Engaging Communities
Project Update

November 2013

[Handwritten notes on paper]

1. Health issues in communities (e.g., physical health, mental health)
2. Elderly care
3. Access to healthy foods
4. Community involvement
5. Youth engagement
6. Economic development

November 2013
The Project Team and Coordinators have been busy initiating Phase II of the Engaging Communities: Achieving Healthier Weights through Community Food Security in Remote Inuit Populations project and are excited to provide an update on activities completed to date.

Keep in View: Project Meeting in February 2014

We are beginning to plan our first project-wide face to face meeting which will be held in Hopedale in February 2014 where we hope many of our partners will be able to join us for a two day gathering focused on strengthening the Engaging Communities project.

The meeting will focus on reviewing the proposed activities for the project, hearing updates on activities completed to date, and discussing key strategic issues for the project going forward.

Keep an eye out for more information about this meeting as planning progresses!

Project Overview

The Engaging Communities Project spans a four year period (2013-2017) and is working towards the following five objectives:

1. To increase access to and consumption of healthy food in Hopedale through implementing and evaluating the NiKigijavut Hopedalimi action plan, including the expansion of the community freezer and home gardening programs;

2. To improve food security and healthy weight conditions in Nunatsiavut through developing, implementing, and evaluating community food action plans in Nain and Rigolet, and developing recommendations for a regional food security strategy for Nunatsiavut;

3. To increase national knowledge exchange and promotion of the Community-led Food Assessment model through collaborating with the National Inuit Food Security Working Group and supporting the development, implementation, and evaluation of a community food action plan in one additional northern, Inuit community across Canada;

4. To increase understanding of northern Inuit food security conditions through developing a Nunatsiavut-specific definition of food security, evaluation tool, and related indicators through participatory methods;

5. To increase knowledge of successful Inuit food security interventions through documenting practical summaries and completing basic evaluation of three food security interventions.
Project Activities in Nunatsiavut

There has been substantial work completed Nunatsiavut, both within communities and at the regional level, since February 2013.

NiKigijavut Hopedalimi “Our Food In Hopedale” Update

Activities in Hopedale are off to an exciting start. Juliana Flowers was hired in April 2013, as the Hopedale Coordinator and has been working on implementing the NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Action Plan, including the expansion of the Community Freezer and Backyard Gardening Programs.

Juliana has been working from the Hopedale Inuit Community Government (HICG) office with guidance and support from the NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Committee, including representatives from HICG and the Department of Health and Social Development.

Hopedale Community Freezer Program

The HICG Community Freezer Program now has two chest freezers in the HICG building, one mainly for seafood and the other for frozen food. In August, the Community Freezer Program expanded to be available to all members of the community, once a month per household. Installation of a Walk-in Freezer, which was purchased through phase one of this project, is still in progress and is expected to be completed soon.

Through the Community Freezer Program, HICG has made connections with other communities and/or organizations to enhance and expand the program. Hopedale has been exchanging harvested food with Nain, but now throughout the year plans to exchange food when need arises. The Hopedale Community Freezer was able to access char from Nain this year, and have traded a portion of this char for cod (corned and fresh frozen) from NunatuKavut, Southern Labrador. NunatuKavut is an aboriginal metis group which serves central and southern Labrador whose head office is in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The NiKigijavut Hopedalimi committee believes it is very important to widen and diversify our connections so that the freezer can include additional harvested country foods.

The Community Freezer Program in Hopedale is also expanding to include a new program, modelled after the Going Off, Growing Strong program in Nain. The program aims to have established hunters act as mentors to five at-risk youth in Hopedale to pass on knowledge of hunting, going out on the land, and other life skills to the youth. A subcommittee of the NiKigijavut Hopedalimi committee has been formed to guide the development and implementation of this program in Hopedale, which began this fall. The Department of Health and Social Development hired a Social Worker, Rita-Anne Sheppard, to coordinate this expansion.
Initially the NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Committee met with the Nain Community Freezer’s Going Off, Growing Strong group in May to assist in establishing a youth program in Hopedale. The current Youth Outreach Committee consists of Inuktitut teachers, the Career Development teacher, social workers, AngajukKak (mayor) and the Hopedale town manager, Nunatsiavut employees, Nunatsiavut Department of Health and Social Development employees and HICG councillors. The committee has ensured that members included people involved in working with our youth.

