

STRATEGIC REFLECTION
2024-2028



Ojitodan

Let's do and build
something together



Credits

The strategic reflection process was produced by:

- Richard Ejinagosi Kistabish
- Caroline Lemire
- Nancy Wiscutie-Crépeau
- Şükran Tipi
- Denise Lavoie, Organization Design Consultant and Facilitator
- Pierre-Olivier Therrien, Analyst
- Maxime Lalo, Analyst

Minwashin team:

- Richard Ejinagosi Kistabish
- Caroline Lemire
- Anna Mapachee
- Janis Rivard
- Justin Roy
- Şükran Tipi
- Nancy Wiscutie-Crépeau
- Roger Wylde

Working group, September 10-11, 2024:

- Adrienne Anichinapéo, Kitcisakik
- Bertha Chief, Timiskaming First Nation
- Jesse Chief, Long Point First Nation
- Carole Dumont, Lac Simon
- Alex Mapachee, Pikogan
- Frances Mowatt, Pikogan
- Julie Mowatt, Pikogan
- Suzanne Mowatt, Pikogan
- Akines Papatie, Kitcisakik
- Verna Polson, Kebaowek
- Victor Rodgers, Long Point First Nation

Translation/interpretation:

- Harry McDougall
- Wanda Crépeau-Etapp
- Menish Ruperthouse-Mapachee

Note-taking:

- Rosalie Roy-Boucher
- Daphnée Cardinal
- Justin Roy



Lac Duparquet - Akotekami [agoudégami]

Translation: "The shores are suspended." - this meaning refers to the view we have at times, at Lake Duparquet, where the shores seem suspended, like a mirage in the distance (Roger Wylde).

akote = suspended / gami = shore, riverside



Word from the president



“Access to all the knowledge that concerns us is essential if we are to create the space where language can evolve freely, from tree to tree, from portage to portage, from education to health, until the language ecosystem invades our entire territory. And that also means getting our linguistic rights recognized.”

(Ejinagosi Kistabish, 2021)

It was one step at a time, with the awareness that every little thing counts, that we came to reflect together on this project for the revitalization and protection of our language, a project we have named *Ojitodan*. The word *ojitodan* expresses an action, a process; it does not express a fact. Most of our words to describe something in the past, present and future are always words that define action. *Ojitodan* thus expresses the action of doing the thing together. If we do the action this way, together, we'll get there, and something will happen at the end of the process. This must be done in a way that respects the balance of our relations, in a human approach that leaves plenty of room for experimentation, mistakes and adjustments, and in a rhythm that respects people and makes room for empathy and healing. The job we have to do is to create protected spaces for the transmission of our language, taking the necessary time to do so. It's not always that we

have this space in time to do it, as we have with the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, which is under way until 2032. We need to reconcile the two, space and time, in the contemporary world, using our imagination rather than our understanding, in the way our ancestors did, in situations where they were deprived but managed to imagine, to set up something new to develop their understanding, their capacities and their intelligence. We're confronted with two concepts in which space and time are colliding, and we must reconcile them. That's the job we have to do, and we have the tools to do it, based on Anicinabe culture and Anicinabemowin concepts. It won't happen overnight, I can promise you. It took us 10,000 years to understand how the ecosystem works, so let's give ourselves the space and time to bring our language to life and pass it on in all spheres of life - family, community, education, health, economy and work, justice and territory.



Mission, vision and values of Minwashin¹

Mission

At the heart of Anicinabe Aki, Minwashin is a non-profit cultural organisation whose mission is to support, develop and celebrate our arts, language and culture.

Vision

Minwashin is a gathering space where Anicinabe language, arts and culture can be promoted and revitalized. Minwashin believes in cultural and linguistic creation and reappropriation...Nikani.

Values

MINOTEI

Generosity is about giving and sharing. Giving time, help and support.

Recognizing the needs of others and helping to meet them whenever possible.

Sharing resources and information, gathering and networking to seek the common good, collectiveness.

MANATCIC KIWITCI MATISINWIN

All words in the Anicinabe language are imbued with respect.

Respect is an essential value for creating healthy relationships and a harmonious environment.

It's up to each and every one of us to create such a climate.

Act with consideration, courtesy, attentiveness and discretion towards the people with whom we come into contact.

Be diligent and avoid all forms of discrimination.

All are entitled to respect and dignity... even the living beings who have fed us and cared for us... Mikwetc!

MINWASHIN / MININAKON

We're talking here about beauty as grandeur, will, history, creation, ideal. Minwashin is one of them. The quest for all that is beautiful in Anicinabe culture, in the quest for meaning in one's actions, in the desire to "do things together" and in the need to believe in human beings and nature.

INENIMO

We are proud of who we are. We have a strong bond and sense of belonging to our territory. We want other communities, other cultures, to take an interest in us for what we bring to society and cultural diversity. We proudly celebrate our arts, our language and our knowledge.

¹ Minwashin. 2020. *Planification stratégique 2020-2025*. Rouyn-Noranda : Minwashin.

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“My wish is that we work together to ensure the survival of our language. Join all the women and men who, in recent years, have reached out and listened. It’s with optimism that I observe the emergence of inspiring individuals. With them comes a great wind of hope. Our language is the blazing fire of our culture: alive, sacred and vulnerable. Let’s lend it our breath and it will light the way to its own resurgence, reinvesting our lives with its evocative words, its meaningful stories and its precious bits of wisdom.”

Richard Ejinagosi Kistabish,
President of Minwashin
President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO
North American representative of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages
Global Task Force



Richard Ejinagosi Kistabish

Ejinagosi, Anicinabe of the Abitibiwinni First Nation, has worked for many years in the health field at regional and provincial levels. He has served as Chief of the Abitibiwinni First Nation and Grand Chief of the Algonquin Council of Quebec. Ejinagosi has been a vocal critic of residential school abuse and social injustice. He continues his fight against the harmful effects of acculturation by supporting cultural and artistic projects on Anicinabe territory through the Minwashin organization, of which he is president and co-founder. He is also President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

1. Presentation of the Governing Committee members



Caroline Lemire

Caroline has been involved in cultural development for some twenty years, and is particularly renowned for her deep commitment to the revitalization and recognition of the Anicinabe culture and language. Her dynamism and ability to bring people together around common goals led to the creation of the Minwashin organization, where she has been holding the position of director since its foundation. She is also well versed in the realities of the arts, from creation to dissemination.



Şükran Tipi

Trained as a linguist, Şükran has acquired solid fieldwork experience over the past 15 years, particularly with the Ilnu people, with whom she has been involved in various initiatives to document and revitalize their language and related knowledge, particularly in relation to the use of ancestral territory. In parallel with her doctoral research on the connection between language and territory, co-constructed and conducted with the Pekuakamiulnuatsh First Nation, she subsequently assisted Indigenous students throughout their university studies. For the next four years, Şükran intends to put her life skills and expertise to work to revitalize the Anicinabe language, in a position of respect, humility and openness to being destabilized, by challenges as much as by beauty.



Nancy Wiscutie-Crépeau

Originally from Senneterre, born to an Anicinabe/Eeyou mother and a Québécois father, Nancy Wiscutie-Crépeau has been a member of the Minwashin Board of Directors since 2019. A trained teacher, she completed her doctoral studies at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Education in 2022. Since 2021, she has been devoting her energies to work in relation to the Anicinabe language. As part of the Ojitodan project, Nancy will act as Scientific Director, a role that includes developing and implementing a research governance structure consistent with Anicinabe values and principles. She is professor at the National Institute of Scientific Research (INRS), associated to the Joint Research Unit in Indigenous Studies (JRU).



Anna Mapachee

Anna is a woman of many talents. A graduate of Université de Montréal, she stands out for her exceptional communication skills and deep commitment to the Anicinabe culture. Raised in Pikogan, she grew up immersed in traditions, values and ancestral knowledge, having had the chance to experience life in the forest thanks to her parents. Driven by a fervent desire to pass on her knowledge, Anna multiplies her initiatives to share the Anicinabe language and knowledge. She gives lectures, teaches language and culture, and is actively involved in raising public awareness of First Nations issues. She acts as a consultant for the nine Anicinabe communities in Quebec and Minwashin. Her ability to rally people around her enables her to conduct ambitious projects and contribute significantly to the preservation of her culture.

2. Introduction

Minwashin wishes to pursue its actions by sharing a common vision of the future of Anicinabemowin. Working in the field of the transmission, creation and promotion of Anicinabe arts, culture and language, the organization aims to ensure the sustainable development of Anicinabemowin, in harmony with current and future values and realities.

To this end, Minwashin undertook a process of strategic reflection to define the project’s identity and to target stimulating challenges towards a concrete action plan. This exercise will foster a better understanding of what is really at stake in this major project called Ojitodan, which means **Let’s do and build something together**. It represents **the long path to reach Kackitodan**. Let us succeed together!².

The reflection process was conducted in four stages:

- 1. drawing up a portrait of the current situation;
- 2. refining the mission of the Ojitodan project and establishing a vision and specific values;
- 3. identifying and prioritizing major orientations;
- 4. drawing up a strategic action plan.

