



Poverty Summit - November 28-30, 2011

Collaboration, cooperation, mutual understanding. These may seem like utopian notions in many contexts. Yet, this year we in Nunavut, in one capacity or another, were part of a broad public engagement effort that led to an unprecedented agreement on an urgent issue.

This broad agreement, which was made in Iqaluit during the poverty summit, November 28-30, 2011, is called *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*. Its goal is to promote holistic approaches to poverty reduction, which have been organized within six "action themes." These themes will help us to define poverty in Nunavut, and provide a lens through which we can view our policies and programs to assess their effectiveness in reducing poverty.

The plan focuses on collaboration and healing, and calls on every sector of society to work together to find ways in which to support initiatives that promote community and individual self-reliance.

The Makimaniq Plan was reviewed by participants during the final session on Wednesday morning (November 30). The plan has been corrected, translated, formatted and re-distributed to all participants.

Now we can move to the next step in this process, which, as stated on page # 1 of the plan, is to prepare our own organizations for action:

"We recognize that this must be a plan for all of us, and we pledge to review this plan within our respective organizations to confirm our commitment to these priorities."

In the New Year, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction will meet to adjust its structure to reflect the organizational needs presented by *The Makimaniq Plan*. A transition team will draft a new terms of reference that will guide the roundtable's new role to provide leadership and oversight in the implementation of the plan.

Nunavut



Harry Maksagak

What's Causing Poverty?



Anna Ziegler and Saa Kotairuq

This reorganization will build on the momentum generated through the public engagement process and the poverty summit, and on the commitments to action made by participants, including representatives from government, Inuit organizations, municipalities, NGOs, the business community and individuals.

A law to support poverty reduction.

The poverty summit was co-chaired by Premier Aariak and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Vice-President Jack Anawak. In the media conference that followed the summit, Premier Aariak announced that the government will introduce legislation "for the implementation of the long-term Poverty Reduction Action Plan with the collaboration of our partners." Nunavut will be the fifth provincial/territorial jurisdiction in Canada to address poverty reduction in this way.

The government's announcement also made commitments to revise the public housing rent scale, establish a culturally-relevant pilot program for addictions treatment, and convene and participate in a Nunavut Food Security Coalition

With this broad agreement on a plan for action, we have taken a big first step towards understanding that organizations and individuals in our society, if we are to succeed in resolving complex challenges such as poverty, must learn from each and act together.

Let's make of the fight against poverty an opportunity to work closely with each other to support our communities in their own initiatives, and to nourish the great potentials our society possesses.

Happy Holidays, and until the New Year.



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