Five youth and a list of volunteer harvesters have been recruited to participate in the program, and most of the supplies for the program have been sourced. It is expected that when the youth and harvester go out on the land, a portion of their harvest will be donated to the community freezer and/or given to seniors. This will include any kind of fish, duck, seal, geese, berries, among other country foods, and wood for their stoves. Through the program, it is stipulated that there is no hunting on any banned animal.

The committee is really excited about these developments for the Community Freezer Program and can see what a positive difference this can make for residents of Hopedale.

**Hopedale Backyard Gardening Program**

Five households in Hopedale signed up in May to participate in a pilot home-based vegetable gardening program.

In the Hopedale Food Security Asset Analysis & Priority Setting the top two priorities were the Community Freezer Program Expansion and Community Gardening. NiKigijavut Hopedalimi recruited five families with little or no gardening experience to participate in the program and hosted an introductory workshop. The workshop was hosted in June and was facilitated by Jill Airhart. Families potted kale, iceberg lettuce, romaine lettuce, chives, parsley, peas and beans from seedlings and seeds into containers. Jill returned in August to offer a compost workshop for the community. During this visit, Jill and Juliana followed up with the families on their experiences in the gardening program. It became evident that the families wanted to move from container gardens to outdoor gardens to grow root plants for next year. Overall, the participants really enjoyed the program and were very pleased to be able to eat what they grew.

In this year, a demonstration garden and grow station was established at the HICG office. This indoor garden helped to increase interest in gardening, raise awareness of the project, and recruit potential new families for next year. The demonstration garden was also used by the after school and recreation programs to engage youth in gardening.

The NiKigijavut Hopedalimi committee is now planning the next steps for the program. These next steps include recruiting five additional families to set up container gardens next season, developing a cost-sharing program for building raised bed vegetable gardens at this year’s participants’ houses, and partnering with the Moravian church to establish a community garden.

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During the home visits in August, Jill and Juliana learned what did and did not work, what grew well and what did not, and how the gardening program can be improved. With this knowledge, the new families can learn from the mistakes and the successes of this year and accomplish much more.

Public Awareness

The NiKigijavut Hopedalimi committee has also been working to keep public awareness and engagement with the project up. Juliana has been keeping the NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Facebook page active, which has grown to have 110 members!

NiKigijavut Hopedalimi partnered with the Department of Health and Social Development to host a food demonstration and tasting at the local store. Juliana and Christine Vincent, the Community Health Worker, gave a demonstration on making kale and garlic pesto, served it on crackers, and gave away packs of chives along with information on how to use them. 16 people tried the pesto, and 13 of the 16 liked it. There was also a door prize which included iceberg lettuce, romaine lettuce, and beans from the gardening program that one lucky participant won.

World Food Day in Hopedale

On October 16th NiKigijavut Hopedalimi partnered with the Department of Health and Social Development to host a World Food Day Community Breakfast. The organizers prepared fish n’ brewis, baked beans, quiche, and boiled eggs, toast and homemade partridgeberry jam, and also had cereal, oranges, apples, tea, coffee, and fresh milk. Over 80 people came out between 7-9am to join in for breakfast. Food was donated by the local stores and the Department of Health and Social Development.

As a result of the Hopedale World Food Day Community Breakfast, there were two media hits on the work in Hopedale – one with Marjorie Flowers, Project Team Leader of Department of Health and Social Development in Hopedale (http://www.cbc.ca/labradormorning/episodes/2013/10/16/world-food-day-1/), and another with Wayne Piercy, AngajukKak (mayor) of Hopedale (http://www.cbc.ca/labradormorning/episodes/2013/10/17/baby-formula-shortage-in-hopedale/).

Additional Nunatsiavut Community-led Food Assessments

After much consultation with the Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, Postville, and Rigolet Inuit Community Governments, consideration of the capacity of each community to participate in a Community-led Food Assessment (CLFA), and resources available in each community, Rigolet and Nain were selected in April as the two additional communities to conduct full CLFAs.
Coordinators and representatives from Nain, Rigolet, and Hopedale came together in Nain from June 24-26 2013 for training on the project, the CLFA model, and evaluation to provide the coordinators with the tools necessary to successfully complete the initial stages of a CLFA.

