



Aan Michif Piikishkwaytaak

(Let's Speak in Michif)

MNBC's 10-Year Michif
Language Revitalization Plan



MÉTIS NATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA

APRIL 2024

Tân'si!

Hello! - NORTHERN MICHIF

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Maarsii!

Thank you! - SOUTHERN MICHIF

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INTRODUCTION

This document outlines a 10-year plan for the Métis Nation of British Columbia (MNBC) to support its Métis citizens and communities to revitalize our Michif languages.

The Métis people are diverse, and their linguistic history reflects that diversity. Michif is unique to the Métis people, and there are three distinct varieties of Michif: Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French.¹ From a linguistic standpoint, these varieties are distinct languages, as speakers of one Michif language may not be able to understand speakers of another, and vice versa. Moreover, for each of these Michif languages, there are also regional dialects and other sources of variation across speakers. However, all varieties of all Michif languages are inherently and immeasurably valuable and they together are a strong marker of Métis culture and identity. In British Columbia, there are citizens with diverse connections to historical Métis communities, and MNBC is committed to supporting all three Michif languages.

Like many other Indigenous languages in Canada, the Michif languages are under critical threat. Colonization has eroded the natural course of intergenerational transmission of Michif languages, and today there are very few first language speakers living in British Columbia.² However, there is a strong community interest in revitalizing Michif languages in B.C., a growing number of Michif language learners, and a small group of language champions who are committed to developing their proficiency and passing Michif languages on to future generations.

This language plan is focused on supporting the diversity of Métis citizens in B.C. who want to see their languages thrive. Our approach is rooted in the understanding that Michif language revitalization is about much more than just language, as language is inherently intertwined with culture, identity, family, and wellness. We recognize that the work of reclaiming what was forcibly taken can be mentally, physically, and spiritually demanding, and through this language plan, we aim to adopt an inclusive and trauma-informed approach that acknowledges, respects, and celebrates the hard work of MNBC citizens reclaiming their Michif languages. Based on community feedback obtained through engagement sessions and focus groups, coupled with current understandings of best practices in language revitalization, this plan maps out ten years of activities for learning, using, and valuing Michif languages in B.C.

1 We adopt the language naming conventions of the “Words of our Ancestors” resource (MNBC 2023), while respectfully acknowledging that different communities may choose different names to refer to Michif languages and/or varieties.

2 According to the Métis Languages in BC Vitality Survey (MNBC 2022), 17% of the 1128 survey respondents have some knowledge of a Métis language, only 1% of the respondents identified as a language speaker. This suggests there are at least 11-12 speakers of a Métis language in B.C., but it is unclear whether these individuals speak Cree or one of the Michif languages (or multiple Métis languages). Moreover, Cree was the most widely reported language in the survey, and the consensus from the participants in the engagement sessions and focus groups seems to be that there are few first language Michif speakers in the province.

As outlined in the roadmap at the outset of the document, each activity is under the umbrella of a strategy that works in concert with other strategies that are collectively designed to advance a goal that will help manifest the following vision:

Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French are recognized and valued as a key aspect of Métis identities, heritage, and culture. A new population of proficient speakers is supported by and contributes to proven strategies to restore Michif language transmission across generations. Métis families and individuals in all areas of British Columbia are empowered through effective grant programming, mentorship, resources, and community networks to learn, share, and use their Michif languages in their homes and daily lives.

This document details the methodology used to develop the plan; the goals, strategies and activities of the plan; as well as timelines, targets and key priorities. A summary and analysis of the budget and a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress is also provided. The appendices share additional details relating to the plan's activities and content.



METHODOLOGY

The development of this plan was led by Heather Bliss, with collaboration from Merion Hodgson and Rebekah Stevens. Self-location statements for these consultants are provided in Appendix G. The plan was developed during the months of March through October 2023. A series of online community engagement sessions and focus groups with MNBC citizens informed the plan, as detailed in Table 1 below. A full list of participants is provided in Appendix F.

Table 1. List of engagement events

Event	Date	Number of participants
Visioning session (MNBC language team)	April 14	3
Engagement session (Regions 1 and 2)	May 6	17
Engagement session (Regions 3 and 4)	May 8	13
Engagement session (Regions 5, 6, and 7)	May 15	5
Engagement session (All regions)	June 1	15
Focus group 1 (Vision and goals)	June 19	8
Focus group 2 (Strategies and activities)	July 4	6
Focus group 3 (Draft plan review)	October 19	6

In addition to consultations with MNBC staff and citizens, the plan was informed by the 2022 Métis Languages in BC Vitality Survey, which reported on 1128 MNBC citizens' knowledge and use of Métis languages. The survey found that, while only 17% of respondents report knowledge of a Métis language, 66% report hoping to learn a Métis language in the future. These and other findings of the survey are instrumental in establishing a baseline for the growth of language programs and resources over time. The development of this plan has also been informed by current understandings of best practices in language revitalization and language policy and planning. Published academic literature in these fields was consulted, as well as websites and other materials produced by organizations committed to language revitalization, such as the [First Peoples' Cultural Council](#) (FPCC).³ The bibliography prioritizes the works of Indigenous authors.

3 Project lead Heather Bliss has worked extensively with FPCC on planning and research projects. Participants in the engagement sessions and focus groups also frequently pointed to FPCC as a good model for MNBC's Michif language revitalization planning initiatives.

GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND ACTIVITIES

Our vision for Michif language revitalization is that our Michif languages are recognized and valued as a key aspect of Métis identity, heritage, and culture. A new population of proficient speakers are supported by and contribute to proven strategies to restore Michif language transmission across generations. Métis families and individuals in all areas of British Columbia are empowered through effective grant programming, mentorship, resources, and community networks to learn, share, and use Michif in their homes and daily lives.

This section provides a summary of the goals, strategies, activities, timelines and targets for how we plan to achieve our vision.



Goals

The plan is organized around four goals, which, broadly speaking, support Michif language learning, use, and value, as well as the coordination of language revitalization initiatives. The organizational paradigm for the first three goals (learn, use, value), aligns with those of other large-scale language revitalization plans that are widely recognized as successful (e.g., New Zealand’s Crown Strategy for te reo Māori [Maihi Karauna](#), Wales’ Welsh Language Strategy [Cymraeg 2050](#), see Bliss et al. 2020 for a summary). The fourth goal is to ensure MNBC has capacity to oversee the administration, evaluation, and planning of these goals, and to build relationships with other groups to carry out this plan.



GOAL 1 Learn

Provide funding and support for a group of committed Métis individuals to become Michif language leaders, who can help grow and maintain the Michif learning community through a diverse range of programs and resources based on best practices in language revitalization and rooted in Métis culture and ways of knowing and being.



GOAL 2 Use

Foster meaningful opportunities for Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French to be spoken, heard, seen, and shared in Métis families, homes, and communities, MNBC-governed spaces, and public spheres throughout British Columbia.



GOAL 3 Value

Strengthen the collective understanding and appreciation amongst Métis citizens and allies in British Columbia of the inherent value of Michif languages and their intrinsic connections to the past, present, and future of Métis culture, identity, and well-being.



GOAL 4 Coordinate

Advance Michif language revitalization through effective coordination, planning, and evaluation of Michif initiatives in B.C., as well as relationships with other Métis Nations, Indigenous communities, and allies to learn and share best practices and effective strategies.

Strategies and Activities

Under each of the four goals is a set of strategies that provide direction and focus to the various activities. These strategies are described here, with a list of the activities under them. Most activities will be under the portfolio of the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language, but in some cases, activities require collaborations across MNBC Ministries. Comprehensive descriptions of the activities are provided in Appendix A. Additional activities outside the scope of this plan but under consideration for inclusion should additional funding become available are also described in Appendix E.



Strategies to Support Goal 1 (Learn)

The plan includes four strategies to support Michif language learning. The strategies are designed to reach a diversity of learners with a diversity of interests, including learners who strive to reach high levels of proficiency and to lead language revitalization efforts (Strategy 1.1), other learners who want pathways to connect with their Métis heritage and identity through language (Strategy 1.2), learners wanting access to Michif language through formal education (Strategy 1.3), and learners who want to engage with Michif independently using learning resources (Strategy 1.4). Of course, these groups are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The intent is to offer a range of strategies to empower learners to lead their own language journeys. Each of these strategies is described on the following page, with a list of their activities.



Strategy 1.1. Support a circle of language leaders to attain high levels of proficiency in one or more Michif languages and to be trained in best practices in language revitalization.

- Activity 1.1.1. Michif mentor-apprentice program
- Activity 1.1.2. Michif language revitalization scholarship program⁴
- Activity 1.1.3. Michif language leader grant program

Strategy 1.2. Support Michif learners at all stages throughout British Columbia with guidance, programming, and grant funding.

