polls. As such, EC and AFN agreed on the need for greater information on the link between advance registration and experience at the polls, and the link

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<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=e&Mode=1&Parl=41&Ses=2&DocId=6514414&File=0>.

between community assistance with recruitment and ensuring voter services on reserve. It was a new information objective of the 2019 contract to share these messages.

This report presents details on the EC and AFN election initiatives for 2019 and examines First Nations feedback to assess the impacts of these initiatives. The report is divided into seven sections: AFN Mandate, Background and Objectives; Methodology; Barriers to First Nations Election Participation, Determining Priority First Nations for Outreach, EC and AFN 2019 Election Activities, Results of 2019 Activities; and Conclusions.

Project Objectives

The objective of the joint EC and AFN 2019 federal election initiative was to make sure that First Nation electors knew when, where and how to register and vote during the 43rd GE and to reduce informational barriers that might prevent them from participating. Engaging band administrators on the link between early registration and receiving a Voter Information Card and encouraging early discussions between First Nations Communities and Returning Officers on recruitment and polling locations were included as new objectives.

2. Project Methodology

Overview

This initiative had four components.

- (1) Follow-up to **review barriers** to First Nations election participation as a basis for targeting future EC and AFN action.
- (2) **Determination of priority EDs** containing First Nations that could benefit from focused assistance in preparing for the 2019 election.
- (3) **Information dissemination to prioritized key stakeholders**
 - a. Preparation of materials for dissemination (pre-writ), including the review and edit of existing EC products relating to key messages including early registration and Voter Information Cards, recruitment of local election officers and the potential for on-reserve polling stations; and,
 - b. Information dissemination to First Nation band offices, community leaders and First Nation electors directly (pre- and post-writ), through social media, websites, radio, call centre outreach and AFN election staff attendance at in-person events.
- (4) **Outreach to First Nations.** Activities in this phase focused on communicating with community leaders rather than directly with First Nation electors.
 - a. Preparation of documents for targeted outreach (pre-writ), including call-center scripts, briefing materials and questions for a micro-survey; and,
 - b. Targeted outreach to key stakeholders in priority EDs (pre- and post-writ), including general information about EC services such as registration and acceptable ID for First Nation electors. This activity will also include a survey of selected First Nations administrators and leaders.

3. Supporting Research

Literature Review on Barriers to Voting

Academic literature identifies several ongoing barriers to First Nations participation in federal GEs. In 2015 the AFN conducted a review of relevant literature⁴ focusing on a specific set of potential barriers: language, legislative, geographic, political identification, socioeconomic, knowledge, connectivity and cultural. The conclusion drawn from the review was that six barriers should be used to develop a “Report on Barriers” index to prioritize outreach activities for the upcoming October 2015 election and beyond.

In preparation for the 2019 election the AFN conducted a follow-up literature review that highlighted barriers including health, distance from polling station, access to transportation, proof of identity and address, understanding of the process, and interest in politics. It found that more recent literature points to the likely effects of the *Fair Elections Act (2014)* making it more difficult for First Nations voters to vote because of added difficulties in proving their voter eligibility. Notably, recent literature also appears to focus on political reasons for non-voting.

Survey and interview work have demonstrated that First Nations voters express a preference for First Nations candidates, but also want to be acknowledged by all candidates as important voters, given more information about candidates, and have their interests be better represented by candidates. The review found that it is possible that the literature has purposely taken a more qualitative turn and focused in on the political and ideological reasons for non-voting, but that it is likely that as more time passes, quantitative scholars will collect the necessary data to make more updated statistical claims about more geographic and socioeconomic barriers to voting. This is reflected in the fact that literature after the 2015 federal election has relied thus far on self-reported reasons for non-voting. Upcoming works will have to grapple with the causes of the increased First Nations voter turnout of the 2015 election.

In 2019, the AFN also examined the use of the 6-barrier index developed for 2015, using voter turn-out data for 2011 and 2015 as well as findings from AFN election outreach and surveys. The AFN determined that population data was a more effective way to determining priority electoral districts and that the previous index, while useful, was not as efficient as the alternative.

