

Throwing logs: The 2025 Integrated Resource Plan and Learning from Indigenous Nations

A CROSS-CULTURAL CRITIQUE OF MANITOBA HYDRO'S PROPOSED 2025 INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN

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University of Manitoba



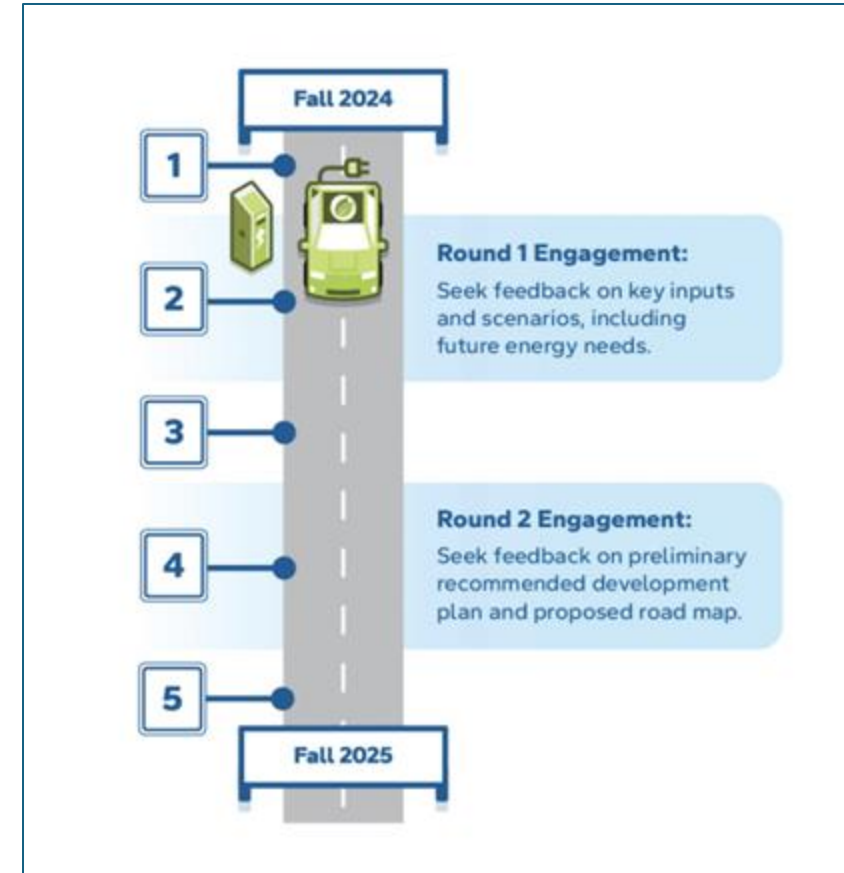
QUALIFICATIONS

- PhD: restoration, agriculture
- Expertise: remediation, environmental protection, monitoring, food systems, wellbeing
 - Indigenous engagement
- Approaches: mixed methods, video, braided seeing, science+culture, community-led
- Productivity: peer review publications, video, advocacy
- Experience with CEC, NEB, Senate etc.

Dr. McLachlan is directed to focus his evidence on public engagement as it relates to Wa Ni Ska Tan's membership and constituents. He is to collaborate with Dr. Fitzpatrick, independent expert for the Consumers Coalition, to ensure there is no duplication of effort.

OUTLINE

- Approach
- Public engagement
- Indigenous engagement
- Manitoba Hydro surveys
- BC IRP
- TAC
- WNST Survey
- Indigenous engagement moving forward
- Community-led energy
- Customer-side solutions





APPROACH

TWO PHASES

Phase 1

(Manitoba Hydro)

- Document Review
- Information Requests
- Survey (Rounds 1, 2, Indigenous Leadership)
- TAC meeting notes

Phase 2

(Data collection and outreach)

- Interviews (individual)
- Interviews (group)
- Case Study (BC IRP)
- Online survey

COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

Table 1. List of 16 interviewees from five First Nations in northern Manitoba.

Participant Code	First Nation	Class	Gender	Role	Date
RS	TCN ¹	Landuser	M	KK	5/6/2026
WH	TCN	Landuser	M	KK	5/6/2026
JH	TCN	Landuser	M	KK	5/6/2026
NB	TCN	Landuser	M	KK	5/6/2026
RM	PCN	Landuser	F	Elder	5/27/2026
LM	PCN	Landuser	F	KK	5/27/2026
FB	PCN	Landuser	F	Leader	5/27/2026
MG	PCN	Landuser	M	Elder	5/27/2026
JO	PCN	Landuser	M	Elder	5/27/2026
CC	NHCN	Fisher	M	Leader	5/28/2026
LD	OPCN	Landuser	M	Leader	6/6/2026
JS	OPCN	Landuser	F	Leader	6/3/2026
DD	OPCN	Landuser	M	Elder	6/3/2026
CM	OPCN	Fisher	M	KK	6/3/2026
RM	OPCN	Fisher	M	KK	6/3/2026
CA	FLCN	Landuser	M	Leader	6/12/2026

¹TCN: Tataskweyak Cree Nation; PCN: Pimicikamak Cree Nation; NHCN: Norway House Cree Nation (Kinosao Sipi); OPCN: O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation; FLCN: Fox Lake Cree Nation (Makaso Sakahigan).

2. KK: Knowledge Keeper

**HAVE YOUR
SAY ON**

Manitoba Hydro Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)

What is their recommended energy plan?

Customer-side Solutions 860 MW by 2035
Energy efficiency plans will reduce electricity demand by 860 MW, aligning with Manitoba's Affordable Energy Plan. Key strategies include improved home insulation, support for ground source heat pumps, thermal energy storage, and tailored solutions for industrial clients.



Natural Gas/Biomethane-Fueled Combustion Turbines 750 MW by 2030

Manitoba Hydro plans to add combustion turbines fueled by natural gas or biomethane, along with natural gas pipelines. The company is addressing environmental risks by considering carbon offsets and credits.



Wind Power 600 MW by 2035

Manitoba Hydro plans to buy wind power from Indigenous majority-owned sources.

Hydropower

The plan recommends upgrades of existing hydropower facilities

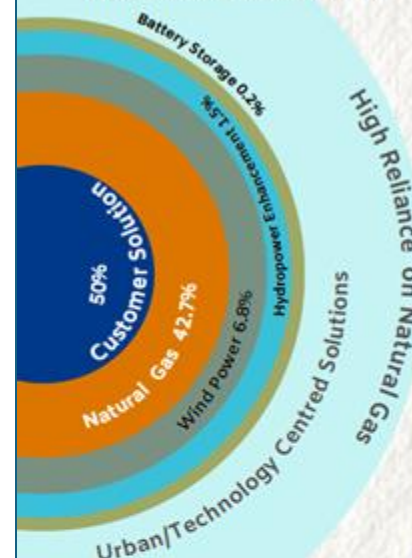


Battery Storage

This pilot project suggests using battery storage as a flexible resource.

**We encourage you to
submit a letter or become a witness to demand
transparency and hold Manitoba Hydro accountable.**

Manitoba Hydro's
Integrated Resource
Plan: Increased Energy
Production for Next 10 Years



The 2025 Integrated Resource Plan Misses ...

Climate & Economic Risk



Impacts
on Land &
Environment

Extreme
Weather

Aging
Infrastructure

Community
Economic Risk

Community Engagement

Meaningful
Engagement &
Collaboration

Inclusive
Opportunities
for
Communities



Inclusion of
Northern First Nations
in Decision-Making

Indigenous Sovereignty & Energy Justice



Self
Determination

Well-Being

Local
Generation
(Diverse Options)

Community
Planning

Other Opportunities

Energy Efficient
Homes on Reserve
(e.g. windows/door
insulation)

Indigenous
-led/owned
Opportunities
(e.g. solar farms, etc.)



We need to hold Manitoba Hydro accountable.



Want to Get Involved?

Please Scan The QR Code

Steph.McLachlan@umanitoba.ca

Call Us:
204 474 9316

WA NI SKA TAN





TECHNICAL INTERVIEWS

Table 2. List of interviewees with outside technical expertise and experience with IRPs.

Participant Code	Organization	Role	Expertise	Date
MB	FNEMC ¹	Senior Manager	BC IRP and First Nations engagement	6/15/2026
CLM	CAT	Senior Researcher	Community-scale energy alternatives	5/26/2026
TAC1	-	-	TAC	5/21/2026

¹FNEMC: First Nations Energy and Mining Council; CAT: Climate Action Team

WNST SURVEY

- Response to inadequacy of MH surveys
 - Spatial, design
- Distributed June 8, 2026
- Closed – for reporting - June 15, 2026.
- Sent through WNST networks
- Social media (FB, IG, X etc.)
- 55 completed responses

WNST SURVEY

Introduction

Introduction

Manitoba Hydro has built a **10-year energy plan**, called the **Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)**, that is now being assessed by the Public Utility Board (PUB). The **Wa Ni Ska Tan Alliance of Hydro Impacted Communities** was approved as an intervenor in this process. This IRP will shape energy-related strategies, new energy projects, and grid service across Manitoba for the next decade.

Manitoba Hydro conducted two rounds of **general public surveys** related to the IRP, yet ultimately only 0.03% of responses were Indigenous from northern Manitoba (the R0B postal code).

This **survey** is being conducted by Wa Ni Ska Tan and will document **northern and Indigenous views** that were otherwise excluded. We will share these important survey **outcomes** with the PUB.

This survey will take **10 to 15 minutes to complete**. You can skip any question you do not want to answer. Your responses are **confidential** and will be combined with those of other respondents in our report.

After completing the survey, you will have the opportunity to win **one of five prizes** (one \$200, two \$100, and two \$50 prizes).

Thank you for considering this. Your voice matters.

The **Wa Ni Ska Tan IRP Team**

Do you wish to **proceed with this survey**?

☐ No

☒ Yes

Take Our Survey



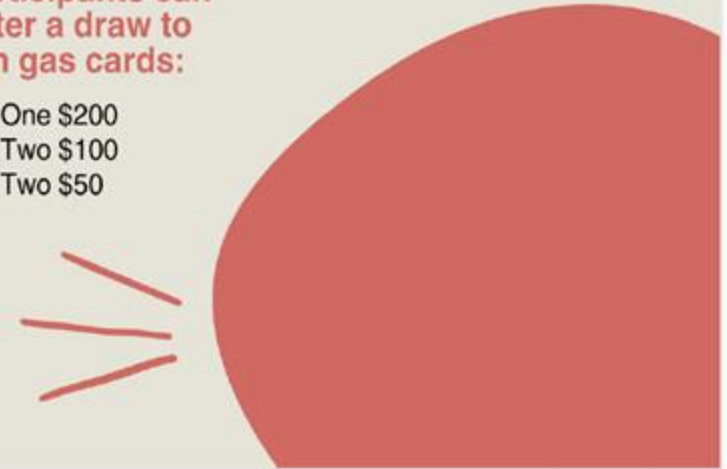
Share your voice on Manitoba Hydro's 10-year energy plan

Manitoba Hydro's Integrated Resource Plan will shape energy decisions across the province for the next decade.

Wa Ni Ska Tan is gathering input from northern and Indigenous communities to help ensure these voices are included in the Public Utilities Board review process.

Participants can enter a draw to win gas cards:

- One \$200
- Two \$100
- Two \$50





PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

BEST PRACTICES

15 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Just probably
16 a couple of short snappers to quote Dr. Williams.
17 Sorry.
18 Throughout your presentation here and
19 throughout a lot of the materials I've read from
20 Manitoba Hydro, you talk about industry best
21 practices. And when I've been pounding through the
22 materials from Manitoba Hydro, I kept looking for what
23 those industry best practices are.
24 Am I missing something in here? Or do
25 we have a document, a guideline, a report that -- that

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TRANSCRIPT DATE JULY 27, 2026

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1 you folks used that outlines what the industry best
2 practices are for Integrated Resource Planning?