**Rigolet Community-led Food Assessment**

The community of Rigolet has quickly become very engaged in the Rigolet CLFA. Kelly-Ann Blake was hired as the Rigolet Project Coordinator in June and has been off to an energetic start. A diverse and robust group of key community players have come together as the Rigolet Advisory Committee. The membership has representation from several agencies including the Department of Health and Social Development, Rigolet Inuit community Government (RICG), Kids Eat Smart, Rigolet school administration staff, teachers, Labrador Grenfell Health, the women’s shelter, and a contingency of active gardeners. The advisory committee meets on a monthly basis and has been actively involved in guiding the CLFA process.

To kick off the Rigolet CLFA, Kelly-Ann developed and hosted a display at the Rigolet Salmon Festival. This display helped to inform the community about the project, recruit new members to the advisory committee, and hear what food issues people are interested in.

The committee decided to start collecting input from the residents of Rigolet by completing a household survey. The survey was created in consultation with researchers at Trent University as well as McGill University, who had completed surveys on Food Issues in Rigolet in spring 2013.

There were four main objectives to completing the survey:

1. To discover food security concerns and possible solutions from the perspective of community members in Rigolet
2. To discover the effectiveness of the community freezer program in Rigolet
3. To explore the level of interest in a co-op store or a bulk buying program in Rigolet
4. To explore the level of interest in developing gardening programs in Rigolet

Kelly-Ann completed the survey in October, and 77 (of 100) households participated! Fresh local produce was purchased and shipped to Rigolet from a farmer in Goose Bay and was distributed to all households that took part in the survey. There is potential for this relationship with a local food producer in Goose Bay to become a sustainable food source for a bulk food buying program for Rigolet, which will be further explored throughout the CLFA process.

The results of the survey were presented back to the community at a public World Food Day event. Over 20 people came out to the event to hear about the results, discuss the findings, and review next steps for the project.
Through the CLFA to date, interest from the community in vegetable gardening has been heard loud and clear. As a result, a gardening workshop was hosted to explore this interest. 17 participants came out to the workshop, and there has been a lot of positive feedback - several participants are having good success in growing their potted herbs! There are now plans to establish a gardening subcommittee of the Rigolet Advisory Committee to help guide the planning of a gardening and composting program in Rigolet as part of the CLFA.

The Environmental Scan, which is the first step of developing the Community Food Report through the CLFA process, has been drafted and will be reviewed with the advisory committee. The committee is also working on developing a food security inventory for Rigolet, which will list all of the existing food programs and services in the community.

A facebook page has been developed and is being used to share the results of the CLFA, invite people to the community participate and to share pictures and information about the project. Momentum is building around the CLFA in Rigolet, and with so much progress already made there is great opportunity and interested in the next steps of the project.

**Nain Community-led Food Assessment**

The CLFA in Nain was established in partnership with the Nain Research Centre. Carla Pamak, Nunatsiavut Research Advisor had been filling the coordinator role for the CLFA, along with support from Katie Winters and Dorothy Angnatok at the Research Centre. A Nain CLFA Advisory Committee has been established including diverse representation from the community. An initial meeting of the Nain Advisory Committee meeting was held, where the committee identified some priority program areas they were interested in exploring through their CLFA.

Existing research on food security indicators relevant in Nain is being collected to inform the Environmental Scan portion of the CLFA. A household survey on food security and food programs is in development in partnership with Trent University and is planned for completion in January. This survey will gather both baseline information on the status of household food security in Nain, as
well as residents’ perceptions of food programs and ideas for new initiatives in the community, and will inform the Environmental Scan and Asset-Gap Analysis of the CLFA.

Due to staffing changes at the Nain Research Centre there is no longer capacity for the Centre to support the CLFA. As a result, the project is now in the process of recruiting a Nain Community Coordinator, who we hope to have in place soon.

**Regional Planning, Dialogue, and Activity**

As a result of the high level of interest from Postville and Makkovik in the CLFA community selection process, and the difficulty in selecting only two communities, the project has committed to supporting some food security interventions within all Nunatsiavut Communities. To facilitate this, the project has developed a Nunatsiavut Food Security Action Fund of $50,000 to support food security interventions in all Nunatsiavut Communities. Communities will work with the project staff through the application and reporting processes for the fund. We will also be working closely with these communities to help facilitate evaluation of the resulting interventions, and monitoring the impact of these efforts. It is our hope that this fund will better allow communities to address relevant, emergent food security issues and support successful food security programs within their communities.