For 2019, EC and the AFN focused on information-dissemination activities that could help alleviate barriers within the scope of election-related activity. These included encouraging band administrators to reach out to returning officers early to arrange on-reserve polling stations, information about the election including the revised voter identification rules, and establishing connections with First Nations leaders and band administrators to ensure that First Nations had the information they wanted and were able to disseminate it in a timely manner.

⁴ Assembly of First Nations, *AFN Report on barriers to voting that could affect First Nation voters*, June 2015.

4. Determining Priority First Nations for Outreach

Priority Federal Electoral Districts

Some of the election activities that EC and the AFN undertake to enhance opportunities for First Nations election participation are labour-intensive, involving multiple contacts with individual First Nations to inquire about information needs, arrange for the delivery of elections information, and obtain the views of First Nation leaders about the election process and any barriers they have faced. It is desirable, therefore, to identify those First Nations that stand to benefit the most. For 2019, the same approach was taken as in 2015, focusing some extra attention on 43 Federal Electoral Districts (FED) with high concentrations of First Nations electors. In addition for 2019, the AFN used further population analysis to identify 10 more FEDs that should be prioritized. To do so, six criteria were adopted as warranting consideration:

- Communities with an 18+ self-identified First Nation population of 2000+
- Communities with an 18+ self-identified First Nation population 4%+ of the overall 18+ population
- Communities with an 18+ registered Indian population of 2000+
- Communities with an 18+ registered Indian population 4%+ of the overall 18+ population
- Communities in Ontario with an 18+ First Nation population of 2000+
- Communities in Ontario with an 18+ First Nation population of 2%+ of the overall population

The 338 FEDs across the country were ranked according to how many of these six criteria they met, and the top 10 FEDs were selected as priority FEDs, to be added to the original 43 FEDs for a total of 53 priority FEDs.

5. EC and AFN 2019 Election Activities

EC and the AFN carried out targeted activities in advance of the 2019 federal election to enhance the opportunity for First Nation electors to participate, based in part on knowledge gained from the 2015 experience. One priority was to help ensure that polling stations would be located on-reserve where numbers of electors warranted it. In some FEDs, all the First Nations had on-reserve polling stations. In others, only some of the First Nations had a polling station on-reserve. In 2015 there were 297 First Nations with a polling station on-reserve. This increased by 68 to 365 on-reserve polling stations in 2019.

Another outreach priority was to encourage the hiring of local First Nations individuals as election officers on-reserve to make the registering and voting processes more comfortable for residents and to offer short-term employment opportunities to on-reserve residents. Outreach helped ensure that First Nations leaders were aware of the opportunities and knew how to link interested residents with the people doing the hiring.

The majority of activity targeting First Nations electors is undertaken by the AFN, often making use of available election materials produced by EC, adapting them at times to suit the needs of First Nations.

In 2019, the AFN undertook three broad types of activities to remove barriers related to information regarding the 2021 Federal Election: 1) the operation of a call centre to make direct contact with priority First Nations to encourage and facilitate participation in the election, 2) direct face-to-face outreach at a number of events providing information to targeted groups, and 3) the sharing of election information and materials through a range of media that included both digital and traditional media.

Call Centre Outreach

The first major element of the electoral outreach team's work was the operation of a call centre to try to make direct contact with the 493 First Nations in the 53 priority FEDs. Our priority FEDs come as a result of interpreting a number of factors such as population, participation, and previous indicators of lack of access. This was a highly labour-intensive operation with 13 callers and a considerable amount of information to disseminate and to obtain from First Nation leaders and administrators. Scripts were written for three separate rounds of calls, each building on the one before to follow up on specific election matters. Effective outreach required that current phone numbers and e-mail information be compiled for all the band offices and administrators and was continually updated as the calls transpired. The calls are referred to as "rounds" of calls because often multiple calls were required before contact was made, and then in some cases the administrator was not available or was not the person taking responsibility for election organizing for the band, so further contacts were required.

Call Round 1, which took place between June 24 and July 12 of 2019, was an introductory call providing a broad overview of changes brought forth with the Elections

Modernization Act, election processes, and employment opportunities with Elections Canada.

- Total targeted First Nations communities: 468 First Nations
- Total First Nations we made direct contact with: 138/468 (29.4%)

Call Round 2, completed between July 31 and August 9, was intended to follow up in a few specific areas mainly to inquire as to whether the First Nation had succeeded in making contact with the Returning Officer responsible for their FED in order to ensure that polling stations were located appropriately to facilitate participation by residents. The number of First Nations attempted to contact increased due to newly provided contact information.