3

10
11 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Well, thank
12 you for the question because there's a couple
13 different aspects that we have covered in our
14 materials. And when you're starting out with an IRP,
15 I think one of the common things to keep in mind is
16 that an IRP is unique to a utility.
17 So if you Google IRP, you'll get
18 different responses with different utilities. But
19 with that, the common elements that -- and this is
20 what is well understood in industry, is the common
21 elements within an IRP that form a basis for -- for
22 best practices include both having a robust analysis,
23 but also engagement.
24 And that's what's key that's different
25 from how planning was done in the past and that's what

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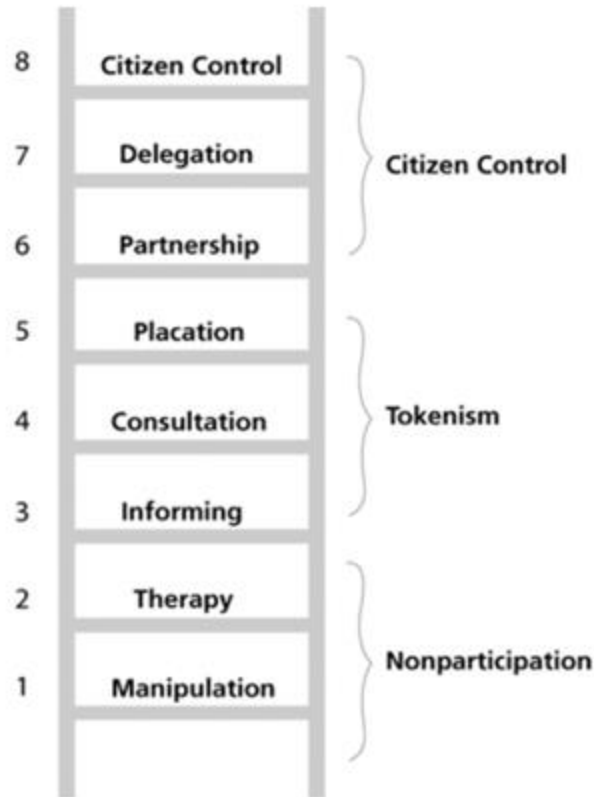
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – IAP2

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

© Federation of International Association for Public Participation 2024. All rights reserved. This work was created with contributions from Lewis Michaelson, Martha Rozelle and Doug Sarno.

Fig 1. International Association for Public Participation Spectrum of Public Participation as presented by Manitoba Hydro (taken from MH IRP Engagement Report, 2025, Figure 1, p4).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – INJUSTICE



Arnstein's Ladder (1969)
Degrees of Citizen Participation

“...top down, technocratic and ‘decide-announce-defend’ approaches to energy infrastructure development dominate energy project development and have been widely identified as major sources of injustice to affected communities, by excluding them from meaningful involvement, imposing power asymmetry in access to information and decision-making and eroding trust and legitimacy.”

Hoicka et al. 2026

“Such circumstances provide a climate for participation to be contained through standardisation and thus leveraged as a tool to reinscribe the entwined logics of colonialism and state capitalism, with deep geographical implications. The main means through which participatory practice is being standardised in western settler-colonial contexts is through the deployment of frameworks, such as the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) approach.”

Novacevski and Legacy, 2025

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – MH CLAIMS

“The general public was engaged through regular updates at key milestones, opportunities to subscribe for ongoing information and input, and targeted efforts focused on energy literacy. Engagement efforts with this audience focused on seeking feedback on potential energy choices and understanding what is important to customers in considering the energy future in Manitoba.”
(2025 IRP Engagement Report, p8).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – MH CLAIMS

1
2 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Certainly.
3 I'd like to take this opportunity to clarify something
4 about this spectrum and how we use it in the practice
5 of designing engagement.
6 The spectrum isn't intended to be
7 something that you push to aspire to different levels.
8 It's not to say that one level is better or worse than
9 another. It is a way to articulate to those that you
10 are engaging with what the promised influence on
11 decision-making is. Being clear about that in an
12 engagement process is critical for the purposes of
13 transparency and trust.
14 If I were to promise to you that you
15 were empowered, that would be me putting the decision-
16 making in your hands. And in Manitoba Hydro's
17 context, we cannot do that.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – WORST PRACTICES

- Too little
- Too late
- No impact
- By design

“...It is more transparent and credible to select a lower level on the spectrum, than to overpromise influence that cannot be delivered. Manitoba Hydro felt confident that we could deliver “inform” and “consult” levels of engagement for steps within the IRP development process.”

PUB/MH I-79a-c, p 2



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – WORST PRACTICES

Recommendation 5: That made-in Manitoba approaches to public engagement be developed for future energy planning rather than relying on generic and largely inadequate templates like the IAP2 and that more adequately reflect the often-unique challenges but also opportunities when it comes to energy planning in this province.



INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT – MH CLAIMS

“As a predominantly hydroelectric utility, our past and our future are inextricably intertwined with Indigenous Nations and communities who have a strong cultural and spiritual connection to the lands and waters since time immemorial. We acknowledge the impacts of our projects and operations and are committed to working collaboratively to strengthen and improve our relationships with Indigenous Nations and communities as Manitoba’s energy future unfolds. We support the advancement of reconciliation in Manitoba and will continue to engage with Indigenous Nations and communities in our future energy planning process and community-led energy planning.” (2025 IRP, p 25, emphasis added).

“Improving engagement & enhancing relationships

...Manitoba Hydro affirmed its commitment to respect and support Indigenous peoples in all aspects of its business, including working to understand the evolving energy needs of Indigenous Nations.” (2025 IRP Public Engagement Report, p iv).



2025 Integrated Resource Plan

Published January 2026

To request accessible formats visit
hydro.mb.ca/accessibility.

 **Manitoba
Hydro**
energy for life

1. Land Acknowledgement

Manitoba Hydro has a presence right across Manitoba – on Treaty 1, Treaty 2, Treaty 3, Treaty 4 and Treaty 5 lands – the original territories of the Anishinaabe, Anishinew, Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

We also acknowledge the ancestral lands of the Inuit in northern Manitoba.

We acknowledge these lands and pay our respects to the ancestors of these territories. The legacy of the past remains a strong influence on Manitoba Hydro's relationships with Indigenous communities today, and we remain committed to establishing and maintaining strong, mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous communities.



INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

“There has been no communication from Hydro regarding their future plans, so I cannot say if they have my best interests or not when making their future plans.”

WNST Survey, R14 (Non-Indigenous)

- Little to no genuine engagement with Indigenous partners: grassroots
- Steps to better do so in future iterations

“Looks good on paper, but will it happen? Will we see results? I am very pessimistic when it comes to Manitoba Hydro promises.”

WNST Survey, R17 (First Nations, off-reserve).



Plate 6. Money and power (digital art: Robert Spence, 2026)



Plate 1. Ties that bind (digital art: Robert Spence, 2026)

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

- Implications of IRP for
 - Health
 - Cultural wellbeing
 - Traditional livelihoods
- Signposts

“Where does the health of the people come in? In all of this, you can’t separate the people from the environment. When does that topic of discussion come into play here, or does it even?”

RS, TCN

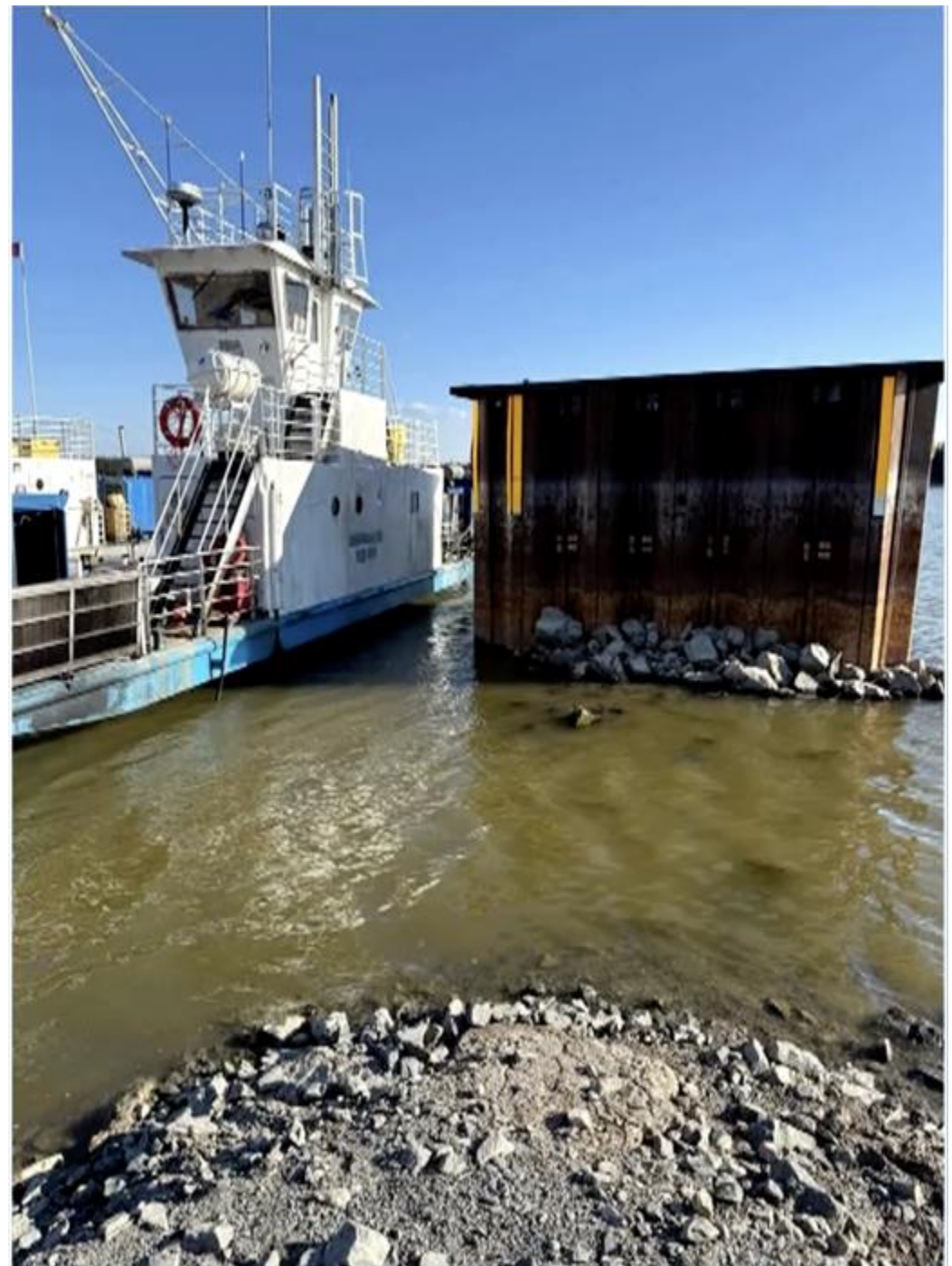
Recommendation 7: That factors important to northern First Nations become incorporated into the evaluation metrics and signposts, these including but not restricted to community infrastructure, housing, culture, traditional livelihoods, health and wellbeing, and equity

As children swim, they are surrounded by a multitude of wheats and zebra mussels, leading to rashes and cuts caused by the low water.



Plate 7. Kids playing on a beach (photo credit Angela Blacksmith, 2026)

REDUCED BURDEN IN THE NORTH



REDUCED BURDEN

“I would like to see wind considered for rural communities and even support for rural landowners to put in own wind power. support for ev chargers in homes. i do not want to see more ruining of first nations lands and hunting and fishing. I feel hydro has destroyed so much land and resources it is time to give back.”

[R_7glQY1LEqvimQQp, R1].

Recommendation 3: That Manitoba Hydro assess whether, to what extent, and under what operating conditions, the 2025 IRP would reduce northern hydro generation, reservoir cycling, and water-level fluctuations and identify the management and operating commitments required to achieve those reductions in collaboration with affected northern Indigenous Nations.



