Using Local and Traditional Knowledge to Define a Digital Library for the Inuvialuit Settlement Region
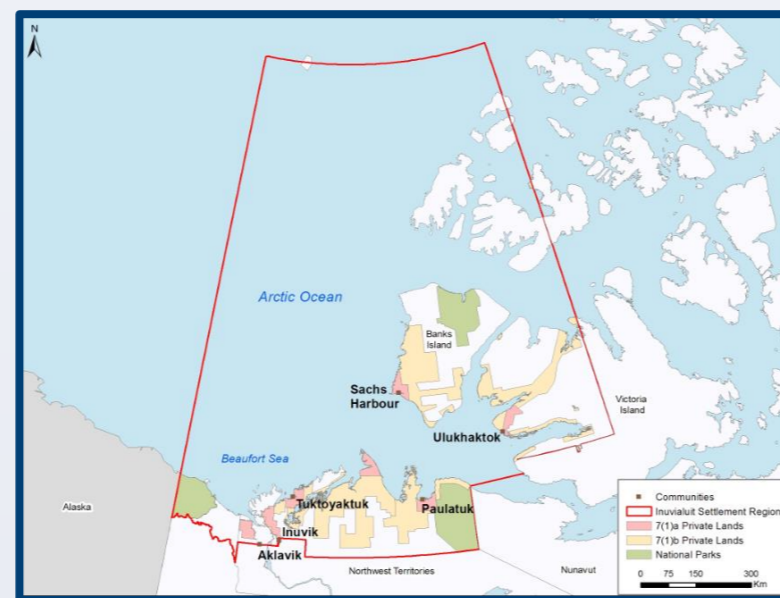
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Digital Library North Project

The Digital Library North (DLN) project is a research and development collaboration between the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC) located in Inuvik, in Canada's Northwest Territories and the University of Alberta School of Library and Information Studies in Edmonton, Alberta.

The population of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region is concentrated in six centres (Aklavik, Inuvik, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk, Ulukhaktok) several of which are remote from the ICRC in Inuvik. This project is designed to provide a digital library service that will be accessible to all of the communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.

Map of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Jenn Perrott 2016.

Core principles of the project include ensuring that .

- the project is defined by community needs and preferences,
- local community members are engaged in the development process,
- the project incorporates concepts of cultural appropriateness in all aspects, but particularly in metadata development,
- community members receive training through the project,
- the project is sustainable at the local level for the long-term.

Methods for Incorporating Local and Traditional Knowledge

1. Collaborative research partnership.
2. Spending time getting to know each other:
   - Meetings in Inuvik and Edmonton
   - Video-conference meetings.
3. Gathering community input in Inuvik and remotely from other communities.
4. Testing the prototype with the community.
5. Developing frameworks for culturally appropriate metadata.
6. Training local staff.
7. Hiring staff from the local community.
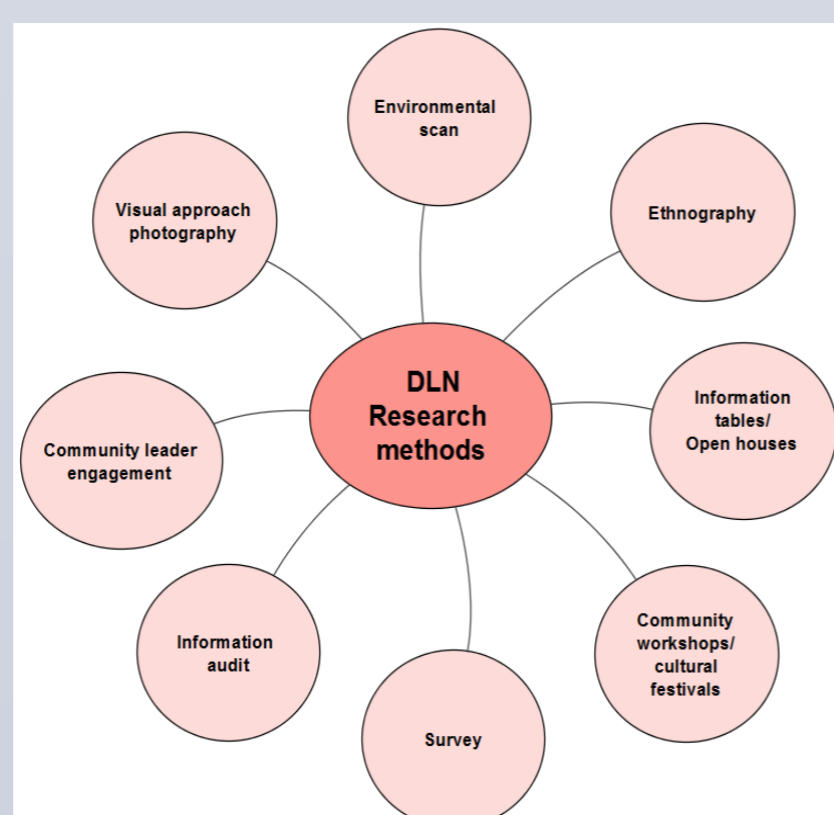8. Advertising and demonstrating the digital library throughout the ISR.

Researcher Dr. Ali Shiri gets to know the Inuvialuit Settlement Region

Researcher, Robyn, collects community input at an information table in Inuvik

Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks Incorporating Community Input

1. Business and management
2. Organizational information systems
3. Social sciences
4. Cultural anthropology
5. Community informatics

Examples of Local and Traditional Knowledge Incorporated

1. Identification of primary user groups.
2. Locally defined priorities for including materials in the digital library.
3. Administrative knowledge around integration into local IT structures.
4. Identification of people and places in photographs.
5. Explanations of activities depicted in photographs and their importance.
6. Defining levels of access to sensitive information for different user groups.

Uummarmiutun

Siglitun

Kangiryuarmiutun

Adding language learning materials in all three dialects is a locally established priority.

Culturally Appropriate Metadata

Culturally appropriate metadata to take into consideration the specific characteristics of the target community group.

Examples:
1. More appropriate
   Eg: "Place" rather than "spatial coverage" (Dublin core term)
2. More specific
   Eg: Inuvialuit rather than Inuit
3. Locally used terminology
   Eg: "parka" locally called "parky"

4. Terminology in all three dialects

   Eg: Weak (not strong) (English)
   Hakugiittuq
        (Kangiryuarmiutun)
   Hanngiitchuq
        (Uummarmkiutun)
   Sanngiituq
        (Siglitun)

Future Work

1. Demonstrating digital library in remote communities.
2. Developing metadata in all three dialects.
3. Developing the library interface in all three dialects.
4. Digitizing and incorporating more materials.
5. Incorporating the digital library into the ISR web environment
6. Training of ICRC staff on metadata creation, IT infrastructure to ensure sustainability.
7. Hiring more local staff and summer students.

Researchers Robyn and Anastasia work with local summer student, Kenneth, at the ICRC in Inuvik

Acknowledgements

Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre

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