

● National Urban Inuit Community Dialogue

Supporting Local
Champions

Exhibit: National Inquiry into Missing and
Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Location/Phase: Parts 2/3 St. John's

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An Urban Inuit Strategy
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In 2014/15 and 2015/16, through funding made available by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Tungasuvingat Inuit engaged urban Inuit in 6 cities, including: St. John's, NL; Montréal, QC; Ottawa, ON; Toronto, ON; Winnipeg, MB; and, Edmonton, AB, for the *Increasing Urban Inuit Participation in the Economy* project. The purpose of the project was to increase local Inuit capacity to engage and fully participate in the design and development of initiatives focused on dealing with issues faced by urban Aboriginal Canadians. In addition, the project aimed to ensure that all future Aboriginal initiatives included an Inuit perspective based on local Inuit experience and expertise.

Through extensive Inuit engagement and by identifying barriers faced by Inuit, the project aimed to:

- Contribute to the development of a National Urban Inuit Strategy to support the increased participation of Inuit in the economy;
- Identify key priorities faced by Inuit to feed into Regional Strategic Plans; and,
- Develop partnerships with industry, federal and provincial partners and key stakeholders.

National Urban Inuit Strategy Vision

That all Inuit and their organizations be guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and create strong urban Inuit communities across Canada that gather to practice, celebrate, maintain and teach Inuit culture. That urban Inuit and their organizations support one another and participate in the design and provision of the programs, services, tools, information, resources and supports Inuit need to be healthy and feel safe.

National Urban Inuit Strategy Goals

Strengthening Urban Inuit Communities – A Place for Inuit – Ensuring that there is an investment in an urban Inuit community infrastructure and that urban Inuit have a place to call their own.



Jason LeBlanc

Executive Director of Tungasuvingat Inuit.



Knowledge and Expertise – Expanding knowledge and expertise on the urban Inuit population across the country, through Inuit-led research and analysis.

Culture and Traditional Knowledge – Inuit culture and traditional knowledge is at the core of the National Urban Inuit Strategy. Inuit need the opportunity to gather and celebrate their culture.

Justice – Ensuring that Inuit have access to all necessary supports within the justice system.

Safety – Ensuring the safety of Inuit within the urban environment.

Health and Wellness – Ensuring Inuit are healthy, well and have access to all health services.

Education – Supporting Inuit in the pursuit of their life-long learning goals and objectives.

Family Supports – Supporting the family unit through Inuit-specific programs and services.

Housing – Ensuring Inuit in urban centres are able to access appropriate and safe housing.

National Urban Inuit Strategy Strategic Priorities

Infrastructure and Local Capacity Development – Ensuring that urban Inuit have a voice in urban centres across the country; helping Inuit transition to urban centres from the north and/or rural communities; and, ensuring Inuit have a place to call their own and gather.

Language, Tradition and Culture – The ability to speak Inuktitut, share country food, share with and pass on traditional knowledge to Inuit within the urban environment is a key component of the Strategy.

Educational Supports – Providing the necessary supports for the educational success of urban Inuit.

Continuum of Care and Support – Providing consistent funding to support Inuit-specific programming and services for urban Inuit.

National Urban Inuit Research and Knowledge Transfer Network – Supporting urban Inuit-specific research initiatives that will benefit urban Inuit across the country.

Urban Inuit-Specific Policy Development and Programming – For governments, partners and stakeholders to use the Strategy as a tool to initiate discussion on how and where to invest and support urban Inuit in Canada.

Engaging Urban Inuit in Other Urban Centres – The Strategy should not exclude or limit the participation of Inuit residing in other urban centres that were not involved in the project engagement process.

2 Introduction

The 2015/16 *National Urban Inuit Community Dialogue – Building Local Champions*, was a national dialogue and community capacity building exercise that brought together local Inuit in urban centres to discuss and identify how Inuit would like to be involved in addressing issues and challenges they faced living in the cities. Building on the outcomes from the “*One Voice Workshop*” in 2005, and with the support of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI) was able to create a “space” for Inuit in urban cities and assist in the building of local Inuit capacity to access the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and improve urban Inuit participation in the economy. Inuit residing in St. John’s, NL; Montréal, QC; Ottawa, ON; Toronto, ON; Winnipeg, MB; and, Edmonton, AB, were able to gather and discuss the provision of First Nations, Métis and Inuit services within their respective cities and determine how urban Inuit could be involved in improving services specifically for Inuit.

In addition to providing information on the programs and services available to First Nations, Métis and Inuit in the cities, the facilitated dialogue allowed each city to develop and/or strengthen community plans that included a vision, goals, community strengths, and an action plan, outlining how each goal would be achieved. Two (2) National Meetings were also held, bringing representatives from each of the 6 cities together to discuss how an Urban Inuit Network could work together for the betterment of Inuit across Canada. The Urban Inuit Strategy (UIS) is a description of a path forward based on the 18 months of dialogue undertaken throughout the *Urban Partnerships – Increasing Urban Inuit Participation in the Economy* initiative.



Inuit Studies Conference October 2016 St. John’s, NF

NF. Left to Right: Kowesa Etitiq (Tungasuvvingat Inuit), Gail Baikie (Halifax), Marilyn Maychak (Toronto Inuit Association), Norma Dunning (Inuit Edmontonmiut), and Angus Anderson (St. John’s). This roundtable invites various community groups to share updates from their organization efforts and discuss strategies to implementing an Urban Inuit Strategy.

3

National Urban Inuit Community Dialogue
Supporting Local Champions



3 An Urban Inuit Strategy

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of Inuit now live outside of Inuit Nunangat (“where Inuit live”), Inuit traditional lands including Nunavut, Nunavik (northern Québec), Nunatsiavut (Labrador), and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) of the Northwest Territories (Statistics Canada 2015). The trend toward urbanization among Inuit is growing because of problematic living conditions in the north—namely, overcrowded housing, food insecurity, lack of economic and educational opportunities and limited access to medical care. Gaps exist between Inuit well-being and that of the general population of Canada, yet Canadian cities are not fully prepared to facilitate the transition from northern hamlets and communities to large southern urban areas (Morris, 2016). The infrastructure and capacity built to facilitate the transition of First Nations moving to the urban environment needs to be replicated and supported to meet the specific needs of Inuit. The UIS seeks to build support and continually improve the services and programs needed for Inuit in the urban environment.