MANITOBA HYDRO SURVEYS (R1, R2)

MH SURVEYS

Response Rate per 1,000 Residents by Region — R1, R2, and Combined

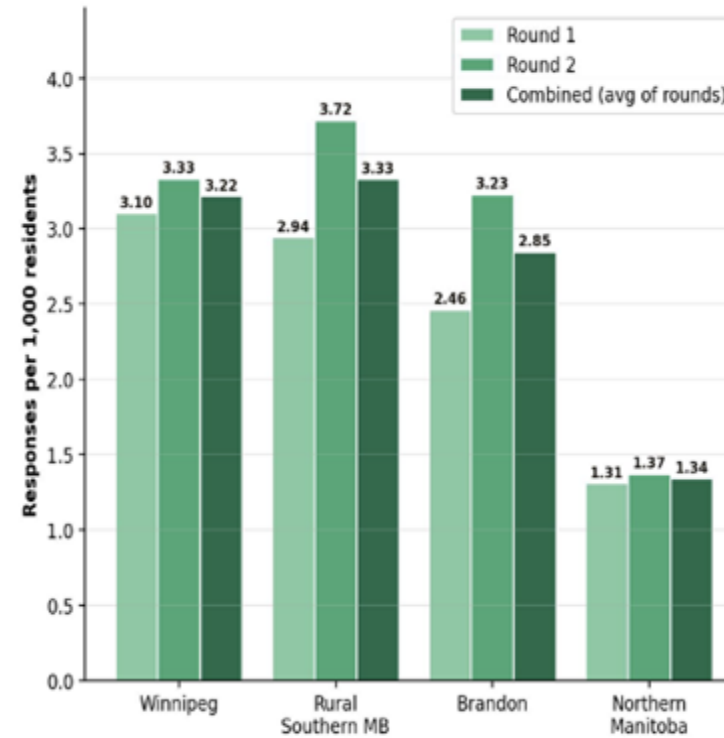


Fig 2. Responses rates / 1,000 for R 1, R1, and R1+R2 according to region

MH SURVEYS

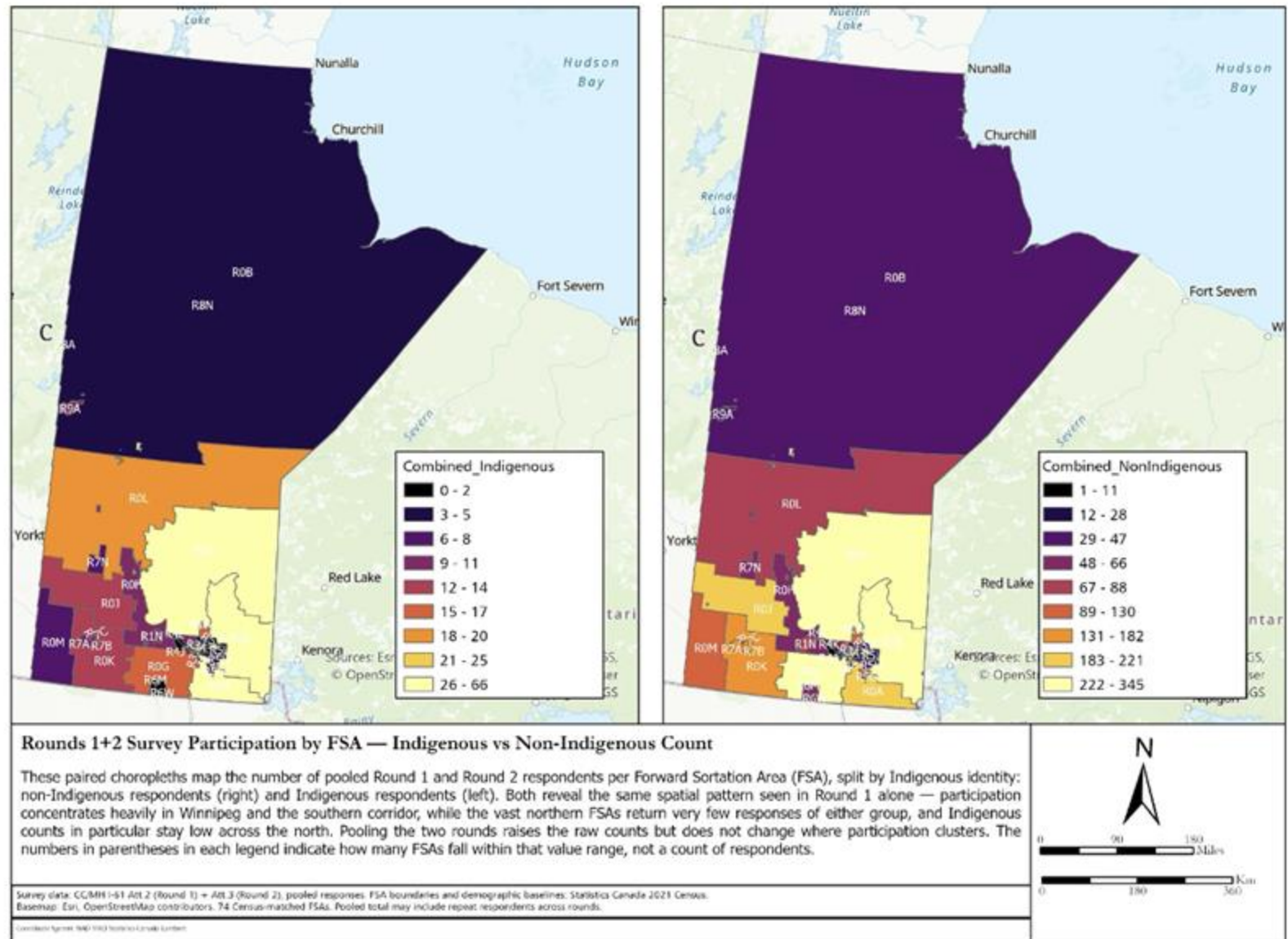


Fig 5: Indigenous vs. non-Indigenous participation in IRP surveys this combined for both (R1 +R2) according to FSA

MH SURVEYS

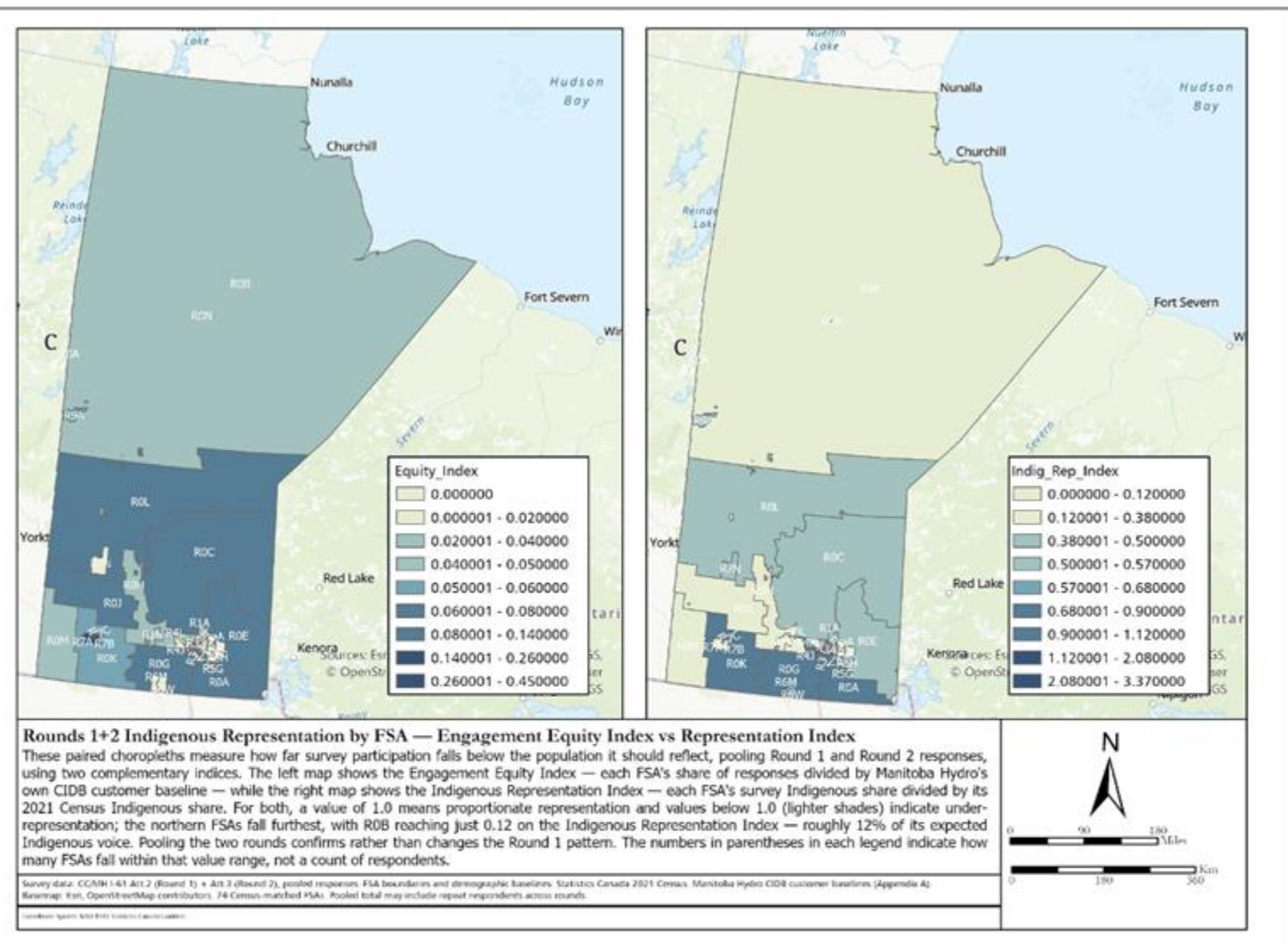


Fig 7: Spatial distribution showing Indigenous representation in combined rounds of IRP survey (R1+R2) in FSA, reflecting Representation Index (Indigenous participation/Indigenous population according to census data) and Engagement Equity Index ((Indigenous participation/Indigenous population according to Manitoba Hydro rate paper data)

