



News About Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan

14 March 2011

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This newsletter has been prepared in response to numerous requests from communities, organizations and individuals for more information about the preparation of Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan.

It's written by staff at the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, who, together with staff in the Department of Social and Cultural Development at Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., provide administrative support to the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction.

You have expressed interest in receiving news about the effort to reduce poverty in Nunavut, and so you're on our mailing list. If you know of others who are interested, please forward this newsletter to them. We're anxious to reach as many people as possible in our communities!

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Send us an e-mail: nrpr@makiliqta.ca.

CBC Radio Reports on Arctic Bay Community Dialogue

CBC Radio reports:

People in Arctic Bay speak out about poverty in the territory

People in Arctic Bay this week spoke out about poverty in the territory at a community meeting. Anna Qaunaq was one of the facilitators. She says 53 people showed up even though there were other meetings in the community at the same time. Qaunaq says some people spoke of how many young people start families before they have the means to support themselves.

"Whereas back then if a man learned how to hunt and learned how to build an igloo and was able to take care of a family, that's when he would get a wife, get married and start his own family."

Qaunaq says ideas such as training young people to hunt were brought up as possible solutions. Another resident said funding to teach hunting and sewing skills is available if the community is interested. Similar poverty meetings are being held across the territory. Those who cannot attend are encouraged to submit ideas to the facilitators. An anti-poverty summit hosted by the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik will take place in November.

Fifty-three people participated in the community meeting. Arctic Bay also has held a community radio program on poverty reduction, and Anna has started a Facebook group called "Let's Fight Hunger in Our Community - Arctic Bay."

Congratulations to Arctic Bay community dialogue facilitators Anna Qaunaq and Esau Tatatoapik!

The Nutrition North Review Project

In our last newsletter we reported on the impact Audrey Qamanirq's photos of Arctic Bay food prices has had on public awareness of this issue.

Now there's another community-based initiative to help ensure our food prices are carefully monitored--the [Nutrition North Review Project](#), "a grass roots review of the Nutrition North Program in Nunavut."

The goal of this project is gather prices on a small selection of groceries from communities across Nunavut. Already 16 communities have volunteers reporting on food prices. Volunteers are still needed for:

- Chesterfield Inlet
- Gjoa Haven
- Grise Fiord
- Hall Beach
- Kimmirut
- Qikiqtarjuaq
- Repulse Bay
- Taloyoak

If you're intersted in helping out with the Nutrition North Review Project email Tony Rose at: contact@nutritionnorth.org.

Community Dialogue Facilitators' Workshops Across Nunavut!

Qikiqtani Workshops

Two community dialogue facilitators' workshops were held in Iqaluit with participants from every community in the Qikiqtani region, including Grise Fjord and Sanikiluaq.



Photos: Jayco Simonie from Sanirajak sharing his group's ideas during the "community assets" activity during the first Qikiqtani facilitators' workshop (left); participants from the second Qikiqtani facilitators' workshop (right).

Kitikmeot Workshop

A week later, the workshop team--Kerri, Tim, Anna, and Ed--were "on the road" to Kugluktuk, where Wendy Bolt, Theresa Adamanche and Jonathan Case had organized a workshop for community representatives from the Kitikmeot region. On February 25 we met at the Community Hall with new friends from Kugluktuk, Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak and Kugaaruk.

The Kitikmeot workshop was an intense learning experience for everyone. One reason for this was the weather: a blizzard in Kugluktuk (and blizzards throughout the region) kept us together for three days. Lots of time to talk, to get to know each other and to share ideas!



Another reason was drum dancing. Theresa honoured the group with a performance during the workshop, and then arranged for us to visit an elders' drum dancing workshop, where the Kitikmeot Heritage Society was recording songs.

Photos: Kitikmeot facilitators' workshop participants (left); Johnny Kootook from Taloyoak sharing his group's community goals and visions (right).

Kivalliq Workshops

Blizzards and high winds were waiting for us in the Kivalliq region, too, and we arrived a day late in Rankin Inlet. Two workshop sessions were held at the Catholic Parish Hall. Tommy Bruce did most of the organizing, and Boyd White, Robert Connelly and Laura McKenzie also provided tremendous support, particularly when the weather caused a change in our schedule, and we added a second workshop on very short notice.

As in Kugluktuk, the extra time in Rankin Inlet led to a better workshop experience and more. In Rankin Inlet in early March the community focus is on hockey and the Avataq Cup - and the arena was next door to St. Hall. Thursday night's game between Coral Harbour and Rankin Inlet provided an unforgettable experience of the energy and passion in our communities!

Because of the blizzards, community representatives from Cambridge Bay could not make it to the regional facilitators' workshop. So, last week, Wendy Bolt and Theresa Adamanche traveled to Cambridge Bay together to collaborate with three people from Cambridge Bay who will facilitate dialogue there.



Thank you to everyone who supported and participated in the workshops! The workshop dialogues on poverty reduction and community development were brave, honest and inspiring. The workshop team has noted how much consensus has been expressed in each region on our core values and strengths, our visions for Nunavut and for the changes we are all eager to create. We look forward to gathering everyone together again in May to share the ideas that have been

developed in each community-to pool our collective knowledge on how we can move forward to reduce poverty in Nunavut.

Photo: Wendy Bolt reviewing her group's ideas for action during the community facilitators' workshop in Kugluktuk.

For more information about the workshops and the role of the community facilitator contact the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat (867-975-7817) or the Community Operations office of ED&T in your region.