The common thread in most of the research with Inuit in urban areas is the conclusion that much more support for Inuit-specific services is needed. In a study of urban Inuit homelessness, Kishigami (2008) suggested that an urban Inuit community centre where information and food could be shared is essential for the well-being of Inuit. Budak (2014) noted in her profile of urban Inuit that “[i]t is common to hear Inuit say they crave the company of other Inuit, or that maintaining strong cultural ties is a crucial part of how they managed the transition into city life”. Kushwaha (2013) documented how Ottawa Inuit were able to maintain an Inuit identity and connection to the land through the consuming of country foods, transfer of Inuit knowledge, cultural practices, and language made possible by local Inuit organizations. Bloy (2008) concluded:

“Without intervention, Inuit children growing up in Winnipeg will not be exposed to Inuktitut language, Inuit sewing, art, story telling, games, singing and drumming. Moreover they will not have the opportunity to experience the deep community connection between Inuit that has always been central to their survival as a people.”

The Urban Inuit Strategy is an initial step and path forward to engage, support and maintain a local urban Inuit community and prepare for Inuit who wish to transition to their cities. The UIS seeks an investment to strengthen a network of Inuit specific organizations in eight (8) cities (including Halifax, NS; and, Vancouver, BC) across Canada’s south. It will also seek to resource and gather information on urban Inuit to better understand, serve and express the needs of Inuit outside of Inuit Nunangat.

Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI) with the support of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development Canada (INAC), engaged Inuit in 6 southern cities: St. John's, NL; Montréal, QC; Ottawa, ON; Toronto, ON; Winnipeg, MB; and, Edmonton, AB. The goal was to work with local Inuit in the development of an UIS and a proposal for submission to the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) to improve Inuit participation in urban economies. Throughout the duration of the project, TI was also able to visit each city twice and meet with local Inuit community members.

Throughout the sessions, Inuit were engaged in discussions about challenges faced while living in the city. The facilitated conversations also provided a space where local Inuit could hear from municipalities and existing local program and service providers, including city police; colleges and universities; health centres; child and family services; local district school boards; legal services; various Aboriginal organizations, etc.

Participants discussed the realities of moving to the city and how Inuit moving to the city for the first time could benefit from the participants' experiences and knowledge.

Participants also identified what was known about Inuit within their respective cities and what additional information would be useful.

The project found that each city has a local Inuit community providing or supporting Inuit-specific activities. The facilitated process gathered the Vision, Principles, Goals, specific experiences, challenges and needs of Inuit for each city. The initiative also identified solutions and plans for moving forward in priority areas that were both local and network-wide. It was also suggested that the plans be grounded in Inuit Principles – Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ), to ground Inuit participation in the provision of needed programs and services to Inuit in the urban environment; the programs, services and the supports Inuit need to effectively and fully participate in the urban economy.

The initiative has led to the creation of an Urban Inuit Network. The Network is made up of Inuit core groups from each city ready to work together for the betterment of all Inuit. There is a need for resources for local Inuit to continue to gather, support one another and celebrate their successes with their local service provision network.

There is also a need for funding for an urban Inuit research initiative that will be locally focused, designed, implemented and supported through a network of urban Inuit researchers. The project did gather as much information as it could find and has included a snapshot of the urban Inuit population as *Appendix A* of the Strategy.



5 Tungasuvvingat Inuit and Urban Inuit Engagement

Located in Ottawa, ON, Tungasuvvingat Inuit is a multi-sector hub for Inuit of all ages, whether they have just started to unravel the challenges of navigating urban living in the south, or staying connected to their culture in the north. A registered, charitable, not-for-profit organization, TI offers more than 20 highly integrated, front-line services and is the only Inuit-specific service organization of its kind in urban Canada offering support to Inuit through their entire life cycle.

The expertise and capacity developed at TI has allowed the organization to create partnerships, networks and access resources aimed at supporting urban Inuit across Canada. This latest national engagement is the second being hosted by TI.



Charlotte Qamaniq courtesy of Nunatsiaq News. Charlotte an acclaimed throat singer who performs in the group Silla + Rise.

The “National Urban Inuit – One Voice – Workshop, held in October 2005, was a joint venture between Tungasuvvingat Inuit and the Inuit Relations Secretariat of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. Inuit from several Canadian cities gathered in Ottawa discussed their experiences, challenges, successes and priorities. The workshop participants had identified three main concerns: the need for a national body representing Inuit in the south; the need for Inuit community centres in urban areas; and, the need for support from the federal government and others.

6 INAC’S Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Increasing Inuit participation in urban economies is a high priority for INAC. According to the 2011 National Household Survey, 37.5% of Inuit living outside of Inuit Nunangat live in large urban centres. As the fastest growing and youngest urban Aboriginal population in Canada, Inuit participation in Canada’s urban economies is especially important.¹

The UAS defines *Participation in the Economy* as participation that enables Aboriginal Peoples to have the skills, knowledge and training to secure, maintain and excel in a strong Canadian economy.

On February 6, 2014 the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) was announced, aimed at

¹ November 5, 2015, Urban Aboriginal Strategy. AANDC Presentation to National Meeting.

increasing the economic participation of urban Aboriginal Peoples. The previous slate of urban Aboriginal programming ended and was replaced by two new programs:

Urban Partnerships (\$30 million annually) Encourages partnerships and community planning and makes investments in projects that increase the participation of urban Aboriginal people in the economy.

Community Capacity Support (\$23 million annually) Provides core-like funding to all eligible urban Aboriginal community organizations, establishing a strong and stable base from which to attract public and private contributions while assisting them in delivering programs and services that support the increased participation of urban Aboriginal people in the economy.



Annie Pisuktie and Tina Pisuktie of Montreal

Both women have worked for years to help Inuit living in Montreal, through organizations like Chez Doris and the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal. Annie also works on the Nipivut radio service for Inuit, which is broadcast on CKUT, a community radio station based at McGill University. (PHOTO BY JIM BELL) courtesy of Nunatsiaq News



7 Inuit-Specific Challenges with the Urban Aboriginal Strategy

It should be noted that the UAS falls short of providing urban Inuit with the services they need and the appropriate funding required to meet the goals articulated in each program. The process through which UAS resources are currently distributed continues to be mainly geared to First Nations and Métis leaving Inuit with little to no access. Inuit organizations have met and discussed UAS with the responsible INAC staff to convince them of the importance of having Inuit-specific programs and resources within UAS.

No progress had been made on the issue until the TI National Dialogue initiative was supported by INAC. This round of discussions focused on assisting with the development of local Inuit capacity to access the UAS program and resources. The hope is that a National Urban Inuit Strategy will be beneficial to Inuit in Canadian cities.



Maria Brazeau

who's originally from Nunatsiavut, tends a qulliq at the opening of the national meeting of urban Inuit that began Nov. 5-6 2015 in Ottawa. Courtesy of Nunatsiaq News.

8 Purpose of the National Urban Inuit Strategy

The main purpose of the National Urban Inuit Strategy is to identify the priorities of urban Inuit as they perceive them, to implement the priorities that would reflect Inuit values, language and identity, and provide Inuit with the proper funding to facilitate the implementation of supports. The sessions were initially intended to explore the issues preventing access to the UAS but led to a broader discussion about accessing all federal, provincial and municipal programs that may facilitate Inuit survival and prosperity in an urban environment. The overall purpose became the creation of a Strategy that would facilitate the engagement of Inuit in urban settings to support Inuit moving into the Canadian urban environment.