MH SURVEYS

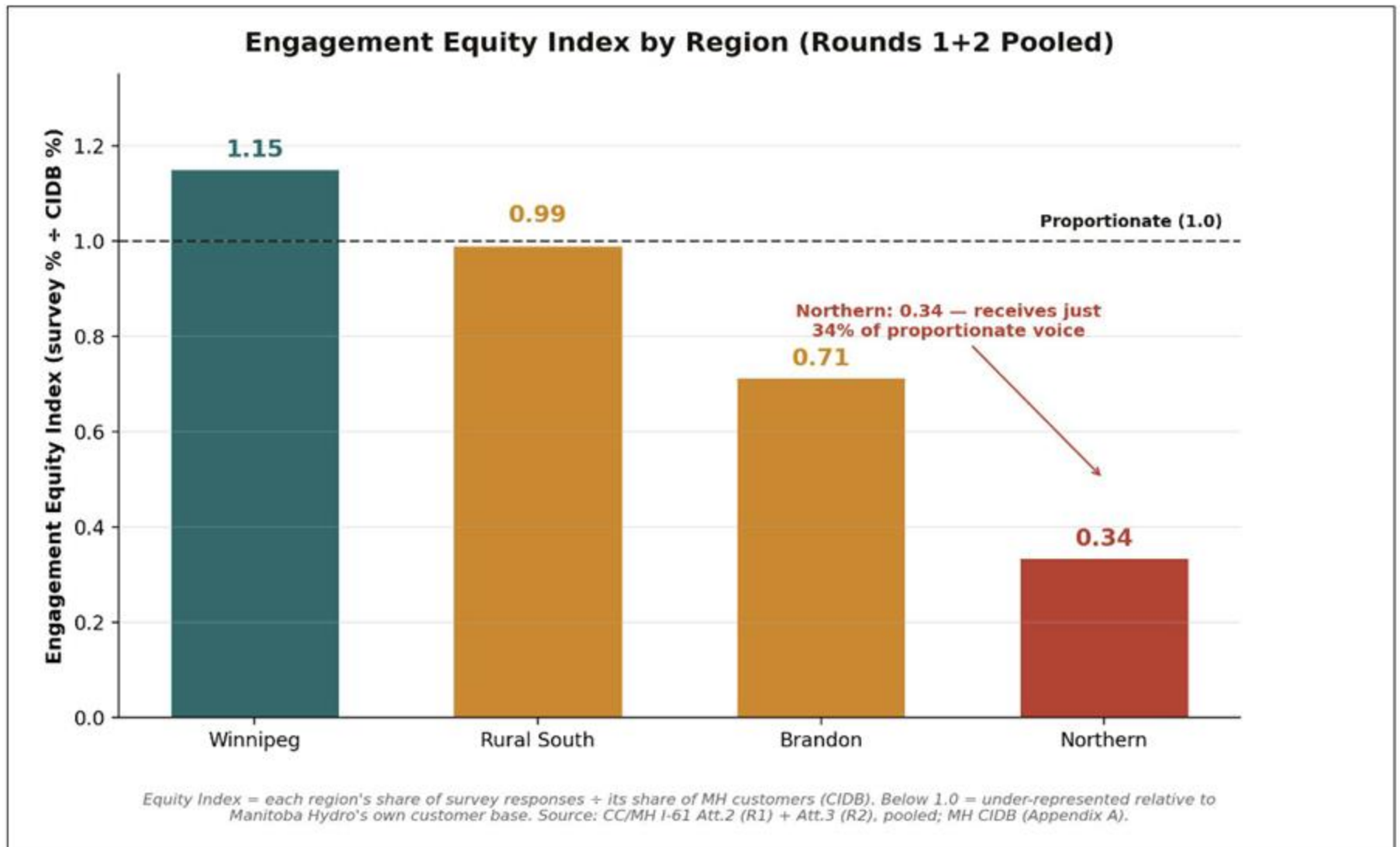
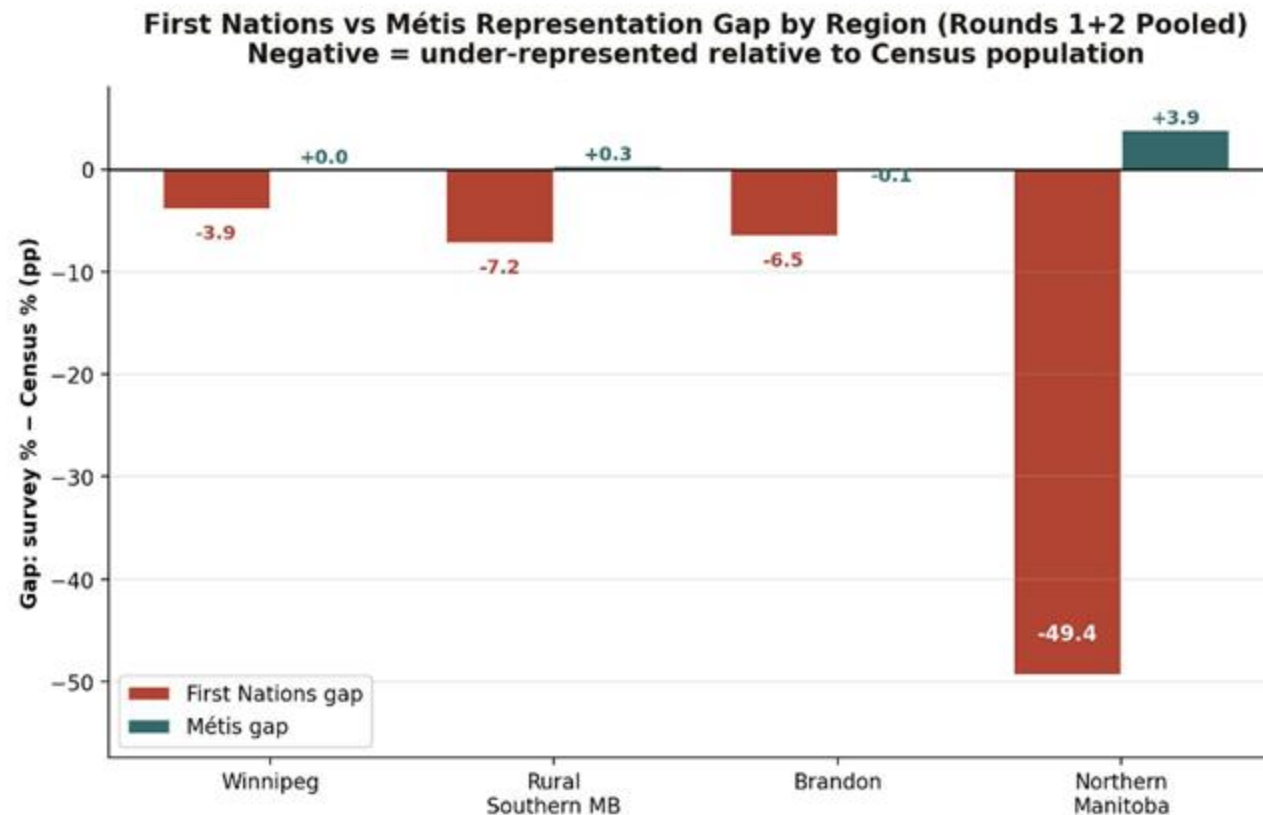


Fig 8: Engagement Equity Index as a measure of Indigenous participation for combined IRP surveys (R1+R2) for Winnipeg and Brandon as well as southern rural region as well as northern region of Manitoba

MH SURVEYS

Fig 9: First Nation vs. Métis participation in IRP surveys this combined for both (R1 +R2) according to FSA



Source: CC/MH I-61 Att.2 (R1) + Att.3 (R2), pooled; Statistics Canada 2021 Census. The Métis gap stays near zero; the deficit is specifically First Nations — same as Round 1.

Fig 10: Representation gap for First Nation vs. Métis participation in combined IRP survey rounds(R1+R2) according to region, these including Winnipeg and Brandon as well as rural and northern regions of Manitoba.

MH SURVEYS

Recommendation 11: That surveys that Manitoba Hydro used as a (the) primary tool to educate and get feedback on the 2025 IRP substantially underrepresented northern residents of the province and especially northern First Nations residents, an underrepresentation that can in part be addressed through some other platforms for outreach and survey recruitment, using social media like Facebook, Twitter/X, and Instagram and perhaps conducting a subset as in-person household surveys.

BC IRP: A CASE STUDY

Clean Power 2040
Powering the future



BC Hydro and Power Authority 2021 Integrated Resource Plan

2023 UPDATE



LEARNING FROM OTHER IRPs: BC IRP

“Understanding this, Manitoba Hydro continually monitors and reviews other utilities’ IRPs and their development processes in pursuit of best practices. In addition to seeing how other IRPs are developed, the content and outcomes of other utilities’ IRPs, particularly those of Canadian utilities in similarly cold climates, can productively inform Manitoba Hydro’s planning.” (2025 IRP, p 32)

BC IRP

- Indigenous vs. public engagement
- Land users and grassroots vs. only elected leadership

“Indigenous Nations were one stream of consultation identified by BC Hydro to satisfy their duty to consult and to support their efforts on working toward implementation of aspects of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” and “BC Hydro engaged Indigenous Nations through regional sessions (virtual engagements), surveys and follow-up smaller group meetings.”

MB, FNEMC

- Scale

“During the development of the 2021 IRP, the First Nations Energy and Mining Council supported BC Hydro’s engagement with over 80 First Nations, Tribal Councils and Indigenous-led organizations through virtual webinars. BC Hydro prepared summaries of the sessions and circulated to regions for review and comment. Input from those sessions were then used to inform development of the draft plan.”

MB FNEMC

BC IRP

- Early and sustained engagement

“BC Hydro released an initial draft IRP for comment by Indigenous Nations and Tribal Councils and has stated that it will continue to engage with Nations in implementing the 2021 IRP and on future projects in response to the plan, which will be subject to separate consultation and approval processes.”

MB, FNEMC

- Adaptive process

“Willingness of BC Hydro to change course on some issues – specifically reversing decision not to renew certain power purchase agreements.”

MB FNEMC

BC IRP

- Three main barriers or shortcomings re Indigenous engagement

“Lack of progress on development of First Nation utilities”; “Adequacy of funding for First Nations participation in regulatory proceedings (BCUC cost award processes are onerous and a barrier to meaningful participation by First Nations”; and “Engagement timelines are often compressed and First Nations are experiencing engagement fatigue”

MB, FNEMC

BC IRP

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. In terms of
10 other jurisdictions or other utilities that have
11 undertaken public consultation, did you look at
12 whether they hit the category of "involve" in terms of
13 their consultation?

14 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yes. We did
15 look across at different processes to see what kinds
16 of techniques and tools they were using, and where we
17 felt they had landed and the different context.

18 I think you could look to BC Hydro and
19 see that their process, as it has evolved, has
20 included a committee similar to ours that involved a
21 conversation that built over time, that had the
22 opportunity to have that confirmation back and forth,
23 that understanding was being achieved.

24 But one thing that I just would
25 highlight is that they are further along on their

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1 journey. So being able to promise that kind of
2 iteration and that intent is easier to do when you're
3 farther along.

BC IRP

Recommendation 8: that Manitoba Hydro adopt some of the key elements regarding Indigenous engagement reflected in the BC IRP. These include the creation of a separate stream of Indigenous engagement, as well as opportunities and support for meetings, workshops and training that are aimed at the leadership and grassroots of individual First Nations as well as Tribal Councils in Manitoba.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

INFORM

Modelling & Analysis Approach



TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

- TAC: Main vehicle for sought-after feedback
- Met 8 times between 2024-2026
- Meeting notes and interview with TAC member

- Two levels of consultation
 - Feedback on existing ideas: common
 - Positive responses to TAC ideas: rare

TAC: RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- TAC #8: awareness and understanding only

“Feedback from TAC will not result in changes to the recommended development plan.”

Manitoba Hydro, 2026d, p 149

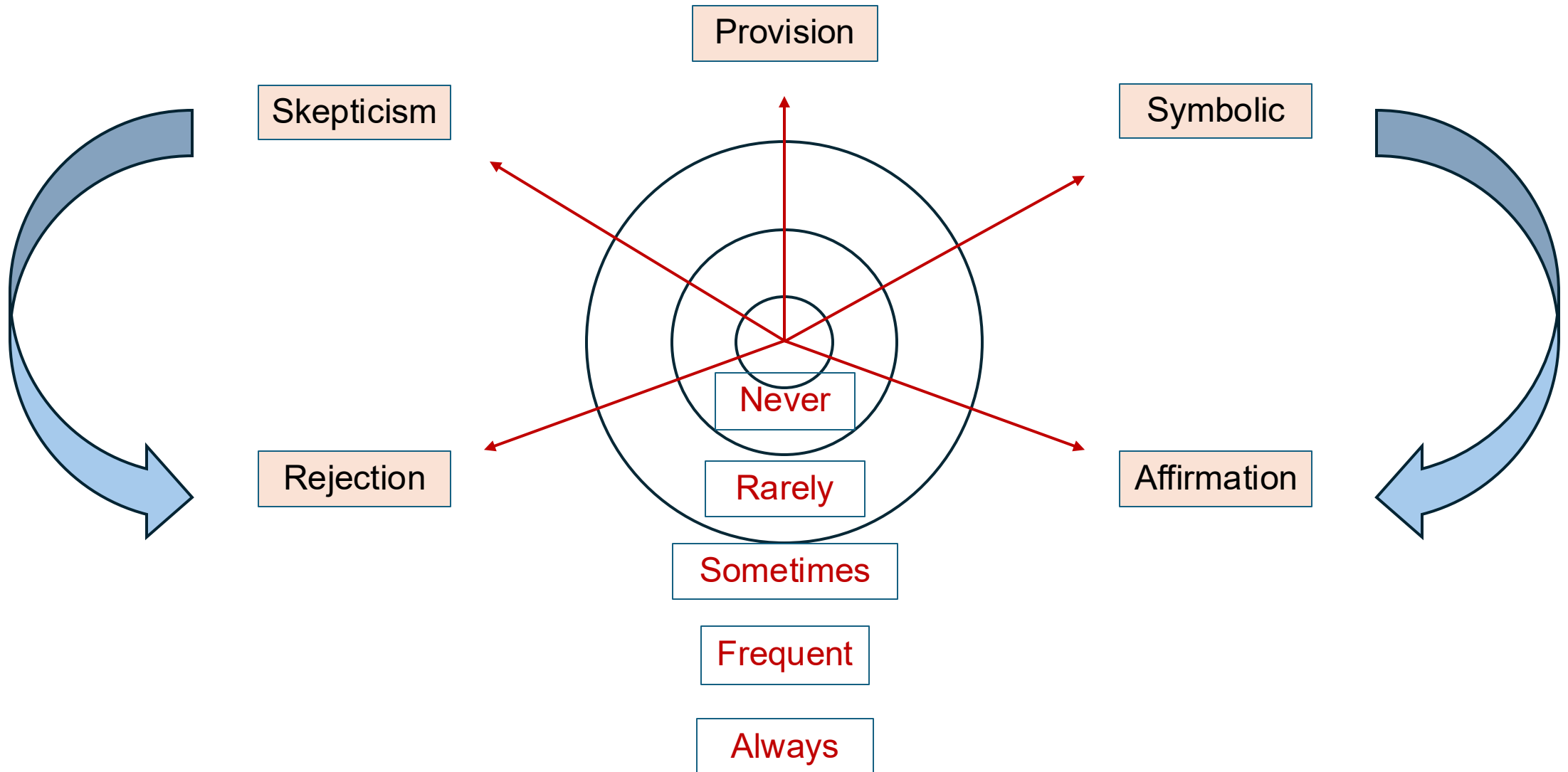
TAC: TIMEFRAME FOR IRP

- Change in timeframe for IRP
- No discussion

“...it wasn’t clear to me when it switched from being a plan to 2050 to being a 10 year plan, that was something that I was like, oh, when, did this happen, so I don’t know if that was me not paying close enough attention or me not being like it being highlighted appropriately to fully pick up on.”