- Activity 1.2.1. Online and in-person courses in the three Michif languages⁵
- Activity 1.2.2. Michif language learning initiatives grant program

Strategy 1.3. Collaborate with Knowledge Carriers, educators, and early years professionals to develop and offer formalized Michif language learning opportunities.⁶

- Activity 1.3.1. Increased Michif in early learning and childcare programs⁷
- Activity 1.3.2. Michif language courses in postsecondary education⁸

Strategy 1.4. Develop and promote effective Michif language learning resources through a virtual Michif learning library.

- Activity 1.4.1. Video language documentation (conversations and stories)
- Activity 1.4.2 Annotated list of trusted Michif language resources

4 As noted in Appendix A, this activity involves a collaboration between the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language and the Ministry of Skills Training, Employment & Post Secondary (STEPS).

5 This activity is dependent on the availability of language teachers of the three Michif languages. The implementation timeline is dependent on capacity and connections with speakers/teachers to be developed over time.

6 Although several focus group members spoke to the need for Michif language instruction in K-12 education, this falls outside the scope of the current plan. This is discussed in Appendix E.

7 As noted in Appendix A, activity 1.3.1 involves a collaboration between the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language and the Ministry of Education.

8 As noted in Appendix A, activity 1.3.2 is involves a collaboration between the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language and the Ministry of Skills Training, Employment & Post Secondary (STEPS).



Strategies to Support Goal 2 (Use)

The plan includes two strategies to create opportunities for Michif languages to be used, each of which focuses on different domains in society. The first is within MNBC as an organization (Strategy 2.1). Participants in the engagement sessions and focus groups advised that citizens want MNBC leadership and staff to take active steps to learn Michif languages, and they want to see Michif languages integrated into MNBC communications. MNBC is already engaged in this work, and this plan outlines steps to expand these initiatives to offer more substantive Michif learning opportunities for larger groups of staff and leaders, and to develop and implement a strategy for bringing more Michif into otherwise English documents, meetings, online messaging, etc.⁹ The second domain is within the home and community (Strategy 2.2). Métis citizens in B.C. want to connect with each other and their families using their languages. A third strategy recognized as important but outside the scope of the current plan is create opportunities for Métis citizens in B.C. to experience Michif in everyday life through media, arts, and in workspaces (see Appendix E).

Strategy 2.1. Lead through example by integrating Michif languages into MNBC operations, communications, and events.

- Activity 2.1.1. Michif learning opportunities for MNBC staff and leadership
- Activity 2.1.2. Michif communications strategy

Strategy 2.2. Provide programming and resources for Métis citizens to share their Michif languages in their homes and communities.

- Activity 2.2.1. Online Michif network to connect learners and users from across B.C.
- Activity 2.2.2. Michif in the home program
- Activity 2.2.3. Michif language sharing grant program

Ca si bon!

This is great! - MICHIF FRENCH

⁹ To be explicit, the plan outlines steps to offer language instruction to interested staff and leaders; MNBC is not aiming to develop or implement policy requiring anyone to learn or use Michif.



Strategies to Support Goal 3 (Value)

Generating excitement about Michif languages amongst MNBC citizens is an important part of language revitalization. Community members whose ties to their language have been threatened or even severed need to be invited to participate and made to understand that they have a role to play. This is particularly relevant for youth, who hold the potential to be future language leaders (see, e.g., Shilling 2020). Moreover, celebrating the achievements of learners is a key part of building a language community. It is also important to build recognition and appreciation of Michif languages amongst the broader public in British Columbia, but this is a later step, and public awareness falls outside the scope of this current plan (see Appendix E).

Strategy 3.1. Inspire Métis citizens in B.C. to join the Michif language revitalization movement.

- Activity 3.1.1. Resources promoting the value of Michif languages
- Activity 3.1.2. Michif youth program
- Activity 3.1.3. Michif language celebration grant program





Strategies to Support Goal 4 (Coordinate)

The plan includes two strategies to coordinate the activities associated with the first three goals. The first of these (Strategy 4.1) is to provide ongoing administration, evaluation, and planning of Michif language work in B.C., and the second (Strategy 4.2) is to foster relationships that will help MNBC achieve its vision for Michif language revitalization (see Bliss & Thoma 2022 and references therein on the importance of budgeting for intercommunity and intergovernmental collaboration in language revitalization planning). Each strategy is designed to develop capacity so that MNBC can coordinate this important work with knowledge of current and evolving best practices in language revitalization. The strategies are outlined below.

Strategy 4.1. Coordinate Michif language revitalization planning and activities in B.C.

- Activity 4.1.1. Administrative support
- Activity 4.1.2. Monitoring and evaluation (see section 5 and Appendix D)
- Activity 4.1.3. Language planning

Strategy 4.2. Engage with current and evolving best practices in language revitalization through continued relationship-building and communication with other Indigenous language communities.

- Activity 4.2.1. Participate in the Métis National Council Languages Working Table
- Activity 4.2.2. Learn and share best practices with other Indigenous organizations

Êkwa!

Let's go! - NORTHERN MICHIF

MNBC'S 10-YEAR MICHIF LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PLAN ON A PAGE

VISION

Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French are recognized and valued as a key aspect of Métis identities, heritage, and culture. A new population of proficient speakers is supported by and contributes to proven strategies to restore Michif language transmission across generations. Métis families and individuals in all areas of British Columbia are empowered through effective grant programming, mentorship, resources, and community networks to learn, share, and use their Michif languages in their homes and daily lives.

GOAL 1. LEARN

Provide funding and support for a group of committed Métis individuals to become Michif language leaders, who can help grow and maintain the Michif learning community through a diverse range of programs and resources based on best practices in language revitalization and rooted in Métis culture and ways of knowing and being.

1.1 Support a circle of language leaders

Mentor-apprentice scholarship program
Language leaders grant program

1.2 Inclusive learning pathways

Language courses
Learning initiatives grant program

1.3 Formal language education

Early learning and childcare programs
Post-secondary programs

1.4 Learning resources

Video library
Trusted list of resources

GOAL 2. USE

Foster meaningful opportunities for Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French to be spoken, heard, seen, and shared in Métis families, homes, and communities, MNBC-governed spaces, and public spheres throughout British Columbia.

2.1 Lead by example

Michif learning for MNBC staff & leadership
Michif communications strategy

2.2 Michif in the home and community

Online Michif network
Michif in the home program
Language sharing grant program

GOAL 3. VALUE

Strengthen the collective understanding and appreciation amongst Métis people and allies in British Columbia of the inherent value of Michif languages and their intrinsic connections to the past, present, and future of Métis culture, identity, and well-being.

3.1 Inspire community action

Language value resources
Youth program
Language celebration grant program

GOAL 4. COORDINATE

Advance Michif language revitalization through effective coordination, planning, and evaluation of Michif initiatives in B.C., as well as relationships with other Métis nations, Indigenous communities, and allies to learn and share best practices and effective strategies.

4.1 Oversight

Administration
Monitoring and evaluation
Language planning

4.2 Relationship-building

Métis National Council
Other Indigenous organizations

Timelines and Targets

This plan maps out strategies and activities over a 10-year period, beginning in 2024/25. The findings of the Métis Languages in BC Vitality Survey (MNBC 2022) and the outcomes of the engagement sessions and focus groups gave us a baseline from which the activities can scale up over time as capacity is developed. See Appendix B for a map of the timeline. What follows in this section is a summary of the guiding principles that supported timeline development, and an outline of 10-year targets.

There are few first language Michif speakers currently living in B.C., and a small but growing number of learners committed to becoming language leaders with high proficiency and expertise in language revitalization. In the early years of the plan, it is assumed that Métis citizens from outside the province will be rather heavily engaged to support certain activities that require high proficiency and substantial expertise, but over time, the pool of language leaders in the province will increase and reliance on those outside B.C. will lessen.

Michif language revitalization is urgent, and there is a strong need to work quickly to document first language speakers, create new speakers and learners, and to build communities that use, share, and celebrate their Michif languages. However, this urgent need must be balanced against the equally important necessity to honour Michif languages and Métis culture and identities by getting it right. Programs and resources need to be created and implemented in such a way that they respect and build on the knowledge of Elders and speakers and that they are grounded in best practices in language revitalization. The timelines for the activities in this plan were developed with the intent of striking this balance. Moreover, given funding constraints, the timeline and targets allow MNBC to make steady progress on Michif language revitalization while staying within the current budget. Should more funding become available, capacity can grow quickly, and additional activities can be integrated into the plan (see Appendix E). With these guiding principles in mind, we aim to reach the targets on the following page by the conclusion of this 10-year plan.¹⁰



10 Given that all of the activities under Goal 4 (Coordinate) are ongoing, targets are not set for this goal.



OUTCOMES: GOAL 1

Learn

- At least 20 language leaders with high proficiency and expertise of language revitalization
- At least 800 adult learners actively involved in Michif learning through diverse pathways
- Michif immersion time in at least one ELCC program in most or all regions of the province
- Virtual learning library with a list of trusted resources and videos of conversations and stories



OUTCOMES: GOAL 2

Use

- Many MNBC leaders and staff with at least beginner proficiency in Michif language(s)
- Online Michif network that connects at least 5,000 MNBC citizens
- 50 families in all regions of B.C. regularly participating in a Michif in the home program
- 30 grant-funded projects to share and use Michif languages in their communities



OUTCOMES: GOAL 3

Value

- At least 5,000 MNBC citizens can use simple phrases and introduce themselves in Michif
- Most MNBC citizens value and support Michif language revitalization

Key Priorities

The engagement sessions and focus groups provided opportunities to learn from MNBC citizens about their top priorities for advancing Michif language revitalization in B.C. These priorities differed somewhat across the two types of groups (engagement sessions versus focus groups), although the priorities are not mutually exclusive. Whereas the engagement sessions centered language inclusivity and opportunities for all citizens who wish to learn, the focus groups highlighted the need for capacity building among MNBC leadership and those already engaged in learning Michif languages. These key priorities augment each other and guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable language plan. An outline of the key priorities, resonating themes, and corresponding strategies and activities is provided in Appendix C. A brief summary is given below.