8.1 A Reflection of Being Away from Home

The vision is a positive reflection of the realities of being away from the north. It describes what every participant desired when discussing the realities of being so far away from home. The ability to gather, speak the language, socialize, celebrate and support one another. The vision also speaks to the desire of urban Inuit to access programs and services designed by and for Inuit. Every city expressed the desire to participate in supporting Inuit as they transition to life in the south and felt that Inuit need to see themselves in the programs and services they access.

8.2 Vision

That all Inuit and their organizations be guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and create strong urban Inuit communities across Canada that gather to practice, celebrate, maintain and teach Inuit culture. That urban Inuit and their organizations support one another and participate in the design and provision of the programs, services, tools, information, resources and supports Inuit need to be healthy and feel safe.





8.3 Principles – Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

1. Pijitsirniq (or the concept of serving). This principle speaks to the roles Inuit and their organizations have and the relationships that need to be created to best serve Inuit people. The principle of serving and providing for family and/or your community.

2. Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (the concept of respect and caring for people). Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.

3. Tunnganarniq (concept of being open, welcoming and inclusive). The principle speaks to the desire to foster good spirits by being open, welcoming and inclusive in all urban Inuit initiatives.

4. Aajiiqatigiingniq (or the concept of consensus decision-making). This principle speaks to the need to develop standardized consultation and decision-making processes for urban Inuit, for their organizations and between their organizations.

5. Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq (or the concept of skills and knowledge acquisition). This concept is to ensure a meaningful capacity-building adjunct to all community-empowerment exercises. The development of skills through observation, mentoring, monitoring/research/evaluation, practice and effort.

6. Piliriqatigiingniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq (or the concept of collaborative relationships or working together for a common purpose). Urban Inuit communities want to be full and meaningful partners in all community and social development activities. They also wish to establish meaningful and effective relationships and partnerships with Inuit and Canadian governments.

7. Avatimik Kamattiarniq (or the concept of environmental stewardship). That the initiatives undertaken by urban Inuit will be in keeping with our responsibility to the land, animals and the environment.

8. Qanuqtuurunnarniq/Qanuqtuurniq (or the concept of being resourceful to solve problems). The National Urban Inuit Strategy and any resulting initiatives will be innovative and resourceful.



8.4 Goals

The goals identified provide the Strategy with the desired outcomes from which an action plan and an investment plan can be created. The goals are intended to focus attention on areas and initiatives that will facilitate Inuit in their transition to an urban environment.

1. Strengthening Urban Inuit Communities – A Place for Inuit

To ensure that Inuit in all urban centres have places to call their own. That there be an investment in an urban Inuit community infrastructure. An infrastructure created and supported by Inuit within each city who have the desire and ability to participate in creating a welcoming and supportive urban Inuit community. The goal is to have strong, welcoming and supportive Inuit communities in every urban centre in Canada. To have a known Inuit community in every city that has a place to gather, celebrate and support one another.

The creation of a space through this joint TI/INAC initiative for urban Inuit to gather has already led to the inclusion of an urban Inuit voice in policy discussions beyond the UAS. Local urban Inuit communities have now participated in Inuit specific pre-inquiry discussions with families of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). The process allowed urban Inuit, who are often outnumbered in urban processes by other Indigenous groups, to share what they would like to see accomplished by the Inquiry as well as determine the best way for Inuit families to participate in the MMIWG Inquiry process.

2. Knowledge and Expertise

To expand our knowledge and expertise on the urban Inuit population through Inuit-led research and analysis. To have the ability to gather, analyze and use information to create an efficient and effective urban Inuit community support infrastructure. Specific research initiatives and programs and service delivery evaluations are tools that will contribute to the achievement of this goal. Creating the community and organizational capacity to plan, gather and utilize the gained understanding of Inuit within each city.

3. Culture and Traditional Knowledge

Places in each city that Inuit can call their own. A place to gather and speak Inuktitut, practice and share traditional activities and knowledge and to celebrate Inuit culture. To plan and coordinate Inuit cultural activities and social events in each city. To have places in the city where Inuit can feel safe and support one another.

4. Employment, Income and Participation in Urban Economies

To see Inuit fully participate in the local urban economy. To have Inuit-specific programs and services available and accessible by Inuit that can assist them succeed in their transition to an urban environment and fully participate in the urban economy.



The programs and services will need to include employment services, childcare, youth initiatives, housing supports, access to required healthcare, mental health and healing supports.

5. Justice

To ensure that Inuit who find themselves involved in the justice system have the support they require within the system to heal. That urban centres with the ability to provide Inuit-specific supports and services to assist Inuit reintegrate into the urban environment or back into their home communities.

6. Safety

To work collectively to ensure that Inuit are safe within the urban environment. That all types of violence be discussed and addressed with the Inuit community participating in creating a safe urban environment. That stereotypes that may exist get broken down through demonstrations of Inuit culture and other educational initiatives.

7. Health and Wellness

To ensure Inuit have access to all health services including primary health care, health supports, services and programs, including mental health supports. That Inuit are healthy and able to prosper in their urban environments.

8. Education

That Inuit are free to pursue their life-long learning goals and objectives within an urban environment. To ensure Inuit have access to needed information and to support programs and services that will ensure educational success.

9. Family Supports

That Inuit have the Inuit-specific family supports they require to fully participate in the urban economies. That the UIS seeks to establish a network of Inuit-specific programs and services that will support Inuit families that are transitioning to and living in urban environments. This could include, but is not limited to: childcare, social service provision and referrals, social supports, food bank services, etc.

10. Housing

That Inuit in the urban centre find appropriate and safe housing. That the UIS seek to understand and address the urban Inuit housing issue and challenges. This will require an investment in the capacity to determine the challenges Inuit face finding a home when in urban centres and having the ability to assist those Inuit needing a home.

8.5 Strategic Priorities

1. Infrastructure and Local Capacity Development

Mobilization of a Local Inuit Voice

The Strategy will seek to strengthen and support the creation of local urban Inuit organizations. These organizations will facilitate the mobilization of the local Inuit community, plan local events, seek community input and facilitate Inuit participation in the design and implementation of local Inuit programs and services. These organizations will provide the supports necessary for Inuit to better participate in the local economy and be the vehicle by which local Inuit will access the Urban Aboriginal Strategy. The initial support will need to be through an investment in some core-like funding that will allow for basic operations, the creation of an urban Inuit space and the start of collaborative efforts with municipalities, provinces, Inuit regional governments and the federal government.