- Total targeted First Nations communities: 493 First Nations
- Total First Nations we made direct contact with: 75/493 (15.2%)

Call Round 3, which took place primarily in the August 19-26 period but included some follow-up calls up until the election, focused primarily on offering detailed information about available voting methods, locations and identification requirements and addressing outstanding questions in advance of the election.

- Total targeted First Nations communities: 493 First Nations
- Total First Nations we made direct contact with: 43/493 (8.7%)

Call Round 4, which took place between September 22 and October 16, focusing on preparing for the election by directing people to election.ca, informing First Nations about advanced polling stations, sharing information ways to vote and responding to final questions including ones regarding polling stations on reserve, student voting, registration difficulties/complications, those who received more than one VIC, polling station locations, and issues with jobs opportunities.

- Total targeted First Nations communities: 493 First Nations
- Total First Nations coded Green: 178/493 (36.1%)

In total, through the call-centre, we had direct contact with 277 (56.2%) of the 493 First Nations we attempted to contact regarding the election, at least once. We believe that this number would have been higher should the election and outreach efforts happened at a different time in the calendar year as many First Nations' administrative offices have reduced hours during the summer period; a fall election with summer outreach meant less communication between the call-centre and First Nations administration. Tracking the difference in the percentage of contacted First Nations should be included in future collaborative work. In the event that we were unable to reach First Nations via telephone, we followed-up with both fax and email information.

Face-to-Face Outreach

Between February 2019 and October 2019, the AFN conducted outreach in various communities in 7 provinces and territories. The AFN had staff attend or participate in 11 festivals, summits, and conferences in person and 1 teleconference to communicate

information on how to participate in the federal election. The combined attendance of these events totaled over 2500 First Nations community leaders and administrators. This in-person outreach mainly comprised of informational booths. The goal of these outreach booths aimed to prepare and provide the necessary information to ensure First Nations are well informed on where, when, and how to vote. The booths also shared information about the Election Modernization Act specifically regarding changes to identification, vouching rules, and using the voter information card as proof of address.

At all of these events, informational materials by EC were available with messaging on acceptable ID, job opportunities, Inspire Democracy tool kits, e-registration, voter information services, and new Indigenous language correspondence. The availability of some material in 15 Indigenous languages was well received, notably among community elders and fostered a sense of inclusion among our audience.

A key facet of our information booth interactions was the opportunity to assist people interested in registering for the election. This provided an opportunity for our electoral outreach team to inform and direct visitors to the EC website for voter information services. Some of our visitors were inspired to share this information with their family and friends creating an opportunity to introduce them to the Inspire Democracy tool kits. The tool kits offered visitors their own chance to engage their community members, friends, and family by holding their own workshops. They can also be incorporated into classrooms, teaching youth about the importance of voting. The two popular tool kits that visitors showed interest in were for voting and registering in a federal election and working at a federal election.

Both AFN and EC promotional items were available as incentives for conversation. EC promotional items included pens, clips, phone wallet/card holder, and phone straps. AFN promotional items included pop sockets, pins, and booklets. The card holders and pop sockets proved popular at our in-person outreach events. The card holders allowed us to reiterate our message about the different types of ID that can be used to vote and the pop socket was a great tool for reminding people that e-bills and other online documents were an option as well. To further attract more visitors, the booth would frequently have higher-value AFN promotional items (i.e. leather bag, water bottle, notepads) as a prize for a raffle at the end of the events.

An additional form of in-person outreach was also conducted during the AFN's Annual General Assembly held in Fredericton, New Brunswick from July 23-25, 2019. During this event, a number of presentations were held for various Regional Caucuses designed to share information about the upcoming 43rd General Election and reduced barriers to voting.

Focus Group

The AFN electoral outreach team also conducted a focus-group style event designed to increase our knowledge of barriers facing First Nations communities and how our message was being received amongst First Nations community members. Both AFN staff and EC staff were present during the event.

