A YELLOWHEAD INSTITUTE SPECIAL REPORT

PINASUNNIQ

Reflections on a Northern Indigenous Economy

NOVEMBER 2024

Yellowhead Institute

EDITORS

Kunuk Inutiq

Hayden King

Shari Fox

DESIGN & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Yumi Numata

COPY EDITOR

Jasmyn Galley

PRODUCTION & RESEARCH SUPPORT

Ash Vols

COVER PAGE ART & ADDITIONAL GRAPHICS

Jessica Winters

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHY

PREFACE (P7), PART 02 (P40) CONCLUSION (P72)

Robert Kautuk

FEATURE QUOTE (P64)

Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory

(Installation shot of Nannuppugut! from the National Gallery of Canada)

P58

Barbara Akoak

Additional featured photography by Janine Lightfoot, Shari Fox, Aimo Paniloo, credited throughout the report. All other photography by Yumi Numata.

FEATURED ILLUSTRATIONS P10 & P75

Germaine Arnaktauyok

('Moon Spirit II,' Etching and Aquatint, 2005; 'When Houses (Iglus) Were Alive,' Lithograph, 1996)

ABSTRACT

*Pinasunniq: Reflections on a Northern Indigenous Economy** offers a vision of Inuit economic self-determination. It challenges the "common sense" Northern economic models that have historically excluded Inuit voices and continue to erase Inuit economic activity. Through economic analysis, narrative, and advocacy, the report asks critical questions about the benefits of government-led policy and approaches of industry. In contrast, it offers examples of Inuit-centered economic frameworks in practice today that prioritize sustainability, reciprocity, and care. Part 01 reviews the current landscape, reflecting on systemic barriers to Inuit-led development. Part 02 addresses traditional economic activities, particularly hunting, harvesting, and food sovereignty, emphasizing the role of Indigenous knowledge. Part 03 explores economic diversity through the arts and care-based economies, with perspectives on healing, meaningful work, and reconciliation. Ultimately, this edited report is not just an analysis but a call to action to envision and act upon a future where Inuit have the authority to shape their economy in ways that foster cultural revitalization and community well-being. Pinasunniq demonstrates how Inuit leadership in economic discourse can shift us toward a path for transformative change rooted in self-determination and aligning with Inuit values.

**Pinasunniq* translates loosely to "endeavour" or "venture".

This special report was made possible with support from the McConnell Foundation, Definity Foundation, and Inspirit Foundation. It was also supported in part by a Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation awarded to Shari Fox in 2019.

Toronto Metropolitan University Faculty of Arts

Yellowhead Institute is based in the Faculty of Arts at Toronto Metropolitan University

X

@yellowhead_

FACEBOOK

fb.me/yellowheadinstitute

INSTAGRAM

@yellowheadinstitute

WEBSITE

yellowheadinstitute.org

Yellowhead Institute

This report was produced over the span of two years and included many conversations with friends and colleagues about the nature and vision for a Northern Economy. We are grateful for these conversations, which were critical to shaping our work.

We have also watched as organizations, individuals, and collectives have emerged in recent years practicing the alternative vision of a Northern Economy that we propose in these pages; determining their own interests and goals, and often working against a system that discourages their efforts. Yet, their labour, passion and drive perseveres — they are what we mean when we say Pinasunniq. They reflect an economy defined by Inuit self-determination and showing others that it can be done — it is being done.

We dedicate this report to all those who do so much to care for their communities.

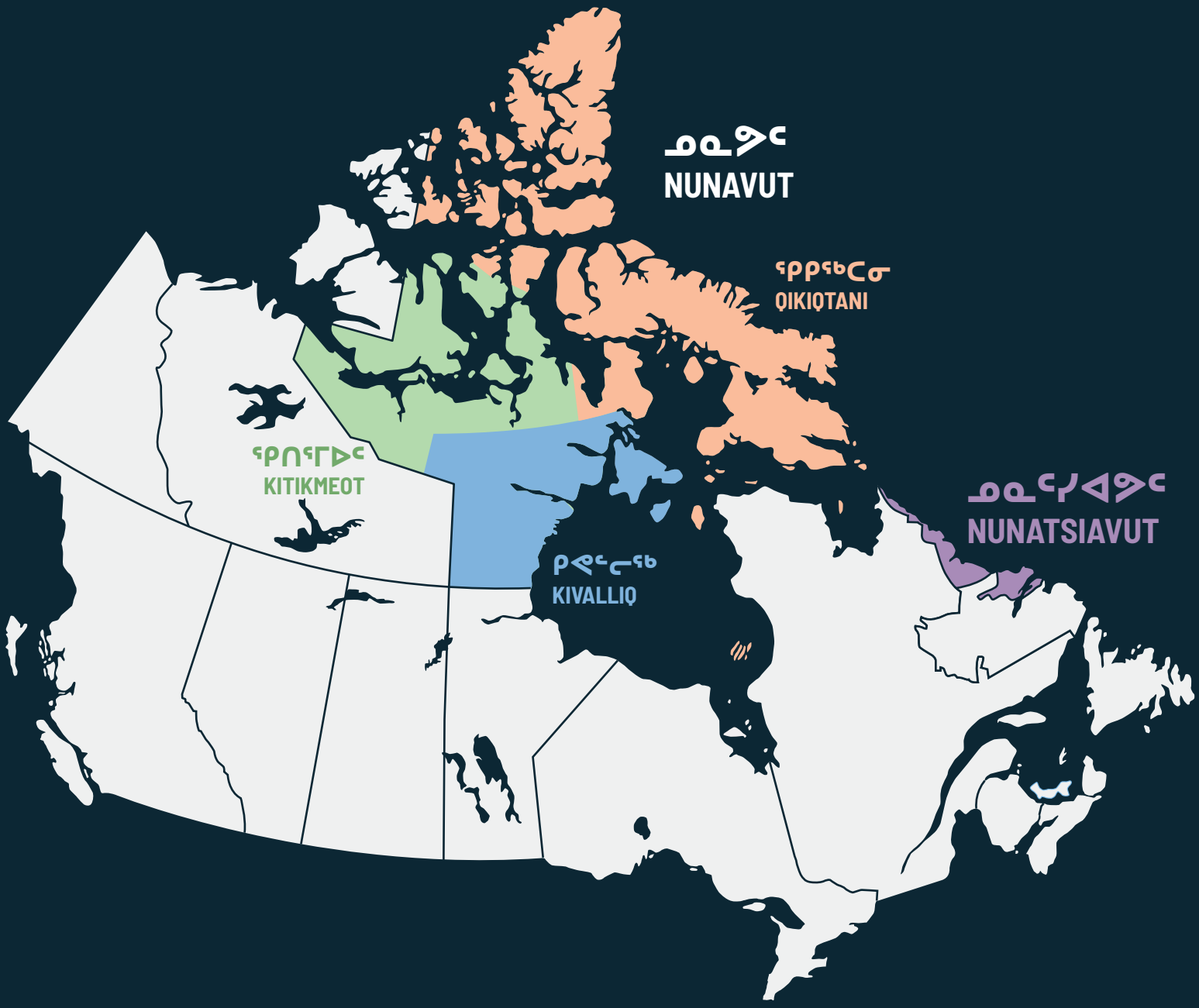
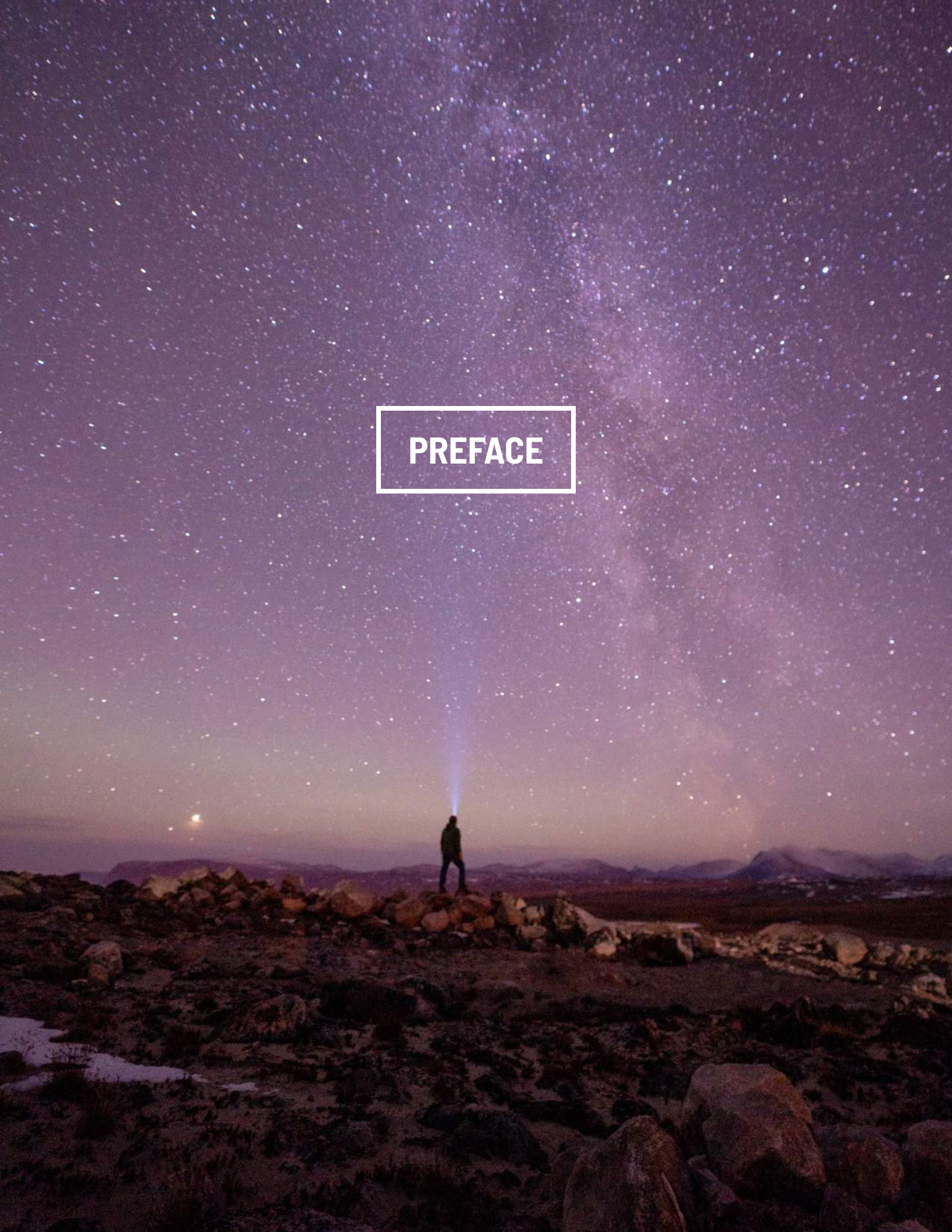

ᓄᓇᕗᑦ
NUNAVUT
ᖁᐱᖁᖅᑕᓂ
QIKIQTANI
ᖁᑭᑎᒥᐅᑦ
KITIKMEOT
ᑭᕙᓪᓕᖅ
KIVALLIQ
ᓄᓇᕋᐊᕗᑦ
NUNATSIAVUT

Table of Contents

THE STARTING POINT HERE IS TO EXAMINE OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH SILA (A COMPLEX WORD OFTEN SIMPLIFIED TO "WEATHER FORCE" OR "SKY"), NUNA (LAND), AND TARIUQ (OCEAN). WE MUST THEN ASK WHAT IT MEANS TO LOOK AFTER OURSELVES WITHIN THOSE RELATIONSHIPS AND FOCUS ON THE VALUES THAT ARE INTEGRAL TO INUIT PHILOSOPHY: RECIPROCITY, GRATITUDE, REVERENCE, AND STEWARDSHIP.

–KUNUK INUTIQ



PREFACE

Recovering Ourselves through Kaujjajjuk

We grow up with stories that teach us how to relate to the world. These stories provide important lessons. They guide us, and each time we hear them, depending on where we are in life and what we've experienced since the last time we heard them, offer a new lens to view the world. They often depict extreme situations and how we should or should not behave. The teachings help us strive for inuusiqattiarniq — the ultimate aim of living a good life through collective well-being and relationships with our surroundings.

