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Implementing the CARE Principles for Datasets with Local Contexts Labels

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Data repositories recognize that the CARE Principles (Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility and Ethics) and data sovereignty are integral when working with indigenous communities, but it can be difficult to put words into action. Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) has been working with Local Contexts to address this gap.

ONC has been working on integrating Local Context Labels into our infrastructure, to ensure that our indigenous community partners have the ability to communicate the values important to them, traditional protocols, and specific conditions for reuse of the data they collected. In order to support this, ONC had to develop pathways between our infrastructure and the Local Contexts API, as well as further develop our ISO 19115 and DataCite metadata profiles, making metadata human- and machine-readable, so that it is properly discoverable to users.

Local Contexts Labels have not been widely implemented within data repositories, so we encountered the need to develop parts of our metadata profile from scratch. It was a challenge, and we believe that other data repositories would benefit from our experiences. If our work can be leveraged by others, it would be a stride towards implementation of the CARE Principles and indigenous data sovereignty, that would add value to the entire research community.

The selection of Local Contexts Labels, and the drafting of the text associated, is intended to be done by the community, not the data repository. When ONC approached our partners about this initiative, we overwhelmingly received agreement that this is a great opportunity, but none of them had capacity to undertake this effort at the time. In an effort to be prepared for when our community partners are able to be involved, we began a Proof of Concept using ONC-owned data within the Local Contexts Test Hub.

We worked within the Local Contexts Test Hub to create a test case, using ONC-owned data allowing us to plan for technical integration, as well as provide communities with support and documentation, based on our experiences. This Proof of Concept has been valuable, and has provided us with some great insights into the Local Contexts Infrastructure, as well as the challenges our community partners will likely encounter, allowing us to develop supports in advance.

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