Portrait of the situation (May-June 2024)

This first stage involved gathering internal and external information. First, it took the form of a reflective analysis. What are our strengths and weaknesses in relation to the internal environment, and an analysis of macro-environmental factors that could have an impact on the project? To do this, we had to:

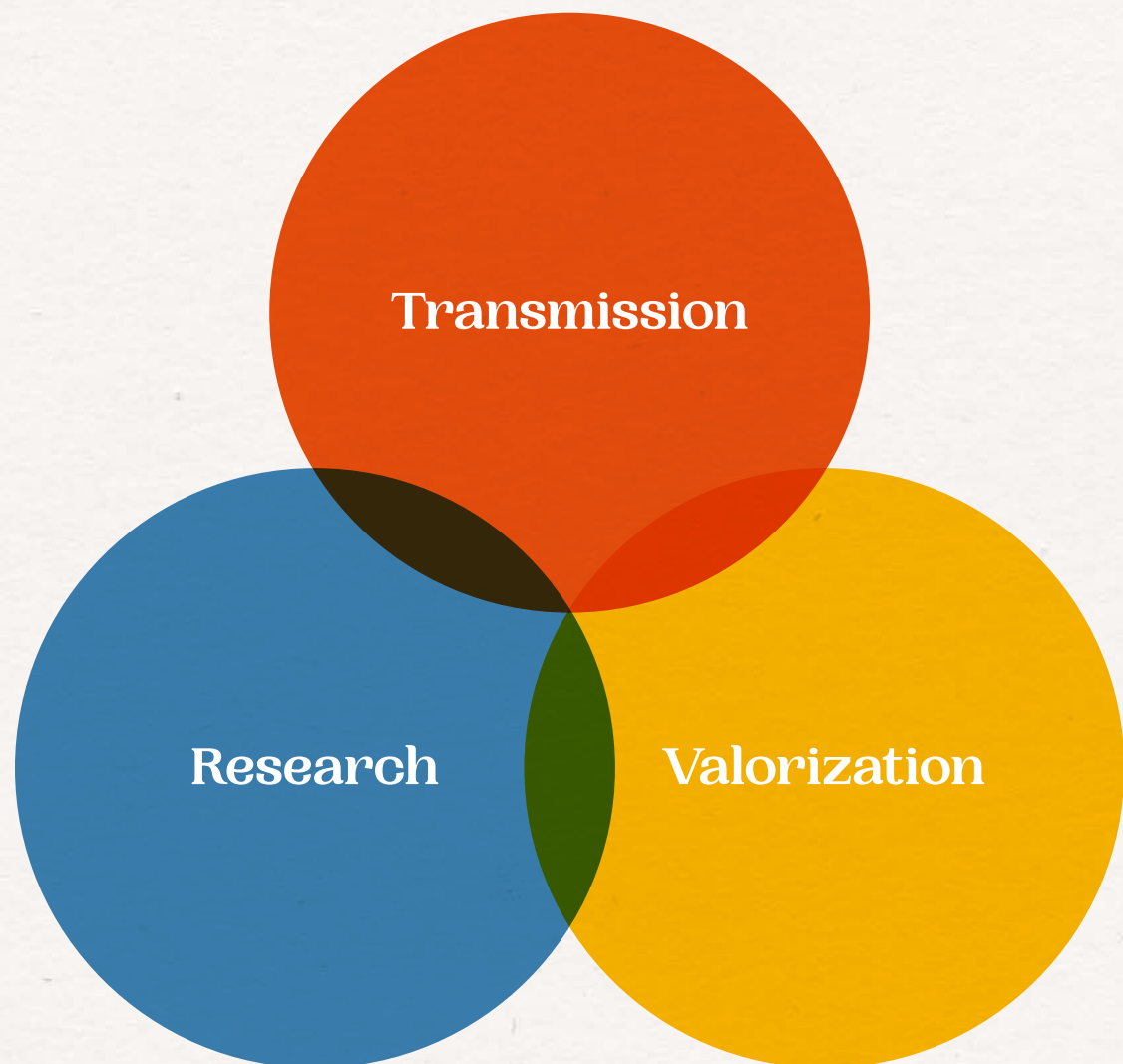
- gather, read and analyze the numerous contents/consultations required to produce a portrait of the situation;
- analyze the project’s strengths and challenges, and identify related issues, opportunities and obstacles (SWOT: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats);
- analyze the project’s macro-environment in terms of political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors (PESTEL).

Project identity (June-July 2024)

This second stage raised a series of questions about the project’s mission, vision and values, reflecting Minwashin’s mission, vision and values. The aim of this reflection was to develop a specific identity for the project that would encourage the greatest possible commitment from the community members to their language. As a result, we were able to:

- consolidate the common vision of the project and weave the links with Minwashin’s mission, vision and values;
- confirm the project’s specific purpose, vision and values;
- position the project in relation to the issues and challenges expressed during the community tours;
- define the project’s main orientations (axes) and strategic objectives.

² Note that a verb form ending in -dan indicates a mode that is close to the French imperative, but is more than that, as this particle insists on an action to be performed “together” (validation and explanation provided by Anna Mapachee).



Main orientations (June-September 2024)

What are the factual issues and challenges for the next four years?

This stage reveals the paths we need to take to reach our destination:

Kackitodan: let us succeed together

Thus, we have been able to confirm the three major work fields of Ojitodan:

Transmission, Research, Valorization.

Actions to be taken (September-October 2024)

This final stage, conducted over two days of collective reflection with the language working group in Duparquet on September 11 and 12, 2024, resulted in the development of a strategic action plan, structured around the three axes and in line with the challenges already identified.

More specifically, we were able to:

- all agree on the name, values and relevance of the project;
- name concrete actions for each major axis;
- consolidate all action statements;
- define priorities and identify realistic commitments based on available time and resources;
- confirm the interest of language speakers/experts in continuing the work and actively contributing to the project.

3. Context

Since its foundation in 2017, Minwashin has conducted numerous collective and innovative projects, bringing recognition and credibility among the various actors in Anicinabe arts, language and culture. The success of these concerted initiatives has opened up valuable opportunities to develop numerous partnerships, while strengthening outreach and visibility at regional, national and international levels.

In 2019, Minwashin deployed an action plan as part of the International Year of Indigenous Languages, proclaimed by the UNESCO. On this occasion, the Minwashin team seized the opportunity by conducting an extensive promotional and awareness campaign to contribute to the valorization of Anicinabemowin. To this end, the team developed a brand image and a number of strategies and resources, including a lexical resource, labels for naming various objects in Anicinabemowin and a series of videos that can be viewed on the Minwashin website.



Brand image developed by Minwashin for the International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019)



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
Indigenous Languages

Brand image developed by the UNESCO for the International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL)



Brand image developed by Minwashin for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032)

4. Milestone Events

This section presents a number of milestones since 2019 as founding events of the Ojitodan project.



Miaja

The major 2019 Miaja gathering dealt with language, bringing together nearly three hundred Anicinabemowin speakers and linguists. In 2023, the theme of Miaja was orality, another way of honoring the Anicinabemowin language. Since its very beginnings (2018), the Miaja event has remained a valuable opportunity to bring together artists, speakers and cultural and language carriers to collectively reflect on different issues, establish priorities and conduct actions in a concerted manner.