There was a total of eight participants who signed up at our booth at the AFN's Annual General Assembly. The focus group consisted of an "electoral awareness questionnaire" that was handed to all participants at the start of the discussions. The questionnaire was delivered in three parts: 1) demographic questions, 2) electoral and political knowledge questions, and 3) electoral awareness and preparedness questions. This questionnaire was intended to engage participants in deeper discussions relating to voting in federal elections. The demographic information indicated representation from various provinces with both on- and off-reserve participants.

There was significant dialogue between moderators and participants regarding their concerns and further questions that interested them; this displayed a disconnect between voters and the electoral process but eagerness to learn. Participants were active and brought forward concerns regarding ID availability, the RO process, and accessibility to other forms of voting including special ballot processes and advanced voting.

The focus group gave more insight into the issues that have previously been observed as obstacles facing First Nations voters.

Information Dissemination

Online

Information about the 2019 election was produced and disseminated by the AFN electoral outreach team in a variety of ways, primarily on-line. A custom fact sheet was produced and posted to the AFN website with links to other sources of information including the Elections Canada website. The team developed a twitter feed with regular scheduled election messages, and regular Facebook and Instagram posts with contests designed to encourage participation. The AFN's social media campaign included the following number of posts ranging from September 10 to October 21: 31 on Facebook, 26 on Instagram, 30 on LinkedIn, and 33 on Twitter. Detailed analytics of these posts have been included as appendices (C and D).

Radio

In addition, they produced a radio public service announcement in English and French that could be broadcast on local channels including First Nation radio stations, with the option for them to translate the messages into their local languages. An initial radio buy by the AFN had 30 second spots on 50 different radio stations across Canada in 45 different communities between September 30, 2020 and October 20, 2020. A copy of used scripts in English and French have been included as appendices (E and F).

Print

Finally, the team produced regular newsletters targeting all First Nations, designed so that they could be easily pasted into local band newsletters. Print materials were shared via email and fax blasts. The email blasts were sent using AFN membership lists. The following fax blasts were part of our print media campaign that included a number of Elections Canada informational materials with each faxed bulletin: the first on August 26, 2019 delivered to 615 First Nations and Tribal Councils, a second on September 27, 2019 delivered to 630 First Nations and Tribal Councils, and a third on October 15, 2019 delivered to 595 First Nations and Tribal Councils. A new product this year was a vouching list for band administrators to enable volunteers to sign up to act as vouchers at

polling stations in case they were needed, given that the new Act replaced a more formal attestation process with vouching as identification at the polls for the 2019 election. A table of Elections Canada’s informational items and numbers distributed at outreach events is below.

Item	Number Distributed
Guide to the Federal Election	250
List of Accepted ID	422
Students, Get Ready to Vote (Postcard)	100
Get Ready to Vote (Flyer)	150
Community Leader Handbook - Indigenous	50
Community Leader Handbook - Student	25
Work as a Poll Worker (Flyer)	517

Survey of Priority First Nations

Following the election, the AFN sought feedback from all of its members regarding their experience during the elections via an email with an online survey link included. The email and survey were forwarded to those email addresses acquired during the Call-Centre outreach work. The AFN general email distribution list was also used. The survey included 25 different questions regarding ease of access and overall experience in participating in the general election. Some questions included were:

- Did you have a polling place in your First Nation for the 2019 federal general election?
- Did someone from Elections Canada contact you to talk about the possibility of having a polling place in your First Nation for the 2019 federal general election?
- How easy or difficult was it to help find workers for your polling place?
- Agree or Disagree: “Overall, I felt well prepared as a leader to provide election related services to my First Nation members.” (Such as letters of confirmation or vouching lists)

The survey had very few responses totaling just 13. The poor response regarding the online completion of the survey shows a sharp contrast with the level of interaction experienced during the call centre. A possible reason behind the poor response rate of the survey could be timing, as the survey was sent out in February 2020 it is believed that between the long period between the federal election and the survey coupled with pressing concerns for First Nations administration regarding the COVID-19 pandemic that responding to the survey was a low priority. Further to this, follow-up would have been coordinated on the poor response rate if the COVID-19 pandemic had not seized administrative priority at different levels of government.

Post-Mortem Analysis Meeting

As part of the follow-up work of the contract, a post-mortem meeting was held to assess the challenges and successes of the project, lessons learned, and how to improve future collaborative work. The meeting was an accessible cooperative conversation and proved

vital in helping map out the final report, recommendations, and plan possible avenues for collaboration in the future.