To see more photos from the workshops, visit our Facebook page!

Key Issues and Ideas Expressed in Workshops So Far

*What are some of the **most important issues** that must be addressed in order for us to develop the vibrant communities we envision and meet the challenges of poverty?*

The following issues and ideas for action have been expressed in *all* workshops so far, with strong consensus.

For each issue, the workshop groups developed ideas for action to be taken by government and other organizations and also by communities, families and individuals. The general tone of the workshops has been an energizing call to action, support for working together, and a vision of collective capabilities.

1. Country Foods

... essential to poverty reduction and community wellbeing.

- We must work together to increase access to country foods. Country foods are seen as important in *all* aspects of healthy community life in Nunavut, not only for food security and nutrition, but also for local economic growth, interpersonal relationships, skills development and self-esteem, and cultural and community identity.
- Increasing access to country foods requires action at the family, community, regional and territorial levels. Access to country foods was the most strongly and widely expressed issue to consider for poverty reduction.

2. Food Security

... requires urgent short and long-term action.

- Food security requires both increased emergency responses *and* long-term

solutions (some of which are reflected in the other issues listed here). In the second Rankin workshop, it was agreed that short-term solutions must be considered *very cautiously*, however, as they can mask the need for long-term solutions. We need to move forward with a balance of short and long-term actions.

- Many good ideas for action were developed in each workshop, some requiring action at the territorial level, but also within communities and families.

3. Healing, Well Being and Community Connections

...are essential elements of poverty reduction. We must focus on well being and relationships for individuals, communities and institutions. It's time to share, support and listen to each other.

- We need opportunities to consider the massive social changes that all communities have experienced in the last 3 generations, so that we can establish shared goals, visions and values for where we want to go from here.
- We envision stronger connections within our families and communities. We need more healthy and joyful community gathering opportunities, not only for youth and elders, but for adults, too.
- We need to establish more treatment programs and other programs for wellbeing. This must include residential treatment programs in Nunavut.
- We also need to recognize the good work already being done in communities and to increase support for community-driven programs. This requires, among other actions, making funding programs more accessible and "Inuit-friendly," as one participant said.
- We need to strengthen relationships and increase coordination between government departments, Inuit organizations and community organizations.

4. Revisions to Income Support and Housing Programs

...are urgently needed so that recipients are not "trapped."

- It was widely agreed that these systems are structured in such a way that recipients are *trapped*.
- One of the most frequently suggested actions for change is to make rent scaling more gradual, offering "transition support" to people taking on paid

employment and moving off income support. The sudden increase in a person's rent when they take on wage employment is unmanageable and acts as a major deterrent.

- It was also frequently suggested that we must stop the practice of deducting tax credits (including the federal child tax credit), honoraria and other small earnings from a recipient's total monthly income support payment.
- Finally, it was widely agreed that current monthly income support amounts are simply not enough. We were told that a single person living in the High Arctic can expect to receive approximately \$350 per month, only \$100 of which is received as cash (the remainder comes on a "Link Card"). Any tax credits, honoraria or other small amounts of income are deducted from the \$350.

5. Education, Training and "Skills Sharing" within our Communities

... are essential to poverty reduction and require action from all of us.

- Some long-term solutions suggested involve the GN, NTI and other employers acting on their potential to develop "learning cultures" in the workplace, such that working for such organizations means having access to skills development, mentorship, career counseling and increased options.
- On-the-job training and mentorship programs have been described as some of the most practical and accessible ways to increase employment skills.
- We must take action to make elementary and high school education more inviting, accessible and engaging for children and youth. Immediate actions suggested include parental and community involvement, breakfast programs and recreational programs. Major long-term solutions involve revising school curricula to better reflect Inuit language and culture.
- Workshop participants also called on *each other* to share their own skills in their families and communities. With more community gathering spaces and stronger community connections, informal skills sharing would naturally increase. Such skills would include everything from hunting and land skills to Inuktitut and English literacy.

Many other important issues and ideas for action have been raised in the workshops. All of these issues and ideas will be presented in the summary reports for each region.

To comment on any of these issues, please contact us!

Makiliqta Community Dialogue Toolkit - Now Available!



The *Makiliqta Community Dialogue Toolkit* is now available electronically in Inuktitut and English. Check it out! Pass it on! Organize a dialogue workshop in your community! Let us know how we can support you. To get a copy, please contact Tim Stiles (tstiles@gov.nu.ca, 975-7755).

Meet the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat - Tim Stiles

My name is Tim Stiles and I work at the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat as a policy analyst. My responsibilities include providing communications support for the Secretariat, ensuring that community voices are appropriately represented at the policy level and working as a permanent staff member of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. I am grateful to be involved in such an important and timely project.



My background is in political science and international development. I hold a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Guelph and am currently an M.A. candidate at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University. My studies have focused on the importance of civil society and local-level governance structures in the context of development.

In my free time, I enjoy getting out on the land by dogsled, playing in the Senior Men's Hockey league here in Iqaluit and going out my backdoor to ski on Frobisher Bay. This summer I hope to explore some of the river systems in Nunavut by canoe.

I believe in community-based approaches to tackling complicated issues such as poverty and am convinced that solutions to the core problems associated with poverty lie within communities. Our job at the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat is to help harness the wisdom already present in communities and engage local voices in the territory-wide decision-making process. Together with all our partners at the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, we hope to create a positive and productive environment where concerned citizens, government, NGOs and the business community can address the core issues associated with poverty.