

Data-driven Storytelling Workshop Facilitator's Guide

Description

In this workshop, a suite of information is shared related to local and regional socioeconomic, health, and environmental indicators. These integrated “regional profiles” and “regional storytelling maps” are used to illustrate that there are many different regional narratives embedded in publicly available data sets, which may resonate more or less closely with attendees’ own lived experiences. Facilitators create space in which alternative or counter narratives can emerge, which help to illustrate the complexity of data and information, values, and lived experiences that exist in relation to the cumulative impacts of resource development.

Goals

- To provide a platform to build and strengthen existing relationships with communities throughout the workshop’s region.
- To share stories and lived experiences of various individuals living and working in the region in relation to community, health, and environmental values.
- To facilitate discussion around the kinds of information that are most useful in understanding environmental, community, and health values.

Intended Audience

Local and First Nations governments, local decision-makers and service providers, and concerned citizens. For groups of 8-24 participants.

Time Required

Approximately 90 minutes.

Equipment

- Flipchart paper and markers for each table of 4-8 people
- A copy of the Integrated Regional Profile for each participant (see <https://www.unbc.ca/cumulative-impacts/tools>)
 - If a profile for your region is unavailable, see the following process document on how to make your own (<https://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/cumulative-impacts/circintegratedregionalprofileguidefinal.pdf>)
- A poster-sized print-out of the Regional Storytelling Map for each table, if available for the region (see <https://www.unbc.ca/cumulative-impacts/tools>)
- A copy of this facilitation guide for each facilitator

Overview

Timeline

Minutes	Task
10	Welcome, introductions, orientation to cumulative impacts concept
5	Discussion Icebreaker
5	Orientation to the Integrated Regional Profiles and/or Regional Storytelling Maps
45	Data-driven storytelling
10	Report back
15	Final group discussion and debrief
90	Total

Orientation to cumulative impacts concept and activity

Cumulative impacts may occur when resource development activities (including forestry, agriculture, oil and gas, mining, etc.) take place on the land in ways that leave lasting consequences for people, their communities, and the broader environments in which those communities are located.

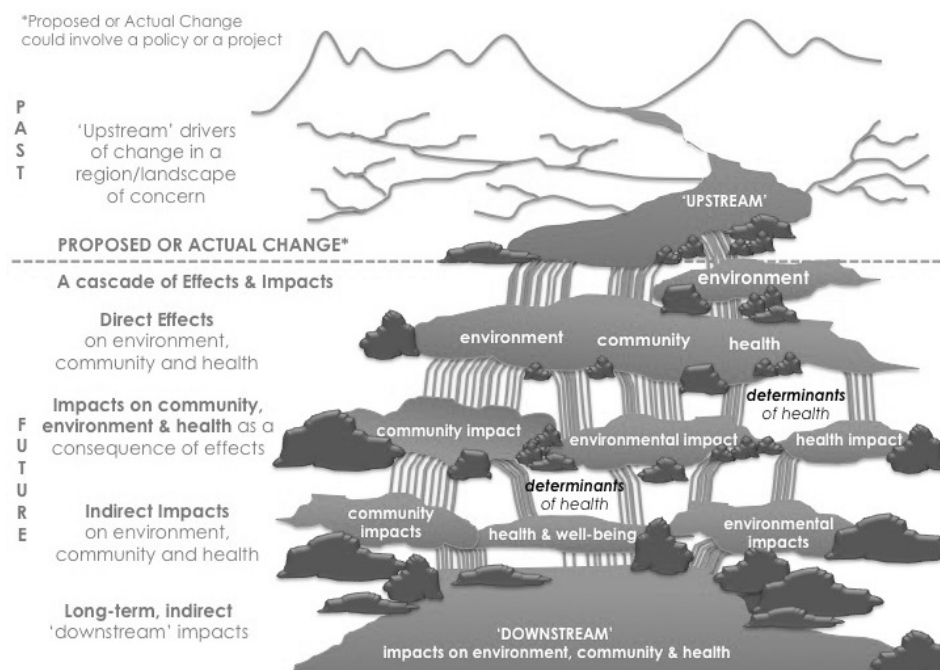
Resource development has both positive and negative impacts, and this region has a long history of [insert relevant resource-based industries here]. Impacts of these activities can combine with those from other projects and activities in the past, present and future. Over time, the effects of multiple projects and resource development activities in one area can **combine** and **interact** to produce long-term changes for people, wildlife and the land. In other words, the sum of these impacts is greater than that of any single project. This makes it important to find ways to harness the positive impacts of resource development to promote health and community wellness, while trying to reduce potential negative impacts.