The National Urban Inuit Strategy will work to continually build the local Inuit capacity to participate in the design and delivery of needed Inuit-specific services and programs. This will include the ability to provide the services themselves or work with existing service providers to facilitate Inuit access. This kind of work has already been supported through the MMIWG urban Inuit discussions.

Each city finds itself at a different level of capacity, requiring the ability to be flexible in the types of capacity development initiatives required. Some cities are just starting to bring the community together, other cities have established Inuit service delivery providers while others have invested in existing mainstream service providers to provide Inuit-specific programming. Each method requires the participation of a local Inuit voice to ensure strategies and initiatives are effective in serving the local Inuit populations. The Strategy will create a mechanism whereby Inuit-specific organizations, no matter their existing capacity, will be able to access resources to build on their strengths to achieve their goals.



National Inuit reunion Meeka Komaksiutiksak

A national Inuit reunion Meeka Komaksiutiksak of Toronto Tina Pisuktie of Montreal and Nicole Luke from Winnipeg were among many urban Inuit who bonded and shared experiences at an urban Inuit gathering in Ottawa this past November 5-6, 2015.

Welcoming Inuit with Transition Supports and Information

The Strategy would allow for the creation and maintenance of a “welcome package” as a tool to support the transition of Inuit to the urban environment. A welcome package could include:

- Distributing information on specific southern cities in northern communities through various agencies.
- Developing partnerships with airlines or other transit operators moving Inuit from the north to south.
- A “welcome wagon” on the ground in urban centres to greet incoming Inuit.
- Information on programs and services, including contact information.
- Information about universities and colleges, recreational activities, health care providers and facilities, and transit systems.
- The use of social media to connect with local Inuit and share information.
- The use of Inuit navigators within urban centres who are available to assist new urban Inuit.

An Inuit Gathering Place

The strategy will support each urban centre’s desire to create a place that they can call their own. A place where Inuit can gather, talk, celebrate and support one another. The TI example was often cited as something each city would like to replicate. The ability to gather as Inuit to discuss the realities of moving to a city. How to recreate what has happened in Ottawa was a priority in every city and it begins with establishing a network and creating a place to gather.

2. Language, Tradition and Culture

The Strategy will support each city in its efforts to practice, learn and preserve the Inuit culture and language within the urban environment. The ability to communicate in Inuktitut, share country food and pass on traditional knowledge to those within the urban environment is a key component of the Strategy. The cultural component will ensure Inuit continue to have a reason to gather, socialize and support one another and ensure greater success for Inuit within an urban environment.

3. Educational Supports

The Strategy will establish the supports and information required for Inuit transitioning to the city to access the elementary, high school and post-secondary education systems and institutions. The Strategy will seek to develop and provide access to information on local elementary and high schools, school boards, colleges and universities, including how and where to register, parental supports, general educational and after-school programming.



4. A Continuum of Care and Support

Participants want to see the Strategy consider alternative options for service delivery and administration of funding that is more inclusive of Inuit organizations with capacity or with the opportunity to build capacity to be involved in delivering services. There is concern that funding for Inuit is shared disproportionately with other Aboriginal groups and often administered through a First Nation organization. An Inuit organization, for example Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), would be capable of administering funding for Inuit and improve proportional allocations to Inuit populations. Alternatively, a process that included Inuit input into and perhaps oversight of an Inuit-specific allocation under the UAS would be beneficial.

The main areas where programming and services are required are in the areas of employment/economic participation, homelessness, justice, safety and health. Each city will identify their priority areas to address and work collectively on ways for Inuit to design and deliver Inuit-specific programming. Partnerships may also be developed and opportunities for Inuit participation on other service delivery and program delivery agency processes will be explored. Ottawa specifically will look at the existing service provision network and identify existing gaps. The overall goal will be to develop a service network where Inuit feel comfortable accessing the supports they need.

5. National Urban Inuit Research and Knowledge Transfer Network

One of the key discoveries that resulted from the discussions was that very little is known about the urban Inuit population. Only one specific Inuit research project was found on homelessness in Montréal. The Strategy will seek to develop local capacity and create the required partnerships to gather urban Inuit-specific data. Data that can be used to identify Inuit-specific needs, measure the levels of success of any initiative and be used to support proposal development. The Strategy will also seek to share that knowledge with other urban Inuit communities and assist communities in the gathering of valuable urban Inuit knowledge.

6. Urban Inuit-Specific Policy Development and Programming

The hope is that the UIS will become a tool used by organizations and governments wishing to support urban Inuit. A tool that can facilitate a discussion on how and where to invest to support urban Inuit. The UIS provides the first building blocks to:

- Allow for the identification of any issues, concerns and barriers Inuit may face accessing and participating in the urban economy through a research initiative;
- Bring Inuit together in urban centres to support one another and ease the transition to urban life for the many reasons Inuit may need to be in the cities;

- Ensure that the realities being faced by the urban Inuit population is heard and informs governments on how best to adapt policies and create initiatives designed to meet the needs of the urban Inuit population; and,
- Create the environment where partnerships and networks can be developed between governments, funding agencies and organizations within the urban Inuit community.

The goal is to provide a nationally supported Urban Inuit Strategy that is based on community specific plans upon which relationships and partnerships can be established and to facilitate any investment that will support Inuit in the urban environment.

7. Engaging Urban Inuit in Other Urban Centres

There were two additional cities that were identified by participants and TI during the Strategy development discussions. Both Vancouver, BC and Halifax, NS were identified as cities that needed to be visited and included in the Urban Inuit Strategy. At the time of completing this report, TI was visiting both Vancouver and Halifax through the MMIWG Pre-Inquiry initiative.

9

Moving Forward – Setting Local Priorities and Key Areas of Focus

The Strategy was developed through a local engagement initiative. Each city was visited twice and asked to identify their vision, goals, priorities and undertake some preliminary action planning. Each city's local plans have been included as *Appendix B*.



APPENDIX A – URBAN INUIT POPULATION

DEMOGRAPHICS AND PROFILE

It has been suggested that the Statistics Canada figures may be lower than the reality, as seeing that Statistics Canada does not capture data from Inuit at risk or homeless.