From the engagement sessions there were resounding themes of inclusive learning and the need for support to access resources and opportunities. Priorities that emerged primarily center family and home as places of learning, using, and valuing Michif, with a strong desire for intergenerational language transmission and a diversity of learning pathways to support learners of all ages and proficiency levels with different language learning goals. There was a sense that more work is needed to build awareness and appreciation of Michif languages in B.C., and that success – in part – is tied to recognition and respect for Michif languages.

The focus group participants are language champions whose Michif language proficiency and knowledge of best practices in language revitalization guided the priorities they identified. A key priority for this group is to build organizational capacity within MNBC so that staff and leadership can effectively develop, lead, and evaluate language programming that is trauma-informed and inclusive. Another priority concerns supporting learners to ensure they have access to meaningful and appropriate learning pathways and resources, and that their learning journeys are nurtured and celebrated. Moreover, they determined that all Métis languages need to be valued, and that the web of relationships between language, culture, identity, and wellness should be emphasized, as a guiding principle of this plan and as a way of evaluating success in Michif language revitalization.



BUDGET

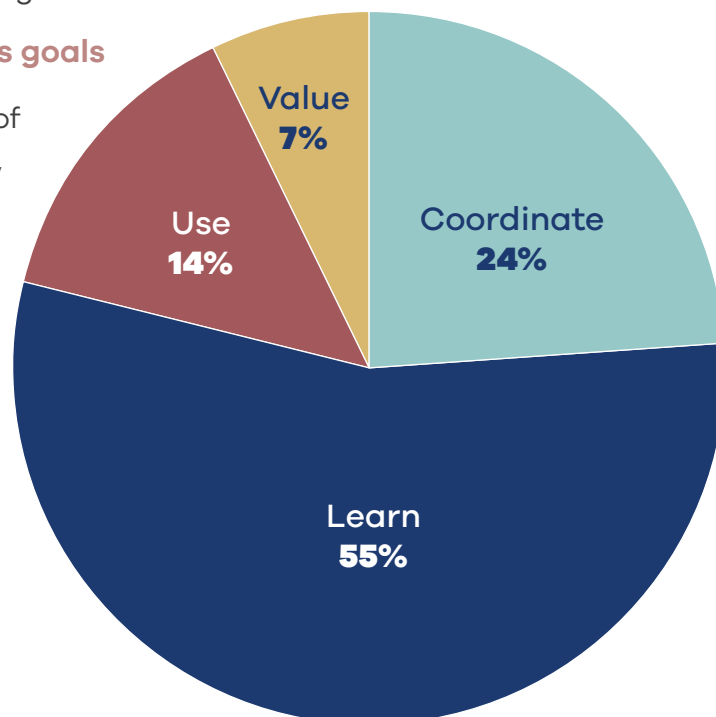
The budget for this plan is designed to approximate current funding levels, which are confirmed through 2028. MNBC will continue to seek new funding streams and opportunities leading up to and beyond this time. The total budget for the plan is approximately \$13 million over ten years, with an average of \$1.3 million per year.

The current plan will help to establish a strong foundation for Michif language revitalization in B.C. However, increased funding would allow MNBC to (i) support additional activities that address key priorities (see Appendix E), and (ii) further grow capacity in its language team. The estimated total budget needed to fully support all activities and capacity growth is over \$50 million, averaging \$5 million per year. We will continue to advocate for increased funding to support Michif language revitalization in B.C.

Activities under Goal 1 (Learn) are the most cost-intensive, and those under Goal 3 (Value) are the least cost-intensive. This is in alignment with best practices in language revitalization, which promote language learning to be the main thrust of language revitalization. Activities under Goal 4 (Coordinate) comprise just under a quarter of the budget, which reflects the critical need for organizational support for community-based language plans (see, e.g., Gessner et al. 2018 on the important role of FPCC and similar organizations). The proportion of costs going to each goal is diagrammed in Figure 2.

Figure 2. 10-year budget distributed across goals

Over the course of the 10-year plan, over 20% of the total budget is dedicated to grant funding, which goes directly to MNBC citizens for grassroots projects.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework is outlined in detail in Appendix D. The framework is inspired and influenced by the work of Myaamia linguist Wesley Leonard, who advocates for framing progress-tracking in language revitalization through a cultural and linguistic lens specific to the language's community (e.g., Leonard 2011). He also cautions against imposing non-Indigenous ideals of success in language learning onto Indigenous language revitalization frameworks. Following Leonard's lead, the M&E framework incorporates culturally significant aspects of Métis culture and Michif languages. Additionally, many of the tools and metrics outlined in the M&E framework respond to the voices heard during engagement sessions and focus groups with MNBC citizens.

The framework is organized into three main sections: (i) research and needs assessments, (ii) community feedback, and (iii) internal tracking. Under each section, there is a series of evaluation tools, each with their own timeline and list of metrics, which align with the plan's activities and targets. The evaluation tools provide means to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, and they include mechanisms to collect data through various means so that language learners and other program participants feel they are being heard and respected in culturally relevant ways.

Below are brief descriptions of each of the three sections of the framework; detailed discussions of the tools and metrics within each section are provided in Appendix D.

Research and Needs Assessments

This section is designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data through both self-administered surveys and structured longitudinal studies. These tools can monitor the vitality, wellness, and learning of Michif languages in B.C., and use this information to identify priority areas to address. Tools such as the Métis Languages in BC Vitality Survey, a Michif Learner Self-Assessment Tool, and a Wellness Study will be used to monitor and evaluate these domains.

Nikishkahtayn li Michif

I am learning Michif - SOUTHERN MICHIF

Community Feedback

This section focuses largely on collecting qualitative data based on the input of Métis citizens at program completion. It utilizes a model whereby exit-interview style conversations are used to engage citizens in a process of reflection on the outcomes of grant, scholarship, and other programs. This type of community feedback can be used to assess how effectively programs are meeting community needs, and how they can be adapted to better do so.

Internal Tracking

This section seeks to gather largely quantitative data by using MNBC's internal records. Internal tracking will allow for MNBC to monitor and evaluate the language plan's progress in terms of programs and resources, as well as opportunities for funding, collaboration, and public awareness. Qualitative data may also be gathered from staff wellness surveys.



CONCLUSION

It is critically important to revitalize Michif languages so that future generations can learn and embody this aspect of our Métis culture and identity. Our Michif languages are vital to expressing and understanding who we are as Métis people and the rich cultural depth and diversity of the Métis Nation.

The goals and activities outlined in this plan are the first step in providing MNBC citizens with opportunities to learn Michif and begin incorporating it into their lives. Whether your language learning goals are small (like learning a few phrases) or large (like becoming a fluent speaker), we encourage all Métis to embrace learning Michif and to support the Nation's mission of keeping our Michif languages alive and active.

Revitalizing a language takes generations of dedicated individuals learning and passing on their knowledge. MNBC's vision is to provide opportunities, initiatives and resources that support MNBC citizens to learn Michif so that our Michif languages flourish. This plan marks the beginning of our journey to achieving our vision and we look forward to honouring and uplifting our Michif languages, speakers and learners as we move forward.

For detailed information about the activities identified within this plan, please see the Aan Michif Piikishkwaytaak Appendix.



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Shaylee LaFontaine, 2023.

APPENDIX A. DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF ACTIVITIES

Strategy 1.1. Support a circle of language leaders to attain high levels of proficiency in one or more Michif languages and to be trained in best practices in language revitalization.

Activity 1.1.1. Create a Michif mentor-apprentice program that provides funding and guidance to teams of highly proficient Michif speakers (in British Columbia or elsewhere) and learners for Michif immersion learning.