6. Conclusion

Summary

The AFN's work supported by Elections Canada in the build-up to the 43rd General Election was a significant undertaking having reached at least 277 First Nations through our call centre with a number of in-person and traditional media outreach. This work can reasonably be stated to have provided a significant impact in increasing First Nations participation in the federal electoral process.

While the *Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and other Acts and to make certain consequential amendments* removed a number of barriers for First Nations participation in the 43rd General Election, there are still systemic issues that may prevent First Nations from comfortably engaging in the federal electoral process and cooperation between the AFN and Elections Canada should continue to identify and address barriers to participation in the federal electoral process for First Nations.

Appendix A

Priority First Nations Targeted by AFN Election Call-Centre

Federal Election District	Associated First Nations
Alberta	
Banff-Airdrie	Stoney Tribal Administration (Bears paw FN)
Bow River	Siksika Nation
Foothills	Tsuu T'ina First Nation, Piikani Nation (Peigan First Nation)
Fort McMurray- Cold Lake	Fort McMurray # 468 First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Fort McKay First Nation, Chipewyan Prairie First Nation, Cold Lake First Nation, Mikisew Cree First Nation, Bigstone Cree Nation, Heart Lake First Nation
Grande Prairie-Mackenzie	Dene Tha' First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
Lakeland	Saddle Lake Cree Nation, Frog Lake First Nation, Kehewin Cree Nation
Medicine Hat--Cardston--Warner	Blood First Nation
Peace River - Westlock	Sucker Creek First Nation, Peerless Trout First Nation, Swan River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Whitefish Lake First Nation #459, Tall Cree First Nation, Little Red River Cree Nation, Loon River Cree Indian Band, Whitefish Lake First Nation #459, Woodland Cree First Nation, Beaver First Nation, Lubicon Lake Band, Driftpile First Nation, Kapawe'no First Nation, Sawridge
Red Deer-Lacombe	Louis Bull First Nation, Ermineskin First Nation, Samson Cree First Nation, Montana First Nation
Yellowhead	Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, O'Chiese First Nation, Sunchild Cree First Nation, Paul First Nation, Wesley Stoney First Nation
British Columbia	
Cariboo--Prince George	Nazko Band Government, Tl'etinqox-t'in Government Office, Ulkatcho Indian Band, Soda Creek Indian Band, Alexis Creek First Nation, Canoe Creek Indian Band (Stswecem'c Xgat'tem), Lhtako

	Dene Nation (Red Bluff), Xení Gwet-in First Nations Government, Esketemc First Nation, Stone Indian Band, Williams Lake Indian Band, Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation (Kluskus), Alexandria Indian Band (?Esdilagh First Nation), Toosey Indian Band, Saik'uz First Nation
Chilliwack–Hope	Aitchelitz First Nation, Skwah First Nation, Cheam First Nation, Tzeachten First Nation, Kwaw-Kwaw-Apilt First Nation, Yakwekwioose Indian Band, Squiala First Nation, Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation, Popkum Band, Skowkale First Nation, Peters First Nation, Soowahlie First Nation, Shxwhß:y Village
Courtenay–Alberni	Uchucklesaht First Nation, Tseshaht First Nation, Ucluelet First Nation, Ahousaht First Nation, Hesquiaht First Nation, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, Huu-ay-aht First Nation, Qualicum First Nation, Hupacasath First Nation, Toquaht First Nation
Cowichan–Malahat–Langford	Penelakut Indian Band, Malahat Indian Band, Pacheedaht First Nation, Ditidaht First Nation, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Cowichan Tribe, Halalt First Nation
Mission–Matsqui–Fraser Canyon	T'it'q'et First Nation, Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation, Union Bar Indian Band, Nicomen First Nation, Ashcroft Indian Band, Boothroyd Indian Band, Skawahlook First Nation, Bonaparte Indian Band, Cayoose Creek First Nation, Yale First Nation, Douglas First Nation, Spuzzum First Nation, Fountain Band (Xaxli'p Council), Bridge River Indian Band, Shackan Indian Band, Chehalis Indian Band (Sts'ailes), Skuppah Indian Band, Matsqui First Nation, Kanaka Bar Indian Band, Cook's Ferry Indian Band, Boston Bar First Nation, Oregon Jack Creek Band, Tsal'alh (Seton Lake First Nation), Chawathil Band, Sqewlets (Scowlitz First Nation), Siska Indian Band, Samahquam First Nation, Seabird Island Band, Leq'a:mel First Nation, Lytton First Nation, Skatin Nations
North Island–Powell River	Cape Mudge (We Wai Kai) First Nation, Homalco First Nation, Kwiakah First Nation, Da'naxda'xw First Nation, Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nation, Kwakiutl Band Council, Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation, Oweekeno Nation (Wuikinuxv Nation), Ehattesaht First Nation, Nuchatlaht First Nation, Quatsino First Nation, Klahoose First Nation, K'ómoks First Nation (Komox), Wei Wai Kum FN (Campbell River Indian Band), Tlowitsis First Nation, Mamalilikulla-Qwe'Qwa'Sot'em First Nation, Gwa' Sala-Nakwaxda' xw, Tlatlasikwala First Nation, Gwawaenuk Tribe, Tla'amin Nation (Sliammon), Namgis First Nation, Kwicksutaineuk-ah-kwaw-ah-mish, Tsawataineuk
Prince George–Peace River–Northern Rockies	Saulteau First Nation, McLeod Lake (Tsekani) First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, Lheidli-T'enneh First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Doig River First Nation, Tsay Keh Dene Band, Prophet River First Nation, Kwadacha Band,

