

## **Approaches to Sustainable Economic Development in Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation**

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## 1. Introduction

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) is based within Nelson House, Manitoba, located on Treaty 5 territory, and is home to the Swampy Cree. Following settlement, assimilation policies implemented by the Crown, the collapse of the fur trade, and harmful hydro projects impacted the community's ability to sustain themselves, and has led to current struggles such as poverty, and poor health. In order to solve some of these issues the community has attempted to merge the traditional economy of their ancestors, with mainstream income activities in order to promote development in the community. The Hybrid Economy model, as presented by John Altman, allows a marrying between the neoliberal model of development theory and the ideologies of the community.<sup>1</sup> The Hybrid model overlaps the sectors of state, market, and traditional to accommodate the lived reality of the actors within the scenario. By utilizing the Hybrid model NCN is able to create development initiatives, which encompass their need for cultural preservation, and the ability to compete within a neoliberal market.

## 2. Historical Context

NCN is located 850 km north of Winnipeg, and has year round road access. The Cree word, nisichawayasihk, means "where three rivers meet," as the community is located on the north shore of Footprint Lake, at the junction of the Burntwood, Footprint and Rat rivers.<sup>2</sup> NCN is part of Treaty 5, after having signed the amended treaty in 1908.<sup>3</sup> The community is surrounded by Boreal Forest and large water bodies, providing access to wildlife such as caribou, moose, wolf, muskrat, beaver, trout, whitefish, pike, and pickerel.<sup>4</sup>

NCN's history is directly related to the interests of European settler individuals, starting with the fur trade and ending with resource extraction goals of present day. In the early years of the fur trade, the Cree of Northern Manitoba were essential middlemen, and traded furs for European goods. However, as the fur trade slowed it created poverty and starvation for bands that had become reliant on the industry. This led to many Indigenous people becoming wage laborers or debt laborers to pay off their trade deficits with the posts.<sup>5</sup> The implication of this was that Indigenous families became more sedentary and reliant on casual labor and charity provided from the fur trading companies.<sup>6</sup> Around the 1840's, missionaries of Roman Catholic and Methodist backgrounds began trying to evangelize and convert indigenous people.<sup>7</sup>

During the 1870's the goal of the Dominion of Canada was to create land and opportunities in the south for Europeans.<sup>8</sup> The government's hope was that Indigenous people

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<sup>1</sup> Altman, Jon, *The hybrid economy and anthropological engagements with policy discourse: A brief reflection* (Australia, The Australian Journal of Anthropology, 2009) 322-323.

<sup>2</sup> Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, *About Us*, N.d. Retrieved on March 26 from <http://www.ncncree.com/ncn/aboutus.html>

<sup>3</sup> Grainger, Dana-Mae, *Nelson House, Manitoba: An Ethnographic history*, 1979, (University of Manitoba), 1-70. Retrieved on March 26 from <http://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/bitstream/handle/1993/3496/Grainger%2c%20Nelson%20House.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

<sup>4</sup> Grainger, Dana-Mae, *Nelson House, Manitoba*, p. 25..

<sup>5</sup> Mochoruk, Jim, *Formidable Heritage: Manitoba North and the Cost of Development, 1970 to 1930*, (University of Manitoba Press, 2014) 7-100.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Mochoruk, Jim, *Formidable Heritage*, p. 18.

would vanish or totally assimilate.<sup>9</sup> From the late 19th century through the 20th century, Indigenous children were sent to residential schools away from their home community. The goal of these schools was to assimilate youth into European culture, and, as was quoted, to “kill the Indian in the Child.”<sup>10</sup> While attending these schools children were banned from using their language, and were emotionally, physically, and sexually abused.<sup>11</sup> The children of NCN were sent to residential schools in other communities such as Norway House, or Pine Creek.<sup>12</sup>

Today, NCN has high levels of unemployment and poverty where individuals are not able to meet their basic needs and have low levels of wellbeing. With wellbeing encompassing mental, physical, social, cultural, and spiritual well-being. The average household income in 2011 within NCN was \$17,927 compared to the rest of Manitobans who average \$36,696. The community depends heavily on government transfers, 26% of residents receive a government subsidy, compared to 13% in the rest of Manitoba. There is high unemployment with 23.5% of NCN residents unemployed, compared to 6.2% in the rest of Manitoba.<sup>13</sup>