Inuit believe that a person's character is reflected most clearly in how they treat a vulnerable person, like an orphaned child or widowed woman with no one to hunt for them. The story of Kaujjajjuk is an important one in our region of Nunavut in Inuit Nunangat (Inuit Homelands).

Kaujjajjuk, an orphan boy, lived with his cruel grandparents. Kaujjajjuk means "the one to be picked up by the nostrils." When he entered the igluvigaq (iglu), he would be pulled into the dwelling by the nostrils to the point they became stretched from the continual abuse. Not worthy of a name, he was referred to by how he was tormented.

This story has much to offer in how we work towards reclamation after experiencing the abuses of colonialism.

How we look after ourselves, our families, and our community defines how we live our lives, including our laws, philosophy, and value systems.

These are determined by the environment we live in. That is why a conversation on land and the subsequent subject of what an economy is stands at the crux of Indigenous, including Inuit, self-determination.

In Inuit legal systems, values stem from our hunting way of life. Atuutiqarniq (sense of purpose) and Inuuqatauttiarniq (being a healthy and productive member of society) are important aspects of one's well-being, sense of self, and belonging.

Colonialism and imperialism sought to destroy how we define who we are, our relationships with each other, and our natural environment. Here, I explore the ways in which we are reclaiming ourselves and our relationships in Nunavut while acknowledging the challenges we face. The story of Kaujjajjuk helps explain our plight and what we must keep in mind as we work to reclaim our minds, our bodies, and our lives.

HISTORY

In pursuit of determining our own destiny, including self-government, it is crucial to understand the history of the economic aspects of colonialism — what it was or is and how it impacts us today — so that we may be able to free ourselves from its grip.

Maintaining imperialistic and capitalistic ideas of economy limits our ability to control our destiny because it ties us to the current oppressive systems. Defining our own economy in the larger context of Indigenous resistance and "Land Back" is inherently connected to the concept of self-determination and our very identities. As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o writes:

> **The real aim of colonialism was to control the people's wealth: what they produced, how they produced it, and how it was distributed; to control, in other words, the entire realm of the language of real life. Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-determination in relationship to others.**[1]

Colonialism in the North did two things at the outset: It oppressed Indigenous peoples by claiming our lands and then exploited our lands and peoples for wealth building. The policies of colonial destruction took place insidiously over decades and continue to cause damage to our psyche. We live with its harms in various ways, from internalizing inferiority to dealing with conditions resulting from colonial trauma.

England's colonization of North America was economic, designed to build wealth for their Empire, and done through a campaign of dehumanization. "In Europe there was an aggressive competition for overseas territorial acquisitions and the emergence in colonising countries of doctrines of racial superiority which denied the fitness of subjugated peoples for self-government." [2]

Waves of contact and colonialism depleted our autonomy. First, the explorers looking for a shorter route to Asia from Europe brought sicknesses. Second, whalers began mass killing sea mammals to produce oil for heat and light in their cities and towns, and the fur traders relied on the mass killing of animals for their economy, too. The third wave was the schools and missionaries who sought to wipe Indigenous peoples of their knowledge systems, identity, language, and ways of life. This was accompanied by forced settlement living and, for Inuit, government programs such as the dog slaughter, which involved the systematic killing off of the dog teams we relied on. Finally, the anti-fur movement decimated the one economic avenue Inuit pursued in the transition to settlement living.

Collectively, these impacts compounded and created deep dependency and poverty in Inuit communities. The conditions that we live with today.

Illustration Credit: 'Moon Spirit II,' Etching and Aquatint, 2005, by Germaine Arnaktauyok

At night, Kaujjajjuk would sleep on the porch with the dogs, even in the coldest winter. There were two dogs that were most tame that he would sleep with to keep warm; he called them qipiarjuk ("the little blanket") and qarakjualuuk ("the pad"). It would be very crowded on the porch with the dogs. Before sleeping, Kaujjajjuk would look up to the moon and sing to its spirit.

The whole community treated him ill, chanting to him, "Kaujjajjualuk, naunginnaa uirisautiksatuinnaq?" ("Where is that Kaujjajjuk, the one whose only purpose is to be teased?") But there were two women who treated him well. One of them made him a small knife, which he kept hidden.

With a sense of worthlessness and almost complete oppression, how does one survive the ordeal spiritually, mentally, and physically?

With kinship ties to families and the land severed, Inuit were like orphans, removed from the means to look after ourselves. While the colony's wealth grew, Inuit became impoverished as our sense of self and how we look after ourselves dwindled. Our interdependency and sense of community have been undermined by lateral violence, which has largely been normalized. Lateral violence is when we act out our internalized colonialism and turn on each other through gossip, verbal assaults, judging, undermining, and passive-aggressive or generally intimidating behaviour.

If dehumanization was and is the means to control our lives, the antidote to regaining control is one that is humanizing: claiming identity, love and care for our kin and community, especially through committing not to partake in lateral violence.

NOW

To start deconstructing colonialist ideas, especially if we are to pursue self-government, it is imperative to consider what an economy is and what and who it is for from the grounding of Inuit belief systems.

The starting point here is to examine our relationships with sila (a complex word often simplified to "weather force" or "sky"), nuna (land), and tariuq (ocean). We must then ask what it means to look after ourselves within those relationships and focus on the values that are integral to Inuit philosophy: reciprocity, gratitude, reverence, and stewardship. For example, if we look after nuna, it will look after us; if we damage nuna, we are doing damage to ourselves. Nuna is an extension of our being; we are part of our natural environment, and it is part of us.

Inuit are a hunting society. That is our economy. The hunting and harvesting economy is not just for food but also for overall social, spiritual, and cultural well-being. Colonialism distorts that and dismisses it because it doesn't fit within its narrow extractive ethos.

> **Colonialism almost never exploits the entire country. It is content with extracting natural resources and exporting them to the metropolitan industries, thereby enabling a specific sector to grow relatively wealthy, while the rest of the colony continues, or rather sinks, into underdevelopment and poverty.**[3]

Despite being relegated to the "under-developed," for Inuit, a hunting economy is still integral to our lives and our path to food sovereignty. Inuit are reclaiming power in the food system by rebuilding the knowledge base and relationships between people and the land, as well as between harvesters, Elders, their kin and community.

Reclaiming our food system strengthens our connections to the values, philosophy and laws by which we live and through which we can address underlying social disparities that cause food insecurity. Our hunting economy supports our own needs by supplying healthy and culturally based foods, and it is a practice of self-determination that creates jobs, markets, and economic opportunities and ensures Inuit continue to access our land, knowledge, and food-sharing practices.

However, in capitalist and colonial systems, a land-based hunting economy rooted in Indigenous self-determination is not an easy argument to make. As noted by the international peasant movement, La Via Campesina, at the World Food Summit in 1996, "food sovereignty is rooted in the ongoing global struggles over control of food, land, water, and livelihoods."

We are told that food comes from trade, economies of scale, and competitive advantage. We are told this is because local control of the global food supply is discouraged. We are expected to trust that Northmart stores fairly distribute and price our food because they receive federal funding from programs such as Nutrition North, which subsidizes shipped food, to do so. For federal programming, Nutrition North is the main and only consistent food security program. There is no permanent funding to support hunting as a food source or employment, even though it is a reliable and culturally relevant food system.

Encouragingly, there is a growing movement in Nunavut to build a hunting economy as a livelihood and economic base. Programs like Angunasuktiit, run by the Ittaq Heritage and Research Centre in Clyde River, were used as a model by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association to create the Nauttiqsuqtiit — Inuit stewards who are part of a monitoring system for the Tallurutiup Imanga Marine

Conservation Area. And now, multiple community men's groups see the value in men regaining their hunting and land skills to pursue healing and reclamation. These programs exist in Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit, Kugluktuk, Pangnirtung and, most recently, in Cape Dorset. The Pirurvik Centre in Iqaluit has been instrumental in assisting the groups' development. The Government of Nunavut has also launched the Atii Anguti program, which supports men's groups across the territory, and recently, Nunavut's Minister of Family Services, the Honourable Margaret Nakashuk, said in the Legislative Assembly, "I have tasked my officials to begin the work to create full-time hunter positions, young hunter mentorship programs, and community hunts to make country food more accessible to Elders."[4] There are also hunting skills programs in communities, such as the Young Hunter's program in Arviat. This commitment to preserving our traditional way of life and affirming that we're a hunting society is being seen as instrumental to our vision of the future economy.

The arrival of Kaujjajjuk's spiritual helper helped him to reclaim his power.

Late one night, Kaujjajjuk heard people arriving. He then heard someone sternly command, "People have arrived; Kaujjajjuk go outside." He was a child, so he was scared to listen to a stranger and go outside. But he had to listen to adults. He told each of his dogs to go outside (in those days, animals and humans could speak to each other), and the dogs each responded, "You go outside instead."

When Kaujjajjuk finally left the iglu to face the stern voice that had called for him, he nervously started to sing, "I went out instead." The visitor told Kaujjajjuk he wanted to whip him. Kaujjajjuk did not want to be whipped because he knew it would hurt. But, again, he had to listen, so he thought, "Never mind. If it has to be so, then so be it." Kaujjajjuk was used to being tormented. The visitor started to whip him, and it was very painful. Because the visitor wanted it to be so, so it was.

Every time the whip cracked, Kaujjajjuk grew bigger. Each time, the visitor would ask him, "Young being, have you not grown?" Kaujjajjuk would respond in acknowledgement, "I have developed; I have grown."

After several whips, Kaujjajjuk had grown so much that he was bigger than all the other people in the camp. After the mysterious visitor's job was done, they flew away. The visitor was the moon's spirit. Kaujjajjuk's songs had been heard.

With his new size, Kaujjajjuk could finally convey his anger at being mistreated. He stood up and broke through the roof of the porch. Then, when the villagers called for him, Kaujjajjuk responded, "Here he is! The one to be teased; the one you villagers are to compete with at teasing. Tease away (uirisaliritti); compete away (parlatitsaliritti)."

When Kaujjajjuk appeared as a very big man, some of the shocked observers started to flee. Someone shouted, "Kaujjajjuk has suddenly grown!" Another person, who could not believe how large the boy had become, responded, "Let him!" The villagers quickly conspired to tie Kaujjajjuk down and leave him for the nanuq (polar bear) to attack while they continued to taunt and tease him.

However, when the big polar bears arrived, Kaujjajjuk grabbed them by their hind legs, hit them against the ground and threw them away. He then grabbed the men by their legs and hit them against the ground, too. Kaujjajjuk went on a rampage and, in his madness, accidentally killed one of the women who had been kind to him. Kaujjajjuk deeply regretted harming her and realized how powerful and overwhelming anger can be.

RECLAMATION

Hunting, as a livelihood and a path to healing, will eventually become commonplace in Nunavut and Inuit Nunangat as part of the larger work towards self-determination. However, infrastructure for country food processing will be required in our communities. There must be broader thinking around food sovereignty because, currently, food subsidy programs do not benefit the communities but rather the retail companies. The byproducts of hunting, such as seal skins and oil, will also need to be processed. This is only the beginning.

With the current average Inuit income being just over $28,000 a year (2021 census), most Inuit do not have the economic means to buy equipment to go out on the land, let alone work to create this vision. We must work together to create and access resources, programs, and knowledge for our version of Land Back.

Kaujjajjuk's story teaches us that anger is powerful and, when uncontrolled, dangerous. Therefore, as we regain agency and sovereignty through our way of life, we must not act in vengeance. Instead, we must turn our anger into constructive power.

The colonial system will continue to try to oppress and control us. We need to be mindful not to hurt others, especially each other and our allies. We must diligently work through our historical mistreatment through healing and wellness programs. We cannot forget our spiritual helper, the land, and that our songs will manifest our power and vision.

PART 01
Contextualizing the Northern Economy

Editors' Introduction: What is the Northern Economy?

Kaujjajjuk reflects the contemporary experience of Inuit in Nunavut.