Age

The median age of the Inuit population is **23 years, compared with 41 years** for non-Aboriginal people. The Inuit population is also younger than First Nations, whose median age is 26 years, and Métis, whose median age is 31 (The median age is the point where exactly one-half of the population is older, and the other half is younger). Statistics Canada (2011)

Population Growth

Between 2001 and 2011, the **Inuit population grew by 32%**, about three times the rate of the total population that increased by **11%**. Statistics Canada (2011)

Language

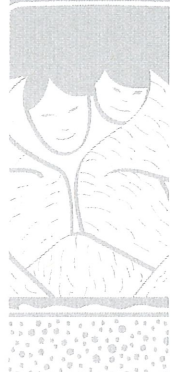
Today, the Inuit language still remains one of the most resilient Aboriginal languages in the country. In 2001, 71% of Inuit were conversant in the Inuit language, while in **2011, 63% of the Inuit population** could converse in the Inuit language. Inuit language is almost universal among Inuit in Nunavik (99%) and Nunavut (89%), while in Nunatsiavut, one-quarter (25%) and in the Inuvialuit region one-fifth (20%) of Inuit can speak the language well enough to converse. Statistics Canada (2011)

Housing/Homelessness

Inuit who are at risk of homelessness – 30% of all Inuit in Canada lived in crowded homes (homes with more than one person per room), compared to 4% of the total population in the country. Statistics Canada (2011)

Inuit who are homeless - Total population of Ottawa ~1,240,000 – **0.6%** are homeless/at risk. Total population of Aboriginal people in Ottawa 45,000 – **4%** are homeless/at risk. Total population of Inuit in Ottawa 2,250 – **15.6%** are homeless/at risk (Ref: Homeless Hub – and Point in time count in Ottawa, ON - June 2014)

Individuals utilizing emergency shelters - Data from the 2007-2008 Inuit Health Survey also indicates that **1 in 5 homes provided temporary shelter to homeless** visitors. Housing problems have been associated with low achievement levels in schools, spousal abuse, respiratory tract infections among infants, depression and substance abuse (ITK, 2004; NTI, 2005). A lack of privacy and personal space can increase stress levels to the point at which tense family situations become inescapable violent crises. Women who are victims of family violence and often their children can seldom find alternative accommodation in their communities due to the lack of housing and shelters



Food Security - 58.3% of Inuit between the ages of 20 and 40 reported that their family could not afford to buy all the food they needed (Lambden et al., 2006).

Children And Youth In Care

Information on children in Ottawa and surrounding area: 2010-2015 – information was gathered by staff regarding knowledge of CAS involved children/youth from 2010 to today. There has been 262 Children/youth that have had CAS involvement - this represents over 22.7% of our total population.

From the information released by CASO October 2015

- Aboriginal population make up in Ottawa – First Nations (53%), Métis (37%), Inuit (5%)
- 43% of children/youth have returned to or remained in family care
- 64% of the children/youth involved is currently in or was in CAS care (spent time in a foster home)
- 26% of children/youth involved with CAS have been Adopted

By the numbers (as per CASO)

Total Aboriginal children and youth population	First Nations	Métis	Inuit
10,164	7,917	2,570	323
In-care	65	7	38
In-care % of Population count	0.8%	0.2%	11.5%

Education

In 2011, 67% of Inuit in Inuit Nunangat aged 20 to 24 years had less than a high school diploma (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Health Needs

A key factor that impacts health services is the cultural appropriateness of services. Inuit frequently face cultural and language barriers, which can leave patients feeling misunderstood, marginalized, and mistreated (Archibald and Grey, 2006). The concept of health for Inuit embodies a holistic view between the mind, body, spirit and emotion. However, health care services are often based on westernized medical systems, and may not be culturally responsive to Inuit by incorporating traditional practices (NCCAH,

2011). Additionally, for individuals who communicate exclusively in Inuit dialects, language barriers may hinder care (Archibald and Grey, 2006).

Frequency of visits annually by Inuit < 30 vs. frequency of visits annually by non-Inuit > 2

Statistics from TI's health services and Statistics Canada

Suicide Rates

Youth suicide is of high concern for Inuit since suicide rates for Inuit youth are among the highest in the world, at 11 times the Canadian national average (Statistics Canada, 2008).

Incarceration

Aboriginal people are 4% of the population of Canada, yet they represent 23% of the number of individuals in federal correctional facilities.

The average rate of crime in Canada is 82.7/100,000 (rate per population) the rate for Inuit is 345.7

- Disproportionate representation of Inuit with significantly higher rates of incidents and severity of incidents
- Current rates of violence against Inuit women are 14 times the national average and only an estimated 29% of spousal abuse cases are reported.
- Violent crimes are 8 times the national average
- Sexual assault rates are 10 times the national average
- Homicide rates are 21 (per 100,000) vs. 1.7 nationally
- 2/3 of Inuit incarceration is sexual in nature. And have re-offend rate of 85%
- Inuit have greater need overall for intervention (89%)
 - needs in the areas of personal/emotional orientation (99%)
 - substance abuse (92%)
 - marital/family (73%)

There is a significant difference, not only with Aboriginal vs. non-Aboriginal offenders, between Inuit and other Aboriginal groups. Modes of intervention need to be enhanced by delivering services that are tailored to the specific needs of Inuit for success.

Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-x

Pauktuutit – Victims of crime

Statistics Canada Police reported crime severity indexes by province and territory