### 3. The Mainstream Economy in Nelson House

#### 3.1 What is the Mainstream Economy?

Mainstream development is defined as an economic development paradigm in the pursuit of neoliberalism, in favor of free-market capitalism. The context within which it will be discussed in this paper is centered on “outside” or government sanctioned projects in order to further benefit the Crown and non-Indigenous corporations. Industrialization and urbanization were seen as the necessary routes to modernization. Because of this discourse, and the perceived backwardness of traditional perspectives, it was instrumental that outside governments and international organizations take leadership in organizing and implementing development projects within Indigenous communities.<sup>14</sup>

Within Canada, one of the ways that the Crown is able to maintain this control on Indigenous communities is through the *Indian Act*. The *Indian Act* was established in 1876, and granted the Canadian parliament legislative authority over the membership of Indigenous people, ownership over reserved land, and local government.<sup>15</sup> While the act has been amended several times over the last 141 years, it still regulates education on reserve, land management, as well as the flow of funds to be used to develop reserve infrastructure.<sup>16</sup> Canadian reserve lands are seen as a protected form of public land, set aside for Indigenous use.<sup>17</sup> The Crown is able to infringe on Indigenous rights and title to land for the development of agriculture, forestry, mining, hydroelectric power, – so long as they can prove that the benefit to

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<sup>9</sup> Dalseg, Barbara. *In their own words: Manitoba's Native residential schools remembered*, (University of Manitoba) 2003. p. 3-100.

<sup>10</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. *About the Commission: Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. N.d. Retrieved on March 26 from <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=39>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> The Children Remembered. *Norway House Indian Residential School*. N.d. Retrieved on March 26 from <http://thechildrenremembered.ca/school-locations/norway-house/#ftn12>

<sup>13</sup> Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *First Nation Detail: Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, 2011*. Retrieved on March 26 from [http://fnp-ppn.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNMain.aspx?BAND\\_NUMBER=313&lang=eng](http://fnp-ppn.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNMain.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=313&lang=eng)

<sup>14</sup> Escobar, Arturo. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. (Princeton University Press) 1995. p. 39-43.

<sup>15</sup> Hurley, Mary C., *The Indian Act* (Library of Parliament) 2009, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Government of Canada, *The Indian Act* R.S.C., 1985, c. 1-5, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/I-5/>

<sup>17</sup> *Guerin v. the Queen*, 1984 SCC [1984] 2 S.C.R. 335

the greater public outweighs that of the Indigenous communities.<sup>18</sup> In the context of Manitoba, many Indigenous communities have experienced loss of land, resources, and even displacement in the face of hydro developments in order to benefit non-Indigenous corporations and communities.

### 3.2 Mainstream economic development in Nelson House

In 2006 NCN created a documentary titled *Where Three Rivers Meet: The History of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation*. The film was developed in order to educate their community prior to a vote which would determine the development of the \$1-billion, 200-megawatt *Wuskwatim Dam project*.<sup>19</sup> The film shares the story of the nation from pre-European contact to the present day, delivering a valuable narrative on the effects of European or mainstream development on the community. Elders interviewed in the documentary recanted stories of how hydro development changed their lives.<sup>20</sup>

MB Hydro started the planning process for the Churchill River Diversion in the 1960s. The diversion would flood water into the Nelson River, which houses a hydro station that accounts for 75% worth of power generation in Manitoba. Participants in the documentary stated that there was no consultation process in this project, no consent was given, and the protests that came from elders in the community were largely ignored. However, In December 1972, an interim license to proceed was issued, and the diversion was operational by 1977.<sup>21</sup> The result of the diversion was severe flooding damage in the region, which greatly affected the livelihood of NCN's economy. Fishermen interviewed reported difficulty fishing because of the amount of debris in the water. Fish populations became depleted, and animals who were abundant in the area moved on to more accommodating ecosystems. Unable to live sustainably through traditional means, the people of NCN became dependent on welfare. Because of the loss of a traditional diet and a growing dependency on mass made, processed food, the community experienced an increase in health issues such as diabetes and cancer. Mental illness in the community increased because so many people lost their ability to employ their gifts and contribute meaningfully, thus experiencing a loss of purpose and identity.<sup>22</sup>