The overwhelming force of colonialism drives communities trying to survive and to heal to the limit. How can you define an economy in this context? As Kunuk suggests in the preface, it is by growing large, taking up space, and intervening in conversations designed to marginalize and ostracize. For a long time, Inuit and Northern Indigenous peoples generally have not had a voice in the discussions around conceptualizing economic development. Canadian governments, industry, and non-Indigenous consultants — this trilateral colonialism of the North — make those decisions.

However, as Inuit and Northern Indigenous people generally challenge the common sense of economic activity as it has emerged over the past few years, a cleavage has become apparent. While resource development and the service economy dominate discussions of wealth, value, and GDP, questions about how these align with Inuit values and self-determination are emerging. How do concepts such as "don't take more than what you need," "respect the rights of the land," "reciprocity and sharing among and between families and communities," and "care-based strategies for meeting needs" factor into our discussions of economy?

There are land claim agreements, supposed "de facto" self-government, devolution, impact benefit agreements, and all manner of institutional arrangements meant to share power. Still, they stubbornly do not translate to Inuit leadership. Meanwhile, a largely invisible (or at least largely unacknowledged) economy of hunting, art, and care operates in tandem – but precariously.

This is the cleavage we speak of.

This report is by no means a comprehensive report on self-determined economy, but rather a start of a conversation on what that means, or could mean, to expand it.

There are many reports and explorations on Northern Economy, most often centred around extractive industries that further disconnect Inuit from their values and systems, and past economic systems have caused further disparity between Inuit and non-Inuit, with most of the money flowing to the south. There is minimal discussion about what Land Back and Cash Back mean for Inuit and the North. This report explores these concepts.

Further, this report is not just a contribution to the conversation but an active intervention. It aims to center Inuit voices on the Northern Economy, its distinct sectors, modern challenges, and transformative opportunities. Through a combination of historical context, contemporary analysis, reflections, and visions for the future, this report aims to provide alternative conceptualizations of economic activity to shift the narrative and drive toward significant change in the common sense approach to the economy.

Part 01 introduces the path that Inuit, in particular, have walked thus far and considers the current economic landscape. Matthias Oschinsky provides a broad analysis of the orthodox economic development prescriptions and their failure to deliver the promise of an Inuit-led economy where Inuit struggle to see themselves reflected. Siila Watt Cloutier reflects on the historical and current transformations in the Northern economy, advocating for a holistic approach that integrates cultural, spiritual, and economic well-being. These two chapters offer a contextual foundation for the more reflective or advocacy-focused chapters that follow.

Part 02 focuses on the Inuit's much older economic activities as expressed in a contemporary Nunavut. Jae Lightfoot and Hayden King discuss the critical role of hunter education programs in ensuring food security and maintaining Indigenous knowledge. Esa Qillaq shares personal experiences and insights into the life of a full-time hunter, emphasizing the importance of hunting practices for food security knowledge and cultural preservation. Jason Akearok examines the complexities of fisheries' rights, highlighting the challenges and opportunities for sustainable development in the region. Richard Paton explores the potential of a conservation-based economy, advocating for practices that balance ecological preservation with economic development.

Part 03 explores the diversity of Inuit economic activities beyond hunting or mining, with a focus on the arts, small business development, and the economy of care. Barbara Akoak reflects on her experiences in the art and craft sector against the backdrop of mass commercialization and Northern monopolies. Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory and Kunuk Inutiq discuss the impacts of decolonial art on challenging and transforming destructive economic practices. Romani Makkik reflects on meaningful work and challenges readers to consider the connections between economy and healing.

We recognize there are gaps in the report, such as further exploring what caring for our people on our terms means for us, including looking after our children, their education, and creating safety nets to prevent them from going into care; looking after our Elders based on our values, and analyzing our health and justice systems. Because, importantly, "the economy" cannot be easily extracted from our lived realities, and attention must be paid to the politics and economy of society more generally.

But more specific to the traditional conceptualization of economic activity, we have not considered a number of sectors critically: tourism and economic benefits (or harms); the often extractive industry of science and research and the growing leadership of Inuit in this area; the potential for a knowledge economy, and the impacts and benefits of Indigenous data sovereignty; or, whether business development initiatives do enough to support entrepreneurship and create private businesses when major service gaps exist, such as with banking within smaller communities. Nor have we examined energy and the economy of power.

So there is work to do. However, the perspectives within this report offer a holistic approach to understanding the Northern economy that is self-determined by Inuit and examples of transformation. If we are to truly recover from the grips of colonialism and its trail of destruction, we need to control and manage what happens on our lands and on our terms.

MATTHIAS OSCHINSKY

The Current State of the Northern Economy for Inuit in Nunavut

What is the current state of the northern economy, with specific attention to Inuit in Nunavut? This chapter attempts to answer this question.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the nature of the so-called "mixed economy," where governments support mining and resource development but offer very little space for Inuit-led economic activity, and questions whether the strong bias towards mining is justified when considering socioeconomic outcomes for Nunavut's population. Government support for mining far outweighs that of other sectors, yet its benefits to the local population are modest.

The second section examines the labour market and the extent to which Inuit are involved and benefit from the existing Northern Economy. It draws a comparison between government support for skills development for the wage economy and support for culture and language, with a particular emphasis on the latter. As demonstrated by the rest of the report, investments in language education could provide the foundation for Inuit-led economic activity, which is grounded in Inuit culture.

Based on the results of this analysis, it is clear that a re-think of the economic development approach in the Northern Economy is warranted. This re-evaluation should strongly focus on Nunavut's traditional economic sectors: harvesting, arts, and the language that underlies their effective practice. Beyond the economic benefits, these sectors play a pivotal role in cultural revitalization and community building. Moreover, hunting and harvesting significantly contribute to food security and food sovereignty, further justifying the need for change.

THE "MIXED" ECONOMY

When discussing Nunavut's economy, it is important to keep in mind that it is, in essence, a dual one.

Specifically, we can distinguish between formal (wage-based) and traditional (land-based) economies. Economic assessments commonly focus on the former with an emphasis on employment, wages, and GDP growth.

Since mining is the largest private sector employer in the territory, it receives comparatively more attention than most other sectors. In contrast, Nunavut's traditional sectors, such as hunting and arts, receive relatively little consideration in economic studies. Similarly, this can be seen in the case of government support for Nunavut's industrial sectors. As Caine and Krogman (2010) and Rodon and Lévesque (2015) note, the predominant emphasis on economic investment in the Northern economies tends to revolve around job creation through natural resource exploration and extraction.

The divergent treatment of Nunavut's mining sector compared to its traditional ones raises the question of whether the significant difference in support of mining is actually justified. Put differently, what are the socioeconomic benefits of mining compared to the traditional sectors of Nunavut's population? And should the land-based economy receive more attention and support from policymakers?

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

While specific data on sectoral subsidies is difficult to come by, official information suggests that government support of the mining sector is substantial. The 2023 federal budget set aside $1.5 billion to launch a critical minerals infrastructure fund and proposed a 30 percent tax credit for extracting and processing critical minerals.[1] Budget 2024 expanded this with $3.8 billion for a Critical Minerals Strategy.[2]

The significant tax credits come on top of deductions for exploration expenses. Canadian exploration expenses (CEEs) refer to the costs incurred when determining the existence, location, extent, or quality of mineral resources, petroleum, or natural gas in Canada. The notable thing about CEEs is that they are deductible to 100 percent in the same year they occur. In other words, businesses can immediately subtract the entire amount from their taxable income. Additionally, if there are any unused expenses, they can be carried forward indefinitely or transferred to investors through so-called flow-through shares.[3]

Below are figures for exploration and deposit appraisals from 2020 to 2022 in Nunavut. Total expenditures amounted to $143.2 million in 2022. Approximately 70 percent of this amount, a total of $100.24 million, was spent on exploration.[4]

TABLE 1

Exploration and deposit appraisal expenditures Nunavut, 2020-2022

YEAR	EXPLORATION (millions)	DEPOSIT APPRAISAL (millions)	TOTAL (millions)
2020	$49.49	$21.21	$70.7
2021	$104.44	$44.76	$149.2
2022	$100.24	$42.96	$143.2

SOURCE: NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA: MINERALS AND THE ECONOMY[5]

Meanwhile, there is also data on the loss in corporate income tax for the 100 percent deduction of exploration expenses. Assuming a 12 percent corporate income tax, the lost tax revenue for Nunavut in 2022 alone amounts to roughly $12 million. For the past three years, the total loss is around $30.5 million.

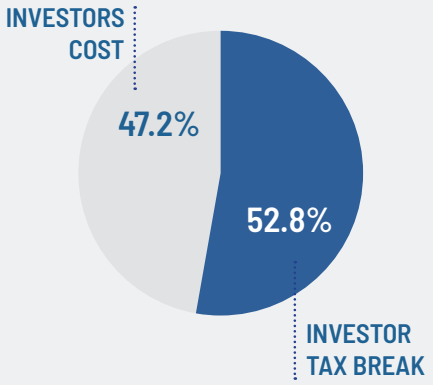
TABLE 2

Estimating loss in corporate income tax revenue for Nunavut due to CEE deductions

YEAR	LOSS IN CORPORATE INCOME TAX REVENUE (millions)	TOTAL LOSS FROM '20 - '22 (millions)
2020	$5,938,800	$30,500,400
2021	$12, 532,800	
2022	$12,028,800	

As mentioned, these deductions come on top of tax credits from so-called flow-through shares (FTS). Simply put, an FTS is a way for a business involved in mineral exploration and development in Canada to raise funds. When a company issues FTS, it allows them to pass on certain expenses to the shareholders, which are then treated as if the investor, not the company, had incurred them. This arrangement can help lower the investor's taxable income.

Nunavut leads in this regard.
In 2022, the cost of a $1,000 investment in FTS was $472. In other words, Nunavut allows investors to pay less than half the full cost of their investment in mining.



These figures combined illustrate considerable support for the mining sector. In contrast, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) recently announced that it would provide a total of $556,866 over two years to support Nunavut's hunters and trappers organizations.[6]

While it is commendable that public officials recognize the importance of supporting Nunavut's land-based economy, there is a striking disparity in government support between the mining sector and the traditional economy.

Looking simply at employment numbers, one could argue that the mining sector supports considerably more jobs in Nunavut than in hunting or arts. According to the latest census data, out of a total workforce of 13,255 people, around 400 work in mining, 250 in arts, entertainment, and recreation, and 150 in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting. However, these statistics fail to capture the true magnitude of Nunavut's land-based and art economy (demonstrated below), nor do they account for the overall impact of each sector on the economy, including their interdependence with other sectors.

THE BENEFITS TO NUNAVUT

Instead of focusing solely on GDP, wages, or employment numbers to assess the importance of a specific sector for an economic region, it is more valuable to consider the sector's interdependence with the broader regional economy; this gives us a better understanding of its benefits to the region through its interconnectedness with other sectors.

One of the key tools in understanding this interdependence is the concept of economic multipliers. When a new investment or spending occurs in a specific sector or industry, it creates a ripple effect, impacting other parts of the economy. These ripples are known as economic multipliers.

Let's say a company decides to build a new factory in a town. This investment will create direct job opportunities in the construction industry. But it doesn't stop there. The construction workers will spend their wages on groceries, restaurants, and other local businesses, which, in turn, creates additional jobs and income for those businesses and their employees. The employees of these businesses will then spend their earnings elsewhere, creating further economic activity.

Economic multipliers measure this ripple effect by showing how one initial investment or spending generates additional economic activity and income. Essentially, it's a way to understand the broader impacts and benefits of an investment or expenditure beyond just the direct effects.

Two commonly used measures to estimate the contribution of a specific sector to the local economy: Job Multipliers and Labour Income Multipliers.

A JOB MULTIPLIER shows the total number of additional jobs created in the regional economy for a further investment of $1 million in a specific industry. Investments in industries with higher job multipliers are likely to increase overall employment more than those with lower job ones, thus creating more benefits for the economic region overall. Figure 1 presents the top five job multipliers by industry in Nunavut and compares those with the mining industry.