The mentor-apprentice model for Indigenous language learning has been widely cited as an efficient and cost-effective strategy, particularly for communities with limited resources and limited capacity. While the traditional mentor-apprentice model pairs proficient first language speakers (/mentors) with learners (/apprentices) for one-on-one language immersion, many communities struggle to populate this type of program due to a paucity of first language speakers who can serve as mentors. Instead, many communities are innovating with scaffolded approaches that have individuals serving both mentor and apprentice roles, (i.e., by receiving mentorship from more advanced learners, and mentoring less advanced learners). This approach has served the WSÁNEĆ community of SENĆOŦEN learners very well (see, e.g., Sampson 2014; Jim 2016). The first generation of apprentices were mentored by first language speakers, and they went on to serve as mentors themselves to the second generation of apprentices, who in turn then mentored a third generation of apprentices, and so on. Because language learning is an ongoing process with stages of development, individuals can serve as mentors and apprentices simultaneously, particularly if there are cohorts of learners who can support and challenge each other. Moreover, apprentices' learning will be enriched through teaching, and they will advance their skills through both types of interactions.

MNBC will adopt such a strategy to address the urgent need to develop high proficiency speakers in British Columbia. This is in alignment with what various individuals in the engagement sessions referred to as a "pyramid scheme" of language learning. For such a model to be effective, the first generation of apprentices will likely need to work with a mentor from outside the province, and given the limited access to mentors, a small cohort of apprentices will work together with one mentor. Following the success that Prairies to Woodlands (and other organizations) have experienced with [online mentor-apprentice programs](#), the mentor and apprentices can work together in a mostly online space, although there is also a need for language learning to be grounded in Métis culture and include cultural teachings and land-based experiences, which will require the apprentices to travel to spend time with the mentor outside the province. In addition to travel expenses, the mentor and

apprentices must be compensated for their time so that they can commit to and focus on the work. Each apprentice will aim for 300 hours of immersion time per year with their mentor. This will continue for three years, totalling 900 hours, which is often cited as an optimal amount to achieve intermediate to intermediate-high levels of proficiency (e.g., Benson & Khelsilem 2021, Johnson 2017; see also the discussion in Bliss & Thoma 2022).¹¹

Activity 1.1.2. Create a Michif language revitalization scholarship program that provides funding for tuition and living expenses to committed Michif learners to pursue postsecondary training in language education, language revitalization, linguistics, and/or other relevant areas.

This activity complements the mentor-apprentice program outlined in 1.1.1, as language leaders need to develop language proficiency alongside expertise in language revitalization. The Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language will collaborate with the Ministry of Skills Training, Employment and Post Secondary (STEPS) to offer scholarships to emerging language leaders.

Activity 1.1.3. Create a Michif language leader grant program that funds initiatives by committed Michif learners to advance their proficiency, develop skills in language revitalization, and/or foster Michif speaker networks.

This grant program is specifically designed to support language leaders but is deliberately open-ended within that space to respect language leaders' capacity to know which strategies are best for them.

Strategy 1.2. Support Michif learners at all stages throughout British Columbia with guidance, programming, and grant funding.

Activity 1.2.1. Offer language courses online and in-person throughout B.C. for learners of the various Michif languages at varying levels of proficiency.

Our engagement sessions revealed a strong community interest in having MNBC offer short (i.e., 6-12 week) language courses in the Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French languages at different proficiency levels (beginner, intermediate, and advanced) across regions. Participants had varying opinions about online and in-person course offerings, suggesting that both are needed and that, in some cases, it may be appropriate to blend the two delivery models. The full implementation of this activity is dependent on the availability of speakers/teachers of the three Michif languages. Given that MNBC already has established relationships with some Michif language teachers from outside B.C. - and has offered online courses in the past - this activity can continue and scale up over time. The sequencing of courses and regions will depend on community interests and availability of instructors and instructional designers.

¹¹ We anticipate that at least some of the individuals who complete the mentor-apprentice program will choose to continue growing their language proficiency and expertise through the language leaders grants program (1.1.4) and other avenues.

Activity 1.2.2. Create a Michif learning initiatives grant program that funds programs developed by chartered communities and other Métis groups and organizations to advance Michif language learning in B.C.

This is one of three open-strategy grants that will support community-driven ideas and initiatives for each of the three main goals of language revitalization (learn, use, value; see also 2.2.3, and 3.1.4). It is important that these grant programs launch early in this 10-year cycle to allow grassroots momentum to build over time, and to empower citizens to engage in language revitalization in the ways they see fit.

Strategy 1.3. Collaborate with Knowledge Carriers, educators, and early years professionals to develop and offer formalized Michif language learning opportunities.

Activity 1.3.1. Increasingly integrate Michif language immersion into early learning and childcare programs throughout British Columbia.

Young children are the ideal language learners. Unlike older children and adults, they have the ability to acquire (multiple) language(s) as their mother tongue(s) with little effort and through exposure alone. Language nests are early learning environments that immerse young children in their language, and they have long been cited as an important part of a long-term language revitalization strategy, as they create new generations of first language speakers (e.g., McIvor & Parker 2016). However, language nests require relatively proficient speakers to serve as or work alongside early learning and childcare professionals (see, e.g., Arnouse 2019) and we see this a longer-term goal that will not be achievable in the 10-year timeframe of this current plan.

Nevertheless, it is important that early learning and childcare (ELCC) be included as a space for Michif language in this current plan. By laying the groundwork now - and increasingly integrating Michif into ELCC programming - we can plan for language nests to be part of the next 10-year plan. A collaboration between the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language and the Ministry of Education is required to carry out this work. The aim will be to organically integrate Michif immersion time into MNBC's ELCC programs, and slowly increase the time spent in immersion throughout the 10-year plan. Eventually at some later point, we hope that a subset of MNBC's ELCC programs will be in a position to transition to full immersion and adopt a language nest model.

Activity 1.3.2. Partner with B.C. universities and colleges to develop and implement postsecondary accredited Michif language courses.

B.C.-based universities such as Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria have effectively partnered with numerous Indigenous communities to offer language programming. These language programs are essentially “shells” with approved curricula that can be tailored to specific languages and communities. One of the advantages of these types of programs is that the majority of the costs for program delivery are covered by the institution. Moreover, these programs are attractive to some learners because they can earn accreditation towards a certificate, diploma, or degree from a recognized institution. They also can raise public awareness and visibility of the language(s). The Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language will collaborate with the Ministry of Skills Training, Employment and Post Secondary (STEPS) to develop partnerships with postsecondary institutions to offer language programming.

Strategy 1.4. Develop and promote effective Michif language learning resources through a virtual Michif learning library.

Activity 1.4.1. Develop a video library of stories and conversations by Elders and other speakers that can be used to support beginner, intermediate, and advanced learners.

Language documentation is a key aspect of language revitalization. Creating a comprehensive record of the sounds, words, phrases, monologues, and dialogues that characterize a language as it is actually spoken by a diversity of first language speakers is important so that current and future generations of learners can access these materials for their own learning advancement. Video documentation is increasingly cost-effective, and it is useful insofar as it captures the nuances of pronunciation, gesture, and other aspects of language. Participants in the engagement sessions recognized the need for high-quality video resources that not only preserve the language, but that can also serve as a model for learners practicing their language skills. Given the small number of first language Michif speakers across Canada, this is an urgent priority, although it will require travel to outside the province to work with Elders and speakers from elsewhere.

Activity 1.4.2. Curate and maintain a list of trusted and effective Michif learning resources.

A key message heard during the engagement sessions and focus groups was that there are many Michif language resources available from various organizations, but language learners and users sometimes struggle to understand which resources are reliable and which best suit their learning needs. Participants expressed a strong interest in having MNBC develop and maintain an annotated list of resources that have been reviewed and can be trusted to have accurate language content.

Strategy 2.1. Lead through example by integrating Michif languages into MNBC operations, communications, and events.

Activity 2.1.1. Provide Michif learning opportunities for MNBC staff and leadership.

A consistent and strong message received throughout the engagement sessions and focus groups was that citizens want MNBC staff and leadership – including Directors in Chartered Communities – to learn Michif as a way to lead by example. Given that MNBC staff and leaders are located across the province, and that qualified Michif instructors are located outside of B.C., this activity employs a cohort-based model for online learning in which groups of up to 50 people can participate in a variety of short-term Michif language courses focused on specific topics that will advance their functional language use.

Activity 2.1.2. Develop and implement a Michif communications strategy that promotes the use of Michif languages in MNBC documents, web spaces, media, and meetings.

This activity is designed to demonstrate to citizens MNBC's commitment to Michif language revitalization. The aim in some other Indigenous language communities is to provide full-scale translations of government documentations and live interpretation at government meetings and events. However, MNBC'S communications strategy will – at least initially – be more focused on introducing Michif words and phrases throughout otherwise English communications and doing this in an authentic and accurate way. In the focus group, this was described as “sprinkling” of Michif, and there was hearty discussion about the importance of “sprinkling” as an emblematic use of the language, and the need to do it right by honouring speakers' time and expertise to effectively translate key words and phrases in their appropriate context. The technical term for “sprinkling” is *code-mixing*, and it can be an effective strategy to invite new and potential learners to engage with their languages (see, e.g., Bliss et al. 2021).

Strategy 2.2. Provide programming and resources for Métis citizens to share their Michif languages in their homes and communities.