TAC1

TAC: MH ENGAGEMENT



TAC

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1 journey. So being able to promise that kind of
2 iteration and that intent is easier to do when you're
3 farther along.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, if they're
5 further along, would you see Manitoba Hydro possibly
6 moving to the 'inform' category, sorry, 'involve'
7 category? Yeah. To the involve category in future
8 efforts?

9 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yes,
10 absolutely. I think that is something that we can
11 pursue with our Technical Advisory Committee.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you
13 very much.

14 MR. DAVE BOWEN: If -- sorry. If --
15 if I may, it's Mr. Bowen. I think that when we read
16 the words on the screen here under Involve in terms of
17 promise to the public, and it talks about that your
18 concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in
19 alternatives developed and provide feedback on how
20 public inputs influence the decision.

21 There's some practical considerations
22 in our process that we need to consider if we were to
23 commit to that, and we would have to carefully
24 consider that if we were going to move to this -- this
25 'involve' state.

519

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. But it may be
2 something you consider in the -- for future efforts,
3 Mr. Bowen?

4 MR. DAVE BOWEN: We we've been very
5 transparent that we're open to learn and evolve this
6 process.

TAC



Recommendation 6: That Manitoba Hydro explore ways of shifting its engagement activities along the participation gradient to include collaboration if not empowerment. This would especially be the case for its Technical Advisory Committee and the recently announced Indigenous Advisory Circle whose mandates as “advisory” appear to be restricted by Manitoba Hydro.



WA NI SKA TAN SURVEY

WNST SURVEY

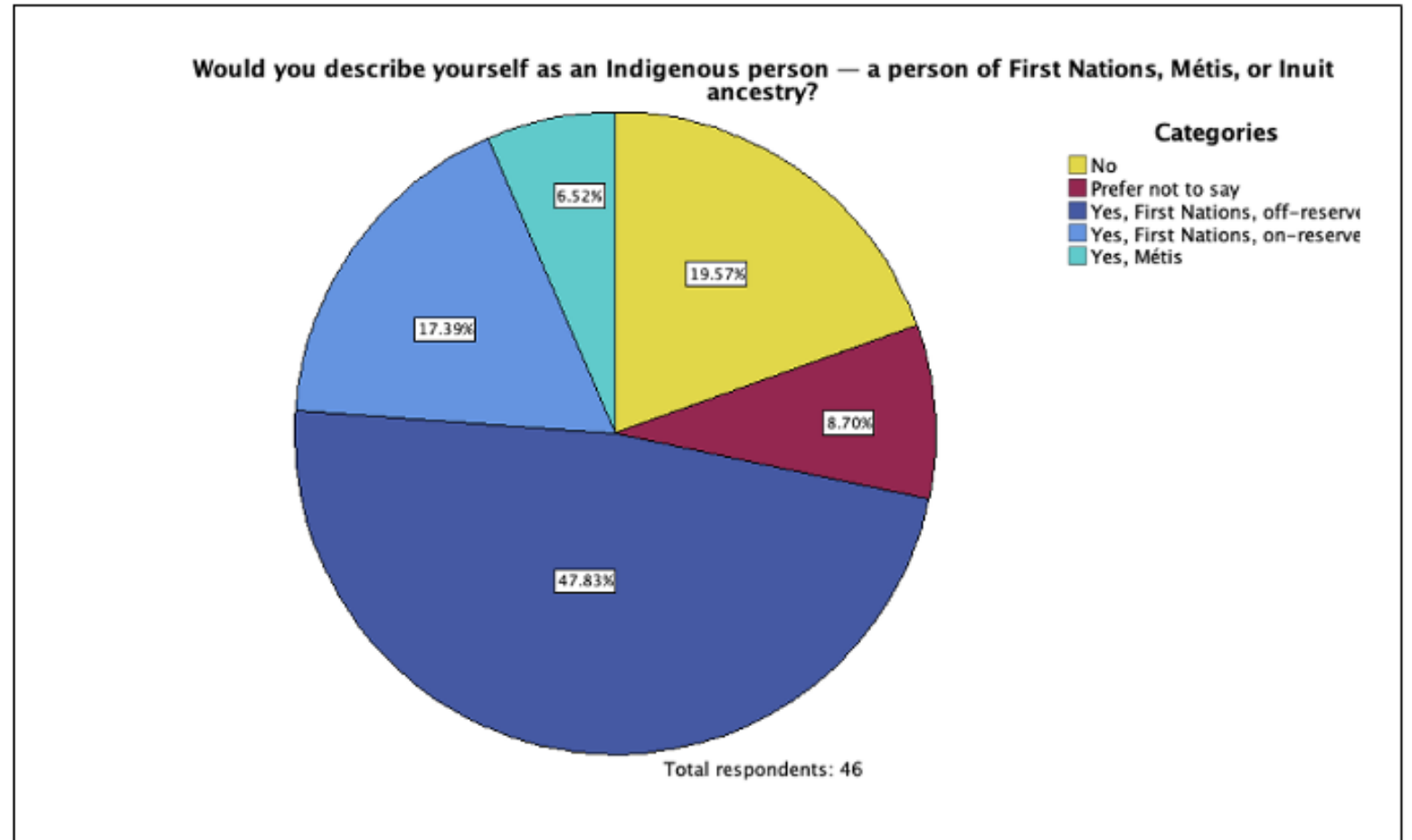


Fig 11. Indigenous identity of WNST survey respondents. 71.7% identified as Indigenous (47.8% First Nations off-reserve 17.4% First Nations on-reserve, 6.5% Metis), N=46.

WNST
SURVEY

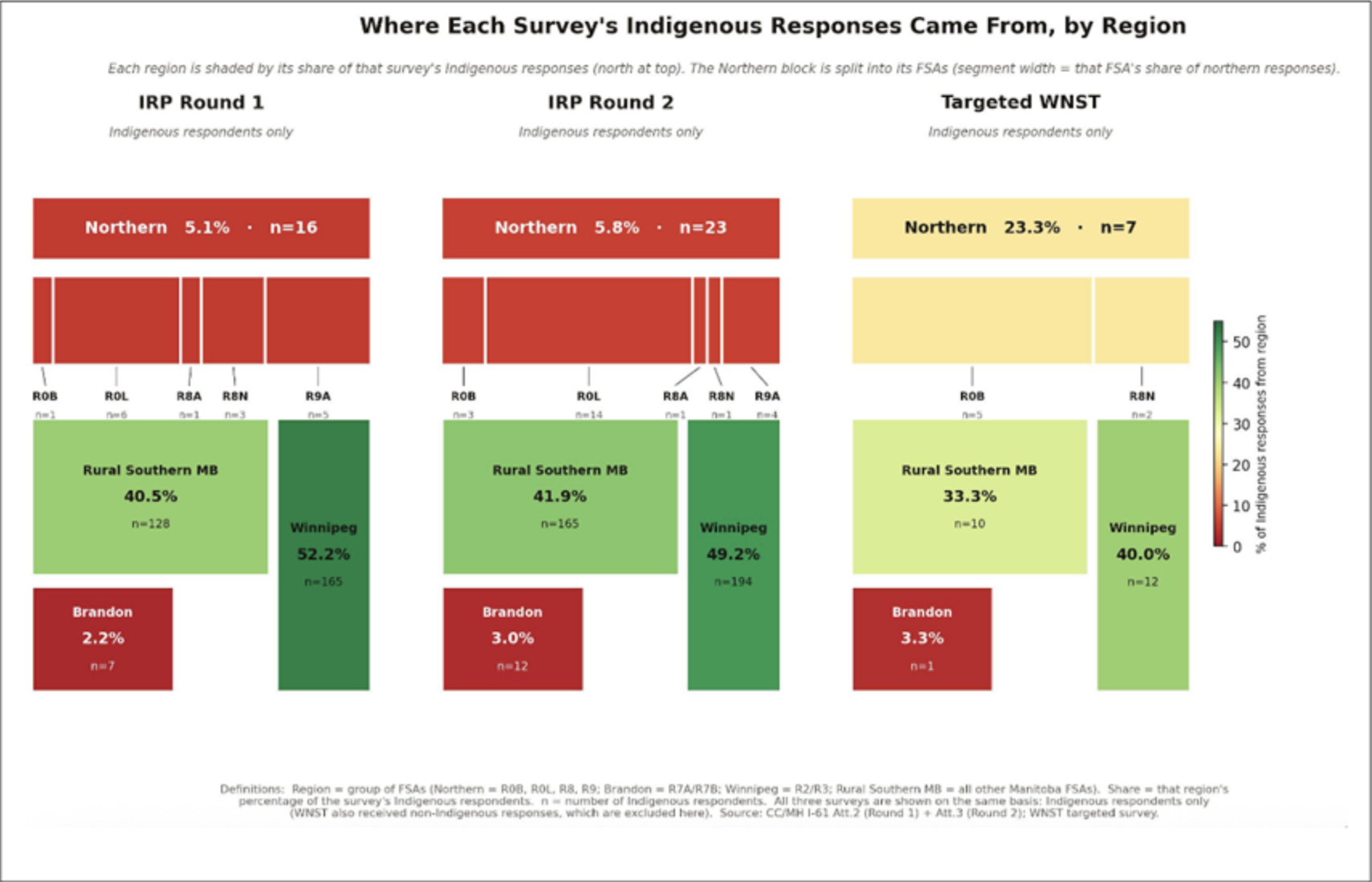


Fig 15. Spatial distribution (%) of Indigenous respondents to WNST and Manitoba Hydro IRP surveys (Rd 1 and Rd 2) according to northern, rural southern and urban categories.

WNST SURVEY

Prior to completing this survey, were you already aware that Manitoba Hydro recently developed a 10-year energy plan (called the Integrated Resource Plan, or IRP) and invited communities to give feedback?