Some progress has also been made in facilitating regional dialogue and planning through the project. A meeting was held with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development of Nunatsiavut Government in May 2013 to discuss the development of a Nunatsiavut Food Security Strategy. There has also been some discussion about the establishment of the Regional Food Security Network and how it may be structured to be most effective. It is expected that the next steps for this regional planning will be identified at the project face to face meeting in February 2014.

Since the beginning of the project in February 2013, we have been actively recruiting a Regional Coordinator who will be responsible for coordinating this regional dialogue, coordinating the Nunatsiavut Food Security Action Fund, and supporting the Nunatsiavut communities. We are thrilled that after months of searching, we have recently filled this position – Martha Winters-Abel from Hopedale has now been hired as our Regional Coordinator!

**National Collaboration & Expansion**

National promotion of the project and the opportunity for national expansion has been completed in collaboration with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and the Inuit Food Security Working Group of the National Inuit Committee on Health.

The Inuit Food Security Working Group includes representation from each of the Inuit land claims regions, including Inuvialuit Settlement Region (Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Quebec), and Nunatsiavut. The working group has the mandate to foster dialogue and determine collective course of action to advance programs and policies that will assist with the improvement of food security for Inuit in Canada.

In July 2013, the project was invited to present to the Inuit Food Security Working Group at their inaugural face to face meeting in Ottawa. Kristie Jameson and Chris Furgal attended this meeting on behalf of the project and presented an overview of the project, CLFA model, and our plans for national expansion. Following the presentation, the group discussed the opportunity...
for national expansion to one other community in another Inuit region through this project. There was interest in this from the other regions, however concerns of capacity and sustainability of resulting programs was highlighted.

Through the discussion, a collaborative process was developed for recruiting and selecting the additional community to complete a CLFA through the project. The project will be working closely with the Inuit Food Security Working Group over the next several months to support this process. It is anticipated that the community from another Inuit region will be identified by March 2014.

Research & Evaluation

There has also been extensive work over the past several months in planning, developing resources, and initiating evaluation and research activities for the project. Much of the evaluation and research components of the project are led by Chris Furga and his team from Trent University.

Project Logic Model

An evaluation advisory team was established for the project in April 2013 to help with the development of the evaluation framework, plan, and methods for the project. This team has primarily been working on developing a comprehensive logic model for the project to help guide all evaluation activities completed at the community, regional, and national level. The logic model has recently been submitted to the Public Health Agency of Canada for review. It is the intent of the evaluation team that the logic model will be reviewed and finalized through an interactive process with all our project partners at our face to face meeting in February. The current draft of the logic model is attached in Appendix A to this update.

Evaluation Activities

With all of the activity happening on the ground in Hopedale and Rigolet, there has been need for the evaluation team at Trent to work collaboratively with our project coordinators and community committees to develop appropriate evaluation tools to capture the story and impact of this community action as it happens. Surveys and interview questions have been developed collaboratively and used by the project coordinators with participants of the programs completed to date, to help us develop a baseline and understand the impact of the programs. Evaluation tools are also being used to help identify how programs can be improved going forward.

All of the tools developed are being brought together to create a “Community Evaluation Toolkit” of surveys, forms, interviews, etc. This toolkit will be presented and reviewed at our face to face project meeting in February. Ethics applications have been submitted at Trent University and are being submitted to the Newfoundland and Labrador Ethics Committee and PHAC for this and all future planned work. Small evaluations that have taken place to date have been in response to community actions and the need to capture descriptions of what has taken place on the ground.
Baseline Assessment of Food Security Status and Other Research & Evaluation Initiatives

One of the first major evaluation and research activities for the project is the completion of a Baseline Assessment of Food Security Status in Nain & Hopedale. This survey would ask households questions about household food security, access to and use of community food programs, and household need for country food. The purpose of the survey is to inform the environmental scan of the CLFA in Nain, and to set the baseline status of food security in these communities. The project plans to complete annual assessments of food security in the participating communities in order to record any changes and to measure the impact of the project interventions on food security. This survey is not being completed in Rigolet in this year as a similar survey was completed recently in Rigolet through the Climate Change Adaptation Research Group of McGill University. The Trent team is working with this data in cooperation with the McGill researchers and the Rigolet Inuit Community Government.