The star – 2013/03/07 prison watchdog

www.csc-scc.gc.ca/research/r134-eng.shtml





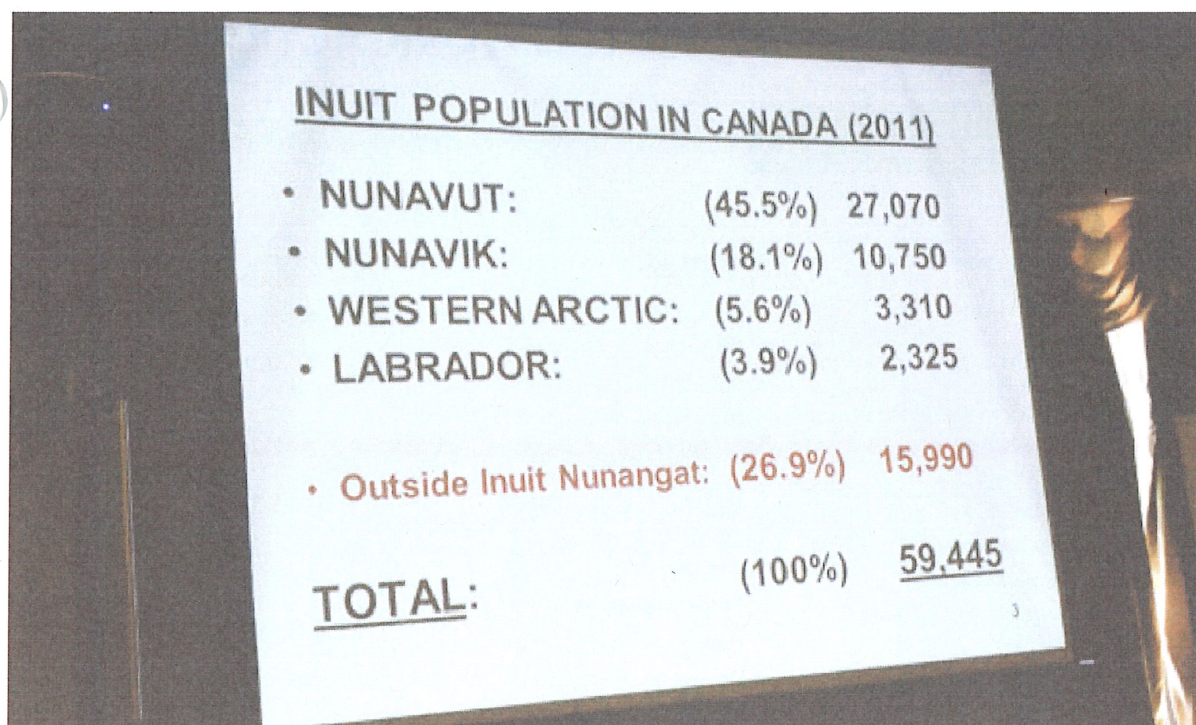
The Urban Inuit Population Profile

	2011	2006	Percentage Change
Canada	59,445	50,480	18%
St. John's	680	280	143%
Montreal	900	570	58%
Yellowknife	735	640	15%
Whitehorse	145	230	-37%
Ottawa-Gatineau	860	725	19%
Toronto	640	315	103%
Edmonton	1,115	590	89%
Halifax	270	150	80%
Winnipeg	350	280	25%
Vancouver	385	215	79%
Victoria	95	135	-30%

(Statistics Canada; 2006 Census, 2011 Census, 2011 National Household Survey)

Statistical Profile Observations

- The overall Inuit population in Canada has increased by 18% over a six-year period.
- The only regions that have seen relatively no growth or a declining Inuit population have been the Yukon Territory -31% and the Northwest Territories with a 4% increase.
- Every Province in Canada has seen an increase in the Inuit population;
- The biggest provincial increase in the Inuit population has been in the provinces of British Columbia and Nova Scotia;
- The Urban Inuit populations are in Edmonton (1,115), Montreal (900), Ottawa-Gatineau (860), Yellowknife (735), St. John's (680), Toronto (640), Vancouver (385), Winnipeg (350), Halifax (270), Calgary (240), Whitehorse (145) and Victoria (95);
- The total Inuit in these thirteen (13) urban areas is 6,415, almost 11% (10.8%) of the total Inuit population in Canada;
- The percentage increase in the urban Inuit population between 2006 and 2011 are in St. John's (143%), Toronto (103%), Edmonton (89%), Halifax (80%), Vancouver (79%), Montreal (58%), Winnipeg (25%), Ottawa-Gatineau (19%) and Yellowknife (15%);
- The average percentage increase in the Inuit population in these urban areas is 76.4%.



2011 Canadian Inuit Chart

This chart shows that in 2011, 15,990 Canadian Inuit lived outside Inuit Nunangat — 26.9 per cent of all Canadian Inuit. (PHOTO BY JIM BELL) courtesy of Nunatsiaq News.



Stephen Agluvak Puskas

Stephen Agluvak Puskas of Montreal helps produce the Nipivut radio service for Inuit in Montreal. (PHOTO BY JIM BELL) courtesy of Nunatsiaq News.



APPENDIX B – NATIONAL NETWORK ACTION PLANS

Illunata – St. John's, NL

Now

- Transportation Issues
- Lack of language
- Lack of connection
- Traditional knowledge exists (have the people)
- Choir established
- Drumming Group
- Social media presence
- Gatherings do happen
- Do support other groups (First Nations, Inuit)
- Not many activities for artists

Support

- Each other
- Other service providers – ARO, NG, SJNFC
- Sector Council
- NL/NU Adoptive Parents
- Elders
- Youth
- Food First NL
- Tungasuvvingat Inuit
- National Network
- Other community orgs

Building Strength

- YMCA Workshops
- Collective commitment of group
- Task completion
- Strength in numbers - recruitment

Medium Term Actions**Language Classes**

- Identify different levels of learning
- Identify different Inuktitut language resources available
- Review various language immersion activities, i.e. language immersion tent at Friendship Centre where Inuktitut is only spoke inside the tent
- Create a booklet with language tags on everyday household items
- First language class to take place in April/May 2016

Creation of Illunata

- Identify potential partners
- Develop proposals for funding
- Develop communications plan
- Regular board meetings
- Implement Inuit-specific programming for Inuit in St. John's and surrounding area

Short Term Actions**Winter Gathering**

- Date set for March 4 – 6, 2016
- Recruit volunteers
- Create ad-hoc planning committee

- Develop detailed list of logistics required, i.e. venue, permits, fire wood, transportation, food, security, first aid, communications, activities, etc.
- Develop work plan and assign responsibilities

Language Classes

- Identify list of Inuktitut speakers in community and determine whether or not they would be interested in being involved in an Inuktitut language initiative.

"Inuk in Town" Pamphlet

- Identify translator to translate pamphlet into Inuktitut
- Identify and compile contact information for Inuit-specific activities; employment; health; justice; education; housing and homelessness; culture and language; justice; etc.
- Identify places for pamphlet distribution

Recruitment

- Word of mouth – reach out to people through telephone and email
- Facebook
- Develop a brief message about what the group is about
- Develop membership/contact list

Creation of Illunata

- Develop vision, mission statement, goals and objectives
- File incorporation papers



SJ-UIC

Goals

♦ Specific ♦ Measurable ♦ Attainable
♦ Relevant ♦ Timely

1. Outreach/Recruitment/Engagement
2. Creation of Illunata
3. Winter Gathering
4. Language Initiative
 - Inuktitut Language Classes
5. "Inuk in Town" Pamphlet

ADDITIONAL GOALS

- Tugâgutet
- Gather knowledge – Inuit community
- Better communications
 - a. Transportation
 - b. Knowledge of events
 - c. In the language
- Artist Initiative
 - d. Instructing/teaching
 - e. Courses. i.e. marketing
- Elder/Youth activities
- Consistent Gatherings/Place
 - f. Our own building
 - g. Social Gatherings – monthly potlucks
- Create membership list/contact list
- Support existing cultural groups
- Be visible and participate in activities
- Create choir
- Provide grieving supports
- Celebrate Events, i.e. Elder birthdays
- Outdoor activities that are culturally based
- Family-oriented activities
- Retreats (self-care, workshops, speakers, cultural teachings)
- Access to more country food
- Hunting/community freezer/smoke house
- Food bank – on wheels
- Clothing exchange – donations

VISION

- Takunausik
- Respect of culture
- Traditions
- Able to speak / understand the language
- Practice traditions
- Feeling connected / inclusion / sense of community
- No barriers to participation
- Food security
- Community advocacy



Southern Quebec Inuit Association – Montreal, QC

Now

- Montreal has a network of organizations providing services to Inuit in Montreal.
- The Inuit organization that existed in the past has been dormant for quite a while.

Support

- The established Inuit community in Montreal has the talent and abilities to come together and support other Inuit in or coming to Montreal.