The community sought compensation from MB Hydro, and the 1977 NFA was developed as a response in order to ensure healthier partnerships between MB Hydro and northern communities. Community members criticized the process, stating that compensation did not flow adequately. After a push from a new band council, the 1996 compensation package dealt \$64 million in funds to the community. This allowed NCN to purchase the Mystery Lake Hotel in Thompson, and also allowed them to open a personal care home, wellness center, and medicine lodge. The remaining \$40 million was placed in trust, allowing a further \$3.9 million in interest to be produced. However, many of the community members still felt that this compensation was unjust, stating that some were affected more than others by the flood, and thus not everyone's compensation repaired the damage done to their livelihoods.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Tsilhqot'in Nation vs British Columbia*, 2014 SCC 44 (20140626) Retrieved on March 27 from <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14246/index.do>. Paragraph 83.

<sup>19</sup> CBC News, *Big Budget Film Woos Band Members on Wuskwatim*, (CBC News) May 2006. Retrieved on March 27 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/big-budget-film-woos-band-members-on-wuskwatim-1.614103>

<sup>20</sup> "Where Three Rivers Meet: The Story of Nisichawayasihk First Nation - NCN Achimowana." Filmed [2006]. YouTube video, 102:21. Posted [October 2016]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rx6UzY-NvE&t=1679s>.

<sup>21</sup> Government of Manitoba, *The Churchill River Diversion*. (Government of Manitoba) N.d. Retrieved on March 27 from [http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/licensing/churchill\\_river\\_diversion.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/waterstewardship/licensing/churchill_river_diversion.html).

<sup>22</sup> "Where Three Rivers Meet: The Story of Nisichawayasihk First Nation - NCN Achimowana."

<sup>23</sup> "Where Three Rivers Meet"

In the late 1990s, MB Hydro invited NCN to discuss the development of the *Wuskwatim Project*, a new 200 megawatt hydro dam to be built on the Burntwood River near Thompson. This proposal was met with much debate, and elders cautioned against it. However, many members of the community saw this as a crucial next step in the development of NCN, and an opportunity that could provide sustainability to future generations. After a lengthy community debate over the high financial risk associated with committing to the project, NCN reached a vote to move forward. The dam was constructed and officially opened in July of 2012.

The result of the *Wuskwatim Project* left NCN in an economically vulnerable position, incurring large amounts of debt to manage.<sup>24</sup> NCN ended up with a 33% minority ownership of the project. The projected numbers for energy consumption did not match what was anticipated, leaving the project less profitable than expected; NCN is now seated with millions of dollars in debt, and a questionable rate of return.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.3 Barriers to development on reserve as a result of the mainstream framework

NCN shares similar struggles with other communities when it comes to Indigenous economic development. In 2013, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) generated a report which surveys 25 First Nation communities who have achieved success in development. The success of these communities is based on improved economic activity despite barriers presented by the *Indian Act*, and the ability to leverage new capital in the pursuit of broader community development objectives.<sup>26</sup> Common barriers include inefficient bureaucratic systems, lack of control over local decision-making, insufficient community capacity, and un-useable land base.<sup>27</sup>

Participants in the survey identified that they are required, because of *The Indian Act*, to use systems that cause administrative inefficiencies and thus create barriers that inhibit development. An example of this is the Government of Canada's fiduciary responsibility to Indigenous communities, as they are to play a role in their development, but often actively seek to inhibit any additional liability that they may gain in these ventures. Underfunding of wages and capital costs, such as infrastructure repair and maintenance, were also shared as barriers, as are programs designed without centering the needs of community members.<sup>28</sup>

Control over local decision-making could be attributed to an inability to access capital. Participants of the survey reported being rejected by mainstream lenders for financing, because of the inability to mortgage reserve lands. For this reason, the community is more likely to become landlords to third party private businesses instead of engaging in their own economic ventures that prioritize the needs of the community.<sup>29</sup> In the case of NCN, who took ownership in the *Wuskwatim Project*, acting as landlords might have benefited them in this case, as they would not be fiscally responsible for the failure of the project.