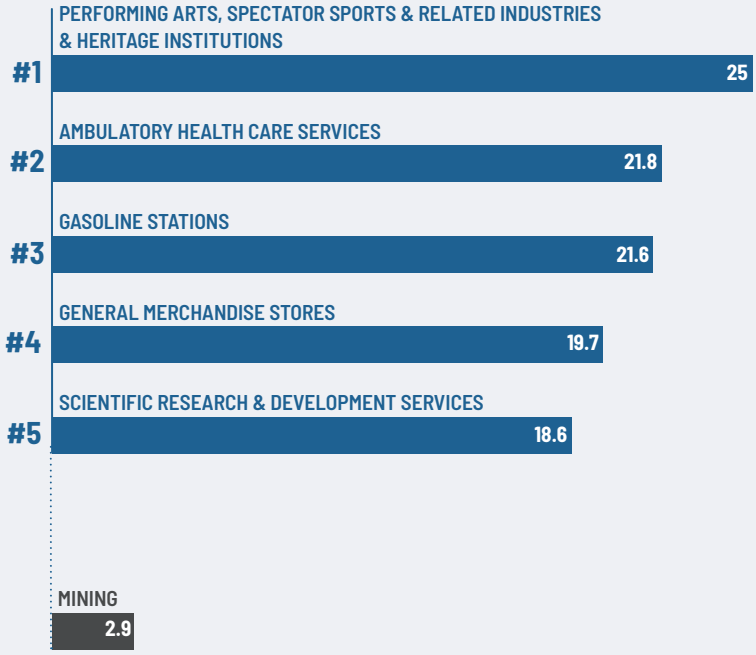
As shown, performing arts, spectator sports and related industries, and heritage institutions have the highest job multiplier, with a value of 25. This means that for every $1 million investment in that sector, an additional 25 jobs are created throughout the economy.

THE LABOUR INCOME MULTIPLIER measures the change in overall labour income for one additional dollar of output.

Figure 2 shows that with a value of 1.5, scientific research and development services have the highest labour income multiplier, followed by performing arts, spectator sports and related industries, and heritage institutions with a total labour income multiplier of 1.

FIGURE 1
Top Five Job Multipliers for Selected Industries in Nunavut, 2019

For every $1 million investment in mining an additional **2.9 jobs** are created throughout the economy in comparison to **25 jobs** per 1 million invested in the Performing Arts.



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, TABLE: 36-10-0595-01.

FIGURE 2
Top Five Labour Multipliers for Selected Industries in Nunavut, 2019

A multiplier of 1.5 means that for every $1 of economic activity, workers receive $1.50 in total wages and salaries across the economy.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, TABLE: 36-10-0595-01.

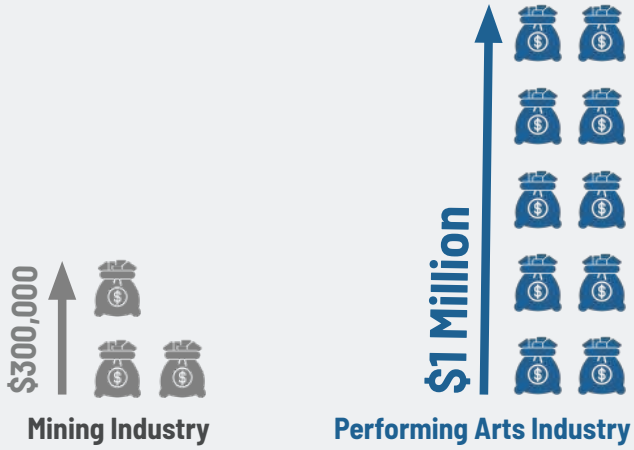
FIGURE 3

Labour Income Increase Comparison

One million dollar investment in the Performing Arts Industry vs. Mining Industry

The labour multiplier for the mining industry is 0.3 in Nunavut. This means that for every $1 million investment, the in the mining industry would increase total labour income by **$300,000**.

In contrast, a $1 million investment in the performing arts industry increased total labour income across the territory by **$1 million**.



These figures demonstrate that while significant support for the mining industry might be valuable from a national perspective, communities in Nunavut do not experience this value to the same degree.

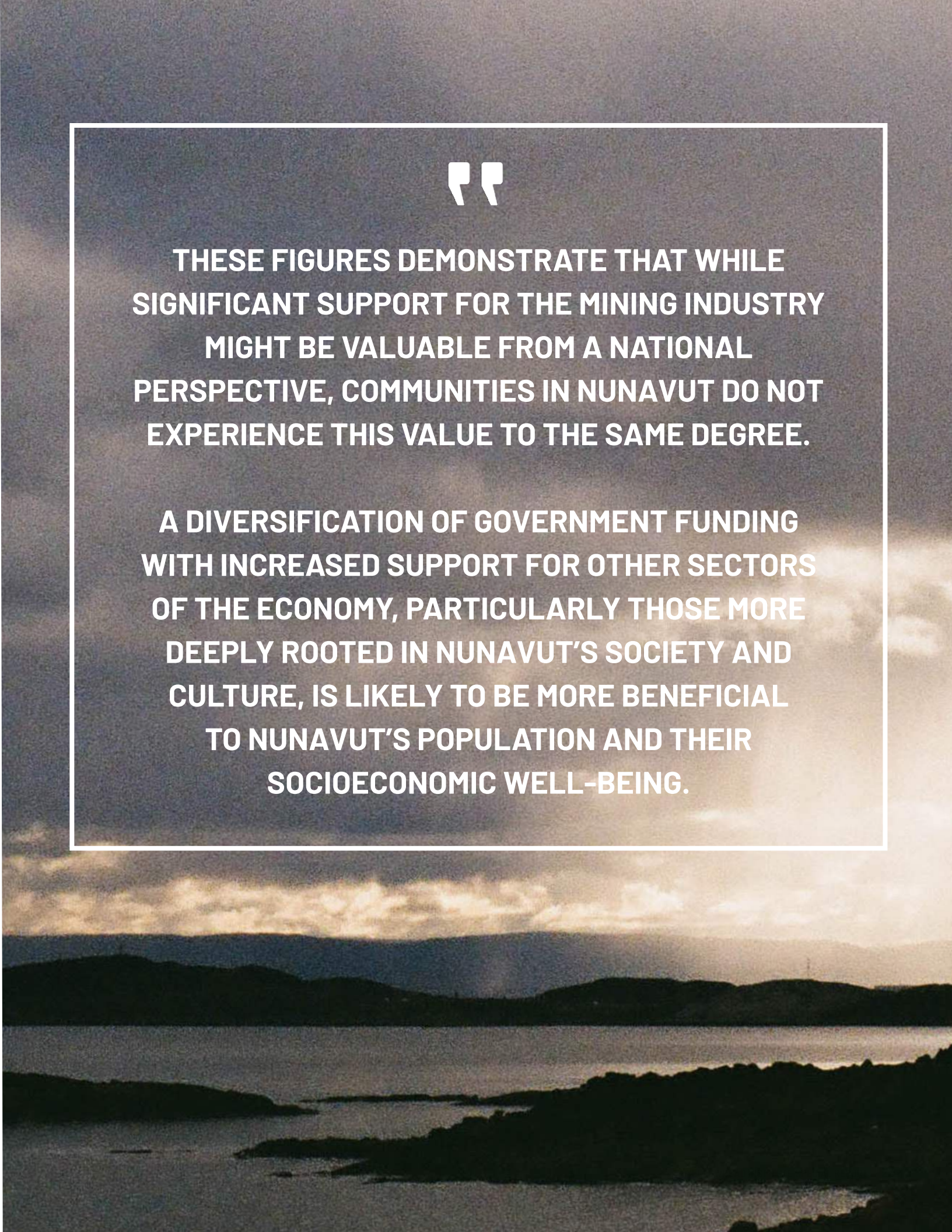
A diversification of government funding with increased support for other sectors of the economy, particularly those more deeply rooted in Nunavut's society and culture, is likely to be more beneficial to Nunavut's population and their socioeconomic well-being.

Indeed, these findings are confirmed by a recent study on the impact of mining on Indigenous communities. Berman et al. (2020) assess the benefits of a mining partnership between the Northwest Alaska Native Association and Teck Resources, a Canada-based company, over 14 years. They sum up their sobering results as follows:

> **The benefits to local residents, although lasting and significant given the limited opportunities in the region, accounted for a relatively modest share of total employment and earnings.**
>
> **The relatively modest benefits received by local Indigenous residents, even in the favorable circumstances of the Red Dog case, suggest that one may need to temper expectations about what extractive industry development can achieve for Indigenous communities.**
>
> (BERMAN ET AL., 2020, P.8)

Based on the analysis conducted thus far, it is evident that a re-evaluation of government support for Nunavut's economy is necessary. As Berman et al. note, overall limited opportunities for the local population contribute to the modest benefits of mining. A plausible conclusion drawn from this observation is that prioritizing the expansion and diversification of overall economic opportunities would yield more favourable outcomes.

Furthermore, as we consider the positive impacts of the traditional economy, the socioeconomic benefits of such a rethinking become even more apparent.



THESE FIGURES DEMONSTRATE THAT WHILE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FOR THE MINING INDUSTRY MIGHT BE VALUABLE FROM A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE, COMMUNITIES IN NUNAVUT DO NOT EXPERIENCE THIS VALUE TO THE SAME DEGREE.

A DIVERSIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING WITH INCREASED SUPPORT FOR OTHER SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY, PARTICULARLY THOSE MORE DEEPLY ROOTED IN NUNAVUT'S SOCIETY AND CULTURE, IS LIKELY TO BE MORE BENEFICIAL TO NUNAVUT'S POPULATION AND THEIR SOCIOECONOMIC WELL-BEING.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ART AND HARVESTING FOR NUNAVUT'S ECONOMY

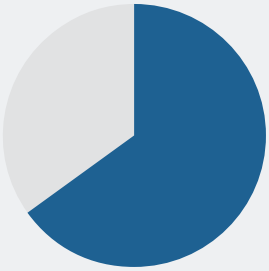
The term "livelihoods" is often used to describe the various ways in which Inuit families earn a living and support themselves. This term goes beyond wage employment and includes activities such as food harvesting, goods production, artwork, and handicrafts. As such, by extending our focus to include the land-based economy, we can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the Inuit economy (Anderson et al., 2016).

Nunavut's land-based, or traditional, economy can be divided into two main sectors:

1. Hunting and harvesting activities; and
2. Arts and crafts.

Data from the 2017 Indigenous People's Survey indicate the level of participation in these activities.[7]

FIGURE 4
The Number of People involved in Hunting and Harvesting Activities in Nunavut



65%

or 12,900 survey participants reported they engage in Hunting, Fishing or Trapping

37%

or 7,300 survey participants indicated they had gathered wild plants

FIGURE 5
The Number of People involved in Arts and Crafts in Nunavut

Almost

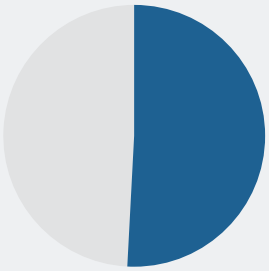
7,000

of survey participants were involved with making clothing or footwear.

Almost

3,400

survey participants produced artwork.



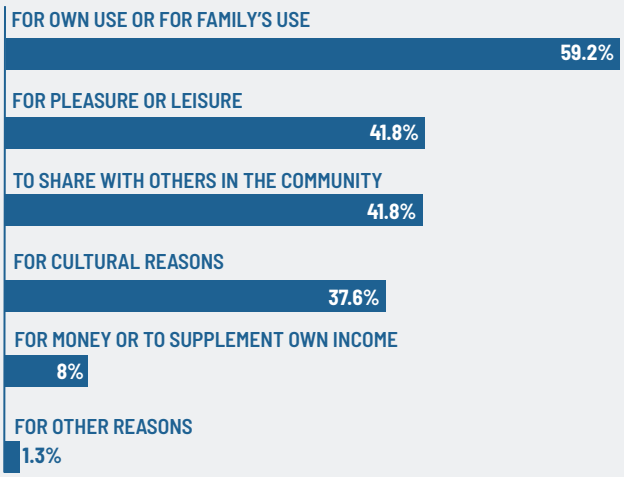
Taken together,

51%

of survey participants were involved in arts and crafts.

