



2018-2021 Strategic Plan

Background



Gratitude and respect goes out to present and past leadership, elders, fluent speakers, language staff and teachers that dedicated many years of their lives to Yukon First Nation (YFN) languages.

In the late 70s and early 80s, YFN languages had numerous fluent speakers and much advancement was made, however the landscape for YFN languages is very different today than it was back then. Forty years ago, the Yukon Native Language Centre (YNLC) was established as a project in 1977 under the Yukon Native Brotherhood and in 1985 it became a centre under the Council of Yukon Indians.

YNLC's initial mandate was to be a training and research centre and over the years it has provided research, linguistic services, translations, public information, literacy sessions, language resources, teacher training, a curriculum binder, audio storybooks and beginner language lessons for all eight YFN languages.



Over the past four decades, the mandate for the centre did not evolve to address the decline of YFN language native-born speakers and the shift to using English as the main language. As well, over the years, YFNs have built their own internal capacity, with 11 Self-Government agreements in place.

Today, all YFN languages are now in critical condition with a number of dialects down to a handful of speakers that were born into the language and that continue to have their traditional language as their first and main language of use. Thus, the mandate that guides the operations of YNLC must change to support strong and vibrant YFN Languages for future generations.

In April of 2017, the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) initiated a process for YNLC to seek advice, feedback, input and direction from YFNs for a new mandate. YNLC met with a cross-section of leadership, Elders, fluent speakers, language staff, teachers and trainees with representation from eight language groups and 14 YFNs. In addition, meetings with partners and recommendations from past language reports and research on evidence based best practices also informed the development of the new strategic plan for YNLC. The input from YFNs, partner meetings, research, reports and reviews shaped the development of the following renewed mandate and strategic objectives which will guide the future operations of YNLC.

It is paramount to immediately support and create a new generation of fluent speakers with the higher levels of language proficiency needed to pass on the language to future generations. Essentially, to create the speakers needed to teach babies in the home their First Nation language as their first language once again, and to create speakers to work in future immersion programs such as nests, camps, and schools and in community programs.

**With the guidance of Leadership and Yukon First Nations,
YNLC will strive to adhere to and achieve the following strategic plan.**



Acknowledgements

YNLC respectfully acknowledges the advice, feedback and direction received from Yukon First Nation elders, speakers, leaders, learners and citizens that participated in the following meetings and language sessions.

Your contribution has greatly influenced this plan!

CTFN Chief and Council Meeting (May 31, 2017)

CAFN Language Sessions (October 24, 2017)

CYFN Leadership Presentations (September 26, 2017, March 13, 2018)

FNEC Presentations (November 2, 2017, January 18, 2018)

KFN Language Meeting (August 24, 2017)

KDFN Language Session (October 28, 2017)

Kaska Language Session (May 23-25, 2017)

LFN Chief and Council Meeting (December 13, 2017)

LSCFN Language Session (September 18, 2017)

NNDFN Language Meeting (October 30, 2017)

SFN Chief and Council Meeting (November 22, 2017)

TKC Language Sessions (October 23, 2017, February 15, 2018)

Ta'an Kwach'an Council (February 15, 2018)

TTC Executive Council Meeting (October 24, 2017)

THFN Language Session (June 5-9, 2017)

VGFN Language Meeting (August 17-18, 2017)

WRFN Chief and Council Meeting (October 31, 2017)

YFN Language Teachers and Trainees Presentation (January 17-19, 2018)

YFN Language Technician Group Presentation (August 22, 2017)

YNLC Language Teacher and Trainees - Course Survey (October 2017)

Yukon Education Language Teachers Inservice Presentation (February 27, 2018)



Vision

Babies are learning their traditional language as their first language in the home and intergenerational transmission is restored.

Mandate

YNLC supports YFNs with language revitalization by providing training, capacity building, technical expertise, advocacy and being a central repository for all to access and use.

Principles

- YNLC will respect the self-governing rights and respective language initiatives of YFNs
- YNLC programs and services will be based on YFN priorities for language revitalization
- YNLC will be community driven and YFN controlled
- YNLC will advocate for YFN languages

Values

- Language must live in the home, with families and throughout the community
- Language is connected to cultural vitality, land, identity, health and success in life
- Language learning is lifelong, holistic and across all sectors of society



Strategic Objectives

1. Reclaim

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the number of YNLC supported, community based and First Nation controlled language programs and services

2. Restore

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the number of fluent speakers

3. Preserve

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the number of resources that are safely archived, digitized and accessible to YFNs

4. Capacity Building

YNLC will work with YFNs to provide technical expertise and training opportunities

5. Language Resources

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase language resources available for localization and application

6. Protect

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the level of protection for YFN languages



Strategic Actions



Reclaim

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the number of YNLC supported, community based and First Nation controlled language programs and services.

Actions:

1. Establish YNLC Advisory Committee representative of YFNs
2. Support YFNs with regional and local language initiatives
3. Support YFNs with advancement of equity for language in general
4. Support the promotion and visibility of YFN languages

Lead: YNLC, Executive, Leadership, YFNs, legal technicians, partners



Restore

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the number of fluent speakers.

Actions:

1. Work with YFNs to develop language proficiency (LP) programs
2. Connect language proficiency program to post-secondary partners in education, linguistics and language revitalization

Lead: YNLC, partners, YFNs





Preserve

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the number of resources that are safely archived, digitized and accessible to YFNs.

Actions:

1. Complete needs assessment and archival quality digitization of existing collections
2. Work with YFNs and partners to record existing speakers
3. Create database and ensure YFN access to language collection

Lead: YNLC, archivists, technology, linguists, speakers, recorders, partners, YFNs



Capacity Building

YNLC will work with YFNs to provide technical expertise and training opportunities.

Actions:

1. Support YFNs with technical expertise such as linguistics, planning, technology, etc.
2. Design and deliver capacity development program to support language revitalization, i.e. train the trainer
3. Design and deliver intensive YFN language teacher certificate program focused on second language and immersion methods

Lead: YNLC, YFNs, partners



Strategic Actions



Language Resources

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase language resources available for localization and usage.

Actions:

1. Design templates and models for proficiency benchmarks, curriculum framework, assessment and teacher and learner resources for use in homes, schools and communities.
Lead: YNLC, YFN Language Technicians, YFNs
2. Utilize Language Database to repurpose data for language resources
 - a. Dictionaries, Phrase Books, Story Books, Grammar, Verbs, etc.
 - b. Language APPS, On-line lessons, etc.
 - c. Signage, labels, place names, etc.Lead: YNLC, Linguists, Technology, YFNs
3. Establish YNLC as a central repository of YFN language technical expertise, materials and information, such as library and website.
Lead: YNLC, Librarian, Technology





Protect

YNLC will work with YFNs to increase the level of protection for YFN languages.

Actions:

1. Support YFN input into national indigenous language initiatives
2. Advocate for YFN languages official language recognition in YK
3. Review of legislation to advance and further protect YFN languages
4. Network with political advocacy technical supports (researchers, strategists, analysts, legal)

Lead: YNLC, CYFN Executive, Leadership, Technicians