Activity 2.2.1. Develop and support an online Michif network that connects speakers and learners with others who live in or come from the same region, and/or have similar backgrounds, proficiency levels, language goals, and/or other interests.

This activity was identified as a key priority throughout the engagement sessions and focus groups. Especially given the diasporic nature of Métis communities in B.C., citizens want opportunities to connect with each other to learn, use, and value their languages in a shared virtual space. Commercially available community-builder platforms provide a simple way to accomplish this activity, as these can be customized for different communities' needs. Engaging MNBC citizens to learn about design and functionality needs, as well as offering online information sessions to demonstrate how the platform works, will be part of this activity.

Activity 2.2.2. Develop and support a Michif in the home program through regional family support circles and resources for incorporating Michif into everyday family interactions.

A key theme that emerged throughout the engagement sessions and focus groups was that home and family are important domains for Michif language revitalization. This echoes the findings of language revitalization experts including Leonard (2007), Thorburn (2016), and many others. The 2022 MNBC Métis Languages in BC Vitality Survey found that Michif language knowledge is most prevalent amongst older generations, which means that today's parents and caregivers likely did not grow up with ready access to their Michif languages. As such, they will find it challenging to integrate Michif into their family lives. Within the timeframe of this current plan, there may not be families speaking Michif as their primary language at home. However, this can be a longer-term goal to work towards, and to get there, a strategy is needed to support families who want to bring Michif into their homes even in small amounts, as they see fit.

A "Michif in the home" resource, modelled after Daniels and Custer's (2022) "nēhiyawētān kīkināhk / Speaking Cree in the Home: A Beginner's Guide for Families" and other similar (smaller scale) resources,¹² will be developed, and then promoted and distributed to families. The program will aim to provide bimonthly gatherings and weekly language challenges sent to families. Families will also be encouraged to connect with each other via the online Michif network (2.2.1).

¹² For example, see Babaamaadizi-Mazina'igan/ Ojibwe Travel Around Book (Reo & Reo 2022) and Aikamotsiipohtoo'pa: A Blackfoot Language Learning Guide for Families (Fox-BruisedHead & Bliss 2023).

Activity 2.2.3. Create a Michif language sharing grant program that funds language circles, language documentation projects, land-based and cultural activities infused with Michif, and other initiatives that support Michif language use in community.

This is one of three open-strategy grants that will support community-driven ideas and initiatives for each of the three main goals of language revitalization (learn, use, value; see also 1.2.4, and 3.1.4). It is important that these grant programs launch early in this 10-year cycle to allow grassroots momentum to build over time, and to empower citizens to engage in language revitalization in the ways they see fit.

Strategy 3.1. Inspire Métis citizens in B.C. to join the Michif language revitalization movement.

Activity 3.1.1. Develop and distribute to MNBC citizens evidence-based resources that promote the value of Michif languages.

Participants in the engagement sessions and focus groups identified a strong need for resources that educate citizens about why and how they can learn, use, and share their Michif languages. The “Words of our Ancestors” resource (MNBC 2023) is a starting point to this resource collection, and other potential resources will include:

Cards that teach citizens how to introduce themselves in each of the Michif languages (with written text and QR codes to audio recordings)

Brochures on “why learn Michif”

Booklets identifying and explaining the well-established links between language and wellness (see, e.g., McKenzie 2022; Taff et al. 2018; Twitchell 2018)

Activity 3.1.2. Develop and implement a Michif youth program that inspires youth to learn, use, and share Michif, and to become language leaders.

Youth are a key demographic in language revitalization planning, as they hold the potential to be the future language leaders. Moreover, engaging youth in language revitalization can have positive impacts on their sense of self, wellbeing, educational attainment, and professional development (Rafael 2021; Shilling 2020). The Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language will work with the Ministry of Youth and Métis Youth British Columbia (MYBC), to learn from youth what types of Michif language programs would serve them best, with aspirations of an annual Michif initiative targeted for Métis youth (see Bliss & Thoma 2022 on the diversity of youth programs and the need to ask youth directly what they need).

Activity 3.1.3. Create a Michif language celebration grant program that funds regional, local, and virtual initiatives to generate interest in and commitments to Michif language revitalization in B.C.

This is one of three open-strategy grants that will support community-driven ideas and initiatives for each of the three main goals of language revitalization (learn, use, value; see also 1.2.4, and 2.2.3). It is important that these grant programs launch early in this 10-year cycle to allow grassroots momentum to build over time, and to empower citizens to engage in language revitalization in the ways they see fit.

Strategy 4.1. Coordinate Michif language revitalization planning and activities in B.C.

Activity 4.1.1. Provide administrative support to carry out the vision, goals, strategies and activities of the MNBC Michif language revitalization plan.

Ongoing administrative support is crucial to the success of this plan. Research on language revitalization planning points to the important role played by centralized administrative bodies, such as the MNBC Ministry of Culture, Heritage, and Language (see, e.g., Gessner et al. 2018; Bliss et al. 2020). Community-based language work that is well supported through regional networks, research and resources, professional development and training opportunities, as well as ongoing fundraising, advocacy, and monitoring leads to better outcomes.

Within the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language, dedicated staff who are trained in best practices in language revitalization are required to lead, implement, and monitor the activities of the language plan. The scope of work for these staff is broad and varied, including the tasks outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

Task	Associated Activities in the Plan
Developing resources	1.4.1, 1.4.2, 2.2.2, 3.1.1
Advertising and recruiting for grants and programs	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 3.1.2, 3.1.3
Overseeing grant adjudication and reporting	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.2, 2.2.2, 3.1.3
Supporting the delivery of courses and workshops	1.2.1, 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 3.1.2
Developing and implementing evaluation tools	4.1.2
Working with Elders, speakers, linguists, contractors, and other experts and professionals (often outside the province)	1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.2
Networking and relationship-building (with Elders, speakers and other experts)	1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 2.1.2, 2.2.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 4.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.2
Liaising with postsecondary institutions	1.1.2, 1.3.2
Representing MNBC at the national level and in the language revitalization community	4.2.1, 4.2.2
Advocating for increased funding from various levels of government	4.1.3
Educating MNBC staff and leadership about Michif	3.1.3
Coordinating Michif support amongst MNBC Ministries and departments	1.1.2, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 3.1.2

The Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language also acts the Secretariat for the [Amelia Douglas Institute for Métis Culture and Language](#). This will be a valuable educational hub for Michif resources, available to the public. Amongst the tasks involved in this work is the ongoing maintenance of the Michif phrase search directory, as well as the Institute's website and social media.

Activity 4.1.2. Develop and implement a monitoring & evaluation strategy to track changes in Michif language vitality in B.C.

Monitoring and evaluation are important aspects of language planning. MNBC will gather and share qualitative and quantitative data on the progression of Michif language revitalization efforts in B.C. See Appendix D for a detailed outline of the monitoring and evaluation framework.

Activity 4.1.3. Ensure that Michif language revitalization planning is ongoing by engaging in a new cycle of planning in advance of this current plan's conclusion.

Although this is a 10-year plan, MNBC will review and revise the plan in Year 5 (with community engagement beginning in Year 4). The development, review, revision, and approval of the next 10-year plan will conclude by the end of Year 10 (with community engagement beginning in Year 8).

Strategy 4.2. Engage with current and evolving best practices in language revitalization through continued relationship-building and communication with other Indigenous language communities.

Activity 4.2.1. Advocate for Métis language rights and government funding and support for Michif languages through continued participation in the Métis National Council Languages Working Table.

This ongoing activity includes attendance at working table meetings, as well as collaboration in the preparation of briefing notes, reports, and other advocacy documents developed by the table. MNBC's participation in this work not only serves to advance Métis language rights but it also supports staff's professional development as it gives them opportunities to stay current and connected to Métis language revitalization initiatives across the country.

Activity 4.2.2. Collaborate with B.C. First Nations, other Métis organizations, and the global community of Indigenous language revitalization experts to learn and share best practices.

This ongoing activity includes participation in virtual meetings, as well as MNBC language staff attendance at language events and other gatherings hosted by other organizations. These networking opportunities allow MNBC to promote and advocate for Métis language rights in B.C., as well as to develop expertise amongst staff in current and evolving best practices in Indigenous language revitalization.

APPENDIX B. TIMELINE MAP

The tables below map out the intended timelines for each of the activities described in Appendix A. Note that timelines for individual activities may change due to funding, capacity, and other variables.