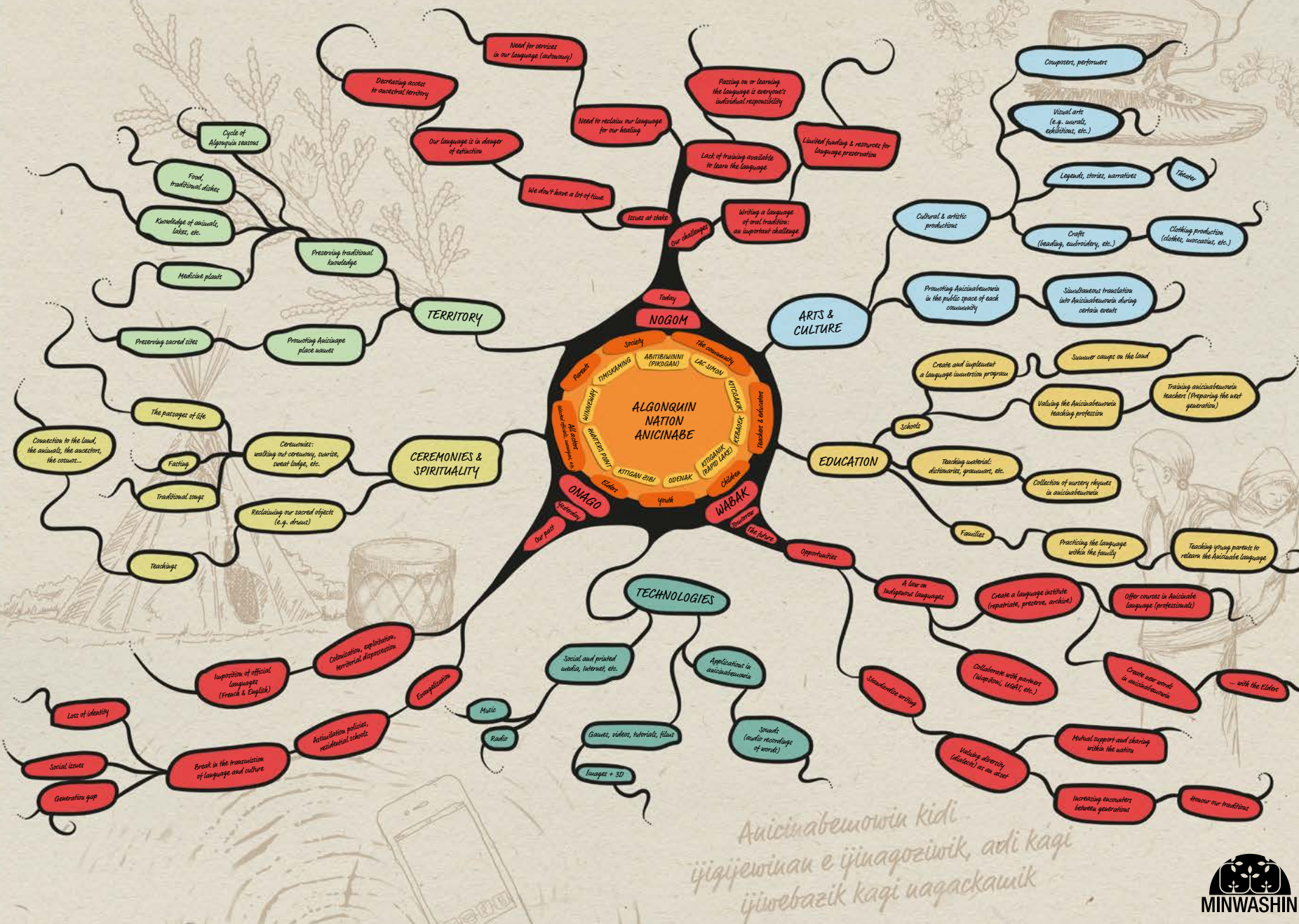
Nin, I am

Discussions at the Miaja 2019 gathering gave rise to a synthesis report, in the form of the concept map shown on the following page, and to the Nin exhibition, dedicated to the Anicinabe language and targeting Anicinabe youth in particular. This exhibition was presented at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in 2022, to coincide with the launch of the Decade of Indigenous Languages. Subsequently, the exhibition, with its accompanying companion guide, toured all the Anicinabe communities in Quebec, as well as the towns of Val-d'Or, Senneterre, Amos and Ville-Marie. In 2025, Nin will be part of the program at the Museum of Civilization in Quebec City, and will continue to tour other museum institutions until 2028.



Nin-The aftermath-Red ribbon

The Nin exhibition was a special invitation to the younger generation to pursue their reflection and become carriers of hope for the future of the language. The young people inscribed wishes on small red fabric ribbons. These ribbons, which were assembled by hand, were to become a large collective work. This work embodies the aspirations of an entire generation, as well as those of many Anicinabe elders and non-Indigenous, for the future of Anicinabemowin. This work was inspired by the idea of gathering the aspirations of Indigenous Peoples across the five continents in order to nurture a sense of hope by building a collective work beyond the borders of the country known as Canada. These assembled ribbons will become a tangible imprint, a modern wampum symbolizing their millennia-old presence and expressing their aspirations and strengths. The aim is to create a global sense of belonging, activating the healing power of cultural identity and the movement to reclaim Indigenous languages.



Concept map summarizing the workshop plenary session on the future of the Anicinabe language at the Anicinabemowin Gathering (Miaja 2) in Keboowek, September 2019³

Concept map created by Nancy Wiscutie-Crépeau

³ Minwashin. 2020. "Miaja nakockitawin otc anicinabemowin: A gathering on the Anishnabe language." <https://minwashin.org/en/language/#single/0>

Nokom acitc wabak — Today and tomorrow

In 2021, on the occasion of UNESCO’s launch of the Decade of Indigenous Languages, Minwashin published a statement on the future of the language. This statement outlines the Anicinabe strategy for this decade, with a focus on creating protected spaces*⁴ where the language can be spoken, both in connection with the territory and in movement. The strategy is divided into three phases:



PHASE 1

Recognition and valorization

This first phase began in 2022 with the launch of UNESCO’s Decade of Indigenous Languages, and has resulted in:

- touring of the Nin exhibition in Anicinabe communities;
- the expression of community members’ needs, expectations and aspirations;
- mobilization of the Anicinabek, speakers, allies and partners;
- a promotional campaign to launch the decade;
- the creation of a Language Working Group;
- the appointment of Richard Ejnagosi Kistabish as North American representative for the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032.



PHASE 2

Reparation and restitution

This second phase concerns the current project, Ojitodan. It took off thanks to substantial funding obtained in 2024. By 2028, this second phase will make it possible to:

- document language-related knowledge;
- develop tools and resources for preserving, learning, relearning and transmitting the language;
- promote and support language-related actions, projects and initiatives;
- continue the mobilization movement by soliciting contributions from the Working Group.



PHASE 3

Autonomy and transmission

The third phase proposes a longer-term vision, that of making sustainable and perennial the means and activities enabling us to freely live and transmit our culture and language on our territory. To think autonomously and sovereignly about the trajectory of our nation through the realization of a collective dream, in particular through the creation of an Office of the Anicinabe Language.

*The notion of protected space in the present context implies the idea of (re)introducing a certain balance into our relationships with the world around us: people (people around us, family, community, colleagues, representatives of public institutions, etc.), animals and all living beings; but also ancestors, the territory, etc. This balance is an essential condition for taking the time needed to reappropriate the Anicinabe language and the knowledge it contains if we want to restore its place in the various aspects of our lives. The concept of a protected space must be understood as a process of transformation, restoration and movement that takes a certain amount of time, in a «space» that we allow ourselves. The challenge will be to reconcile this space with the contemporary era.

⁴ Minwashin. 2021. “Nokom acitch wabak.” <https://minwashin.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/nokom-acitch-wabak-ENG.pdf>





To preserve the tangible traces of certain aspects of our culture and archives, Minwashin created in 2019 a virtual library known as Nipakanatik to repatriate archives and make them accessible to the Anicinabek and the general public. The team conducted an extensive archival digitization tour of the communities, using an RV converted into a digitization lab. This digitization process continues on an ongoing basis, in response to community needs and requests. Thanks to the collaboration of several partners, such as the McCord Stewart Museum, the Museum of Civilization in Quebec City and the National Library and Archives of Quebec (BANQ), a significant volume of archives has been repatriated and made accessible at nipakanatik.org.

Nipakanatik pursues its mission of collecting as much Anicinabe content as possible, documenting the nation's history, preserving archives and sharing them ethically.



In order to provide an overview of significant events since 2019, we have illustrated them on a «sinuous timeline» as a reminder.