The legacy of residential schools is a large contributor to a lack of community capacity. The intergenerational effects of a loss of knowledge, language, and culture in addition to unreconciled trauma have created a decline in community well-being, as well as a decline in

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<sup>24</sup> Leandro, F. (2012). *The Social and Economic (Under)Development of Northern Manitoba: Communities over the Past Two and a Half Decades*. Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives. Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com.libproxy.uwinnipeg.ca/lib/uwinnipeg/detail.action?docID=1061708>

<sup>25</sup> Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. (2015). *Simple Snapshot: PDA Supplemental Agreement*. Retrieved on March 27 from [http://www.ncncree.com/ncn/PDA2\\_SpecialUpdate2015.pdf](http://www.ncncree.com/ncn/PDA2_SpecialUpdate2015.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, *Creating the conditions for economic success on reserve lands: A report on the experiences of 25 First Nation Communities*. (Government of Canada) 2013. p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> AANDC, *Creating the conditions for economic success on reserve lands*, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> AANDC, p. 12-13.

<sup>29</sup> AANDC, p. 19-20.

traditional economic practices such as hunting and fishing.<sup>30</sup> Many of the communities surveyed reported unusable reserve lands as a hindrance to their economic development.<sup>31</sup> The community of NCN was originally confined to their reserve territory because the Crown had no original intention of development. Today, quality and quantity of land has been diminished as a result of flooding. The promise of modernity and western development strategies have failed to provide appropriate and successful community development to NCN.

#### **4. Traditional Economy and how it's shaped NCN**

##### **4.1 What is the traditional economy?**

Raymond Pierotti published a study on Indigenous ecosystems titled *Indigenous Knowledge, Ecology, and Evolutionary Biology* that is helpful for conceptualizing this. While Pierotti's research generalizes all Indigenous perspectives within North America, many of the concepts he discusses are similar to the practices of the Swampy Cree in NCN. These concepts, which are also known as Indigenous cosmology inform the practices necessary in order to create a Traditional Economy.

Pierotti's research is grounded in the understanding that traditional Indigenous community is ecological, and that humans maintain relationships with the land, plants, rocks, rivers and mountains.<sup>32</sup> Indigenous peoples do not "go into nature," they do not move from outside to inside, and when they walk through the forest they are not surrounded by trees, they are instead surrounded by cultural teachings and knowledge. Animals do not exist only in their utility to humans, they have their own knowledge. Animals have abilities that we do not, and are able to utilize the world in a way that we cannot imagine. Humans must come to terms with this power in order to live harmoniously within the ecosystem. This is why the animal is so respected when hunted, caught, and eaten – Pierotti shares a quote from a traditional Mistassini Cree who says, "If we do not show respect to the bear when we kill him, he will not return."<sup>33</sup>

These sentiments of respect and honoring are also practiced by Indigenous peoples in all aspects of resource management. To put it simply, they utilize an approach of "Take what you need, not what you want." Pierotti writes that this ideology allows communities to maintain balance within their ecosystems, allowing them to survive in a fluctuating environment, and minimize their impacts on other species.<sup>34</sup> Non-human species also depend on the actions of humans to maintain balance, one example of this can be found in burning practices that have profound effects on plant community structure, which then further influences bison migration patterns.<sup>35</sup> Western or mainstream development practices have separated people from the natural world, except as a place from which we exploit resources. Development practices that maintain traditional methodology will practice respect to all species and resources, and will maintain balance within the ecosystem in which the community exists.

##### **4.2 How the traditional economy is utilized in NCN**

The documentary, *Where Three Rivers Meet*, describes the economy of NCN pre-European contact as grounded in a strong use of cosmological perspectives in order to maintain balance in their ecosystem. The people of NCN lived off of the land, hunting, fishing and trapping.

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<sup>30</sup> AANDC, p. 22-23.

<sup>31</sup> AANDC, p. 27.

<sup>32</sup> Pierotti, Raymond. *Indigenous Knowledge, Ecology, and Evolutionary Biology*. (New York, Routledge) 2011. p. 26.

<sup>33</sup> Pierotti, Raymond. *Indigenous Knowledge, Ecology, and Evolutionary Biology*. p. 33.

<sup>34</sup> Pierotti, p. 34.

<sup>35</sup> Pierotti, p. 38-39.

Everyone had their own gifts, and a sense of purpose, and everyone would share their particular gift. This way of being gives everyone in the community a role and maintains balance.