Table 3. Timeline map for Goal 1 (Learn)

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Goal 1. Learn										
Strategy 1.1. Language leaders										
1.1.1. Mentor-apprentice program										
1.1.2. Scholarship program										
1.1.3. Language leaders grant program										
Strategy 1.2. Learning pathways										
1.2.1. Language courses										
1.2.2. Learning initiatives grant program										
Strategy 1.3. Language in education										
1.3.1. Early learning and childcare										
1.3.2. Postsecondary education										
Strategy 1.4. Learning resources										
1.4.1. Video library										
1.4.2. Trusted list of resources										

Table 4. Timeline map for Goal 2 (Use)

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Goal 2. Use										
Strategy 2.1. Leadership										
2.1.1. Michif learning for leaders										
2.1.2. Michif Communications Strategy										
Strategy 2.2. Home and community										
2.2.1. Online Michif network										
2.2.2. Michif in the home program										
2.2.3. Language sharing grant program										

Table 5. Timeline map for Goal 3 (Value)

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Goal 3. Value										
Strategy 3.1. Inspiring action										
3.1.1. Language value resources										
3.1.2. Youth program										
3.1.3. Language celebration grant program										

Table 6. Timeline map for Goal 4 (Coordinate)

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Goal 4. Coordinate										
Strategy 4.1. Oversight										
4.1.1. Administration										
4.1.2. Monitoring & evaluation										
4.1.3. Planning										
Strategy 4.2. Relationship-building										
4.2.1. Métis National Council										
4.2.2. Other organizations										

APPENDIX C. KEY PRIORITIES

As described in Section 3.4., different – but overlapping – sets of key priorities emerged through the engagement sessions and focus groups. These are outlined in Tables 7 and 8 below, each with resonating themes expressed by multiple participants, as well as cross-references to strategies and activities that address these priorities and themes.

Table 7. Key priorities identified through engagement sessions

Priority ¹³	Themes	Strategies & Activities
Safe and encouraging spaces for learners of all ages and proficiency levels	Barriers: intimidation, embarrassment, shame Lifelong learning (all ages); inclusivity Different learning pathways for different learners	Strategy 1.2. (also Strategy 1.3)
Family and home as a key domain for language transmission	Desire for children/grandchildren to learn and use Michif Desire to speak Michif with immediate family Storytelling, memories, oral histories, Elders Intergenerational learning opportunities	Activity 2.2.2 (also 1.4.1, 2.2.3, 3.1.1)
Development and sharing of Métis language information and learning resources	Support needed to know which Michif to learn, as well as how and where to access resources and programs ¹⁴ Access to Elders/speakers Resources for all Michif languages at all levels of proficiency List of trusted resources (from various organizations)	Activity 2.2.1 (also 1.4, 3.1.1)
Language documentation of first language speakers	Oral histories and storytelling Natural, everyday conversations Language preservation, but also models of speaking for learners of varying proficiency levels	Strategy 1.4 (also 2.2.3)
Formal education programs	Desire for Michif language learning programs in education settings (ECE, postsecondary) ¹⁵ Teacher training programs needed to develop capacity	Strategy 1.3 (also 1.1.2)
Mentor-apprentice program	Immersion learning, one-on-one learning “Pyramid scheme” of creating new speakers Apprenticeship programs for Michif languages	Activity 1.1.1

¹³ Not included here is the theme of recognition and appreciation of Michif languages in public spaces and everyday lives. This is an important aspect of language revitalization, but given funding constraints, it is a lower priority. See Appendix E for activities that could address this need should funding become available.

¹⁴ See Appendix E for discussion of a regional language coaching team whose role would be to support MNBC citizens with Michif learning strategies and connections with speakers, learners, and Elders. Although outside the scope of this current plan, if funding were secured this activity could provide a means to address this priority area.

¹⁵ Although K-12 education is also an important domain to ensure the continuity of formal Michif learning opportunities, it is outside the scope of this current plan. See Appendix E for further details.

Table 8. Key priorities identified through focus groups

Priority	Themes	Strategies & Activities
Supporting the development of language leaders	<p>Financial support to regenerate populations of high proficiency speakers who can transmit Michif to future generations</p> <p>Training in language revitalization and language teaching</p> <p>Culturally-relevant strategies developed by language leaders</p>	Strategy 1.1 (also 1.3.2)
Capacity growth within MNBC (staff and leadership) ¹⁶	<p>Leading by example</p> <p>Language learning for MNBC staff and leaders</p> <p>Program development and evaluation carried out by experts in Michif language revitalization</p>	Strategy 2.1 (also 4.1.1 and 4.2)
Creation of tools and resources that are rich sources of Métis languages based in Métis culture.	<p>Everyday conversations</p> <p>Authentic language use, rich contexts</p> <p>Urgency of language documentation</p>	Strategy 1.4 (also 2.2.3)
Valuing all three Michif languages equally	Diasporic, diverse community of Métis citizens in B.C.	Strategy 3.1
Building relationships and learning from other communities, including other Métis nations and groups and B.C. First Nations	<p>No need to “reinvent the wheel”</p> <p>Learn from established best practices</p> <p>Recognize and learn from achievements of other groups</p> <p>Collaborate to share Michif resources</p>	Strategy 4.2

¹⁶ Participants in both the focus groups and engagement sessions spoke to the need of having language leaders on staff at MNBC. Although this may be an effective way to drive Michif language revitalization forward, it is outside the scope of this current plan. See Appendix E for details.

APPENDIX D. MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

As described in Section 5 above, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework is organized into three sections, each with their own evaluation tools and metrics. An outline of the tools and metrics for each section is provided in Tables 9-11 below, followed by detailed descriptions of each of the evaluation tools. A timeline for M&E activities is also provided in Table 13.¹⁷

Table 9. Research and Needs Assessment

Evaluation Tool	Timeline	Metrics
Métis Languages in B.C. Vitality Survey	Every 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MNBC citizens value and support Michif language revitalization Increase in Métis Languages in B.C. Vitality Survey responses Increase in number of MNBC citizens interested in learning a Michif language Increase in youth actively learning a Michif language Increase in MNBC citizens' time dedicated to Michif language learning MNBC citizens report feeling increasingly connected to other Michif learners MNBC citizens report using a Michif language in more domains of their lives MNBC citizens are able to identify which Michif language(s) they would like to learn MNBC citizens feel there are enough learning resources for all three languages
Michif Learner Self-Assessment Tool	Every 3 years (end of each MAP cycle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and proficiency levels of adult Michif language learners Number of MNBC citizens who can use simple phrases and introduce themselves in Michif Number of MNBC citizens who feel they are receiving adequate instruction to reach their Michif language learning goals Number of MNBC citizens increasing their language proficiencies
Wellness Study	Every 4 years (Years 1, 5, 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of the link between knowledge of a Michif language and wellness (physical, mental, cultural, spiritual health) Increased overall well-being of participants Development of resources demonstrating the value of Michif language learning in relation to overall personal wellness

¹⁷ Should additional funding become available, a Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator may be hired to oversee the implementation of the various evaluation tools and analyses of the resulting data.

Table 10. Community Feedback

Evaluation Tool	Timeline	Metrics
Exit interviews and reports (Grants and scholarships)	Annual (Grants) Every 4 years (Scholarships)	Intended program goals achieved during the fundings periods Recipients demonstrate progress made during the funding period
Exit interviews (Mentor-apprentice & other Michif language learning programs)	Every 3 years	Number of language leaders with high proficiency Michif learners have positive experiences in MAP and other learning programs Increase in number of MAP participants MAP participants feel supported in all levels of language learning MAP participants are ready to progress to the next level of proficiency MAP participants feel motivated to continue on their language learning journeys
Informal community feedback	Ongoing	MNBC citizens feel satisfied with the availability of Michif language learning opportunities and programming MNBC citizens feel there are adequate resources for three Michif languages MNBC citizens feel they have opportunities to use their preferred Michif language

Table 11. Internal Tracking

Evaluation Tool	Timeline	Metrics
Organizational report (Staff and leadership)	Every 5 years	<p>Number of MNBC leaders and staff with at least beginner proficiency in Michif language(s)</p> <p>Increase in staff satisfaction, support, and overall wellness</p> <p>Increase in the use of Michif language(s) by staff (within the workplace and at community/public events)</p>
Organizational report (Programs and resources)	Every 5 years	<p>Number of trusted Michif language learning resources available on the virtual learning library in all three Michif languages</p> <p>Number of MNBC citizens connected via the Online Michif Network</p> <p>Number of in-person learning opportunities</p> <p>Number of website visits and app and resource downloads</p> <p>Number of participants enrolled in Michif programs</p> <p>Increase in resources that are available in the three Michif languages</p> <p>Number of Michif immersion programs</p> <p>Number of Michif language learning opportunities available in all regions in B.C.</p> <p>Establishment of a Michif Youth Language Learning program</p> <p>Establishment of Michif in the Home Program</p> <p>Number of families participating in a Michif in the home program</p> <p>Establishment of mentor-apprentice program</p> <p>Development of resources promoting the value of learning Michif languages</p>
Organizational report (Relationship building and collaborations)	Every 5 years	<p>Number of opportunities for MNBC staff to learn best practices and strategies in Indigenous language revitalization</p> <p>Number of collaboration and learning opportunities for MNBC staff with other Indigenous organizations</p>

Evaluation Tools

Métis Languages in B.C. Vitality Survey

The Métis Languages in B.C. Vitality Survey will monitor and evaluate the state of Michif languages in B.C. Originally administered by MNBC in 2021 (see MNBC 2022), the first iteration of the survey gathered information on various aspects of Michif languages in B.C., including the number of Michif speakers, interest in learning Michif, capacity, preferred learning styles, barriers to learning, and helpful resources for learning Michif. Future iterations of the survey will occur every 4 years (in alignment with the FPCC survey of B.C. First Nations languages, see Gessner et al. 2022) and include the same metrics in order to accurately gauge the changing state of Michif languages in B.C. Additionally, the survey will include questions to gauge respondents' confidence in assessing appropriate Michif language learning resources and participants' comfort in identifying the Michif language that they would prefer to learn.