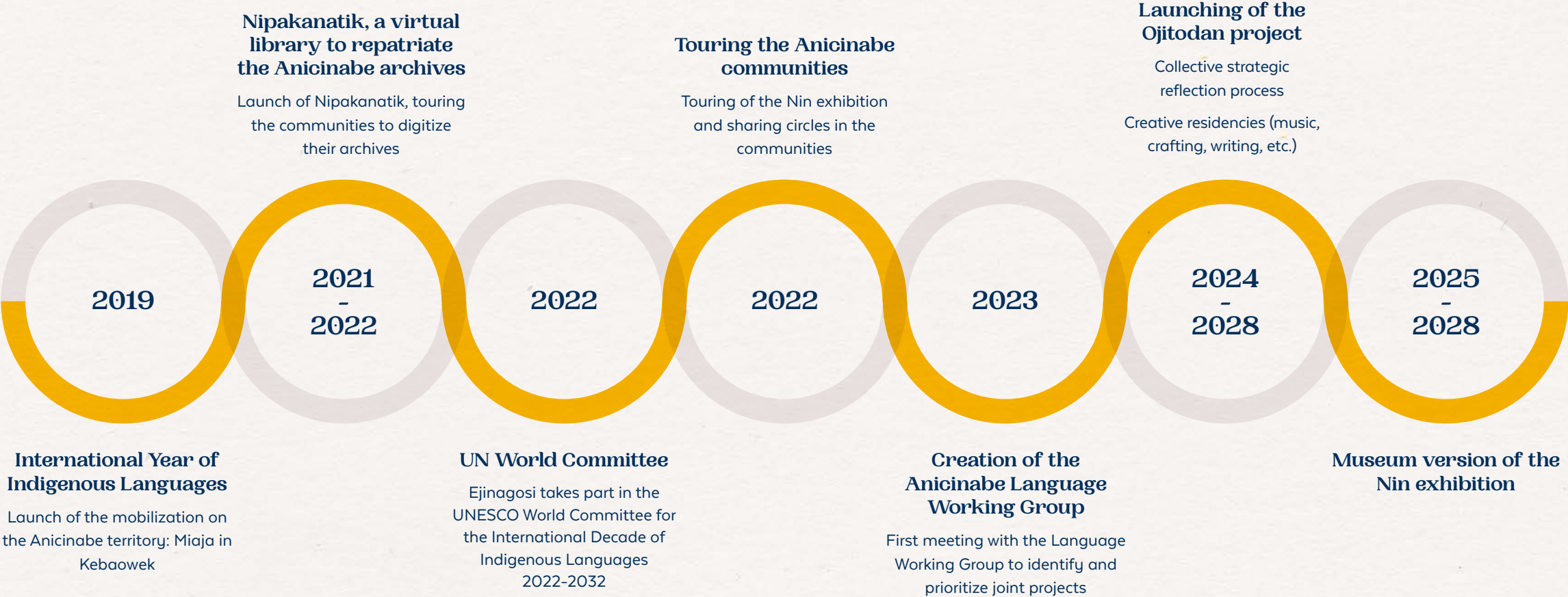


Figure 1
Significant events since 2019 at Minwashin

5. Current situation

Information was gathered through a number of interviews with the project's initiators. Open-ended questions revealed the project's intentions, and provided an opportunity to collect testimonials on its purpose, vision and values. These discussions highlighted both the project's strengths and potential obstacles.

Two analyses, the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) and the analysis of the project's macro-environmental factors, were the preferred tools for providing a step back on the project's current and future situation. They enabled us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the internal environment, and the opportunities and threats of the external environment. In addition, the broader analysis of macro-environmental factors - political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal (PESTEL analysis) - was taken into account, as they are likely to influence the project's strategic environment. By combining these two approaches, it was possible to develop an informed vision to guide planning and decision-making for the project.

5.1. Strengths

Strategic Vision

- A project that reflects the organization’s mission, vision and values;
- Language, a priority field of action identified during Minwashin’s 2020-2025 strategic planning process;
- A project launched in 2019 (the International Year of Indigenous Languages) and continuing in the same vein.

Positive Leadership

- Minwashin’s dynamism with the Anicinabe communities;
- Minwashin’s recognition by UNESCO-Paris (head office);
- Appointment of Minwashin’s President as President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO);
- Appointment of Minwashin’s President as North American representative to the World Committee for the Revitalization of Indigenous Languages for the 2022-2032 decade;
- Minwashin’s credibility with funding agencies.

Relations and Partnerships

- Building and maintaining relationships and networks;
- A partnership agreement signed with INRS to set up a research governance structure;
- Links with community radio stations, broadcasters of Anicinabemowin content;
- A network of local, national and international partners.

Mobilization

- The Miaja 2019 event, a first major gathering focusing on language;
- Nin’s community tour: sharing, talking circles;
- The “Red Ribbon” project (sacred dimension);
- The Miaja 2023 event, on the theme of orality;
- The creation of the Nipakanatik virtual library;
- The creation of a Working Group dedicated to language;
- A scientific director as part of the team;
- The hiring of a project director (linguist and Ph.D. in linguistic anthropology).

Funding

- A 5-year funding with flexible reporting;
- Discretionary annual budget breakdown;
- Possibility of additional funding dedicated to the research component.

Governance and Management

- Project-specific committees already in place (Governing Committee, Anicinabe Language Working Group, etc.);
- An archive acquisitions management policy and Mitonentcikan committee in place for the Nipakanatik virtual library;
- Excellent communication between the Board of Directors and the Governing Committee;
- A team of collaborators within the organization (administration, communication, translation/interpretation...);
- Solid in-house project management experience;
- A specific approach to strategic project thinking.

5.2. Weaknesses

Strategic Vision

- Risk of confusion by adding a specific mission, vision and values to the project;
- Wanting to seize every opportunity along the way (4-year project);
- The scope of the task could lead to “doing too much.”

Leadership

- Unclear positioning of the project within Minwashin’s overall activities;
- Multiplication and management of partner visibility (Minwashin, International Decade, CCUNESCO, INRS);
- Excessive demands on the president and management team;
- Team members overworked and exhausted by the workload.

Partnership

- Too many partnership requests (false friends);
- Having to meet the requirements of each partner (management of partnership agreements);
- Lack of a framework for collaboration and partnership;
- Lack of a clear vision of a global partnership approach for Minwashin.

Mobilization

- Participation and mobilization vary from community to community;
- The same people are often solicited;
- Choice of participants in the needs analysis (sampling almost exclusively in education);
- Lack of dedicated language resources in communities outside the school setting;
- Lack of community mobilization strategy;
- The wishes expressed during the tour, which are all expectations to be met by Minwashin;
- Keeping the Working Group motivated over an extended period of time.

Funding

- A budget to be increased or completed to achieve all the desired results.

Governance and Management

- Roles and responsibilities of committees to be defined, clarified and adjusted: Board, Governing Committee, Working Group, project management, scientific leadership;
- Project organizational chart to be drawn up;
- Management of partnership agreements;
- Implementing effective communication channels to promote Minwashin’s values;
- Implementation of a shared decision-making process.

5.3. Opportunities

Funding

Access to funding is made easier within the framework of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages in Canada;

Access to research funding through various programs and bodies in Quebec and Canada;

Access to private funding, notably from the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation and the McConnell Foundation.

Political

The development of an action plan by the Canadian federal government to safeguard, revitalize and promote Indigenous languages, with a focus on digital empowerment;

The creation of an Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages, composed of a Commissioner and three Directors with the capacity to represent the linguistic interests of First Nations, Inuit and Métis;

The adoption, in June 2019, of the Indigenous Languages Act to preserve, foster and revitalize Indigenous languages in Canada, and to provide adequate and predictable long-term funding to support its implementation.

Technology

Technological progress enables the development of tools that facilitate and stimulate the transmission and preservation of Indigenous languages;

Accessibility and sharing of tools for the preservation of First Nations and Inuit languages in Quebec;

Artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly powerful, and could be an interesting avenue for preserving, supporting and transmitting indigenous languages;

The possibility of developing our own protocols/ethical frameworks for the use of technology and artificial intelligence.

Education

Openness on the part of non-Indigenous universities and Quebec schools to offering courses or programs in Indigenous languages;

Increasing openness on the part of non-Indigenous universities and Quebec schools to collaborate ethically with communities on research;

Anicinabemowin immersion programs in community schools;

Community schools have more and more flexibility to include language transmission at the elementary and high school levels: for example, the Matakan Project, the indigenization of education and territorial affirmation through land-based education for Otapi high school students in Manawan⁵.

Communication

Increased awareness of the importance of cultural safety in schools and health care settings;

Media broadcast content in Anicinabemowin⁶ (APTN and community radio stations);

⁵ Jérôme, Laurent, Ottawa, Sakay and Marie-Christine Petiquay. 2019. "Matakan project : Indigenizing education and affirming territorial identity through land-based learning with atikamekw secondary school students." *Journal of Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples* 4: 34-37. <https://eduq.info/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11515/38063/journal-perseverance-academic-achievement-first-peoples-4-2021.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

⁶ Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. 2024. "APTN gets green light to launch new APTN Indigenous languages channel." <https://www.aptn.ca/aptn-gets-green-light-to-launch-new-aptn-indigenous-languages-channel/>
Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. 2023. "Star Wars (Anangong Miigaading), A New Hope: An alliance to revitalize the Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) language." <https://www.aptn.ca/star-wars-anangong-miigaading-a-new-hope-an-alliance-to-revitalize-the-anishinaabemowin-ojibwe-language/>

Opportunities (following)

Social

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO's strategic action plan: governments and civil society preserve natural, cultural and documentary heritage for future generations (International Decade of Indigenous Languages);

Truth and Reconciliation Commission⁷ and calls to action, including #13, #14 and #15 :

"Call #13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that [Indigenous] rights include [Indigenous] language rights.

Call #14. We call upon the federal government to enact an [Indigenous] Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

- i. [Indigenous] languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
- ii. [Indigenous] language rights are reinforced by Treaties.
- iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for [Indigenous] language revitalization and preservation.
- iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of [Indigenous] languages and cultures are best managed by [Indigenous] people and communities.
- v. Funding for [Indigenous] language initiatives must reflect the diversity of [Indigenous] languages.

Call #15. We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with [Indigenous] groups, an [Indigenous] Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote [Indigenous] languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of [Indigenous] languages initiatives."

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples⁸:

"Article #11.1: Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

Article #13.1 : Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Article #31 : Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions."

⁷ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2012. "Calls to action." https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

⁸ United Nations. 2007. "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

5.4. Threats

Funding

There is a lack of adequate provincial funding for cultural activities, particularly for language transmission;

Lack of local funding by the communities.

Political

Political instability at local, provincial and federal levels, which makes it difficult to prioritize long-term projects, thereby undermining the progress already made;

Slow implementation of laws concerning the ancestral and linguistic rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Technology

Some technological tools and equipment run the risk of becoming quickly outdated or even obsolete with the constant advances in technology;

The high cost of renewing and updating equipment on an ongoing basis.