Today, NCN is proud of the traditional aspects of their economy that they have maintained, however they acknowledge that these ways may not appeal to their younger generations to come, which is why they've explored economic ventures such as the *Wuskwatim Project*. The community acknowledges that their economic future may not center one specific type of economic methodology.<sup>36</sup> Current examples of traditional development in the community include the Nelson House Fisherman's Association (NHFA), the Nelson House Trappers Association (NHTA), and the Jack Moore Elders Traditional Program.<sup>37</sup>

The NHFA supports commercial fisherman by providing opportunities to access funding and allowing them to maintain an income between seasons. By mitigating and subsidizing NCN fishermen through the 1996 NFA compensation funds, the band council is able to provide viable employment opportunities to NCN members through the fishing industry. This program can promote participation in the international and global economy by using renewable resources through traditional and sustainable practices. Currently, the community is home to 40 licensed fishermen and about 60 helpers. NCN fishermen are compensated by receiving a subsidy rate of \$0.90 a kilogram for their product. At the end of fishing season \$0.45 of the \$0.90 go towards their expenses and \$0.45 is used as income.<sup>38</sup>

The NHTA oversees the operation of the Trapping Program, which employs a resource and land use coordinator, a manager and utilizes the Local Fur Council. With approximately 250 trappers who trap within the NCN area, the program runs year round. The Trapping Program includes a subsidy, snowmobile program, cabin repair program, start-up program, and trap-line trail cutting program. Each trapper receives an 80% subsidy for their product each season.<sup>39</sup>

The mandate for the Jack Moore Elders Traditional Program is restoration of tradition, language, beliefs, and values. This program allows elders to be employed in order to develop the foundation for this process – their knowledge plays a vital role in educating NCN youth in Cree culture, history, language, and ways of being. The program includes an outdoor education program via the high school, as well as partnership with the Head Start program run out of the Community Wellness Centre.<sup>40</sup>

## 5. Hybrid Development Theory

John Altman is a main theorist in relation to the hybrid economy approach, and has created this model based on experiences with rural indigenous communities in Australia, his interpretations of the model will be the basis of the hybrid model applied to NCN. The hybrid approach offers an alternative development approach to the typical siloed engagement within either the market economy or state economy. The aim of a hybrid economy is to combine employment and enterprise opportunities with Indigenous aspirations and cultural strengths.<sup>41</sup> Economists have tended to view the economy as something beyond culture, and the hybrid model seeks to incorporate culture and economy as factors that can, and should, work together.<sup>42</sup> The hybrid

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<sup>36</sup> Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, *Vision*.

<sup>37</sup> Nisichawayasihk Trust Office, *Programs*. (NCN Trust Office) N.d. Retrieved on March 27 from <http://trustoffice.ca/index.aspx>.

<sup>38</sup> Nisichawayasihk Trust Office

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Curchin, Katherin, 2013. *Interrogating the Hybrid Approach to Indigenous Development*, Australia: Australian Journal of Social Issues, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> Altman, Jon, 2013. *Economic Futures on Aboriginal Land in Remote and Very Remote Australia: Hybrid Economies and Joint Ventures*. Australia: Economic Futures on Aboriginal Lands, p. 121.

model allows Indigenous communities to place time and energy into the sectors that they see as most viable and important, allowing them to maintain a balance of economic, political, and socio-cultural opportunities. The essentialist view of Indigenous communities to only undertake forms of development that are in line with Indigenous beliefs shows a limitation of the rhetoric of Indigenous development.<sup>43</sup> The reality is that Indigenous people have multiple linkages to other forms of the economy besides just the traditional.

The hybrid economic model is applicable to various aggregates ranging from the individual, to the household, to the community. This model has three sectors, the market, the state, and the customary, with all sectors overlapping. The market sector is generally thought of in relation to firms and industry, and the buying and selling of goods. The state sector would be the sector that provides government services, funding, and health care. The customary or traditional sector refers to economic activities that are rooted in cultural traditions and beliefs. While Altman uses the term customary, in the context of NCN, traditional is more appropriate. This model encompasses different forms of work, and allows for accommodation of rapid sectoral movement between the market, state, and traditional sectors.<sup>44</sup> An illustration of this is a woman, in her mid-forties who is a teaching assistant receiving income from wages as well as from state support, but she is also an artist and an occasional hunter, she is operating in all segments of the economy. Or the example of a single male, who is unemployed and receiving unemployment benefits, that is also a singer and performer, occasionally receiving income from performances, but more often performs in the non-market traditional sector for in kind payments, he too is involved in all of the various sectors. Poverty in these instances is not the result of low productivity or work engagement issues, but is the result of the goods and services of Indigenous communities having low value in the market economy on their own, so the goal becomes finding a way to create market opportunities and not lose culture or tradition in the process.<sup>45</sup> A further goal would be articulation between the state and traditional sector to expand the livelihood options for indigenous people, where income support supplements the traditional sector.<sup>46</sup>