Let's consider the example of a mine to illustrate some of the cumulative impacts to the environment, community, and human health.

- **Environment:** A new mine is developed outside of a small town in an area where forestry activities have taken place for years. There are a series of small creeks and water bodies in the region, as well as a major river that has been significantly changed by a hydroelectric dam. Together, mine construction and operation, past and ongoing forestry activities, and the dam will all interact and put pressure on stream and river function.

- Community:** When a new mine is developed outside of a small town, the town population increases as new people move to town to take jobs at the mine. This population has positive and negative impacts for the small community. There are additional high paying jobs for people that live there, and some young people no longer have to move to make a life. There are increased customers for local businesses, but the services offered in the town (e.g. doctors) may no longer be able to support a large and rapid increase in local population. Moreover, housing prices may increase producing fewer affordable options for local residents. Because of these impacts to housing availability, some people in the community may move elsewhere to look for other opportunities. This cascade of impacts will cumulatively affect life in the community.
- Health:** When a new mine is developed outside of a small town, the mining company sponsors a new indoor skating rink. This has positive health benefits for the town, as people have more options for fitness and recreation. At the same time, as workers make more trips to and from the mine, traffic increases resulting in poorer air quality and an increase in traffic accidents causing more challenges for local health care delivery. While opportunities for recreation may improve, the cumulative health impacts of the mine must also be considered.

The image below shows the interactions between the environment, community, and health. The various flows—between upstream and downstream communities, and between the past, present and future decisions—show how environmental impacts (such as impacts to local water sources) might also have health impacts (lack of clean drinking water) and community impacts (town needs to build a new water treatment facility to serve the local community).



Source: Margot Parkes (2016) Chapter 5, *The Integration Imperative*, p. 142.

Discussion Icebreaker

Group discussion with all participants oriented towards the following question:

- What brought you here today?

Orientation to the Integrated Regional Profiles and/or Regional Storytelling Maps

The aim of the Integrated Regional Profiles and the Regional Storytelling Maps is to find ways to understand regional cumulative impacts in an integrative way—combining environment, community, and health data in one place.

This is just **a** story, not **the** story of the region, based on most the best publicly available data. There are multiple ways to understand this region. These “boundaries” can be more or less relevant for specific purposes, including the availability of data/information, and the scale at which this information is available.

We want participants to reflect on the information displayed in the regional profile and storytelling map, but also to use these profiles as a starting point to drive their own stories, which may support or run counter to the information provided from Census sources, BC Health Data, and BC Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development data on regional change over the past 25 years.

There are some “known unknowns,” and the need to identify additional data gaps and data sources from people in the room. The most recent Census data is still in the process of being released publicly (some data is outdated). There is a lack of regional-level data on homelessness and the use of social services. There is also a lack of data on impacts to Indigenous cultural, spiritual, hunting, gathering practices.

The regional profiles and storytelling maps try to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data. We are also really interested in exploring ways for this kind of tool to incorporate lived experiences, individual and community perspectives. This is a really important kind of information that is not often given the weight it deserves in land use and resource management decision-making processes.

Data-driven Storytelling

This process is a chance to share perspectives on community, environmental, and health values, and to react/respond to the information presented in the regional profiles.

Arrange participants in either one large group, or two to three smaller groups, each with their own facilitator. Each participant is given the chance to share a story or perspective in response to Question 1 (see below). After an initial round of sharing, facilitators move through the remaining discussion questions.

Discussion questions:

1. Resource development has direct and indirect impacts on environment, community, and health values. Can you think of a time where those connections seemed most apparent to you?
2. What kinds of changes have you noticed in the community (e.g. changes in population, services, wildlife, etc.)?
3. In relation to some of the changes you've noticed in the community related to cumulative impacts, is anyone taking care of the whole? What else do we need to be taking notice of?

Report Back

Each discussion group is given some intentional time to identify main discussion themes to bring to the broader group (~5 minutes). Then all groups reconvene in plenary (10-15 minutes). Each table has 2-3 minutes to share and reflect on their discussion to the broader group, focusing on key themes shared from stories, but not attributing specific stories to any particular individual. Each facilitator should allow participants to share anything else that comes to mind or things they thought were important that were not captured in the report back.

Final Group Discussion and Debrief

The workshop concludes with an integrative discussion and debrief. This is an opportunity to share thoughts and reflections in response to information presented and shared in the regional profiles, and by workshop attendees.

Discussion questions:

1. How do we make better land-use decisions that account for long-term impacts to environmental, community, and health values?
2. Is there appetite for a more integrative, community-based land and resource management planning process? What kinds of information do we need to inform integrative planning processes?