Education

Difficulty of finding/sharing appropriate tools for language transmission;

Little sharing of tools developed between language experts and communities.

Territory and the Environment

Young people from the communities are spending less and less time on the land;

Loss of the language of the “territory”: younger generations are losing the vocabulary that characterizes the territory;

Fauna and flora are affected by major disruptions caused by climate change and human intervention, jeopardizing Anicinabe knowledge and practices as well as restricting access to the territory.

Social

Excessive demand for speakers, translators/interpreters and language experts;

Small number of speakers able (and willing) to teach the language;

Elderly speakers are getting older;

Excessive pressure to preserve and transmit Anicinabemowin;

Local linguists’ and cultural carriers’ expertise not, or hardly, recognized in many funding programs;

No recognition of the expertise of local linguists/speakers/cultural carriers as researchers;

Significant drop in the number of parents passing on Anicinabemowin to their children at home;

Lack of networking between cultural development agents and between communities.

*The full content of the PESTEL analysis is available on request.

6. The Ojitodan project

More than a project, Ojitodan is a major undertaking



In collaboration with members of the Anicinabe communities, Minwashin is committed to finding long-term solutions for the preservation of Anicinabemowin and related knowledge to ensure their sustainability for future generations. Substantial funding from the Indigenous Languages component of Canadian Heritage will enable Minwashin and its partners to continue the process of restoring and reclaiming Anicinabemowin that began in 2019. This funding enables us to launch a major project dedicated to research, as well as to the transmission and promotion of Anicinabemowin. This initiative demonstrates a real willingness to take action in the face of the urgent need to preserve and speak Anicinabemowin.

For this project, the National Institute of Scientific Research (INRS) is a privileged partner. A service agreement has been signed between Minwashin and INRS to call on the expertise of professor Nancy Wiscutie-Crépeau, in particular to set up a research governance structure, as this project requires a long-term vision for Minwashin in terms of Anicinabe knowledge preservation and transmission. This **research** component will play a significant role in documenting the Anicinabe language and associated knowledge, ensuring its preservation while facilitating the mobilization of new knowledge.

The second component of this project concerns intergenerational transmission. This refers to the ways in which language and culture are passed on from one generation to the next within the family and community. Each language-transmission activity plays an essential role in the construction of individual and collective identity, and influences the way in which younger generations carry on the traditions. A strong trend has emerged since the last census. “The number of people who have an indigenous language as a second language is increasing, while the number of people who have an indigenous language as their mother tongue is decreasing.” (Anderson, 2018, p. 8). [Translation]⁹.

⁹Anderson, Thomas. 2018. “Results from the 2016 Census: Aboriginal languages and the role of second-language acquisition.” *Statistics Canada*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2018001/article/54981-eng.htm>

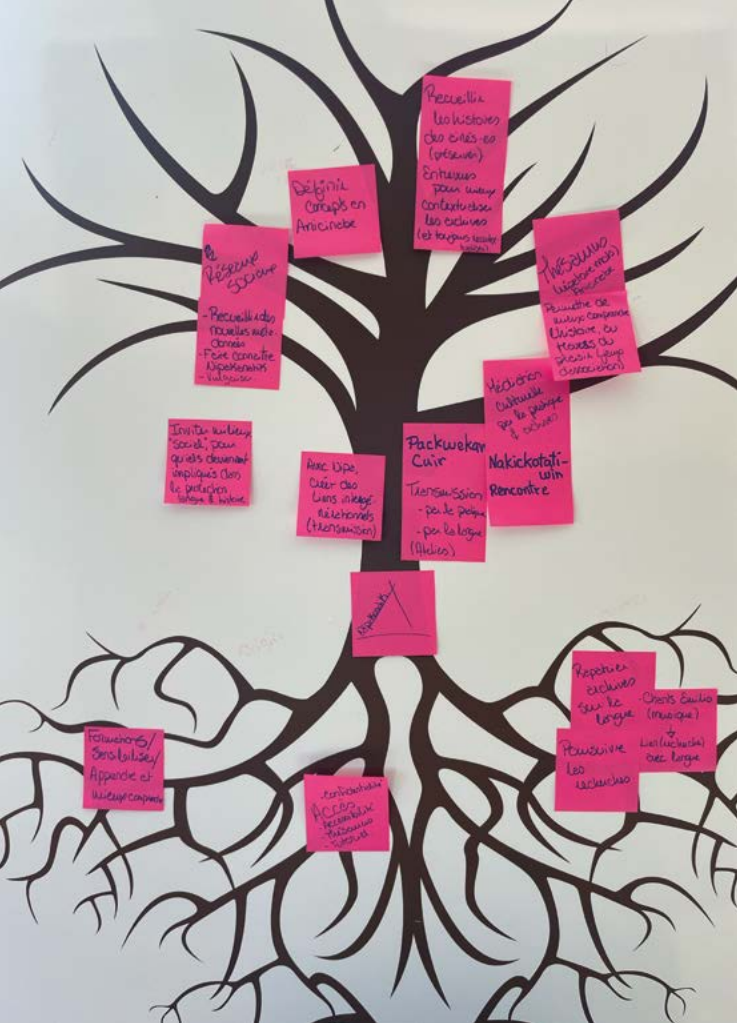
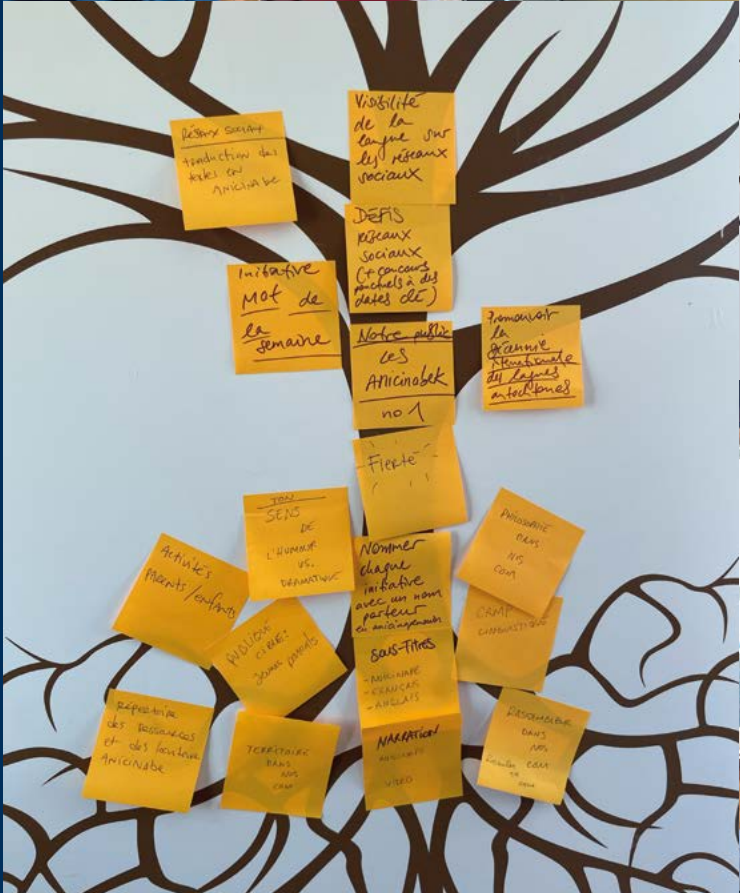
The Ojitodan project (following)

“Culture, supported by language, is one of the ways to heal. Returning to our Anicinabe identity. We are starting another recovery marathon. This marathon is an immense challenge.”

Ejinagosi

The third component, entitled “valorization”, aims to affirm the priceless value and uniqueness of our language, to promote its use, and to publicize our actions in order to strengthen our pride and confidence in our ability to undertake concrete initiatives to preserve and promote it. It also aims to raise political awareness of the importance of indigenous languages and the need to question certain public policies that privilege the use of French (or English) in the public space, with a view to changing certain institutional practices. This means recognizing our linguistic rights, our efforts, celebrating our successes, and highlighting our initiatives. By valuing our contributions, we not only strengthen our sense of belonging, but also inspire future generations to pursue this commitment. Recognition therefore plays a key role in ensuring the sustainability of our linguistic heritage.

In addition to the three main areas of research, transmission and valorization, the major challenge of this project lies in mobilizing community members. Driven by a collective energy, the Ojitodan project will have a greater impact on the Anicinabek, reinforcing mutual aid as well as a sense of belonging and responsibility, through concrete, everyday actions. In the face of challenges, this collective mobilization fosters mutual support and solidarity.



**“Don’t try to translate the word, don’t try to convert it.
Rather, experience the knowledge of the original word.”**

Ejinagosi

Mission, vision and values of Ojitodan

The name of the project emerged from exchanges between members of the Working Group who, in reaction to the suggested name Kackitodan (Let’s succeed together), quickly substituted it for Ojitodan (Let’s build something together). It also acts as a teaching tool, influencing further work. In contrast to the suggested term Kackitodan, it evokes a shared journey (a process) to be completed, rather than a goal to be achieved. The actions to be taken by building something together precede success. All the more so as the process implies the idea of being in constant motion. This teaching will have a structuring effect on the way actions unfold thereafter.

Mission

The mission of the Ojitodan project is to develop concrete, sustainable ways of preserving, transmitting, learning and promoting Anicinabemowin.

Vision

Ensure the future of our language through daily individual and collective action.

Values

**SOKITEITAN / SOKIKAP8ETAN PATCI / MACKA8IKAP8ETAN
WITOKATATIMIN / WIDOKADATIDAN**

Mutual assistance teaches us that our real strength lies in working together.

**E widokotadiek acitc e mawasak mikimowek miima wetcisek kitci
mackawekapweiek.**

**KAWESA NIGOTESIN / PAPITAN / MOTCIKENTATAN
KAWIN ESA NIGOTESIN / SOGIDENIMOWIN**

Courage. We have the strength to overcome our fears, assert our ideas and stand firm in our convictions.

**Sokidenimowin miwe e apadjitoek kitci capockamak kekon kotc. Mitac
ka otci kackitoek kitci sokikapweiek.**

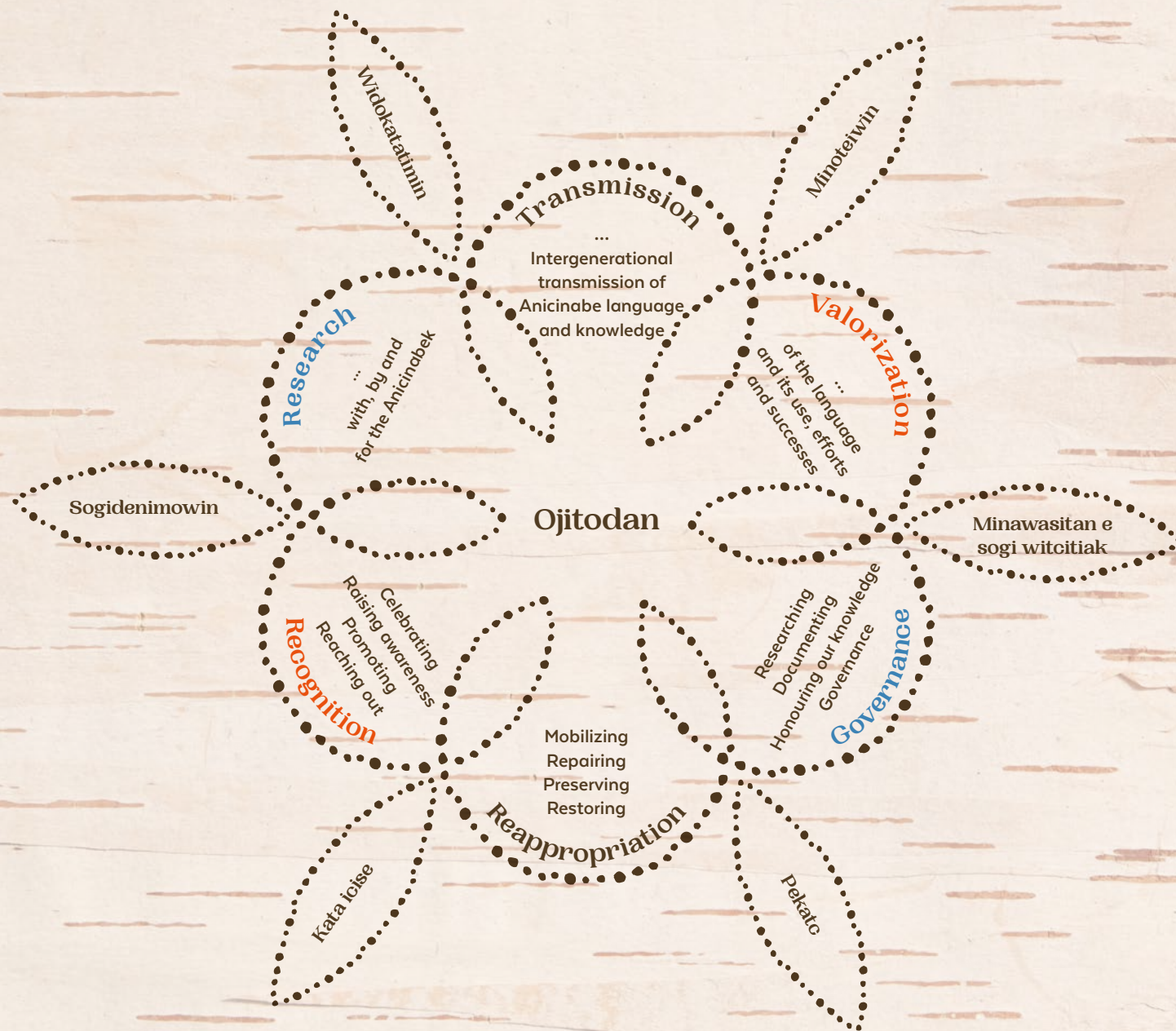
**MINOTEIWIN / MAMA8I 8ITOKOTATITAN / MAMAWI WITOKOTATITAN
WEDATASOKE / MIN8ATISIBIN / KIOCKWATISIDAN**

Humor. Share the joy of speaking our language, embellish our stories with laughter, avoid taking ourselves too seriously and learn while having fun.

**Ka papinaniwak miiwe wetcimakak kitci mino pimatisinaniwak e
apatcitoek kitijikijewinan.**

Minawasitan e sogi witciitiak
Let’s enjoy helping each other with courage.





Below is a visual representation of the three major axes of the Ojitodan project (research, transmission, valorization), which include the issues and actions to be undertaken over the next few years, in line with the mission, vision and values identified earlier in this strategic plan. To do this, we took our inspiration from “The Anicinabe Graphic Heritage in Early Written Sources” (p. 41)¹⁰, borrowing one of the floral motifs on a birch bark basket belonging to the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Nation.

The three petals at the top of the page represent the main axes of the project, with a brief description of each associated issue below. The petals in the bottom section include the actions required for each axis to achieve some of our aspirations as a Nation (recognition, reappropriation and governance). The six leaf motifs around the flower represent the founding values and principles that will guide each of our decisions and actions as a team for the coming years. These values and principles are the basic ingredients for the creation and maintenance of protected spaces.

¹⁰ Minwashin. 2021. “The Anicinabe Graphic Heritage in Early Written Sources.” <https://minwashin.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Anicinabe-Graphic-Heritage.pdf>

7. Issues¹¹

What is really at stake for Ojitodan ?

7.1. Mobilization

Since language is everyone's responsibility, the commitment and mobilization of community members are essential throughout the project. Several means and strategies will be deployed to encourage members to become actively involved and contribute to the process, while fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity for the future of Anicinabemowin. Demonstrating that each individual action makes a difference in the preservation, transmission and valorization of Anicinabemowin. Giving community members an active role by creating working groups and committees, and encouraging pooling and sharing, since solidarity and mutual aid contribute to our desire to act together.

In a broader perspective, the revitalization of the Anicinabe language, which is both an individual and a collective process, contributes to strengthening our ability to act on our future, and to propose our own solutions for passing on our language to future generations. This power to act is one of the essential principles of the struggle in which we are engaged for the recognition of our linguistic rights. The creation and maintenance of protected spaces becomes a tangible means of reclaiming our ways of being, thinking, knowing and doing.

7.2. The digital and information technology (IT) era

In 2020, Minwashin entered **the digital era** head-on by initiating the major Nipakanatik project, a virtual library for collecting numerous archival documents. The expertise acquired will be put to good use, in particular to deepen our understanding of ethical issues, with the aim of documenting Anicinabemowin and facilitating its accessibility.

Information technology (IT) refers to networks, equipment, software/applications, data storage and management systems. Technological advances are evolving at a rapid pace. Keeping abreast of best practices in the acquisition and use of high-performance tools will be essential to the efficient management of the project.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly present in society and in the various areas of our lives. The need to develop resources for preserving and transmitting the Anicinabe language is great, and AI can fill many revitalization needs. However, AI also raises a number of ethical issues that we need to be aware of, which means we need to keep our curiosity alive by keeping a close eye on this aspect, while exploring the possibilities and potential benefits at our own pace.

¹¹ An issue is a key factor that can have a significant impact on the success or failure of a project. The strategic issue represents a major opportunity or risk to be taken into account for the project's sustainability and development.

8. Challenges¹²

8.1. Research Component

Research and knowledge associated with Anicinabemowin

Minwashin intends to solicit the expertise of speakers, carriers of Anicinabe knowledge and culture, and university researchers by developing a research program that will include documentation of the language and its various aspects, the preservation and transmission of Anicinabe knowledge, and the development of innovative strategies for knowledge mobilization and transfer.

Research governance

Minwashin wishes to create conditions conducive to carrying out the project while respecting anicinabe values. To this end, a research governance structure and a research protocol will be developed to provide a better framework for the research work carried out at Minwashin, in response to ethical research issues and enabling the organization to develop its own approach.