To inform the development of this survey, Kristeen McTavish and Emily Wilson from Trent University are travelling to Rigolet, Hopedale, and Nain to complete preliminary qualitative interviews with a randomized, stratified sample of residents to help understand aspects of self-reported or perceived ‘need’ for foods ("What does need mean and how can we understand it in the community in relation to country or store foods?"). With this information, the survey will be finalized and is planned to be completed in Nain and Hopedale this winter.

Further work will take place in the New Year as well to begin to explore the definition and meaning of “food security” from a Nunatsiavimmiut perspective. This will involve focus groups in the communities to determine if a more regionally specific definition can be derived from local narrative. With this work, it is intended to adapt and develop a more regionally specific assessment tool for use in future years of the project for assessing and understanding household food security.

Finally, a case review of three common food security intervention initiatives is planned for the New Year to provide communities with examples from other Inuit regions and to begin to identify the factors that influence successful operation and implementation of Inuit food support interventions in the Arctic.
Engaging Communities: Achieving Healthier Weights through Community Food Security in Remote Inuit Populations

**Project Components**
- Implementation, evaluation, sustainability planning of NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Action Plan including the Community Freezer & Gardening programs
- Development, implementation, and evaluation of community food action plans in two Nunatsiavut communities, and one community from another Inuit region across Canada
- Development of a Nunatsiavut Food Security Definition and evaluation tool(s)
- Development of practical summaries of three successful food security interventions across the North
- Development and coordination of a Nunatsiavut Food Security Network and a Regional Food Security Strategy
- National collaboration, knowledge exchange, and promotion of model, tools, and resources generated through project

**Immediate Outcomes**
1-3 years
1.1 Enhanced local collaboration, coordination, and planning on food security issues in participating communities
2.1 Increased individual and community support for and participation in food security interventions in participating communities
2.2 Enhanced awareness, knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy among participants of interventions
2.3 Increased access to and consumption of healthy wild, locally grown, and/or store bought foods among participants of interventions
1.2 Increased regional collaboration, dialogue, coordination, and planning on food security issues and strategies in Nunatsiavut
3.1 Increased tools available and used for developing, implementing, and evaluating food security interventions and measuring food security status in Inuit communities
3.2 Increased understanding and knowledge of food security conditions and status in Inuit context
3.3 Increased knowledge about food security interventions in Inuit context
3.4 Increased national knowledge exchange and interregional collaboration on food security issues and strategies

**Intermediate Outcomes**
4-5 years
1.3 Expanded local coordination, and enhanced commitment, control and direction over food security initiatives in participating communities
2.4 Enhanced and adapted interventions to increase positive impact for participants
2.5 Improved nutrition and health behaviour, awareness, positive attitudes, and intentions towards healthy foods among participants of interventions.
2.6 Increased capacity of communities to develop, implement, adapt, and evaluate food security programs
2.7 Improved community environment conditions to positively impact food security in participating communities
1.4 Enhanced regional commitment to support and sustain coordinated efforts to improve food security in Nunatsiavut
3.1 Increased tools available and used for developing, implementing, and evaluating food security interventions and measuring food security status in Inuit communities
3.2 Increased understanding and knowledge of food security conditions and status in Inuit context
3.3 Increased knowledge about food security interventions in Inuit context
3.4 Increased national knowledge exchange and interregional collaboration on food security issues and strategies
3.5 Increased use of CLFA model and knowledge products regionally and nationally

**Long Term Outcomes**
6+ years
4.1 Enhanced local and regional agency and capacity to address local food security issues in participating communities and Nunatsiavut
4.2 Successful interventions integrated into sustained, regular organizational programs and policies
4.3 Improved household food security status in participating communities
4.4 Enhanced awareness and uptake of knowledge products nationally and internationally

**Ultimate Outcome**
Improved access to healthy food, health equity, and healthier weights in participating communities and Nunatsiavut as a region.

**FOOTNOTE:**
- Outcomes 1.1-1.4 contribute to IS outcomes for collaboration & partnership
- Outcomes 2.1-2.7 contribute to IS outcomes for interventions
- Outcomes 3.1-3.5 contribute to IS outcomes for knowledge exchange