Michif Learner Self-Assessment Tool

The Michif Learner Self-Assessment Tool provides Michif learners with their own means of assessing their individual proficiency development over time. Learners can share the outcomes of their assessments with MNBC, who can collate the results. The self-assessment tool will be available to learners using various language learning strategies and programs, including the mentor-apprentice program (activity 1.1.1). Additionally, this self-assessment tool can be made available to Métis citizens who are accessing other forms of Michif language learning programs, as well as self-directed language learners. A Michif-specific tool will be developed, using a model similar to the [NETOLNEW Assessment Tool](#) (McIvor & Jacobs 2016) to measure participants' progress, successes, and abilities in their language learning journeys. Learners are assessed through ranking a series of "can do" statements in various domains of language learning. This assessment tool also provides space to customize the assessment questions as needed, in order to reflect meaningful cultural components of learning Michif languages (see Leonard 2011).

Wellness Study

The engagement sessions and focus groups revealed a priority need to clearly understand how Michif languages affect our overall health as Métis peoples. Participants identified aspects of physical, mental, and cultural health that they felt were impacted through their access to Michif languages and culture, and they also expressed an interest in learning about this connection within communities. In response, the M&E framework includes a longitudinal wellness study, in which Michif language learners' wellness can be monitored and evaluated at different stages of the language plan. (See also McKenzie 2022; Taff et al. 2018; Twitchell 2018 on the importance of evaluating connections between language and wellness.) The study will engage a group of MNBC citizens from various key demographics including emergent language leaders, new learners, silent speakers, youth, and family/caregivers. Initial data collection will take place in Year 1 of the plan in order to establish a baseline of the group's wellness in relation to their Michif language learning. Following this, wellness check-ins with the same groups in Years 5 and 9, in order to identify changes associated with increased language learning and wellness. The study's findings will be communicated to MNBC citizens, as well as to other stakeholders and interest groups.¹⁸

Exit Interviews and Reports (Grant and Scholarships)¹⁹

The outcomes of scholarships and grants will be evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively via exit interviews and reports. With support from adjudication panelists as needed, the MNBC language team will conduct interviews with funding recipients at the end of each program. The objective of the interview process is to evaluate program outcomes and results; offering participants the opportunity to participate in an interview can allow them to provide nuanced responses that may not be accessible via a written exit survey. Interview responses will be collated into reports for analysis purposes.

Ongoing and Informal Community Feedback

Ongoing community feedback can come from various sources (including verbal or written), such as participant comments on programming, impact stories, social media, and various other methods of engagement.

18 Focus group members noted cross-Ministry collaborations would be an effective strategy towards the development and implementation of this study. The Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language will engage other MNBC Ministries, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health & Harm Reduction, to solicit input and share findings at key junctures in the design and implementation stages of the study.

19 If funding becomes available, an exit interview process for the mentor-apprentice program (1.1.1) will also be considered.

Organizational Report

An organizational report produced every five years that documents MNBC's internal capacity to support Michif language revitalization in B.C. will include metrics related to the following areas: staffing, programs and resources, funding, relationship-building and collaboration, and public awareness.

Table 12. M&E Framework Timeline

Year	Tool/Activity
1 (2024/25)	Design and launch Michif learner assessment tool Design and launch wellness study
2	Exit interviews Community feedback
3	Exit interviews Community feedback Vitality survey
4	Exit interviews Community feedback
5	Wellness study Organizational report Exit interviews Community feedback
6	Exit interviews Community feedback
7	Vitality survey Exit interviews Community feedback
8	Exit interviews Community feedback
9	Wellness study Exit interviews Community feedback
10	Organizational report Exit interviews Community feedback

APPENDIX E. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE PLAN

This section outlines a number of additional activities that, if additional funding were available, would enrich this plan and provide better long-term and holistic support for Michif language survival in British Columbia. These activities align with the interests expressed by MNBC citizens during the focus groups and engagement sessions, and they are consistent with best practices in Indigenous language revitalization. Should additional funding become available, the activities below may be integrated into the current plan.

Additional Activities for Language Learning (Goal 1)

Create language leader staff positions within the MNBC Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language.

Focus group members identified a strong need for trained language revitalization experts with strong knowledge of Michif languages to be on staff in MNBC's Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language. These language leaders on staff would support the development, adjudication, and evaluation of grant programs, and provide expertise on other language initiatives.

Establish a team of regional language coaches who will provide workshops and consultations to Michif learners to support their learning journeys.

The regional coaching model is inspired by a similar [strategy](#) used by the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) to support diverse learners across the province. In addition to their salaries and training budgets (to support ongoing language learning), coaches could also be given an outreach budget to support the inclusion of Elders and Knowledge Carriers in their work.

Create a Michif silent speaker program that provides culturally-relevant mental wellness supports to help those who know but do not speak their Michif language(s) to overcome the language block.

Silent speakers are a key demographic that can be empowered to support language revitalization (e.g., Fjellgren & Huss 2019; Elijah 2020). In many communities, there are great numbers of silent speakers, although these numbers are often unreported or under-reported for various reasons (e.g., McKenzie 2022). Our engagement sessions and other related work have given us reason to believe that silent speakerhood is an important phenomenon to address in Métis communities as well (although there is no current data that we know of estimating the number of silent Michif speakers in B.C.).

Silent speaker programs need to be customized to the community so that healing practices and other therapeutic interventions are culturally relevant. As such, the development of a silent speaker program by MNBC would require collaboration across ministries including the Ministry of Mental Health & Harm Reduction and the Ministry of Elders, Veterans Wellness and Abilities, as well as consultation with Indigenous mental health experts and Elders. The Ministry of Culture, Heritage & Language needs to build its own capacity as well to support these collaborations. Program development would first require consultations with key interest groups, as well as research on best practices.

Partner with B.C. School Districts to develop and implement K-12 Michif language curricula.

This activity was identified as a priority during our engagement sessions, by educators as well as parents and caregivers who want their children to have opportunities to learn Michif languages in school settings. Moreover, research shows that it is important that school-aged children have access to their languages for reasons of continuity (i.e., to bridge the gap between early childhood and adulthood, see e.g., McCarty & Nicholas 2014). Many Indigenous communities strive for K-12 immersion programs as a way to bridge this gap, but that is not a reasonable goal in the foreseeable future, given the need for capacity development and the diasporic nature of Métis communities in B.C. However, what might be more reasonable should funding become available is for the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language and the Ministry of Education to work in partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Education to develop approved Michif language curricula that could be implemented in a select number of schools throughout the province.

Develop self-paced Michif language lessons that can be accessed online or via mail-out packages.

Successful language revitalization plans recognize that a diverse range of language learning pathways are needed to support a diversity of learners. In addition to the mentor-apprentice program (1.1.1), language courses (1.2.1), and postsecondary programs (1.3.2), participants in the engagement sessions expressed a need for other types of language learning resources. Moreover, while certain individuals learn well using online platforms, there are others who want tangible resources like booklets and flashcards that they can use regardless of where they are or how reliable their internet access might be. This activity could respond to that need. Partnering with an organization such as [7000 Languages](#) would be cost-effective and ethical, as they manage the technological development of online courses while allowing community members to retain intellectual property rights to all language data.²⁰

Create a Michif language resource grant program to fund the development, digitization, and/or archiving of print, multimedia, and virtual learning resources.

The purpose of this grant program would be to support citizens' capacity for innovation in creating their own resources tailored to their own needs and interests. While this activity was identified as a need during the community engagement sessions, we also heard from the focus group participants that caution is warranted to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to ensure that resources being created will be reliable and useful, grounded in Michif knowledge and best practices in language revitalization.

²⁰ See <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/research-development/research-collaboration/programs/project-create-online-indigenous-language-courses> for successful examples.

Additional Activities for Language Use (Goal 2)

Create a Michif in the workplace program that provides grant funding and resources to encourage Métis-owned/operated organizations and businesses to develop Michif language strategies.

Successful large-scale language revitalization plans developed in countries such as New Zealand, Scotland, and Wales include strategies and activities to bring their languages into workplaces (see Bliss et al. 2020). This is important not only because citizens need opportunities to use their languages across societal domains, but also because workplaces that are public facing can promote and celebrate their languages as a way to raise awareness about their importance in society. However, given the small number of Michif speakers in B.C. (see MNBC 2022), and the time needed for Michif language learners to develop proficiency, it is unlikely that workplaces will be developing Michif language strategies in the near future. Nevertheless, there may be opportunity for Métis workplaces to be mindful in how they increasingly integrate Michif languages into their operations, particularly those that are in sectors such as arts and culture, education, or youth services. Funding permitted, we will develop a resource for Métis-owned/operated organizations and businesses with concrete suggestions as to how Michif languages can be incorporated into their workplaces. Following the distribution of the resource, grant funding could be provided to organizations that apply to develop or implement Michif language in the workplace strategies.