Building Strength

- Inuit are culturally strong and politically independent;
- The active language is an asset.
- Existing organizations in Montreal serving Inuit.

Medium Term Actions

Improve Employment Services

- Raise cultural awareness in employers
- Link HR departments with Iqvitivik to tailor training according to the organizations' needs;
- Create a webpage where all resources are listed and described;
- Organizations giving services to Inuit: put in place a succession policy involving pairing/mentorship, to make sure more and more positions are filled by Inuit;
- Summer student programs; and,
- Introduction to urban culture training before Inuit move down South.

Create an Inuit Centre where the community can gather and celebrate Inuit culture.

Offer Inuktitut classes for urban Inuit who don't speak Inuktitut to help with the community's sense of identity and belonging.

Ensure proper access to the appropriate health and social services that help Montreal Inuit.

Find resources to fund an Inuit Justice Case Worker.

Short Term Actions

Apply for UAS Funding

Re-establish the local Montreal Inuit organization to access UAS funding under Community Capacity Supports to resource their core activities and facilitate the building and improving of the services in Montreal. The funding will allow for space to improve existing networks and partnerships and build new ones.

Prepare a proposal for specific programming from the Urban Partnerships initiative of the UAS.

Work with the other urban Inuit organizations across Canada on a National Urban Research Initiative.

Work to re-establish the Montreal Inuit community organization to serve and support Montreal Inuit.

Create and maintain a local Inuit Resource Guide for Montreal.





Southern Quebec Inuit Association

Goals

- ♦ Specific ♦ Measurable ♦ Attainable
♦ Relevant ♦ Timely

An Inuit Cooperative Community Centre in Montreal

- Health Services and Consultations, Inuit Mental Health, Physical Health, Detoxification Supports, Outreach programs;
- A Welcome Centre;
- Transition & Integration Support for Inuit arriving in Montreal;
- Administrative Health Supports;
- Workshops on any topic of Interest to Inuit;
- Cultural Activities, a home away from home, safe house, Elder care, spirituality;
- Temporary Apartments;
- Ivirtivik and other Inuit organization would have offices in the Centre;
- Day Care Centre;
- Employment Centre; and,
- Empowerment Centre - Women getting away from violence, education, empowerment.

Establish an Inuit Centre that can offer a full continuum of supports to Inuit going through the justice system. Have programs in the areas of prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration.

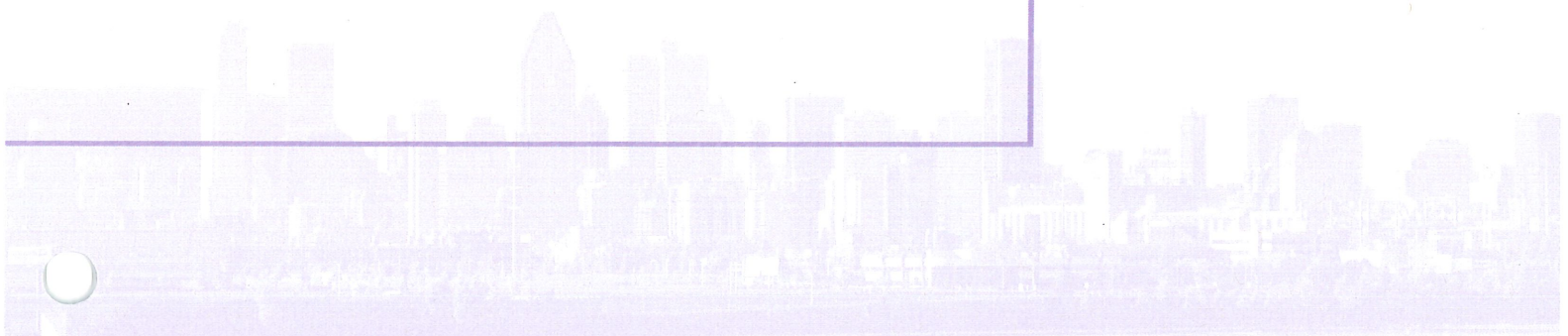
Celebrate Inuit culture at an Inuit meeting place.

VISION

That the strong sense of Inuit culture, identity, and language are shared amongst the greater Montreal community.

A full continuum of Inuit specific supports with the aim of improving Inuit well being.

Inuit live a happy and autonomous life in Montreal.



Ottawa, Ontario

Now

- Ottawa has 5 Inuit specific organizations: Tungasuvvingat Inuit, The Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, Akaushvik Inuit Family Health Team, Inuit Non-Profit Housing Corporation, and Nunavut Sivuniksavut.

Support

- Each organization has developed a network of supports geared to the services they provide.

Building Strength

- By working together, the Inuit organizations can improve the effectiveness of the services they already provide to Inuit in the Ottawa area.

Medium Term Actions**Improve Communications**

Organizations will seek to improve communications between one another and with the Inuit community. One goal could be ensuring Inuit who access programming from one organization are aware of the supports and activities being provided by all.

Improving Services To Inuit

The organizations will have discussions on the services being provided to Inuit in the Ottawa and Gatineau areas. Questions may include: Are they available to all? Are there programming and knowledge gaps? Is there any program duplication or overlap?

Short Term Actions**Apply for UAS Funding**

Each organization will seek to access UAS funding under Community Capacity Supports to resource their core activities and facilitate the building and improving of the services they already provide. The funding will allow for space to improve existing networks and partnerships and build new ones.

Each organization will also prepare proposals for specific programming within each organization's scope of work from the Urban Partnerships initiative of the UAS.

Work with the other urban Inuit organizations across Canada on a National Urban Research Initiative.

Initial Meetings to Create Working Relationships

The Ottawa based Inuit organizations initiate discussions on how they might work together to better meet the needs of all local Inuit. The organizations will explore the types of relationships that may be possible and next steps.

Create and maintain a local Inuit Resource Guide for Ottawa.





Tungasuvvingat Inuit

Goals

♦ Specific ♦ Measurable ♦ Attainable
♦ Relevant ♦ Timely

To create a network of Inuit specific service delivery organizations that support Inuit living in or coming to Ottawa.

To support Inuit and provide the needed programs in the areas of:

- Employment;
- Justice;
- Health;
- Housing;
- Childcare;
- Family Supports (poverty reduction); and,
- Safety.

To provide places where Inuit can gather, support one another and share in the Inuit culture.

Be a voice for the urban Inuit community in Ottawa by sharing how Inuit community organizations have successfully supported the Ottawa Inuit community.

To create the space where Ottawa Inuit community organizations can gather and share knowledge about the Inuit community in Ottawa. This may include discussions on knowledge gaps and research strategies to fill those gaps.

That all Inuit in the Ottawa and Gatineau areas have access to the services they need to successfully transition to life in the region.

VISION

Happy, healthy and safe Ottawa Inuit community.