8.2. Transmission Component

Intergenerational transmission

Speaking Anicinabemowin is everyone’s responsibility in all contexts. Beyond the school walls, Anicinabemowin is used in the family, among neighbors, in the community, at various events, on the move and on the land, in public spaces, thus multiplying the opportunities to speak and hear it. For example, the language camps, launched in 2023, not only offer the opportunity to learn Anicinabemowin in an immersive way, but also to explore the culture, values, knowledge and perspectives associated with it. This enriches the learning experience and fosters deeper exchanges between young and old. It is a privileged place for the transmission of the Anicinabe worldview and knowledge system. This transmission of the language, which constitutes a powerful restorative act, enables current generations to reappropriate and preserve it, so that it can continue to be passed on.

¹² Challenges are often perceived as problems or obstacles, but they can also be opportunities for progress or innovation when well managed.





8.3. Valorization Component

Promotion

Valorizing a language means recognising its value, richness and historical importance, while ensuring that it remains alive and relevant¹³. This involves disseminating inspiring messages, stories and testimonials that highlight the individual and collective commitment to speaking Anicinabemowin and making it alive, visible and accessible, notably through the development of digital tools (applications, software, computer-assisted translation, etc.), the media (website, television, radio), or during rallying events such as International Mother Language Day and National Indigenous Languages Day.

Outreach

Celebrating successes and recognizing the contribution of community members to the valorization of the Anicinabe language will enable the dissemination of information on ongoing actions, community initiatives and project progress. At the same time, establishing and maintaining effective communication channels, as well as developing collective tools and initiatives, will encourage the ongoing participation of community members.

Awareness raising

Raising awareness of the importance of revitalizing Anicinabemowin and encouraging its use in official and professional areas, such as public administrations, businesses and services, is essential to its preservation. This may involve creating laws or policies to encourage its use. This process of linguistic revitalization is part of a major international movement of collective awareness in favor of Indigenous languages, recognized by the UN through the Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032). This movement calls for both individual and collective responsibility to ensure the survival of these languages beyond the decade, in particular by promoting their intergenerational transmission and guaranteeing their visibility in public space, the media, institutions and on the land. It's not just a matter of preserving a language, but also of recognizing and restoring an essential part of the identity of Indigenous peoples.

¹³ The adjective “relevant” is used here to mean that the ancestral language (in this case, Anicinabemowin) must appeal to all generations of Anicinabek in all spheres of their lives. So, if young people don't see fit to learn the language and use it, the language will eventually fall dormant, leaving only its traces of documentation in the archives. Among Indigenous researchers on language revitalization and language ideologies, the notion of “relevance” or “importance” is evoked, a notion very close to the prestige that linguistic communities themselves attribute to their languages and dialects. (Perley 2011; Leonard 2019). [Translation]

- Perley, Bernard C. 2011. *Defying Maliseet Language Death: emergent vitalities of language, culture, and identity in Eastern Canada*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Leonard, Wesley Y. 2019. “Indigenous Languages through a Reclamation Lens.” *Anthropology News website*, September 19, 2019. DOI: 10.1111/AN.1266

9. Kata icise / It will happen!

The research, transmission and valorization of Anicinabemowin require the implementation of a series of actions and means aimed at protecting Anicinabemowin so that it continues to be used by future generations. The strategic actions set out below, which revolve around the three major components of Research, Transmission and Valorization, will be put forward throughout the project. However, these actions will be carried out in due course, while respecting the heritage and pace of the Anicinabek: Pekatc¹⁴.

“A powerful word: pekac, meaning ‘slowly’, ‘let us take the time’.”

¹⁴ Pekatc is an invitation to adopt together a listening posture that makes possible and consolidates the process of self-determination of the Anicinabe Nation.



Time to listen

“The time for listening is the time for exchange with the Elders, the time for sharing traditions within the communities. It is also the time for dialogue between the different Anicinabe communities. It is being able to immerse oneself in one’s own heritage, to share it and to spread it around. Pekatc means giving ourselves time to understand together before giving an answer. The existing consultation models are such that, sometimes, we are asked to give an answer without having had time to form a mental image of the issues. It is important to take the time to understand what we are dealing with. Giving ourselves time together also means creating a space for cultural safety with our allies. The Anicinabek often find themselves in a situation of translating concepts and words that do not have exact equivalents in Western thinking - like the French word “patrimoine”. It is important for allies to be aware of this ongoing state of translation and the effort it requires.

Time for self-determination

Giving ourselves time together means recognising the historical, intergenerational wound. To recognise it for oneself and with those who inflicted it. Taking one’s place also means demanding the means to recover the language and the heritage, to heal the wounds inherited from colonial history.

The time for self-determination is the time when we are no longer satisfied with translating the concepts of others and we assert our own way of thinking. It means expressing ourselves according to our own logic, our own sensitivity and our own imagination. The Anicinabek are from an oral tradition and are too often asked to fill in bureaucratic forms to carry out their projects. These administrative practices perpetuate rules and norms that carry with them a heavy colonial history. Furthermore, they prevent the manifestation of our own expression, consistent with a thousand-year-old oral culture. The time of self-determination is the time when we construct our knowledge of the world on the basis of our own cultural references. Anicinabe pedagogical methods exist and have proved their worth. They are based on ancestral knowledge and guarantee consistency between the knowledge taught and the adopted method of transmission. These methods are suited for deconstructing pedagogical habits inherited from residential schools. In doing so, they are powerful tools for intergenerational healing.” (Miaja 2021 Pikogan Report, p. 37)¹⁵

The following pages therefore present the strategic action plan and desired outcomes designed to respect the Anicinabe vision and heritage.

¹⁵ Minwashin. 2022. “Miaja Beckatc anicinapek kapi nakatamo8atc nakickotati8in: Gathering on the Anicinabe Heritage.” <https://minwashin.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Rapport-Patrimoine-Miaja3-WEB-ENG.pdf>

9.1. Research

Documenting

Objective: Contribute to documenting knowledge and processes related to Anicinabemowin.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)
Contribute to documenting the history of the language and the evolution of its use over time;
Develop a working and research methodology for data collection (scientific approach/Anicinabe science);
Collaborate in the development of the Nipakanatik virtual library;
Survey of language archives;
Document the language camp design and development process.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)
A linguistic data collection grid;
A collection of Elders’ stories;
Audio and video recordings;
Writings and publications on Anicinabemowin;
Collaboration with the virtual library Nipakanatik (bank of key concepts linked to documentary research in Anicinabemowin [thesaurus]);
A document on the historical evolution of the language and its dialects.

Researching

Objective: Study the language, its structures, its history, its evolution, to support its transmission.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)
Co-creation of a language camp model (program, structure, components, teaching material, evaluation tools, etc.);
Co-development of research relevant to Minwashin’s questions and concerns;
Co-analysis of raw data from the documentation phase and from various research reports.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)
A custom-designed language camp model;
Adapted methodological tools;
A context conducive to research and the training of a research team;
Audio and video recordings;
Knowledge-sharing tools, such as research summaries, webinars, conferences, graphics, public presentations, reports and publications.

Research governance

Objective: Foster research governance practices that respect Anicinabe values.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)
Definition of research from an Anicinabe point of view;
Internal reflection on Minwashin’s research needs and positioning;
Co-creation and documentation of an Anicinabe research governance model (definition of Anicinabe values and concepts);
Implementation of a research governance model;
Development of research governance tools;
Dissemination of results and knowledge mobilization.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)
Identify research needs and vision;
Research partnerships that suit Minwashin’s concerns and needs;
A research ethics manual/guide for all Minwashin projects;
An evaluation tool for external research projects that can be transferred to communities;
Video vignettes, simple and accessible tutorials to support Minwashin and communities in research governance;
Training workshops in Anicinabe research ethics.

9.2. Transmission

Transmitting

Objective: Promote language learning and practice in every possible way.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Inventory of transmission tools and teaching resources;

Transmission through music and songs;

Transmission through play and humor;

Development of new transmission tools.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

An inventory of existing resources;

Collaboration on a residency and album project in Anicinabemowin;

An inventory of existing games in Anicinabemowin;

An inventory of stories and humorous anecdotes in Anicinabemowin.

Objective: Using the language daily at home, in the media and in cultural activities to keep it alive.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Transmission through the ongoing practice of Anicinabemowin;

Strengthening parenting skills by supporting family agency, particularly that of grandparents;

Establishing a link with the Minwashin youth strategy;

Development of tools to stimulate interest in language learning and transmission.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

A range of face-to-face and virtual courses/workshops (from initiation to advanced practice);

Tools for using everyday expressions;

Discussion groups based on everyday needs or themes;

A toolbox for parents (songs, stories, rhymes and legends for children).