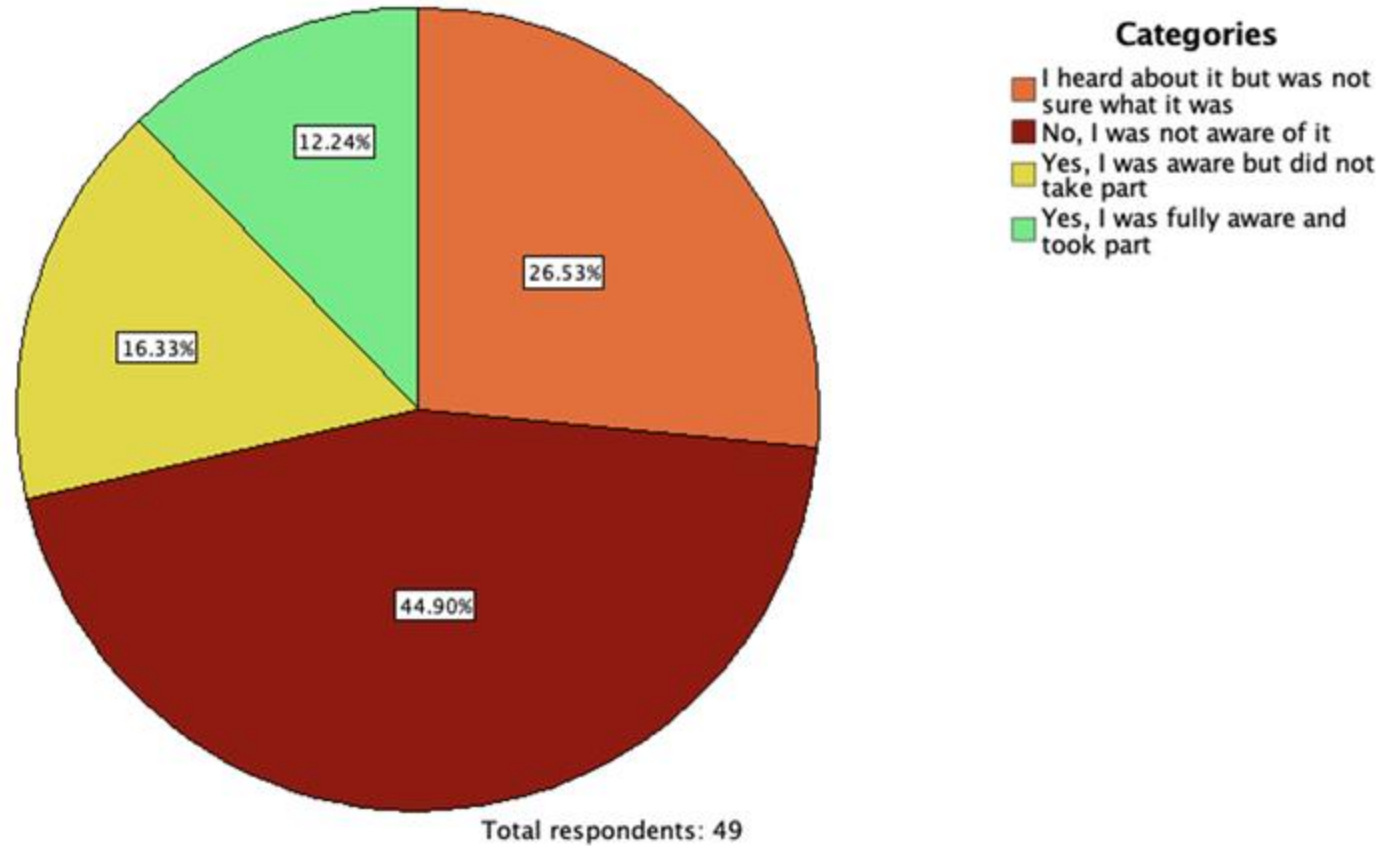
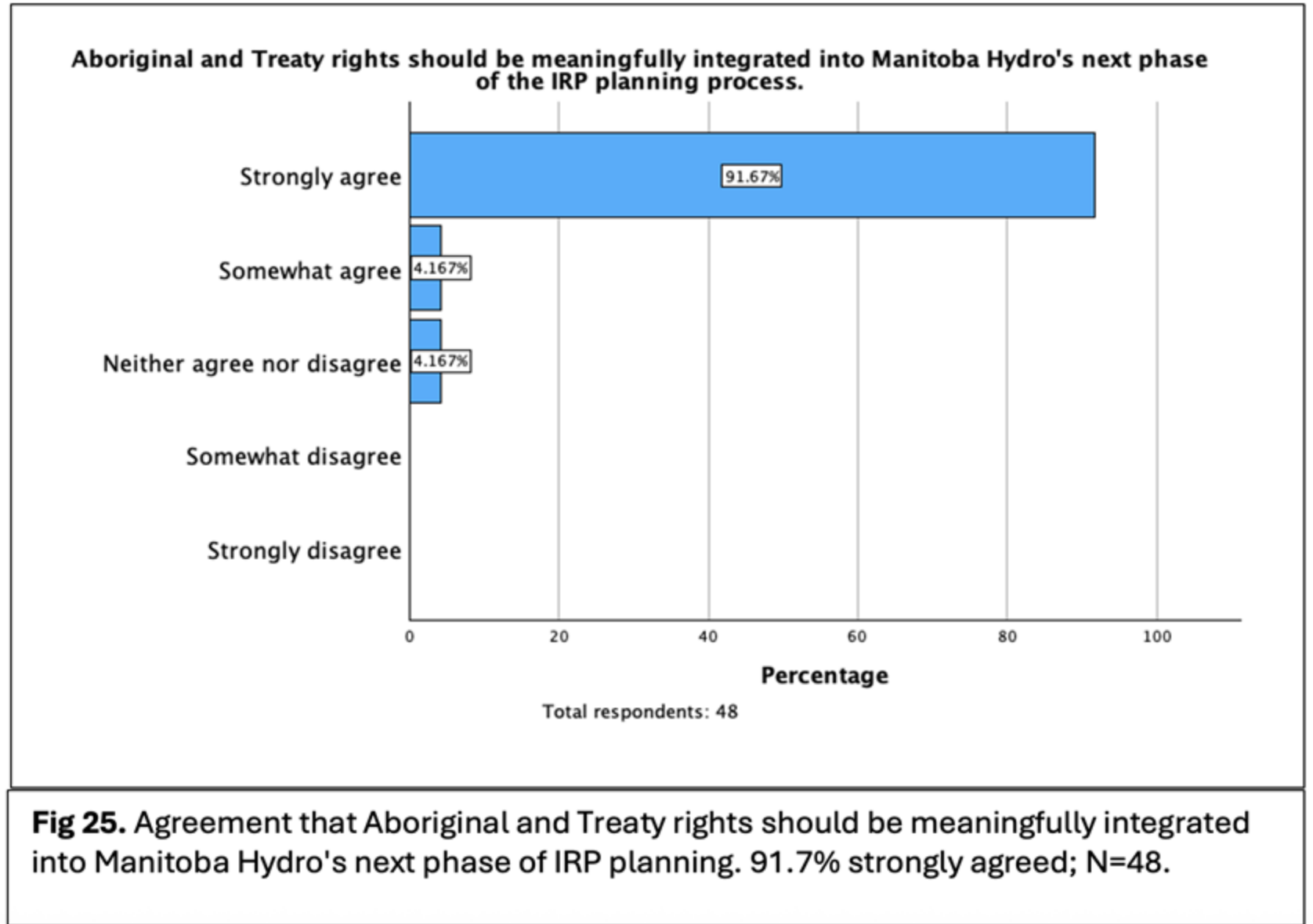


Fig 19. Awareness of the 2025 IRP prior to completing the WNST survey. 71.4% were either unaware or had only heard about it without understanding what it was (n=49).

WNST SURVEY



WNST SURVEY

Recommendation 14: That Manitoba Hydro recognize the importance of Indigenous rights and sovereignty in its planning and management activities, rather than treating Indigenous communities as yet another stakeholder, and in so doing explore ways of equitably collaborating and partnering with communities in future iterations of the IRP as better reflected in both the BC IRP and Yukon Regional Energy Planning.



INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT: *WAYS FORWARD*

MOVING FORWARD

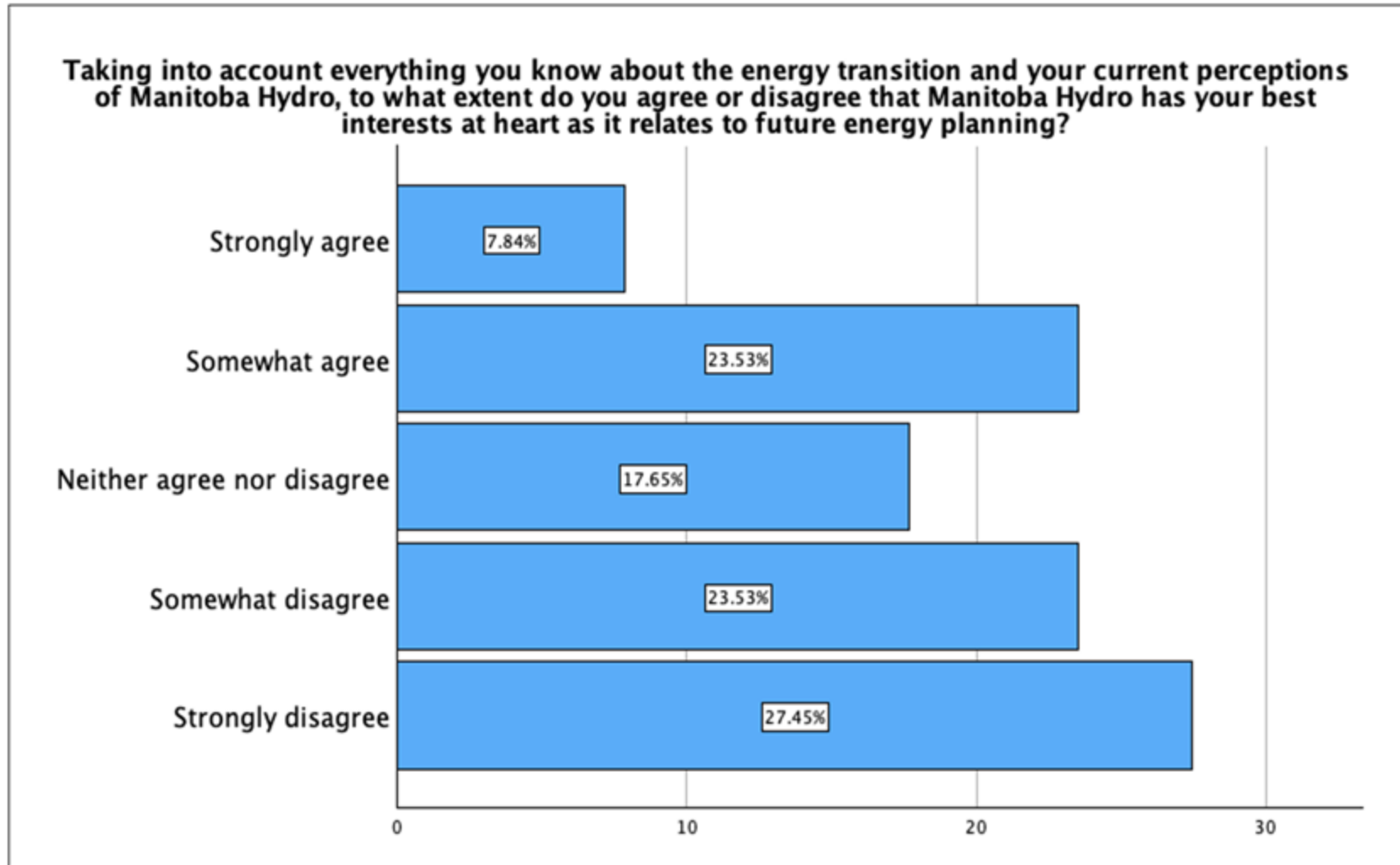


Fig 21. Agreement that Manitoba Hydro has respondents' best interests at heart in future energy planning. Just 7.8% strongly agreed; 51.0% disagreed to some degree; N=51.