	West Moberly Lake First Nations, Blueberry River First Nation
Skeena–Bulkley Valley	Lake Babine Nation, Kitselas Indian Band, Gitsegukla Indian Band, Hartley Bay First Nation (Gitga'at), Gitwangak Band Council, Old Masset Village Council, Takla Lake First Nation, Burns Lake First Nation, Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, Witset First Nation (Moricetown First Nation), Kispiox Band Council, Dease River First Nation, Nak'azdli Indian Band, Tahltan First Nation, Laxgalt'sap Village Government(Nisga'a), Gitanyow Band Council, Nee-Tahi-Buhn Band, Gitwinksihlkw Village Government (Nisga'a), Kitasoo Band Council, Nadleh Whut'en Band, Stellat'en First Nation, Iskut First Nation, Kitsumkalum Band, Glen Vowell Indian Band, Skin Tyee Nation, Heiltsuk First Nation (Bella Bella), Kitamaat Village Council (Haisla Nation), New Aiyansh Village Government (Nisga'a), Wet'suwet'en First Nation, Taku River Tlingit First Nation, Nuxalk Nation (Bella Coola), Kitkatla First Nation (Gitxaala Nation), Hagwilget Village Council, Gitanmaax Band Council, Skidegate Band Council, Yekooche First Nation, Tl'azt'en First Nation, Metlakatla Band, Cheslatta Indian Band, Nisga'a Village of Gingolx
Manitoba	
Churchill–Keewatinook Aski	Norway House Cree Nation, God's Lake First Nation, Northlands First Nation (Lac Brochet), Hollow Water First Nation, Mathias Colomb First Nation (Pukatawagan), Barren Lands First Nation, Marcel Colomb First Nation (Black Sturgeon), Fisher River Cree Nation, O-pipon-na-piwin Cree Nation, Chemawawin Cree Nation, Berens River First Nation, Garden Hill First Nation, Bloodvein First Nation, Sagkeeng First Nations (Fort Alexander), Peguis First Nation, Little Grand Rapids First Nation, War Lake First Nation, Red Sucker Lake First Nation, Wasagamack First Nation, Poplar River First Nation, Pimicikamak Cree Nation (Cross Lake FN), Nisichawayasihk (Nelson House First Nation), Bunibonibee Cree Nation (Oxford House), Manto Sipi Cree Nation, Pauingassi First Nation, Sayisi Dene First Nation, Shamattawa First Nation, Little Saskatchewan First Nation, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, York Factory First Nation, Dauphin River First Nation, Mosakahiken Cree Nation, Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation (Jackhead), Misipawistik Cree Nation (Grand Rapids), Pinaymootang First Nation, St. Theresa Point First Nation, Lake St. Martin First Nation, Little Black River, Fox Lake
Dauphin–Swan River–Neepawa	Pine Creek First Nation, Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation, Keeseekoowenin First Nation, Skownan First Nation (Waterhen), Birdtail Sioux First Nation, Waywayseecappo First Nation, Ebb and Flow First Nation, O-chi-chak-ko-sipi First Nations, Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Gambler First Nation, Rolling River First Nation, Sandy Bay First Nation, Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation (Indian Birch),

	TooTinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve
Saskatchewan	
Battlefords–Lloydminster	Poundmaker First Nation, Onion Lake First Nation, Saulteaux First Nation, Sweetgrass First Nation, Little Pine First Nation, Thunderchild First Nation, Mosquito Grizzly Bear's Head First Nation, Moosomin First Nation, Red Pheasant First Nation
Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River	Ahtahkakoop First Nation, Shoal Lake Cree Nation, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation, Cumberland House Cree Nation, Clearwater Dene Nation, Lac La Ronge First Nation, Island Lake First Nation (Ministikwan Lake Cree Nation), Sturgeon Lake First Nation, Canoe Lake Cree First Nation, Pelican Lake First Nation, English River First Nation, Fond du Lac First Nation, Big River First Nation, Buffalo River Dene First Nation, Flying Dust First Nation, Big Island Lake Cree Nation, Montreal Lake Cree First Nation, Waterhen Lake First Nation, Black Lake First Nation, Birch Narrows First Nation, Witchekan Lake First Nation, Hatchet Lake First Nation, Mistawasis First Nation, Red Earth Cree First Nation
Prince Albert	Muskoday First Nation, James Smith Cree Nation, One Arrow First Nation, Wahpeton Dakota First Nation
Regina-Qu'Appelle	Star Blanket Cree Nation, Okanese First Nation, Peepeekisis First Nation, Kawacatoose First Nation, Pasqua First Nation, Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation, Little Black Bear First Nation, Muskowekwan First Nation, George Gordon First Nation, Day Star First Nation, Muscowpetung First Nation, Piapot First Nation
Souris–Moose Mountain	Ochapowace First Nation, Ocean Man First Nation, Cowessess First Nation, Pheasant Rump Nakota First Nation, Carry the Kettle First Nation, White Bear First Nation, Kahkewistahaw First Nation, Sakimay First Nations
Yorkton–Melville	Cote First Nation 366, Yellow Quill First Nation, Key First Nation, Kinistin First Nation, Keeseekoose First Nation, Fishing Lake First Nation
Québec	
Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou	Cree First Nation of Chisasibi, The Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation, Cree Nation of Eastmain, Cree Nation of Wemindji, Cree First Nation of Waswanipi, Cree Nation of Nemaska, Cree Nation of Mistissini, Whapmagoostui First Nation, Conseil de la Nation anishinabe du Lac Simon, Conseil des Anicinapek de Kitcisakik

Manicouagan	Mohawk Council of Kahnawake, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, Conseil des Montagnais de Matimekush, Conseil des Innus de Essipit, Conseil des Montagnais Unamen Shipu, Innu Takuaikan Uashat mak Mani-Utenarn, Conseil des Montagnais de Pakua Shipi, Conseil des Innu de Ekuanitshit, Conseil des Montagnais de Nutashkuan, Bande des Innus de Pessamit
Saint-Maurice–Champlain	Conseil des Atikamekw d'Opitciwan, Conseil des Atikamekw de Wemotaci
Ontario	
Algoma–Manitoulin–Kapusking	Sheguindah First Nation, Constance Lake First Nation, Thessalon First Nation, Aundek Omni Kaning First Nation, Chapleau Cree First Nation, M'Chigeeng First Nation, Pic Moberg First Nation, Serpent River First Nation, Zhiibaahaasing First Nation, Mississauga First Nation #8, Whitefish River First Nation, Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation, Sheshegwaning First Nation, Chapleau Ojibway First Nation, Michipicoten First Nation, Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, Brunswick House First Nation
Brantford–Brant	Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, Tuscarora, Onondaga Clear Sky, Bearfoot Onondaga, Upper Cayuga, Lower Cayuga, Konadaha Seneca, Niharonadasa Seneca, Lower Mohawk, Walker Mohawk, Upper Mohawk
Chatham-Kent--Leamington	Delaware Nation (Moravian of the Thames)
Kenora	Eabametoong First Nation, Wawakapewin First Nation, Muskrat Dam First Nation, Lac Seul First Nation, Fort Severn First Nation, Ochiichagwe'Babigo'Ining First Nation, Northwest Angle #33 First Nation, Eagle Lake First Nation, Naotkamegwaning First Nation, Sandy Lake First Nation, North Spirit Lake First Nation, Cat Lake First Nation, Ojibways of Onigaming First Nation, Iskatewizaagegan No. 39 Independent First Nation, Kingfisher First Nation, Wunnumin Lake First Nation, Mishkeegogamang First Nation, Bearskin Lake First Nation, Deer Lake First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation (Landsdowne House), Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (Big Trout Lake), Pikangikum First Nation, Wabigoon Lake First Nation, Shoal Lake #40 First Nation, Wabauskang First Nation, Wapekeka First Nation, Obashkaandagaang (Washagamis Bay First Nation), Wauzhushk Onigum First Nation, Poplar Hill First Nation, Lake First Nation, Grassy Narrows First Nation, McDowell Lake First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Keewaywin First Nation, North Caribou Lake First Nation, Slate Falls First Nation, Wabaseemoong Independent First Nation, Webequie First Nation, Kasabonika First Nation, Northwest Angle No.37
Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Chippewas of Kettle & Stoney Point First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames,

	Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island First Nation), Munsee-Delaware Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
Thunder Bay–Rainy River	Anishnaabeg of Naongashiing, Fort William First Nation, Big Grassy First Nation, Mitaanjigamiing First Nation (Stanjikoming), Seine River First Nation, Rainy River First Nation, Lac La Croix First Nation, Couchiching First Nation, Naicatchewenin First Nation, Lac des Milles Lacs First Nation, Naicatchewenin, Nicickousemenecaning
Thunder Bay–Superior North	Red Rock Band, Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek First Nation (Gull Bay First Nation), Whitesand First Nation, Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (Sand Point), Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (Ojibways of Pic River First Nation), Pays Plat First Nation, Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinabek, Aroland First Nation, Long Lake #58 First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation (Long Lac #77), Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay)
Timmins–James Bay	Taykwa Tagamou (New Post), Wahgoshig First Nation, Matachewan First Nation, Attawapiskat First Nation, Weenusk First Nation, Fort Albany First Nation, Moose Cree First Nation, Flying Post First Nation, Martin Falls
Newfoundland	
Labrador	Sheshatshui Innu Band Council, Mushuau Innu Band Council
Long Range Mountains	Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation
Nova Scotia	
Sydney–Victoria	Wagmatcook First Nation, Eskasoni First Nation, Membertou First Nation

Yukon	
Yukon	Kwanlin Dun First Nation, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Ross River Dena Council, Carcross / Tagish First Nation, White River First Nation, Kluane First Nation, Tr'on dek Hwech'in First Nation, Ta'an Kwach'an Council, Champagne / Aishihik First Nation, Na-cho Ny'a'k Dun First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council, Liard First Nation
Northwest Territories	
Northwest Territories	Deline Dene Band, Tulita Dene Band Council, Liidlii Kue (Fort Simpson) First Nation, Deninu K-ue First Nation, Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Ndilo), Gwichya Gwich'in Council, Deh Gah Gotie Dene Council, West Point First Nation, Ka'a'gee Tu First Nation, K' Atlodeeche First Nation (Hay River Dene Reserve), Wekwee'ti Council (Dechi Laot'l Council), Aklavik Indian Band, Acho Dene Koe First Nation, Sambaa K'e Dene Band, Behdzi Ahda First Nation, Nahanii Butte Dene Band, Lutsel K'e Dene Band, Salt River (Dene) First Nation, K'asho Gotine Charter Community Council, Pehdzeh Ki Dene Band, Nihtat Gwich'in Council (Inuvik Native), Wha Ti First Nation, Tetl'it Gwich'in Council, Jean Marie River First Nation, Smith's Landing First Nation, Gameti First Nation, Dog Rib Rae
New Brunswick	
Miramichi–Grand Lake	Eel Ground First Nation, Burnt Church First Nation (Esgenoopetitj), Big Cove First Nation (Elsipogtog), Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation