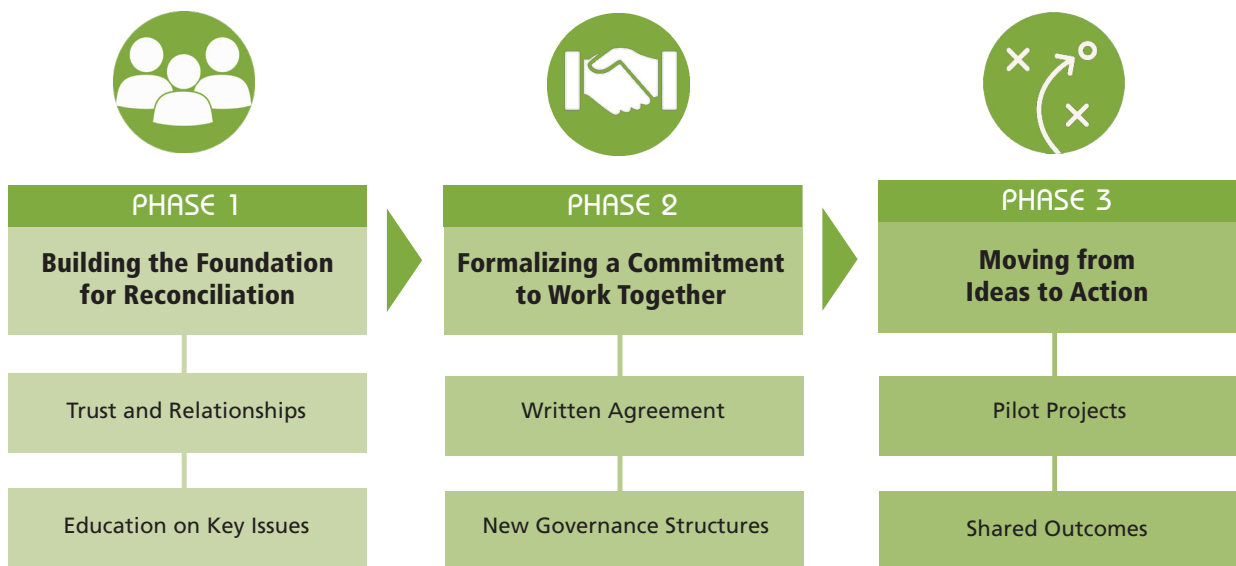


What is the Collaborative Leadership Initiative?

The Collaborative Leadership Initiative (CLI) is a facilitated process that provides resources and expertise to support Indigenous and municipal elected leaders as they find solutions to shared water challenges. The CLI has a proven track record of building trust, strengthening relationships, and advancing action toward true reconciliation.

How does it work?

CLI supports elected Indigenous and municipal leaders as they work together to identify common concerns and develop a shared path forward. CLI can be initiated by one or both parties, but to proceed it must have support from each. CLI can support an ongoing process or help launch a new initiative. It is structured around three phases:



Who sits at the CLI table?

CLI takes a focused approach to working directly with Indigenous and municipal elected leaders. CLI fosters collaboration between a wide range of industry, academic, and non-government organization (NGO) partners, but elected leaders and their administrations are the main participants.

Why does CLI focus on Indigenous and municipal leaders?

Indigenous and municipal governments are not the same or equivalent levels of government; each has its own unique jurisdiction and authorities. When you stack the authorities and jurisdictions together, you can achieve outcomes that are not possible for any one government to achieve on its own. Most water decisions are made, and their impacts are felt most acutely, at the local level. Indigenous and municipal decisionmakers know their watershed best – so solutions should also start here.

Does CLI replace existing decision-making structures, collaborative efforts, and/or initiatives?

No. CLI is designed to support ongoing work, including existing bilateral agreements, joint projects, and collaborative planning processes. By bringing together elected leaders, CLI can accelerate and strengthen this work, as well as explore new approaches that may not have been considered previously.

How was CLI created?

The CLI builds on successful approaches implemented in other jurisdictions, including the Northwest Territories, South Africa, and most recently, Manitoba. In 2017, CIER implemented the CLI model in Manitoba. Working with the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region and the Southern Chiefs' Organization, the CLI process brought together elected leaders from 11 Indigenous governments and 16 municipalities for the first time in 150 years. This led to the signing of a historic intergovernmental agreement between the jurisdictions.

What has CLI achieved to date?

Since 2017, the CLI process has supported reconciliation in Manitoba between 27 Indigenous and municipal elected leaders. Through CLI, the leaders have established a collaborative governance table where they develop shared solutions together. See the CLI Manitoba documentary, Reconciliation in Action, at www.yourcier.org/cli.

How much does it cost Indigenous and municipal leaders to participate?

All costs of the CLI process are covered by CIER. Participating leaders are only expected to contribute their time and in-kind resources to attend CLI meetings.

How does CLI align with the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP?

The TRC states that “reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.” The phases of the CLI process are structured to build relationships between elected leaders by moving from awareness and understanding to concrete action. CLI aligns with UNDRIP by providing a pathway for Indigenous leaders to work with municipalities to exercise their inherent rights and jurisdiction over their territory.

How does CLI create lasting, long-term change?

Through the CLI, a structured decision-making table is created. This table embeds formal and informal collaboration and respect between leaders, their staff, and their communities. Ensuring long term sustainability is an essential part of the third phase of CLI.

How is CLI funded?

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) is funded by the BHP Foundation to implement the CLI process in different regions across Canada.

Who directs the project?

CLI is completely independent and project direction is determined solely by CIER.

What do elected leaders say about the CLI process?

“The structured CLI process provides a framework for leaders and decision makers to successfully step from the shadow of the status quo toward partnerships and solutions that better serve our communities now and in the future.”

- Jim Bear, former Chief of Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and CLI Manitoba participant

“Working with CLI at the time was like a sacred space. The experience of collaboration is one that will follow all of us for a lifetime.”

- Frances Smee, Reeve of the Rural Municipality of Rosser and CLI Manitoba participant

“This is an interesting time in our history — when we can start talking about collaboration and working together. We are all living on Treaty land and we need to work together and become partners.”

- Derrick Henderson, Chief of Sagkeeng First Nation and CLI Manitoba participant

“Traditionally, or so often, we think about life in the way that, if I’m winning, someone else is losing. Or if someone is winning, I must lose. We shouldn’t think that way anymore. We have to think about mutual success, so that together we are all achieving the opportunities that are before us.”

- Scott Gillingham, City of Winnipeg Councillor and CLI Manitoba participant