FIGURE 6

Reasons for participating in harvesting activities in Nunavut, 2017

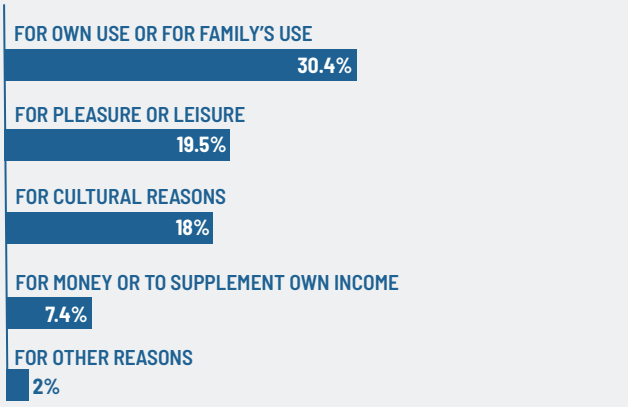


SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, 41-10-0046-01

Figure 6 shows us that only a minority of survey respondents hunt, fish, or trap to generate income. Almost 60 percent of those involved in hunting did so for their own or their family's use, followed by around 42 percent who did so for pleasure or leisure and to share with others in the community. Around 38 percent also cited cultural reasons.

FIGURE 7

Reasons for participating in arts and crafts in Nunavut, 2017



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, 41-10-0047-01

A similar picture emerges with the reasons for participating in the arts. As Figure 7 shows, the main reasons are creating something for one's own or one's family's use (30.4 percent), participating for pleasure or leisure (19.5 percent), and for cultural reasons (18 percent). Again, income generation does not play a significant role.[8]

What does the data tell us about Northern participation in the land-based economy?

Participation in the land-based economy, then, exceeds purely monetary motives and is vital for family life and culture in Nunavut. Yet, recent research shows that it also generates significant socioeconomic benefits.

Studying Nunavut's hunting sector, Warltier et al. (2021) determine the value of Nunavut's country food by considering the amount and nutritional content of harvested country food alongside the nutritional composition and local prices of store-bought alternatives.

They find that 17 out of 21 Nunavut communities harvest enough country food to meet the protein requirements of all community members.

Specifically, Nunavut's country food system annually gathers five million kilograms of protein-rich food from various regions across the territory. The purchase value of the equivalent amount of protein from stores would cost approximately $198 million. In addition, the authors emphasize that the value of the country food system extends beyond monetary worth; it holds profound cultural and nutritional significance.

Studies by Searles (2016) and Kenny and Chan (2017) confirm that hunting and harvesting activities in Nunavut are a key contributor to food security. This finding is pertinent since data shows that Canada's Indigenous population is significantly more likely to be affected by food insecurity compared to the overall population (see Figure 8). Indeed, the share of the Indigenous population suffering from moderate or severe food insecurity is more than double that of the non-Indigenous population.

FIGURE 8

Percentage of Moderate or Severe Food Insecurity: Indigenous vs. Non-Indigenous populations

25.5%
of the Indigenous population experience food insecurity.

12.5 %
of the non-Indigenous population experience food insecurity.

The share of the Indigenous population suffering from moderate or severe food insecurity is **more than double** that of the non-Indigenous population.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, TABLE: 13-10-0835-01.

The important contribution of Nunavut's hunting and harvesting activities to the socioeconomic well-being of the local population is further highlighted in a recent report by the Future Skills Centre (2023). The report, citing George Wenzel's work, emphasized the stark comparison in value of investment in local hunting and harvesting versus money spent at Northern grocery stores, as seen in Figure 9.

Beyond this, the Future Skills Centre report underscores the crucial role of hunters in facilitating access to land-based activities, which hold deep significance for Inuit livelihoods and culture. Yet, their expertise often goes unrecognized when measuring Northern economic growth and their capabilities are often overshadowed by the preference for formal credentials and workplace experience in wage-based employment.

FIGURE 9

HOW FAR DOES $50 GO?

A Comparison between Local Hunting and Harvesting vs. Grocery Store Purchases in Northern communities

Local Hunting and Harvesting

An investment of just **$50** in local hunting and harvesting generates a supply of country food that could feed **20 individuals**.

Local Grocery Store

$50 spent at local Northern grocery stores would provide meat for **fewer than four individuals**, with the meat likely being less fresh and lacking the cultural value associated with traditional food sources.

THE LABOUR MARKET, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, AND LANGUAGE

Regarding wage-based employment, this analysis considers the scope and nature of Inuit involvement in the Nunavut labour market, which is characterized by significant inequality between the Inuit and non-Inuit populations. While the Inuit population accounts for roughly 73 percent of the total labour force in Nunavut, overall opportunities are severely limited to relatively lower-paid jobs. This results in substantial wage inequality and poor economic prospects for Inuit. Moreover, empirical evidence suggests the existence of labour market barriers and discrimination against Inuit workers.

Differences in unemployment rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous[9] groups do not decline significantly with higher educational attainment, and wage gaps exist between the two groups for all levels of educational attainment.

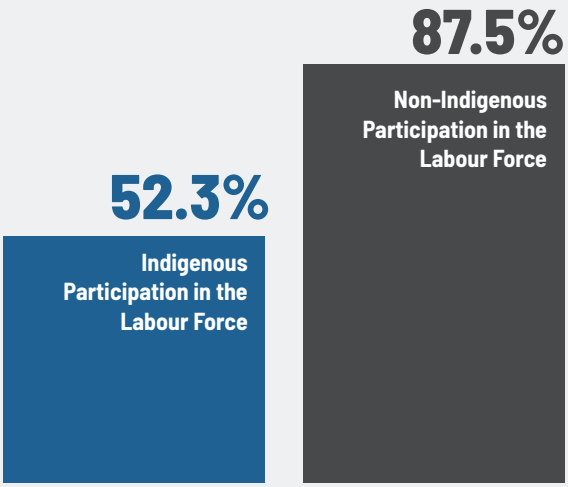
Next to a narrow focus on formal credentials, the profound differences in educational outcomes among the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations appear to result from the prevailing educational approach. With the exception of one French-language school, all schools in Nunavut operate in English.[10] Given the ample empirical evidence demonstrating that integrating Indigenous language in Indigenous schools significantly improves student well-being and learning outcomes, creating an Inuktut-language education system should be a policy priority.

These policies should be part of an approach that works towards the self-determination of Nunavut's Inuit population.

Inequality in Labour Market Outcomes

Among individuals aged 15 and higher, around 52 percent of Indigenous people are in the labour force compared to roughly 87 percent of the non-Indigenous population. More importantly, employment figures for non-Indigenous people are significantly higher. Around 85 percent of the non-Indigenous labour force is employed compared to roughly 41 percent of the Indigenous labour force. As a consequence, the unemployment rate among the Indigenous population is almost nine percentage points higher than that of the non-Indigenous population.

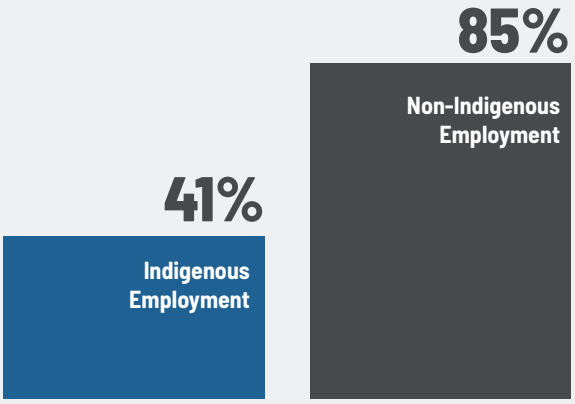
FIGURE 10
Participation of Indigenous People vs Non-Indigenous Population in the Labour Force



Among individuals aged 15 and higher, around **52.3 percent** of Indigenous people are in the labour force compared to roughly **87 percent** of the non-Indigenous population.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA: TABLE 98-10-0451-01.

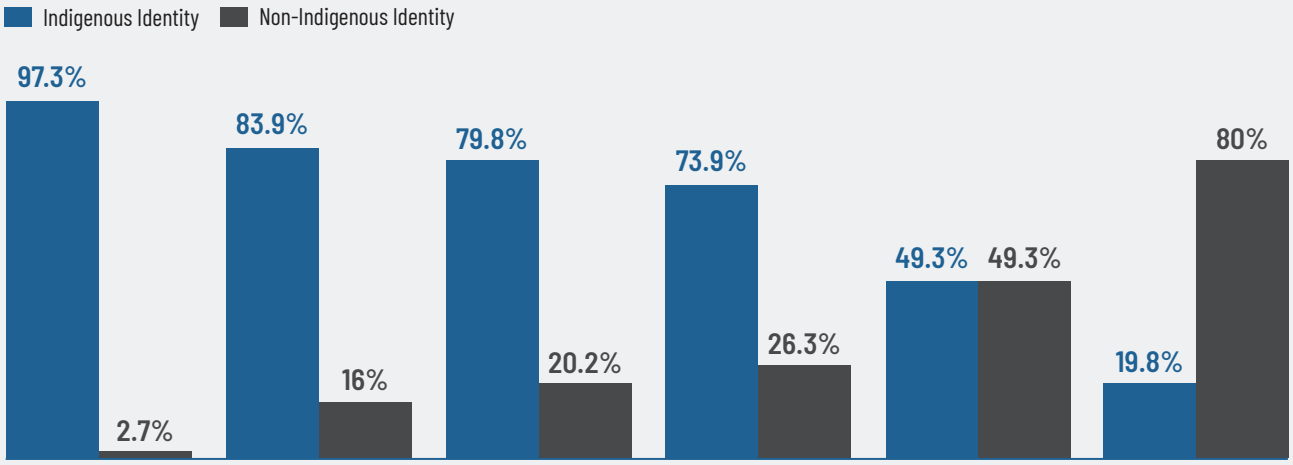
FIGURE 11
Employment Figures for Indigenous People vs Non-Indigenous Population



Around 85 percent of the non-Indigenous labour force is employed compared to roughly 41 percent of the Indigenous labour force.

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA: TABLE 98-10-0451-01.

FIGURE 11
Labour Force Participation by Highest Educational Achievement



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, TABLE: 98-10-0428-01.

This uneven split in employment can be a result of educational outcomes. As Figure 11 shows, among those with no certificate, diploma, or degree, around 97 percent are Indigenous. Similarly, percentage shares among the Indigenous population are significantly higher among those whose highest educational achievement is a high school diploma or equivalent, those with an apprenticeship or trades certificate, and those with a non-university certificate. Figure 11 also shows that the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with an associate degree (a university degree below bachelor level) is the same at 49.3 percent. In contrast, among those with a bachelor's degree or higher, only 20 percent are Indigenous.

While it is likely that these differences in educational achievement account for some of the disparities in Nunavut's labour market with respect to Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups, they are also the result of a degree-based labour market. Certificates and formal educational achievements are still commonly used to signal skills and competencies, whereas valuable skills gained in other ways tend to be overlooked.

As a recent report on Nunavut's mixed economy points out:

> **Hunters have expertise in land-based activities, which aren't typically accounted for in labour market forecasts or measures of Northern economic growth. And despite the fact that life in the Arctic requires strong skill sets, hunters' skills are often not recognized as legitimate qualifications for jobs in the wage economy. Instead, employers tend to privilege formal credentials and workplace experience.** (FUTURE SKILLS CENTRE, 2023: P. 7.)

In addition to a narrow focus on formal credentials, the profound differences in educational outcomes among Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations might also result from the prevailing educational approach — a topic discussed in more detail below.

Labour market choices and outcomes reflect the differences in educational attainment. Among the top ten occupations with the highest shares of Indigenous people in Nunavut, the top five have a total Indigenous employment share of 100 percent. Moreover, with the exception of supervisors in natural resources, agriculture and related production (median annual income: $80,000) and general trades (median annual income: $52,000), the median employment incomes for the remaining occupations are well below $40,000 per annum. In fact, calculating the average of all median annual incomes for these occupations amounts to just $28,640 per year.