MOVING FORWARD

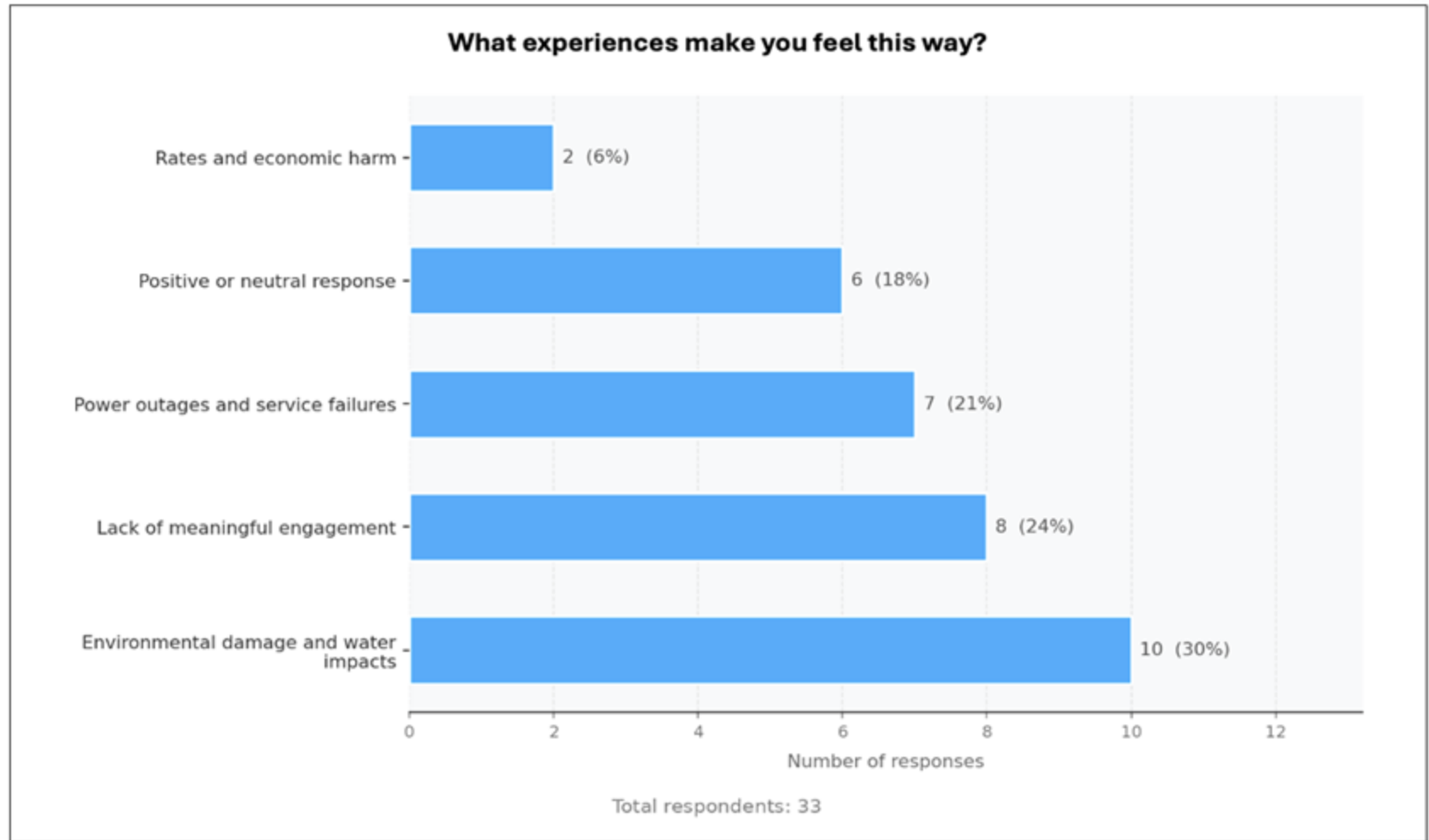


Fig 22. Coded themes from open-ended responses explaining the Q4 trust rating. Respondents most often pointed to environmental damage and water impacts (30%) and a lack of meaningful engagement (24%); N=33.

MOVING FORWARD

We previously experienced a power outage that was temporarily rectified, but this year, a community-wide power outage occurred due to the failure to resolve the issue. This resulted in evacuations, with many residents still displaced. Community members using generators faced challenges with gasoline and equipment fai... more



Plate 3. Community evacuation because of electricity outage Angela Blacksmith, 2026)

MOVING FORWARD

“Hydro and the Province need to do better to fully and meaningfully engage northern and Indigenous Nation. This is critical, because the generating stations and diversion structures are in the North and directly impact the lives, transportation and culture of the Northern Indigenous Nations. No excuse for not reaching the communities and people in the north. They need to hear how much they impact the lives of the people and work in true partnership to engage, mitigate, co-manage the ongoing IRP in MB.”

WNST Survey, R41 (First Nations, on-reserve)

“Why are my tax dollars paying for what is clearly performative transparency?”
[R_332woNnwCGzKzQZ, R2, First Nations, Lives in FN community, Road Map comments]

“Hydro not partnering with communities capable of contributing “

WNST Survey, R25 (Unknown)

MOVING FORWARD

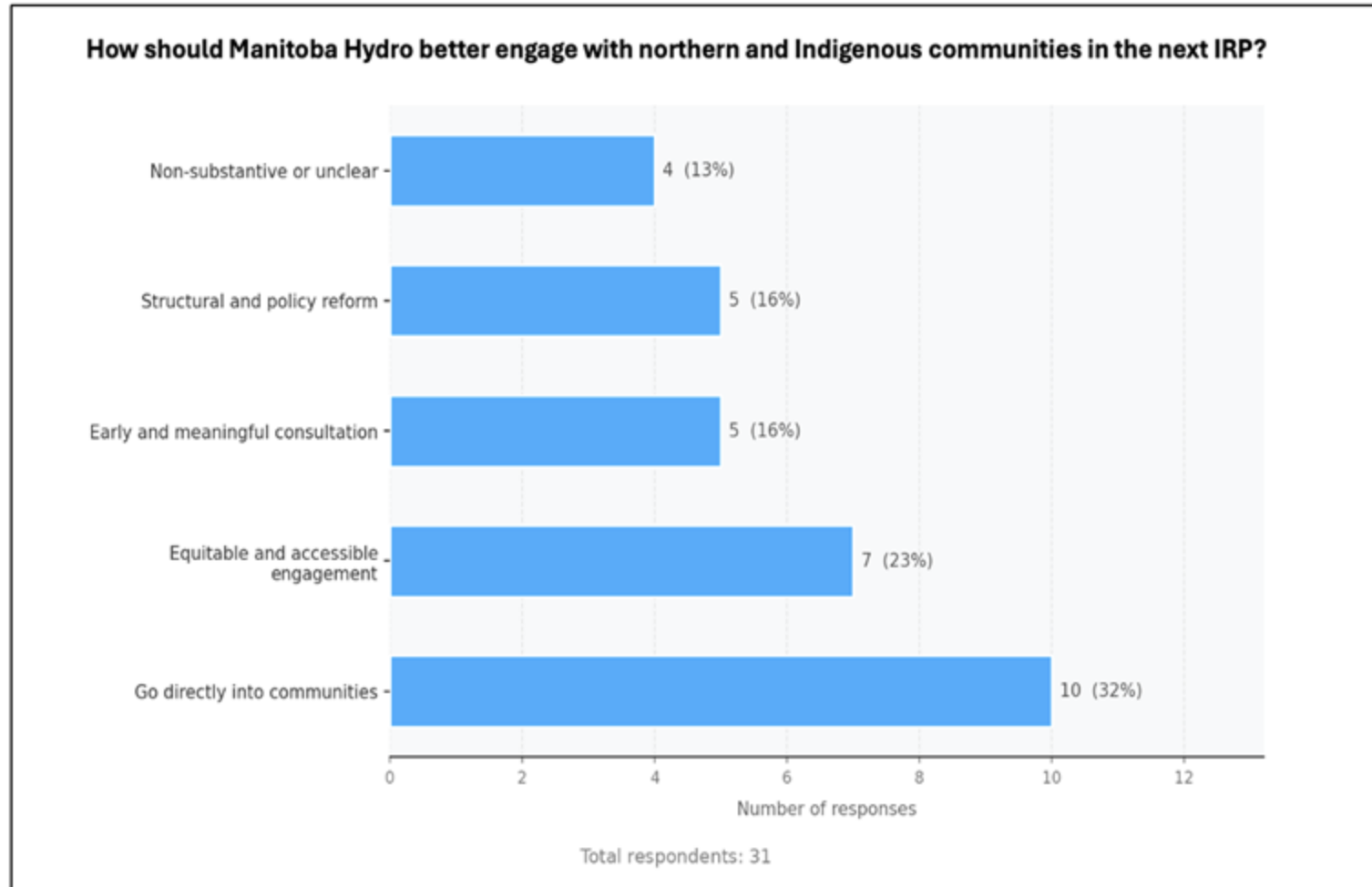


Fig 23. Coded themes from open-ended responses on how Manitoba Hydro should better engage with northern and Indigenous communities. The leading recommendation by far was to go directly into communities in person (32%); N=31.

MOVING FORWARD

“Manitoba Hydro, for me, is a complete failure because it does not involve Indigenous nations or communities for us to be able to talk to them. Rather they go make decisions, and then come after the fact. If we had our input prior in what they need, maybe it would be a better solution. But as it is right now with Manitoba Hydro and what it says, I don't trust. Even with the power outs that we have, it was not Manitoba Hydro that I needed right away. It was my leadership that I needed. And Manitoba Hydro should go to leadership and let them know asap what is happening when it's going to be done. Instead of us keeping guessing the safety of our community, the safety of our water.” (JS, OPCN).

Recommendation 12: That Manitoba Hydro’s engagement with northern First Nations seems to be characterized by working only with leadership, if this occurs at all, or with hand-picked community members, rather than working with the larger community and would benefit from being independently reviewed to see how and why it continues to underachieve, what might be done to address such shortcomings, and also what success stories do exist, all of which could in turn help inform future iterations of the IRP.

MOVING FORWARD

- Engagement early in process, before all key decisions are made

“Visit the communities before the document is developed so Indigenous Communities are made to feel that their issues and concerns are heard firsthand and taken seriously. Instead of asking for comments after the fact with no guarantee that the issue or concerns will even be addressed.”

WNST Survey, R27 (First Nations, on-reserve).

Recommendation 9: That the process of outreach and engagement with northern communities begin at least 2-3 years before the next iteration is submitted, which would enable the relationships that are identified as being so crucial to emerge. Indeed, before commencing on this plan, sit-down meetings should take place among communities, Indigenous organizations and senior management at Manitoba Hydro, to explore what is desired and what is feasible for all those involved.

MOVING FORWARD

- Proactive training and capacity exchange
- All ages
- Better and mutually rewarding engagement with IRP

“One of my ideas is not everybody is keen on technology like grabbing their phone and getting to survey, answering surveys, and downloading this app, downloading the other app to answer the survey. That's where I get stuck. My advice to Manitoba is to train Elders like myself on how to use this technology, because we're completely lost. And that's where they always put the questionnaire for people to answer...I'd like to see some training being done in the community of South Indian Lake, in every community, so that people will know how to use technology that's on their phone, because they don't teach, they didn't teach that in our school...They basically learn by themselves. I'd like to see some teaching done within the community for people that have missed out - Elders like myself.” (DD, OPCN)

MOVING FORWARD

- Relationship building
- Community visits and exchanges
- In-person

“Taking the time to come out to each community to present to communities and along with bring and sharing information about projects and other things there surrounding areas. WNST Survey, R22 (First Nations, on-reserve)

“greater community engagement with Hydro speaking and presenting directly to residents.” WNST Survey, R47 (Non-Indigenous)

MOVING FORWARD

- Open invitation to the PUB Board, Manitoba, and Manitoba Hydro
- Meet with leadership but also grassroots

“I would like to say to the Manitoba Public Utility Board, before you make any decisions, I urge you to travel to these communities and see for yourself what we are forced to be against. Check out our homes, check out our conditions, check out our social programs period. Just check us out in person. Not internet, not Zoom, whatever, but in person. Send a representative here to come and do the work that's needed. It'll be much better for us, much better for you.” (JS”, OPCN)

MOVING FORWARD



Plate 9. Liberal MP Rebecca Chartrand holding photo by Jackson Osborne of hydro-related soil erosion and tree fall (Photo credit: Jackson Osborne)

MOVING FORWARD

- Capacity sharing with communities
- Across generations
- Youth mentorship

“And the other thing I need to do...is I need to start mentoring people, but I haven't found somebody that was willing to commit 100% some of the stuff that I talked about, because to them it's too boring. They don't understand, and then, and I don't know, I think it's just sometimes they, we don't have the proper funding to initiate a mentorship program. It is just whatever funding we can scrape up, and we hire somebody for a little while. But it'd be good if we could get a long-term mentorship program going, you know, with people like myself and the civil engineer, you know, economic development officer, because a lot of us are getting up in our years” (CA, FLCN).

MOVING FORWARD

Recommendation 13: That Manitoba Hydro begin to incorporate approaches to Indigenous engagement that are people-centered, and that they become willing to learn and to accept responsibility for past and ongoing harms as the utility reframes its Indigenous engagement to be relationship based and to work with the larger communities as it works to incorporate some of the rich insights provided by previously excluded landusers in its management activities and energy planning.