Celebrate and practice the Inuit Language, Culture and Traditions in the city.

Feeling connected and included in Ottawa with the Inuit community.

A strong Ottawa Inuit Community.





iTUK – Toronto, ON

Now

- Diverse Aboriginal groups in GTA
- iTUK incorporated
- Committed group of individuals to support activities of iTUK and members
- Over 40 Aboriginal service providers in GTA, but no Inuit-specific programming available and limited knowledge of Inuit

Support

- iTUK members
- Other service providers and community organizations in GTA
- Tungasuvvingat Inuit
- National Network

Building Strength

- Take advantage of partner's free space for meetings.
- Regular meetings of iTUK to review existing work plans
- Recruitment of members and identification of Inuit in GTA
- Outreach via social and digital media

Medium Term Actions

1. Rent temporary office space.
2. Hire office staff member(s) and/or coordinate volunteers for iTUK Inuit Centre.
3. Research options to purchase/rent space and eventually have multiple points of service throughout GTA.
4. Provide cultural-specific programming to the Inuit community, such as:
 - Women's circles
 - Men's circles
 - Inuit traditional cultural teachings
 - Gatherings
 - Youth and social justice programs
 - Recreation (Inuit games)
 - Out-on-the-land programming
 - Mentorship
 - Mental health circles
 - Elders' teachings
 - Country food
5. Formalize partnerships with community organizations through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Service Agreements, etc.
6. Develop and deliver Inuit cultural competency training for non-Inuit organizations, including schools and service delivery organizations.

Short Term Actions

1. Undertake needs assessment with Inuit community and iTUK members.
2. Get involved with community organizations including sitting on Boards of Directors.
3. Develop proposals for language and cultural programming.
4. Expand reach of iTUK through social and digital media.
5. Create a virtual office (phone and mail service).
6. Research existing Inuit cultural competency resource and/or training materials for use and/or adaptation specifically for iTUK.
7. Research potential funding sources.



Inuit of
Toronto
Urban
Katimavvik



Goals

♦ Specific ♦ Measurable ♦ Attainable
♦ Relevant ♦ Timely

1. Create partnerships with local agencies.
2. Create a Central Inuit Association (CIA) within the GTA.
3. Employ a fully functional centre staffed by Inuit within the GTA.
4. Create a database of Inuit in the GTA.
5. Provide supports and services to existing and new Inuk members of Toronto.
6. Secure temporary space to house Inuit specific operations.
7. Cultural awareness education for and by Inuit that will also foster relationships with non-Inuit entities.
8. Employ staff member(s) to manage Inuit-specific operations.

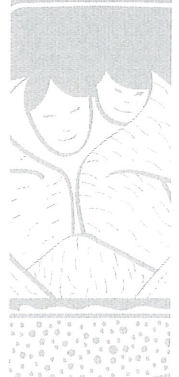


VISION

To create a space where
Inuit can feel welcome and
celebrate our culture in
Ontario's capital.

29

National Urban Inuit Community Dialogue
Supporting Local Champions





Manitoba Inuit Association – Winnipeg, MB

Now

- Large First Nations and Métis presence in Winnipeg
- First Nations and Métis service delivery agencies limited knowledge of Inuit
- MIA in existence since 2008
- Kivalliq Inuit Centre provides lodging for Inuit traveling from the north to Winnipeg for medical
- MIA has numerous partners and supports

Support

- Winnipeg Art Gallery
- INAC
- Province of Manitoba
- United Way
- Manitoba Métis Federation
- University of Manitoba
- University of Winnipeg
- MIA Board of Directors

Building Strength

- Strengthen partnerships to reach goals
- Access funding to further goals
- National Inuit Network

Medium Term Actions

1. Increase the number of Inuit accessing funding for post-secondary education.
2. Develop retention services to assist Inuit students to complete their studies successfully.
3. Increase the number of Inuit accessing employment and training services in Manitoba.
4. Share Inuit knowledge amongst Inuit by conducting specific workshops and activities to build and sustain Inuit culture, language and values.

Short Term Actions

1. Provide orientation services to new Inuit students arriving in Winnipeg.
2. Increase opportunities for Inuit cultural connections and events to build the Manitoba Inuit community and raise the profile of the MIA.
3. Develop proposals to achieve goals.



Goals

♦ Specific ♦ Measurable ♦ Attainable
♦ Relevant ♦ Timely

1. To build a vibrant Manitoba Inuit community by connecting Inuit through activities and initiatives that sustain and build Inuit culture, values and language.
2. Improve education, employment and training outcomes for Inuit in Manitoba.
3. Develop research partnerships that help improve the health status for Inuit in Manitoba.
4. Improve housing and food security for Inuit in Manitoba.
5. Foster organizational capacity and innovation.

VISION

To enhance the lives of Inuit in Manitoba by promoting Inuit values, community and culture while connecting to services that meet our evolving needs.





Inuit Edmontonmiut – Edmonton, AB

Now

- Some volunteers
- New core group
- There are more Inuit in Edmonton who are interested in becoming involved
- No Inuit-specific programming in Edmonton
- Large Inuit population in Edmonton

Support

- Business community
- Awesome core group
- University of Alberta
- City of Edmonton

Building Strength

- Share with and teach our skills to each other
- Develop new partnerships
- Media presence
- Recruit new members
- Leadership Training – Banff Centre

Medium Term Actions

1. Develop recruitment strategy based on existing strategies by other community agencies.
2. Develop database of members and volunteers for use in planning and implementation of various cultural events throughout the year.
3. Find a permanent space for Inuit Edmontonmiut activities.
4. Increase profile of Inuit Edmontonmiut through various media, including social media, radio and print articles.
5. Establish new and strengthen existing partnerships to help achieve goals.
6. Proposal development to offer Inuit-specific programming.

Short Term Actions

1. Develop membership form and distribute electronically and post on-line. Use as part of recruitment strategy for members and volunteers.
2. Establish email account for Inuit Edmontonmiut and develop schedule with core group to respond to emails.
3. Incorporate Inuit Edmontonmiut.
4. Schedule regular board meetings.
5. Complete branding of Inuit Edmontonmiut, including development of logo.

*Tunngasugit**Welcome*

Goals

♦ Specific ♦ Measurable ♦ Attainable
♦ Relevant ♦ Timely

1. Increasing Inuit participation in the urban economy within the province of Alberta.
2. Promoting traditional ways of Inuit knowing and being through language, arts, sewing and story.
3. Providing support to Northern students and the broader Inuit community through educational mentorship.
4. Delivering outreach and community support to Inuit in need of housing, employment, training and medical support.
5. Celebrating Inuit culture through gathering, feasts and public events (i.e. relevant civic holidays and important days).

VISION

To promote, preserve and support Inuit families and Inuit culture through celebration, education and outreach in Edmonton and surrounding area.