With the exception of one French-language school, all schools in Nunavut operate in English.[10] Given the ample empirical evidence demonstrating that integrating Indigenous language in Indigenous schools significantly improves student well-being and learning outcomes, creating an Inuktut-language education system should be a policy priority.

These policies should be part of an approach that works towards the self-determination of Nunavut's Inuit population.

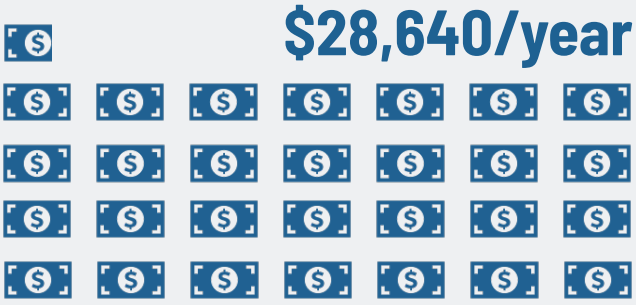
Photo Credit: Shari Fox

In addition to a narrow focus on formal credentials, the profound differences in educational outcomes among Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations might also result from the prevailing educational approach — a topic discussed in more detail below. Labour market choices and outcomes reflect the differences in educational attainment.

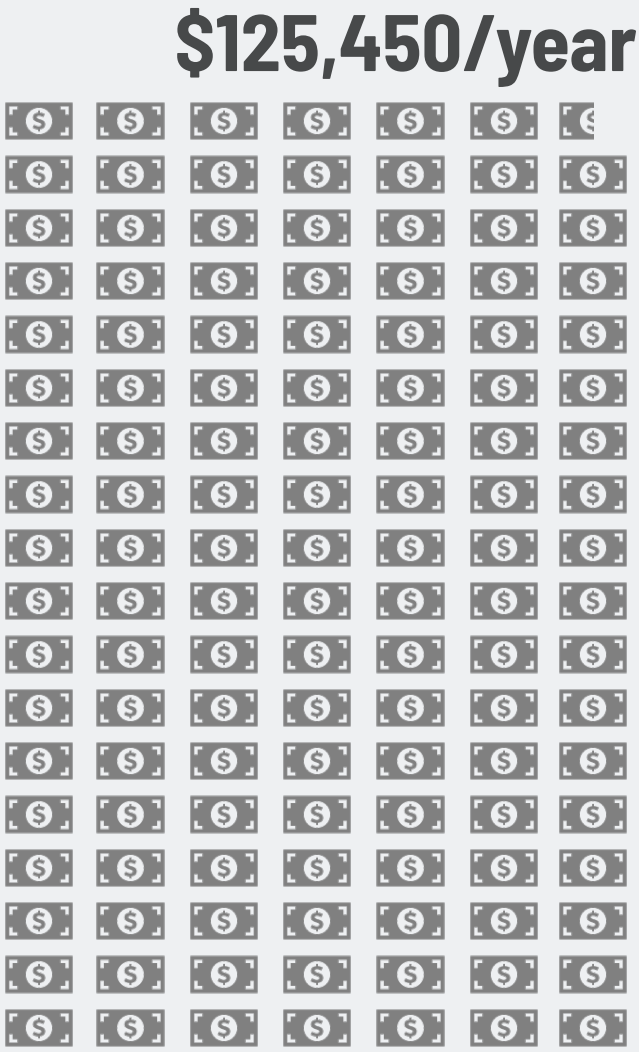
Among the top ten occupations with the highest shares of Indigenous people in Nunavut, the top five have a total Indigenous employment share of 100 percent:

1. Supervisors in natural resources, agriculture and related production
2. Occupations in natural resources and related production
3. Workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production
4. Harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers
5. Machine operators, assemblers and inspectors in processing, manufacturing and printing

FIGURE 12
A Comparison of Average Median Annual Incomes for Top Occupations with the Highest Shares of Indigenous vs. Non-Indigenous People



The average of all median incomes for eight of the top ten occupations with the highest shares of Indigenous people in Nunavut amounts to just **$28,640** per year.



The average of all median annual incomes for the top ten occupations with the highest shares of non-Indigenous people amounts to **$125,450** per year.

TABLE 3
Percentage of Indigenous Employment by Industry and Highest Educational Attainment in Nunavut, 2021

Highest certificate, diploma or degree	Construction	Educational services	Health care and social assistance	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	Public	Total
No certificate, diploma or degree	2.6	3.7	4.6	2.5	9.8	**23.2**
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	1.9	2.5	2.3	0.6	7.9	**15.2**
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	0.8	1.7	1.7	0.7	7.4	**12.3**
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	0.9	0.3	0.4	0.3	2	**3.9**
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.0	2.0	0.4	0.0	1.4	**3.8**
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.7	**0.9**
TOTAL	**5.3**	**10.4**	**9.4**	**4.1**	**29.2**	**59.3**

With the exception of supervisors in natural resources, agriculture and related production (median annual income: $80,000) and general trades (median annual income: $52,000), the median employment incomes for the remaining occupations are well below $40,000 per annum.

In contrast, the top two occupations with the highest non-Indigenous employment shares (100 percent) are:

1. Specialized middle management occupations in health care and central control and process
2. Operators and aircraft assembly assemblers and inspectors.

Further, eight of the top ten occupations for the non-Indigenous population have median annual incomes of well over $100,000.

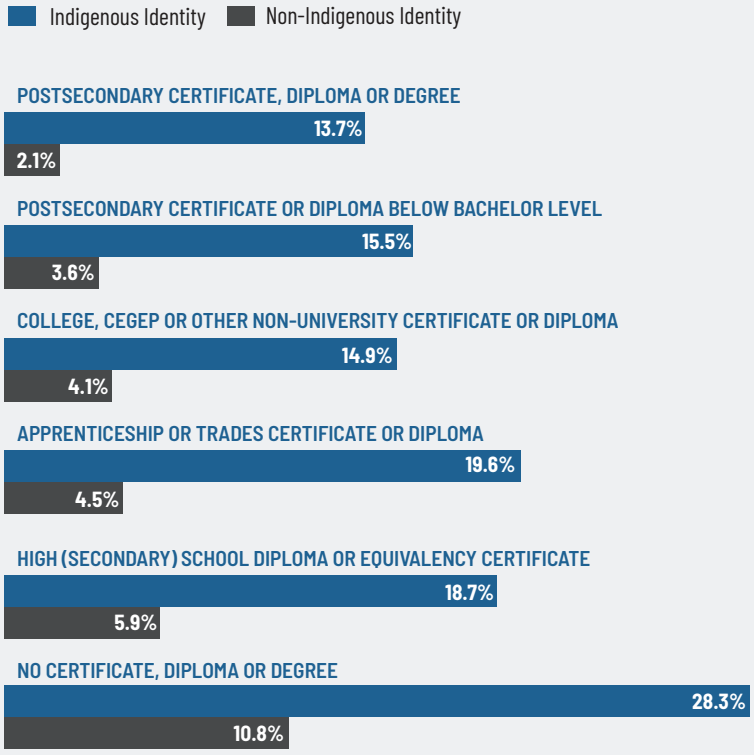
The average wage difference between the top ten occupations with the highest non-Indigenous share and those with the highest Indigenous share in Nunavut is $96,810.

The difference in economic opportunities significantly contributes to the wage inequality between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous populations and is also apparent when looking at employment by industry. The table below breaks down Indigenous employment shares by industry and highest educational attainment. Together, these five industries account for roughly 59 percent of Indigenous employment in Nunavut.

It shows that employees with no formal certificate, diploma, or degree account for the largest share in these industries and represent almost one-quarter of total employment. At 15.2 percent, the second highest overall share is employees with a high school diploma or equivalent, followed by those with a college or other non-university certificate or diploma, with a total share of 12.3 percent.

FIGURE 13

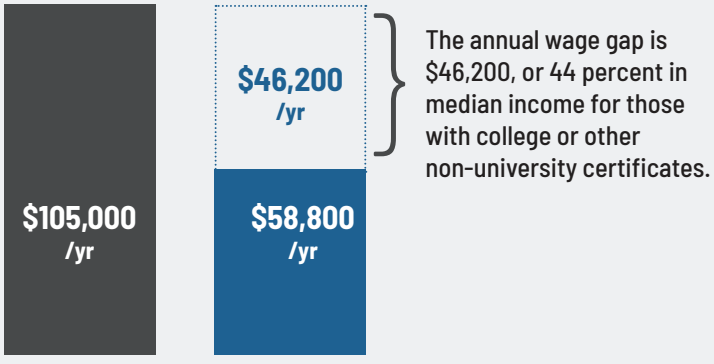
Unemployment rate by educational attainment among the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population in Nunavut, 2021.



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, TABLE: 98-10-0451-01.

FIGURE 14

The Annual Wage Gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Workers with a College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma



One could argue that lower formal educational attainment leads to fewer economic opportunities and a significant wage inequality between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous population in Nunavut.

Yet, this is only part of the socioeconomic picture. The figure to the left depicts unemployment rates for Nunavut's Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations by highest educational attainment. Differences in unemployment rates between these two groups should decline significantly with higher educational attainment – but they do not. For example, the unemployment rate among Indigenous people with a postsecondary degree is 13.7 percent. In comparison, it is only 2.1 percent among the non-Indigenous population. In fact, the average difference in unemployment rate between Indigenous and non-Indigenous among those with any degree is almost 14 percentage points, which suggests the existence of additional barriers or discrimination against the Indigenous population.

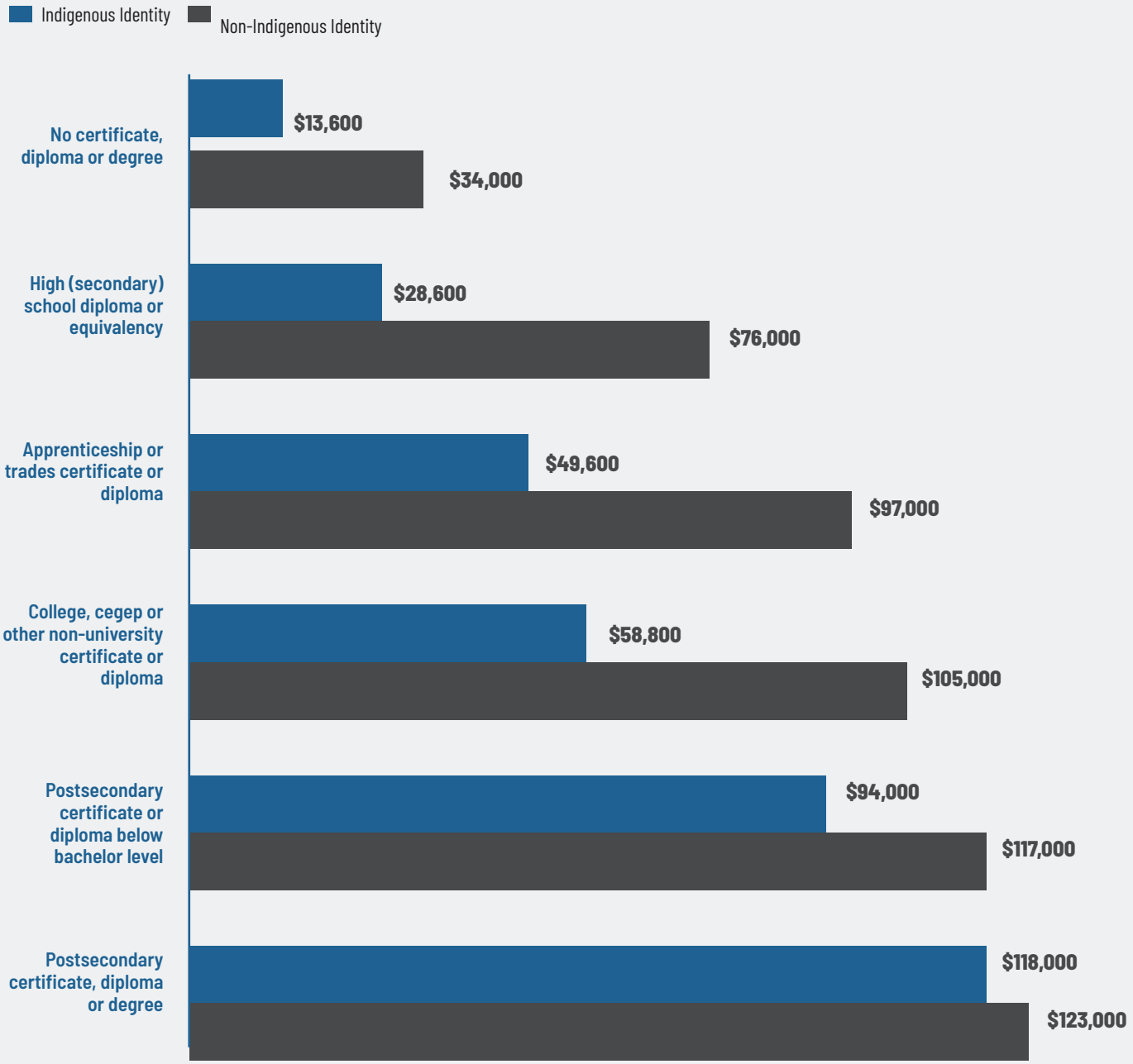
Another indicator of labour market discrimination is the wage differentials among Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers. The annual median employment income by identity and highest educational attainment illustrate that the wage gap exists for all levels of educational attainment.