NCN has a strong traditional economy; they hunt wildlife, they fish, they create traditional artwork, they prepare felts, and they place a high value on traditions, languages beliefs and values. The previously mentioned report by the AANDC cited four recurring trends of development barriers across Indigenous communities; systems with administrative inefficiencies, lack of control over local-decision making, community capacity, and un-useable land base. NCN's development goals include preservation of traditional economic practices, and an embrace of the market economy in order to ensure stability for future generations – this hybrid approach allows NCN to overcome the barriers identified by AANDC. The community's settlement from the Churchill River Diversion has provided them their own flow of capital, allowing them to overcome inefficient systems related with projects based on government funding. The four programs hosted by the Trust Office—the NHFA, NHTA, the Country Foods Program, and the Jack Moore Elders Traditional Program—are initiatives that use the hybrid model to overcome the aforementioned barriers.

The realization of development possibilities with the hybrid economy model will not occur automatically, there are many challenges based on deeply entrenched colonial legacies, but there are specific key challenges to address when seeking to employ the hybrid economy. The first is to understand the local context of each community, such as the economic realities and

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<sup>43</sup> Engle, p. 97

<sup>44</sup> Altman, Jon, 2009, *The Hybrid Economy and Anthropological Engagements with Policy Discourse: A Brief Reflection*. Australia, The Australian Journal of Anthropology, p.322.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 323.

<sup>46</sup> Altman, Jon, 2013. *Economic Futures on Aboriginal Land in Remote and Very Remote Australia: Hybrid Economies and Joint Ventures*. Australia: Economic Futures on Aboriginal Lands, p. 122.

conditions of that specific community. This context enables the opportunity to plan for sustainability and consistency. Understanding the local context will allow insights into how best to implement the hybrid approach, such as emphasizing the market or the state component when trying to supplement the traditional sector.<sup>47</sup> A innovative and inter-sectoral approach with linkages is necessary, additionally the political discourse needs to shift to recognize the value and importance of the traditional sector in first nation communities. Such as increasing community funding in ways that enable functioning of the traditional sector.<sup>48</sup> The expansion of the market sector should be encouraged in whichever way the community sees as viable. For example, commercial fishing in NCN would be a market sector initiative that also enables linkages with the traditional sector. The hybrid model is a model that seeks to encompass all of the realities that face current day Indigenous people, it is about enhancing livelihood options for Indigenous peoples in socially and culturally appropriate ways.<sup>49</sup>

## 7. Conclusion

The process of colonization forever changed the livelihoods of the individuals in NCN, creating conditions of poverty, as well as low physical and mental wellbeing. Mainstream development initiatives such as large hydro-development projects have failed to fully solve these effects of colonization, leading to a confusing divide between wanting to maintain and revitalize culture while also recognizing the need for employment and a cash economy. NCN has a strong traditional economy, and they found ways to incorporate that within the broader wage economy of Canada. They have utilized the hybrid economic model which enables communities to maintain linkages between the state, market, and traditional sectors of the economy. Ongoing, strong government support and recognition for this model will ensure sustainable success for NCN. The successes of NCN while using the hybrid model of development shows that the local context of a community must be taken into consideration when engaging in projects of development. The Hybrid Economy model illustrates that development project parameters should be in line with the community's cosmology and traditional ways of life, while maintaining the balance within the political and mainstream sector, in order to achieve long term sustainability for future generations.

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<sup>47</sup> Altman, Jon, 2002. *Sustainable development options on Aboriginal land: The hybrid economy in the twenty-first century*, Australia: Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research. p.10.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.10

<sup>49</sup> Altman, Jon, 2005, *The Indigenous hybrid economy: A realistic sustainable option for remote communities?* Australia: Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research. p. 6.

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