COMMUNITY-LED ENERGY

COMMUNITY ENERGY

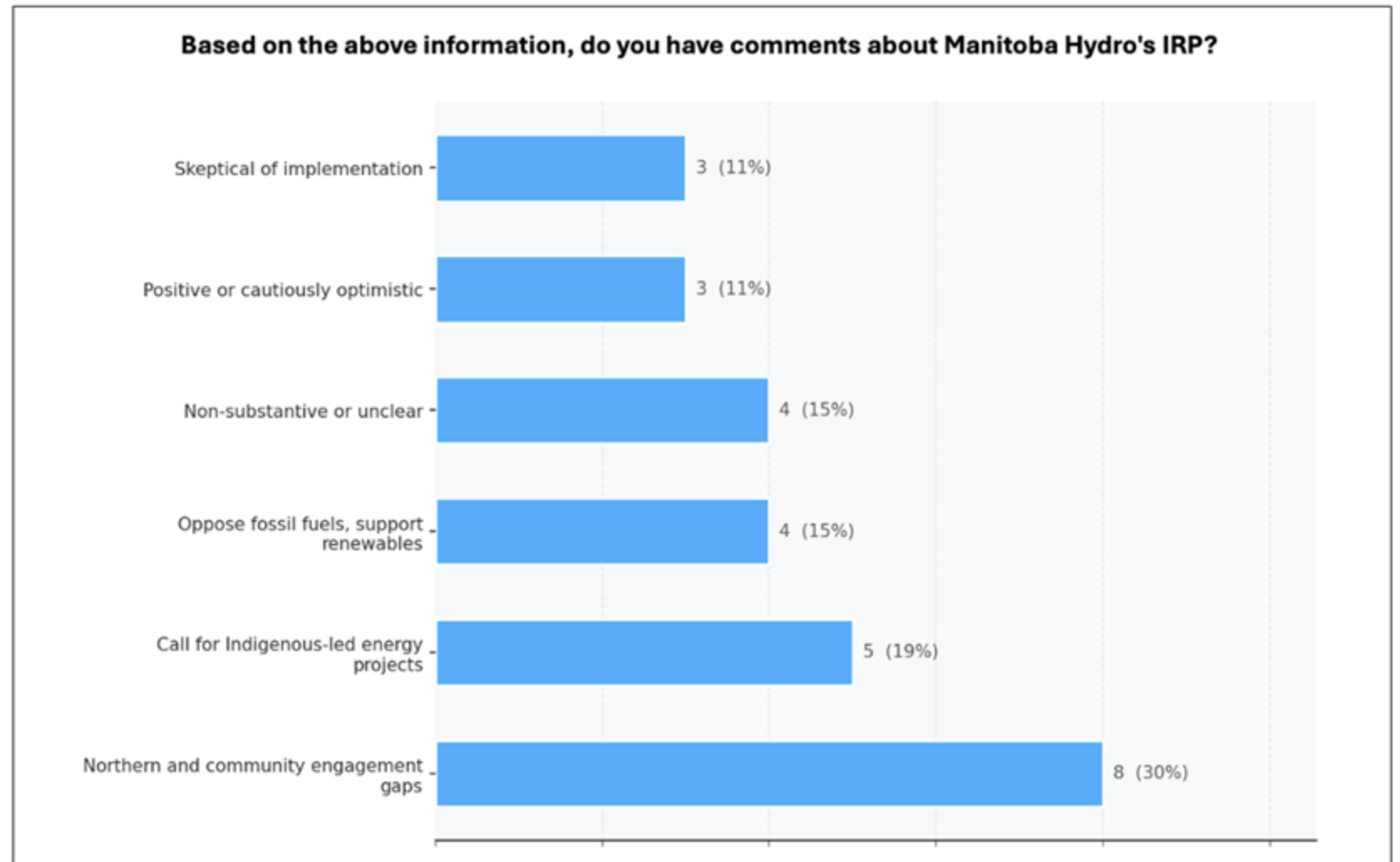


Fig 20. Coded themes from open-ended comments on the IRP after being shown its proposed resource additions. The most common response (30%) pointed to gaps in engagement with northern and Indigenous communities, followed by calls for Indigenous-led energy projects (19%); N=27.

COMMUNITY ENERGY

- Beyond wind power
- Support other Indigenous-led energy initiatives
 - Geothermal, solar, wind etc.
- Increased reliability and safety
- Sell back into grid
- Economic reconciliation

“I think that they shouldn’t just support Indigenous majority owned wind projects. Should be supporting any Indigenous alternative power projects that fit the specific communities needs. Could be a part of economic reconciliation for the harms done by MB Hydro to our communities.”

WNST Survey, R29 (First Nations, on-reserve)

COMMUNITY ENERGY

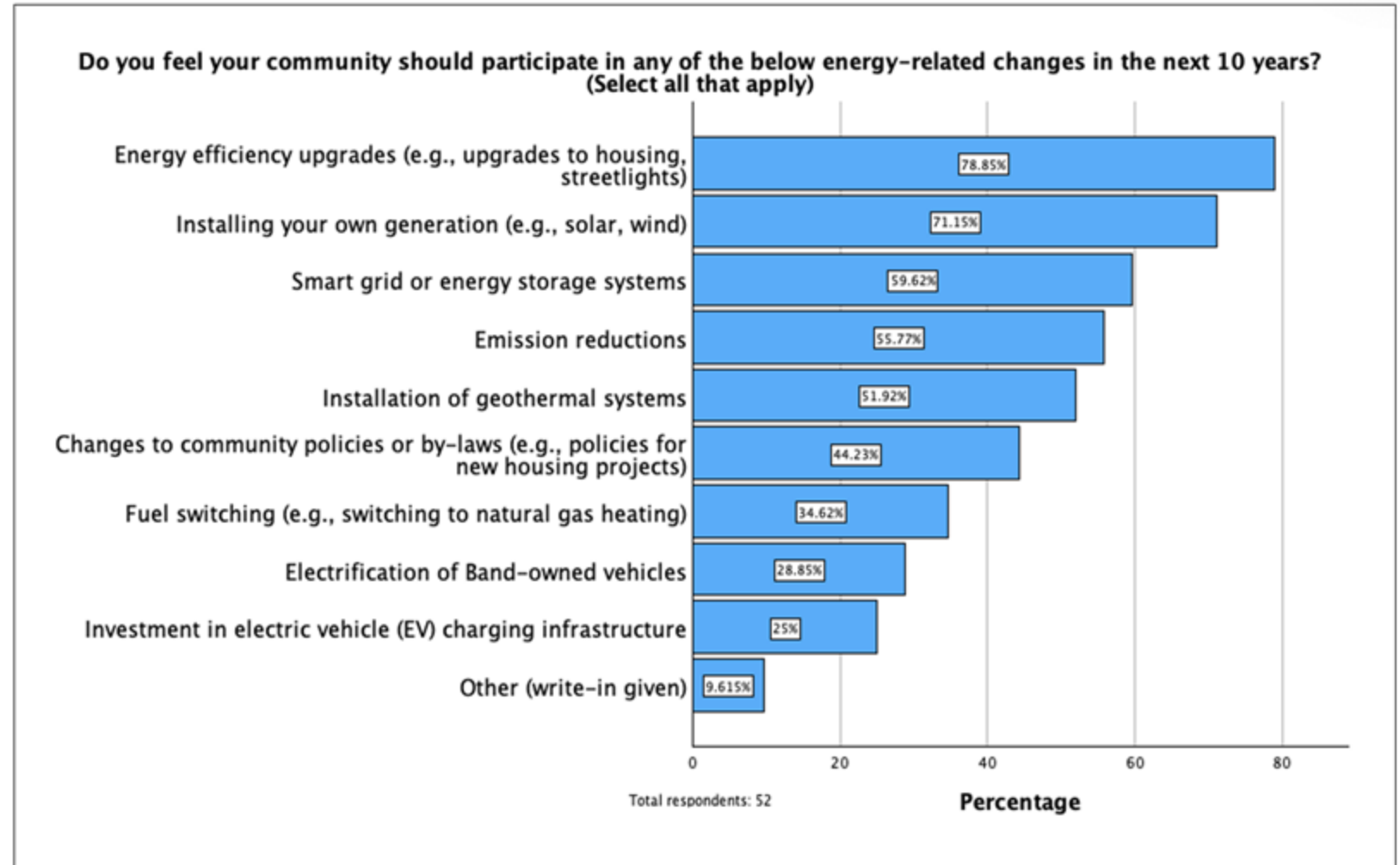


Fig 28. Energy-related changes WNST survey respondents felt their community should participate in over the next 10 years. Energy efficiency upgrades (78.9%) and self-generation (71.2%) led; N=52.

COMMUNITY ENERGY

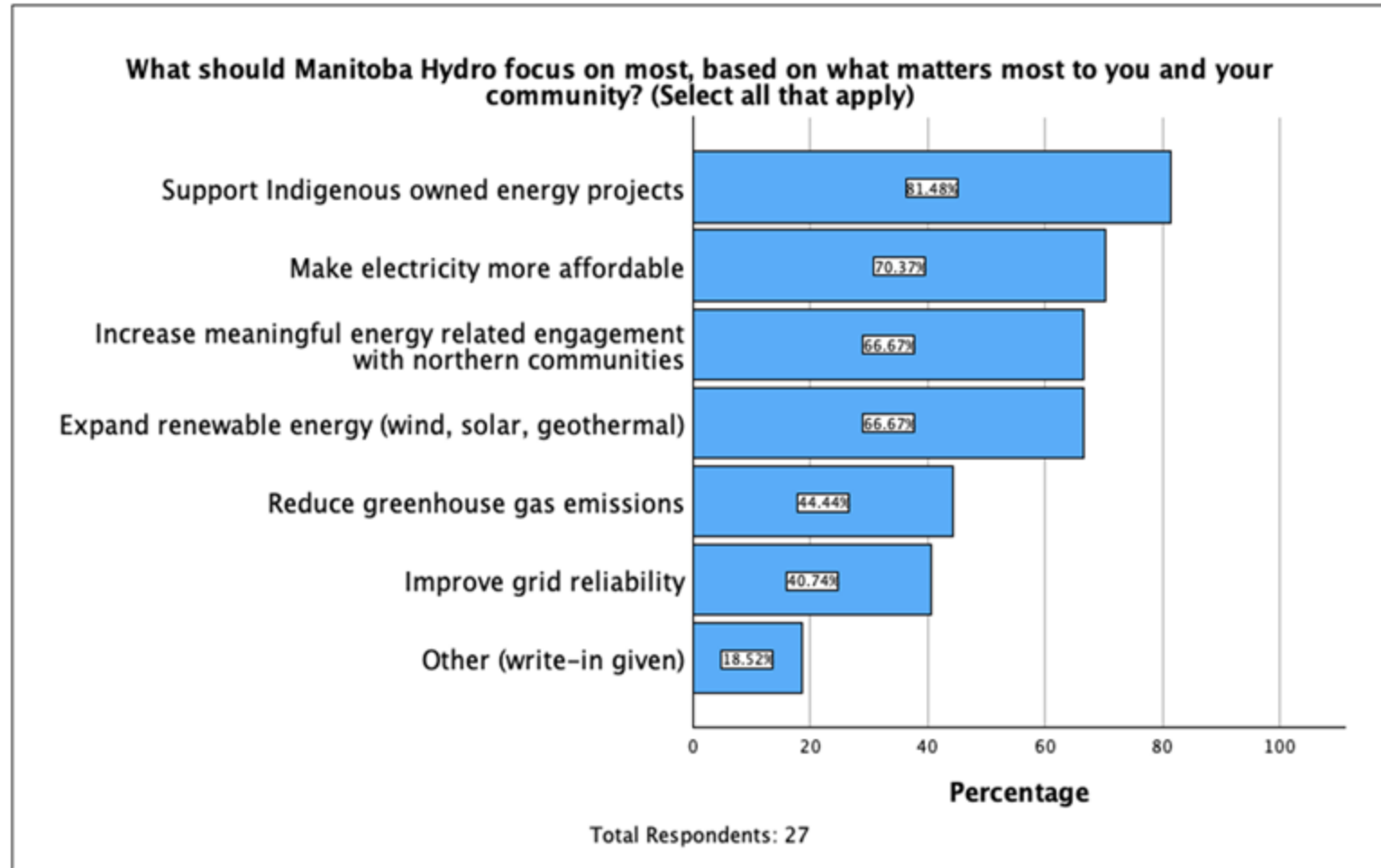


Fig 27. What WNST survey respondents felt Manitoba Hydro should focus on most. Supporting Indigenous-owned energy projects (81.5%) and affordability (70.4%) led: N=27.

MOVING FORWARD

Recommendation 15: That Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba address the hydro-related loss of livelihoods and the economic base of hydro-impacted communities by exploring ways that subsidy programs could better enable Nations to invest not only in mega wind power but also in other smaller scale energy infrastructure, especially for communities whose local economies have been devastated by a hydro-related collapse of fisheries, hunting and trapping.

Recommendation 18: That Efficiency Manitoba conduct a public review of its existing Indigenous-centered programming and identify any successes and gaps and in so doing co-design energy efficiency initiatives with Indigenous Nations that at once recognize and adapt to the substandard condition of existing housing, that build local capacity and employment opportunities in this sector, while also making such options accessible to any interested Nations and community members.

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