The average wage gap is $31,567 per year, but it is significantly larger for specific groups. For example, the annual wage gap is $46,200 in median income for those with college or other non-university certificates.

The empirical evidence strongly suggests a severe lack of economic opportunities for the Indigenous population in Nunavut, resulting in disparate labour market outcomes, wage inequality, and a disregard for skills gained outside the formal education sector.

FIGURE 15

Median Employment Income among Indigenous and non-Indigenous Workers at Various Levels of Educational Attainment



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Despite the clear mandate of Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement, which stipulates that Inuit should be represented in government employment in Nunavut according to their representation in Nunavut's population, a significant disparity persists. Currently, 83.74 percent of the Nunavut population is Inuit, but Inuit hold only 51 percent of filled jobs in the territorial and federal governments in Nunavut.

One argument for why Article 23 has not yet been fulfilled is a lack of relevant skills among the Indigenous population. In this context, as early as 2010, a report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut indicated that the inability to meet the obligations of Article 23 results from the failure to assess, plan, educate and train Inuit workers properly.[11]

Essential measures that should be taken to address these failures include:

- → Improving educational outcomes by revising the current educational system to better suit the needs of Indigenous students
- → Expanding skills training for the working-age population.

Regarding the first measure, the data suggests that creating an Inuktut-language education system would remove key barriers to successfully implementing Article 23. Indeed, Palesch (2016) and Wyatt (2021) emphasize that educational success and subsequent labour market outcomes would improve if Inuit were taught in their own language.

More broadly, evidence shows that student outcomes among Indigenous populations significantly improve when Indigenous students are taught in their language in primary school. Delprato (2021) finds that this approach renders the learning gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students insignificant. These promising results are supported by Angelo et al. (2022), who study the experiences and outcomes of Indigenous students' education in New Zealand, Australia, and Canada.

The importance of Indigenous language education has also been highlighted by de Varennes (2020), the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues. Urging governments to educate children in their mother tongue, the Special Rapporteur points out that this measure lowers drop-out rates, significantly improves academic results, improves levels of literacy and fluency in both the mother tongue and the official or majority language, leads to greater family and community involvement, and proves more cost-effective in the long-term. In addition, it can help mitigate the risks of *"ending up later in life with the lowest paying jobs and highest unemployment rates."*[12]

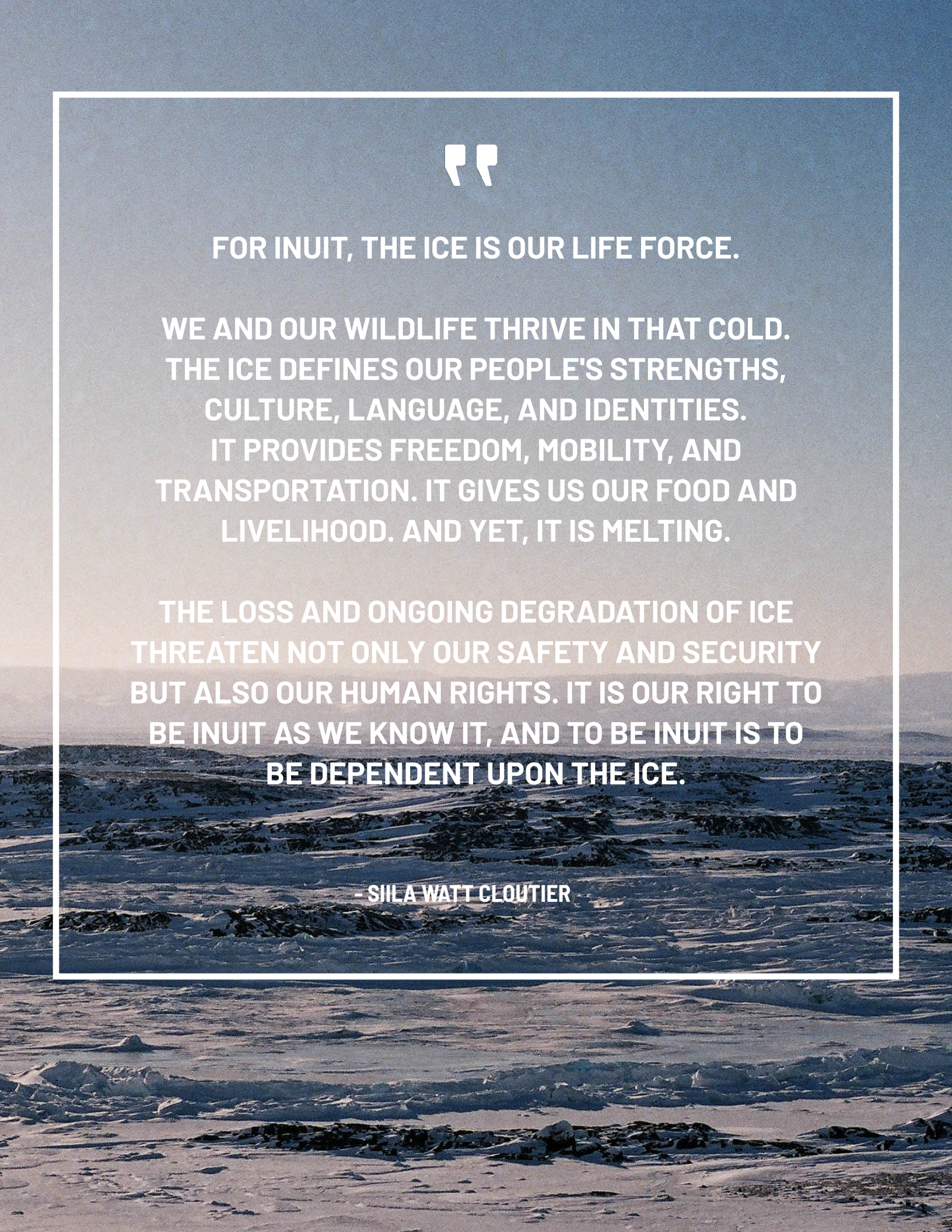
CONCLUSION

This analysis finds that the economy in Nunavut is characterized by substantial government support for the mining industry at the expense of Inuit-led economic activities, giving rise to questions about the long-term socioeconomic benefits for Inuit. It further highlights the significant socioeconomic disparities between the benefits accrued from the mining sector and those from traditional Inuit economic activities such as hunting, arts, and crafts. It reveals that while mining is a major employer, its benefits to the local Inuit population are relatively modest compared to the traditional sectors.

This empirical evidence supports calls for a re-evaluation of economic policies to better support Inuit-led economic initiatives.

The analysis further utilizes economic multipliers to illustrate the broader impacts of different sectors on the regional economy. It shows that investments in traditional sectors, such as arts and crafts, yield higher job and income multipliers than the mining sector. This analysis highlights the potential for greater overall economic benefits from supporting traditional industries, reinforcing the need for a diversified economic strategy that includes substantial support for land-based activities.

Finally, the analysis makes an argument for integrating Inuktut-language education as a means to enhance educational attainment and labour market outcomes for Inuit. This recommendation is supported by extensive research showing that Indigenous language education significantly improves student well-being and academic performance.



FOR INUIT, THE ICE IS OUR LIFE FORCE.

WE AND OUR WILDLIFE THRIVE IN THAT COLD. THE ICE DEFINES OUR PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS, CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND IDENTITIES. IT PROVIDES FREEDOM, MOBILITY, AND TRANSPORTATION. IT GIVES US OUR FOOD AND LIVELIHOOD. AND YET, IT IS MELTING.

THE LOSS AND ONGOING DEGRADATION OF ICE THREATEN NOT ONLY OUR SAFETY AND SECURITY BUT ALSO OUR HUMAN RIGHTS. IT IS OUR RIGHT TO BE INUIT AS WE KNOW IT, AND TO BE INUIT IS TO BE DEPENDENT UPON THE ICE.

- SIILA WATT CLOUTIER

SIILA WATT CLOUTIER

Transformation in the North: Reflections on the Return to a Holistic Economy

Discussing where Inuit are today — with a focus on our economic activity — requires understanding where we have been over the past 100 years.

IN THE 1920s, we were forced to become fur trappers to meet the global markets. That is how we became entrenched in the needs of the world; that was the beginning of the shift in our way of life. Almost overnight, due to the arrival of traders, we changed our diets. Then came the global collapse of the fur market. We were left hanging out to dry as our governments all but forgot about us. Then, the American military arrived in our regions to build the airstrips. While they did not come to save us, they brought jobs and supplies and made life easier for us, and many of our Elders were very appreciative of that.

IN THE 1970s, the land claims were hailed as success stories, but they also relinquished a fair amount of our land rights. And, although we are so few, our community members are over-institutionalized in the child welfare and criminal justice systems, which causes rifts among those of us who remain.

IN THE 1950s, the schools were built, and we were brought into communities, which further changed how we lived. In the 1960s, the historical traumas started coming even faster: residential schools, forced relocations, dog slaughters, and seal bans. You know all of this. The abuses and the addictions that began in our communities were the result of the profound woundings we endured.

IN THE 1980s, toxins and persistent organic pollutants like DDT and PCBs began poisoning our food. Fast-forward to the 2000s: building on existing health data, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami (ITK) launched negotiations for a UN treaty to make our country food safer.

IN THE 1990s, we started to realize that climate change is exacerbating the already very stressful situations in our communities: poverty, violence, suicide, and food insecurity.

> ... in a time lacking in truth and certainty and filled with anguish and despair, no woman should be shamefaced in attempting to give back to the world, through her work, a portion of its lost heart.
>
> – LOUISE BOGAN

For Inuit, the ice is our life force.

We and our wildlife thrive in that cold. The ice defines our people's strengths, culture, language, and identities. It provides freedom, mobility, and transportation. It gives us our food and livelihood. And yet, it is melting.

The loss and ongoing degradation of ice threaten not only our safety and security but also our human rights. It is our right to be Inuit as we know it, and to be Inuit is to be dependent upon the ice.

If we are to move toward equal partnerships, equal footing, and true reconciliation, the world must first understand our history.

A "DEPENDENCY-LIBERATING" APPROACH

As social issues, health issues, and addictions took hold in our world, new forums, institutions, and infrastructure helped us organize ourselves. Social programs and services came into play, but they did not address the legacy of trauma. Instead, they became part of the problem, enabling many social issues to grow rather than be alleviated. We later realized that many of these programs only added to the dependencies colonialism had created.

We've got to start to address these problems from a human perspective. Success in any endeavour, economic or otherwise, is reliant upon the resourcefulness of its people. It has to be people-focused; it has to be on-the-ground-focused.

Colonization has trapped our people, stripped our freedoms, and minimized our skills. However, there is hope. By working towards dependency-liberating approaches within our communities, we can rebuild our people's skills and resourcefulness.