Create a Michif in the media grant program that provides funding to develop media content such as podcasts, radio and television programs, magazines, etc., that incorporates one or more Michif language.

Media including television, film, radio, video games, and other digital content has been identified as a powerful tool for language revitalization. Media produced with Indigenous language content can raise the prestige of minority languages and create new spaces for language learners and users to engage with their languages (see, e.g., Danos & Turin 2021; Ennis 2021). Moreover, centering Indigenous languages and cultures in media is an act of decolonization (Meighan 2021).

However, media production is costly. In Bliss & Creed's (2018) costing model for community-based language revitalization, media and arts production comprises approximately 10% of the total budget - which is a high price when there are urgent needs to support learning initiatives and language documentation projects. Moreover, integrating language content into media productions must be done thoughtfully and respectfully. This was a point that was particularly emphasized by the focus group participants; they don't want media producers to make uneducated guesses about Michif language content or fail to engage with Elders and speakers in the right way. As such, a slow and measured approach is needed. A grant program with small and large grants may provide a path forward. The small grants would be intended to support Métis media producers with already-funded projects who want to incorporate Michif language content into their productions. The large grants could fund media initiatives that center Michif language(s).

Create a Michif in the arts grant program that provides funding to develop creative works such as music, literature, visual art, etc. that incorporates one or more Michif language.

Performance, visual arts, literature and poetry - these and other arts forms are all important parts of language revitalization. Like media, arts raises the visibility and prestige of a minority language, and provides tangible connections between language, identity, and culture (see, e.g., Crazy Bull et al. 2019; Kaliko Baker 2018). And like media, the integration of Michif languages into arts production requires a responsible and respectful approach that engages Elders and Knowledge Carriers in the right way. An arts grant program paralleling that of the media grant program (described above) with both small and large grants can support this important domain for language revitalization.

Additional Activities for Language Value (Goal 3)

Host a Michif language festival.

The rationale for this activity is to bring MNBC citizens together for the express purpose of celebrating and sharing their Michif languages. These types of celebrations should not take priority over or funding from the ongoing hard work of learning language - but at the same time, celebration events can have impacts on the regeneration of the language community, as they can provide opportunities to engage and recruit language learners and leaders of all ages.

Develop and implement a Michif public awareness campaign that educates British Columbians about Michif languages, their value, and the urgent need for their revitalization.

Participants in the engagement sessions noted that many MNBC citizens would like to see Michif languages in public spaces and essential services, and they are hopeful that Michif languages will be increasingly recognized and valued amongst the general population in B.C. Linn (2018) makes a compelling case for the need for public awareness campaigns in language revitalization:

The general public creates donors, and we do need money to implement language revitalization. The general public creates local, national, and international politicians who create policy, and we need supporting policy to affect language reclamation. The general public, most importantly, can create a climate for language revitalization and diversity to flourish. If we are successful in creating new generations of speakers and renewing healthy language communities but the speakers of majority languages are not accepting of language diversity, then small languages will always struggle to maintain a foothold. Without a wider climate of support, we are at best creating at-risk enclaves, and at worst creating margins of future conflict.

Part of the work of raising public awareness comes through increasing the visibility and prestige of Michif languages in workplaces, media, and the arts (see above), and through collaborations with other Indigenous groups and allies engaged in language revitalization locally and globally (see Activity 4.2.2). However, if funding were available, we may consider a small-scale social media campaign dedicated to raising public awareness in B.C. about Michif languages and their revitalization. Given the connections between social media and youth (see Shilling 2020; Bliss & Thoma 2022), this may also be a good opportunity to invite youth ambassadors to help shape the future of how Michif languages are perceived and valued by the B.C. public.

Cultivate strategic partnerships to advocate for the inclusion of Michif languages in public spaces and essential service domains such as healthcare, justice, education, and government.

Many participants at the engagement sessions expressed an interest in seeing and hearing Michif languages in public spaces and essential service domains. Given that the number of Michif language speakers in British Columbia is low (MNBC 2022) and that it will take substantial time to grow the speaker population, this may seem like a low priority. However, we can draw a distinction between a needs-based approach to the translation and interpretation of public service texts versus a rights-based approach (see Bliss & Thoma 2022 for discussion and references). A needs-based approach is exemplified in places like Nunavut where there is a substantial population of first language speakers of Inuit languages who require translation and interpretation in arenas such as healthcare and justice services in order to access these services equitably. A rights-based approach, on the other hand, is exemplified in communities in which most of the population is bilingual, or more highly proficient in a dominant language like English or French. Under the rights-based approach, there is still a need for translation and interpretation, and in this case, it is about Indigenous peoples' rights to see and hear their languages in everyday settings. The priority is high-visibility and emblematic texts (written and oral). For the participants in the engagement sessions, seeing and hearing some Michif in healthcare and government services was deemed an important longer-term objective.²¹

²¹ See activity 2.1.2 for discussion about effective “sprinkling” or code-mixing of Michif languages with English.

APPENDIX F. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

With great appreciation and gratitude, we acknowledge the generous offerings of experiences, guidance, and time from many towards this Michif languages planning project. We thank the following members of the virtual focus groups held June 19th, July 4th, and October 19th, 2023:

Alex Vance	Carmen Leeming	Marlee Paterson	Katy Carson
Barbara Rhoades	Jo-Ina Young	Becca Britton	Marina Best

We also thank the following enthusiastic and thoughtful participants in the four engagement sessions held between May 6th and June 1st, 2023:

Steve	Patrick	Carole	Finally, we thank Elders Jo-Ina, Sylvia, Arlene, and Marie for starting the engagement sessions off in a good way with their prayers and wisdom. Maarsii! Marris! marsii! Thank you!
Nikki	Arlene	Shawna	
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Emily T.	Aimee	Kyla	
Marlee	Barbara	Monique	
Alex V.	Darrin	Tania	
Marc	Rebecca J.	Sabra	
Carmen	Jess	Emily	
Jo-Ina	Shirley	Simone	
Tyler	Michelle	Nova	
Katy	Lisa	Megan	
Alex W.	Terry	Yvonne	
Amy	Tammy	Jamie-Lee	
David	Sylvia		
Marina	Marie		

APPENDIX G. CONSULTANTS' SELF-LOCATION STATEMENTS

Heather Bliss, Project Lead

I am a non-Indigenous linguist living and working in the traditional and unceded territories of the hənq̓əminə́m-speaking peoples. I was born and raised in Mohkínstsis (Calgary, Alberta). I am an alumnus of the University of Calgary (B.A. Honours, 2003; MA 2005) and the University of British Columbia (PhD, 2013), and a former postdoctoral fellow at the University of Victoria (SSHRC 2014-16; Banting 2016-18). My interest in Indigenous language revitalization stems from long-standing collaborative relationships with members of the Blackfoot-speaking Siksika and Kainai Nations in Southern Alberta. I am honoured to support Indigenous people, communities, and organizations through research, writing, planning, professional development, and facilitation. I am a part-time Lecturer at Simon Fraser University, an Adjunct Professor at the University of Calgary, and an Affiliate Faculty Member at the University of Victoria.

Merion Hodgson, Researcher and Engagement Facilitator

I am a Métis and Icelandic/settler originally from the interlakes of Manitoba, who grew up in Grande Prairie, AB. I am a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta, living and working on traditional Blackfoot territory in the Treaty 7 region. I hold a BFA (Alberta University of the Arts), a BA in linguistics (honours with distinction) and an MA in linguistics (University of Calgary) with a thesis focusing on Plains Cree stop consonants. I have been honored to support Indigenous language celebrations and language revitalization projects, including the development of the two Métis language planning projects led by Heather Bliss, as a facilitator and researcher. My hope is to continue learning more about how to apply my training in linguistics to support Métis language revitalization, building on my background in working and collaborating with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Carriers.

Rebekah Stevens, Researcher and Engagement Facilitator

Taanishi. I was raised on Saik'uz traditional territories in Northern B.C. (Vanderhoof), and I currently reside on the traditional territories of the hən̓q̓əmiñəm-speaking peoples. I am a member of MNBC, and my Métis family names are Adams, Dumont, and LaFramboise. I am an alumnus of Simon Fraser University (B.A., 2023). I will be starting my Master's of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) at the University of British Columbia in the Fall of 2023. Throughout my undergraduate degree, I have worked on different language revitalization projects, as well as in the field of SLP, and it has become clear to me how inherently connected having access to our Indigenous languages are to all aspects of our health. I hope to be able to integrate the two fields in my future work as an SLP. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work on this 10-year language plan for my community and I hope to be able to be involved in future Michif language planning work. Maarsii!





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