Objective: Promote community actions and/or collective projects to stimulate the use of the Anicinabe language.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Transmission of the language on the land;

Mobilizing speakers to tell stories about the ancestral territory;

Documenting the transmission of the ancestral territory’s history;

Organizing immersion activities;

Support for community initiatives related to language transmission;

Support for the sustainability of various learning resources/ applications developed by communities (e.g. Spelling Bees, Kokom Translator, etc.).

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

Offering language camps on the land;

A pictorial lexicon/directory of names and activities based on traditional techniques and materials;

An inventory of resources already available;

Discussion groups based on needs or themes related to the territory and traditions.

9.3. Valorization

Promoting

Objective: Promoting Anicinabemowin, making the language more visible and easier to access.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Promotional campaign (strategies and actions) to encourage the use of Anicinabemowin;

Development of multi-channel communication strategies including social networks, media and local events;

Creation of an “Educational Resource Center” to make existing tools more accessible.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

Implementation of a multi-year, multi-channel promotional campaign encouraging the use of Anicinabemowin;

The creation of language promotion strategies and tools accessible to communities;

Easier access to existing educational resources.

Reaching out

Objective : Publicize the project, extend it and make it influential so as to maximize its impact and outreach.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Development of a strategy to maximize the project’s visibility, recognition and long-term impact;

Creation of a distinctive identity (name, logo, messages);

Implementation of a strategic campaign including a targeted communications plan with events, publications and media actions to attract attention and generate interest.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

Increased mobilization and commitment to the project;

A sense of pride in being part of the project;

High project visibility;

A positive impact on community members and the Nation;

A presence at the Canadian Commission for UNESCO;

A significant contribution to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032;

A key reference and recognized leadership in the field;

A strong reputation for best practices, innovation and project quality.

Raising awareness

Objective: To become aware of our collective responsibility, that which empowers and leads to action and change.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Public relations tour of local, regional, national and international government bodies and partners to raise awareness of the importance of language and language rights.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

Joint action and mobilization around a global vision for the revitalization of Anicinabemowin after 2028.

Objective: Make the Ojitodan project sustainable.

Kata icise (Actions – It will happen)

Seeking longer-term funding;

Having Minwashin recognised as a research organization.

Kackitodan (Results – Let’s succeed together)

Substantial funding for the duration of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032);

Positioning Minwashin in the research ecosystem;

Recognition and impact of the project in the medium and long term.

10. Project Governance

Alternating Leadership

Alternating leadership is a management philosophy particularly well suited to the nature of the Ojitodan project. To date, an Anicinabe Language Working Group has been set up following the community tour, and a Governing Committee is in place. In addition to these two committees, the general management, the scientific director, the project director as well as the person in charge of mobilization and consultant for the revitalization of the Anicinabe language are all involved.

Alternating leadership encourages individual and collective participation and commitment in decision-making, while respecting the orientations, available resources and deadlines. This type of leadership values both individual and collective expertise and experience, encouraging multi-level decision-making. In this way, decisions are decentralized and based on the principle of alternation, similar to the “V” flight of geese that take turns to increase efficiency over their long flight. However, for such leadership to be effective, clear and transparent communication is essential. The alternating leadership approach promotes the mobilization of people, because it recognizes and values the strengths of each individual, while reinforcing their agency (empowerment).

The Project Governing Committee ensures that the strategic orientation is maintained, guaranteeing that every action is in line with the mission. It contributes to the fulfillment of the vision and respects the project’s core values. In addition, the committee makes important decisions that have a significant impact on the project. It monitors schedules, costs and resource allocation, while ensuring quality of results. It identifies potential pitfalls and works to mitigate them. The committee makes the necessary adjustments to ensure the success of the project.

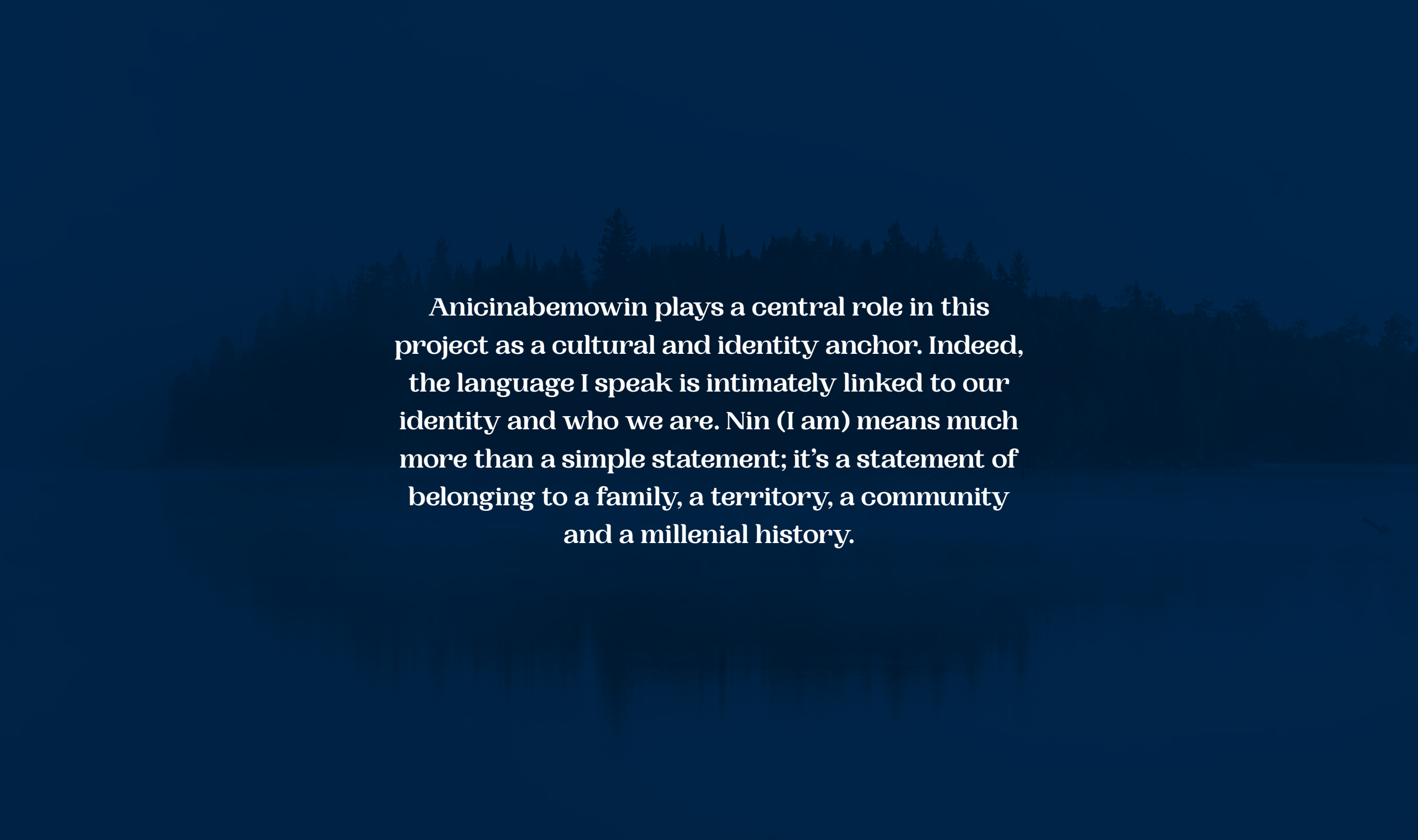
The Language Working Group is a collaborative body bringing together experts, practitioners and interested parties to exchange views and make recommendations on specific language-related issues. The group functions as a space for reflection and dialogue, where everyone can share ideas, debate and confront points of view, while respecting the diversity of opinions. The Working Group plays a key role in providing advice and sharing opinions.



11. Conclusion

This document is the result of a collective process of strategic reflection, carefully conducted in accordance with the fundamental values and principles of the Anicinabek. The Strategic Reflection Committee (which has become the Governing Committee) took the necessary time to develop a clear and respectful vision of the Anicinabe heritage, with a view to ensuring its transmission to future generations. In designing the Ojitodan project, the committee integrated fundamental elements of the Anicinabe culture and traditions, using a participatory approach involving members of the Anicinabe Language Working Group.

Not only does the name of the project reflect the spirit and philosophy of the Anicinabek, but also the values and foundations on which Ojitodan is based are deeply rooted in our culture. Everything was conceived in a consistent and harmonious way, ensuring a perfect match between the initial intention and the reality of the project. Every stage in the implementation of the strategic action plan has been thought out with respect for the notion of “Indian Time” (kata icise), an essential concept that values time as a natural ally. This approach suggests that events unfold at the right time, away from external pressures. The creation and maintenance of protected spaces in this Ojitodan project becomes a means of regaining a certain balance, in the aim of reintroducing language into all spheres of our lives.



Anicinabemowin plays a central role in this project as a cultural and identity anchor. Indeed, the language I speak is intimately linked to our identity and who we are. Nin (I am) means much more than a simple statement; it's a statement of belonging to a family, a territory, a community and a millenial history.



info@minwashin.org
155, avenue Dallaire, bureau 100
Rouyn-Noranda (Québec) J9X 4T3
minwashin.org