Land and culture are the solution to many of our problems. Culture is our medicine, and it's rooted in our home. All the skills that are taught traditionally are what we need. But it's more than becoming proficient providers and natural conservationists who work in traditional ways. It's about the character and life skills learned from our culture that we build along the way and share with others.

CULTURAL SURVIVAL IN THE NORTH

We've been judged very harshly over the years by the animal rights movement when they see blood on the ice and become squeamish and aggressive towards our culture. But for us, blood on the ice means life. It's not confirmation of death; it's affirmation of life. And it's life giving life. It's the same as those in the South who are gardening, and their hands are in the dirt, and they're pulling out their carrots, lettuce, tomatoes, and so on. When our hands are in the blood, that's our harvest. That is our garden.

Our country food has an economic value. But it's the nutritional value that is so important to us. I often say it's not going to be Lipton Cup-A-Soup that's going to keep you warm out in more than minus 40 Celsius; it's going to be seal meat, it's going to be good food, country food.

The communal value of eating from the same animal is very powerful for us. There are ceremonies, rituals, and rites of passage — when the boys and the girls get their first animal or whatever the case may be. It builds their confidence and their self-worth. These are the people-building practices that we need to bring back to everything that we do, economic and otherwise.

At home in the Arctic, we're now facing an incredible growth of interest in developing the geological and ecological riches we have inherited. As Inuit, we place a

great value on the ice and snow because it is a real, stable platform that has allowed our people to hunt, train our children, and live our lives for untold millennia. There is no price that you could pay many of us for the loss of that ice. The whole world is now only learning to place a bigger value on the Arctic ice — and the cold as well — because we are learning more and more just how expensive it is to be losing the Earth's cooling system, the air conditioner for the entire planet. The ice of the Arctic is breaking down, and it's creating havoc all over the world: floods, fires, and hurricanes.

AN ARGUMENT AGAINST THE "QUICK FIX"

The situation we face across the entire Arctic is evolving. Many companies are coming in to exploit the riches that are now becoming much more accessible beneath that melting permafrost and the sea ice. The hunger for jobs in our communities is real. Strangely, it becomes an appealing prospect to be digging up the land we have held so sacred for so long. Just a few years ago, we used to stand solidly together on high moral ground to defend our way of life. But with the lure of the quick fixes, it's become harder. There's some worry here: If we put all of our eggs into that basket of oil, gas, and resources while the rest of the world is trying to wean itself off its unsustainable activity, we'll be left in the dust again, cleaning up the mess — as we did with the DEW Line and with Resolution Island, and with the barrels that the Americans left.

This is the test of our time: to do things differently. The people who depend on that ice and snow for cultural survival must be the central component of our plans. We cannot just permit the discussion of northern development to be conducted in terms of sovereignty, resources, and a narrow vision of economy. The focus must also be on human ways to empower our communities and join forces to form Inuit regions that are prosperous and sustainable.

Unsustainable methods cause irreparable damage to the environment. It's forcing the planet to react with violent storms and other erratic weather. This is not unlike the inner child, the Indigenous child, or anyone who has gone through trauma. Without that care, a place to heal, and effective coping mechanisms, self-destructive behaviour is inevitable. What we see in our communities and our atmosphere is not abnormal behaviour at all; what we are seeing are perfectly normal reactions to extremely abnormal circumstances.

We have to reimagine and realign a new way forward with that conscious intention to make effective change on the ground. It will happen at the speed of empathy first. Then, the speed of trust will kick in once people understand that and respect us for the equality and equity deserving of Arctic peoples. We are not just victims of globalization. Nor do we want to be; we can be teachers of sustainability if given the opportunity.

I'm constantly in awe of our communities — that even through all the thick and thin of all we've gone through, we are still so connected to our culture and our ways. And that's going to be the solution.

THE GLOBAL INUIT

The global pandemic was a grim reminder of how interrelated and interdependent we all are — we're certainly not set apart from the rest of the world. The pandemic broke open even more widely the unresolved issues of racism and social injustices in Indigenous communities as well as Black communities. And we cannot blame one country for the pandemic (or one virus, for that matter): it's really about what we have been doing to the habitats of all wildlife over many, many decades. So many countries have now been exposed for their outdated racist policies and approaches, which increases the risk to those who are already at risk of poor health conditions from poor health systems. But the pandemic also gave us time to pause, reflect, and try to do things differently.

Over the last 27 years, knowing that the world was very slow to address climate change as an urgent issue, I have often wondered what would happen to get the world to wake up to what we've been doing to our planet. In my wildest dreams, I never thought that it would be a virus that would bring everything to a halt. But it did.

Human trauma and climate trauma are one and the same, there is no doubt. Many of these viruses will be

driven by climate change, so why would we invest in systems that will only add and increase the CO2 in the air and create even more havoc for the Earth and its people?

We can innovate differently — not just in terms of businesses and our economies, but also in terms of how we can treat Indigenous issues differently and learn from how Indigenous peoples have taught and lived. We need to advocate for that value shift and economic shift within the Arctic's economic development and landscape. We have to reimagine and realign those values that are based on fairness and respect for our land, environment, planet, and each other.

One potential pathway is conservation economies. I have always believed that culture-match businesses with that protective conservation intent are forward-thinking. The deep-pocketed folks in the world today are moving in that direction of funding conservation economies. We should tap into those deep pockets to continue exploring conservation economies. What better way than the Inuit themselves (who are already natural conservationists) to be the guardians of land and ice? What better way to reclaim pride, dignity, resourcefulness, and wisdom that was taken away through these historical traumas and colonization? We do not want to be victims of globalization. We have much more to offer.

ECONOMIC, SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

For decades, we have seen scientists come up in the spring and leave in the fall like our geese, and we rarely know what they have done and what their plans are. Is this research going to benefit us?

Gus Speth, an American environmental lawyer and scientist, said, "I used to think that the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, environmental collapse, and climate change. I thought that with 30 years of good science, we could address these problems, but I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed, and apathy. And to deal with these, we need a spiritual and cultural transformation. And we scientists don't know how to do that."

We must seize this moment to make those effective changes. It starts with us.

LEADERSHIP, TO ME, IS ABOUT NEVER LOSING SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT WHILE THE ISSUES AT HAND ARE SO MUCH BIGGER THAN INDIVIDUALS, INDIVIDUALS CAN WORK FROM A PRINCIPLED AND ETHICAL PLACE WITHIN THEMSELVES TO MODEL AUTHENTICALLY AND GENUINELY OFFER OTHERS A SENSE OF CALM, A SENSE OF CLARITY, AND A SENSE OF FOCUS...INDIVIDUALS CAN INSPIRE COMMUNITIES. AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES CAN SHAPE THE GLOBAL.

In response, people ask me, "But what can I do?"

I tell them to look deeply inside themselves. Consider how you do things in your daily life, how you treat others, and how you treat Indigenous people. These changes will make a significant impact on the world around you. And if you change your world, it will change for us as Indigenous people. It's important to bring these issues down to the individual level — that, we have the power to change. And if we can change, others around us can change. It can be that simple.

Leadership, to me, is about never losing sight of the fact that while the issues at hand are so much bigger than individuals, individuals can work from a principled and ethical place within themselves to model authentically and genuinely offer others a sense of calm, a sense of clarity, and a sense of focus. Leadership is always about checking inwards to ensure one is leading from a position of strength and not fear or victimhood. Individuals can inspire communities. And local communities can shape the global.

PART 02

The Economy of Nuna and Sila

Hunting Education for an Economy of Food

In contemporary Canada, Indigenous peoples are encouraged to and rewarded for viewing the land as a commodity — something to buy, sell and trade, to use and exploit and then, maybe, to remediate when we're done with it. Some Indigenous peoples and organizations support this position because those participating in the wage economy are rewarded for doing so. It is challenging to uphold and maintain pre-colonial values around social cohesion when individual gain and status are prioritized as part of the messages that we (Indigenous peoples) are inundated with on a daily basis. The resulting socioeconomic conditions can be devastating, and extraction and research industries, in particular, have had a history of exploiting this reality.

Photo Credit: Janine Lightfoot

The partnerships with industry, jobs, and benefits agreements can all help Indigenous peoples and communities address the consequences of colonization.

We are often told that poverty and other socioeconomic challenges can be solved with joint ventures. Unfortunately, this emergent view may take us away from the view of the land we have embraced and practiced for thousands of years. From Anishinaabe in the South to Inuit in the North, the land is alive with agency and spirit. It holds knowledge, language, and laws. To that end, we are finding ways to live in balance by degrees. That does not mean we did not or do not exploit or use the land. In fact, that is the foundation of our relationship with the land and how we learned to live with it. There is no better example of this than our hunting cultures.

The focus of this report is trying to conceptualize a Northern Indigenous economy. In this chapter, we have chosen to explore hunting as an economic activity that reinforces who and what we are as Indigenous peoples and the less discussed solution to many of the challenges wrought by colonization. While this may be less discussed because it is increasingly difficult to use the land for these purposes in the South (where most of the Indigenous-Canada relationship discussions are shaped), the proximity of Inuit to the land in the North is still very close. It is common for Inuit — and Northerners generally — to have a hunting cabin outside a town or village and for children as young as eight and nine to harvest and celebrate their first caribou or seal. Meals reflect the seasonal migrations of animals in our shared territory. These are collective experiences: Inuit hunt together, share supplies, share environmental observations and knowledge, and ensure the harvest is dispersed in communities.

The "goods and services" of the Northern economy — if conceptualized along the lines of Western economic frameworks — are ammunition, wildlife, and knowledge.

At the same time, our hunting culture is threatened. Colonialism was (and is) expressed in the North by forcing First Nations and Inuit to settle in villages and abandon the travel required for sustainable hunting. Inuit were forced to relocate, the sled dogs were slaughtered, outpost camps banned, and racist attitudes told Inuit they were savages for living off the land. Despite the Indigenous resistance to these strategies, they have taken a significant toll. Now, we face messages that suggest that hunting is not a worthwhile economic activity in the face of mining and resource development, and, generally, there is limited support, resources or tools to revitalize the practice. Indeed, those who traditionally would have hunted are often lured to mining or trade opportunities, restricting their time on the land to a hobby.

At this point in our history, these forces and attitudes have led to a crisis in food security for Inuit in particular. The extremely high cost of imported foods in Inuit Nunangat has meant families and communities cannot meet their nutritional needs. Inuit are at a disadvantage when it comes to feeding our families, which was exacerbated during and following the COVID-19 pandemic that further strained Northern supply chains. Even federally subsidized programs are unable to address the issue, and the poor implementation of those programs, like Nutrition North, has resulted in public demonstrations to advocate for the affordability, quality and availability of store-bought foods in our communities.

This is the context for Inuit seeking, once again, to return to the land for our food. Inuit from all across Inuit Nunangat still rely heavily on what we call "country food" or "wild food" — foods from our lands, waters, and sila — as part of our diets. Each Inuit region in the country has developed or is supporting hunting programs to encourage the country food market to grow and, in so doing, address food insecurity. This growing movement represents an opportunity to support Inuit self-determination in food systems through land-based and hunting initiatives.

> Building and sustaining land-based and hunting programs supports Inuit self-determination and our local economies and addresses serious gaps in caring for our communities. Despite years and myriad tactics of colonialism, the knowledge of our environment, animals, weather, seas and harvesting is still accessible. We can reclaim our cultural ways.

For example, in 2012, the Nunatsiavut Government launched the Going Off, Growing Strong Program to engage Inuit youth and support mental health by connecting young people to the land. Soon after, the Arviat Wellness Society in Nunavut began the Young Hunters program for youth as young as eight to train with Elders and hunters to learn land-based skills. These programs were also responses to mental health crises that were affecting young people, in particular Inuit men from the ages of 15 to 29. Prior to colonialism, Inuit men played a significant role in providing for families in our hunting society. With the introduction of a wage-based economy, their displacement affected our communities and our families. These programs, while not full-time, support and celebrate the roles that Inuit hunters have in our communities and demonstrate how much of an impact hunting programs can have.

Perhaps most notable in the movement toward supporting hunters in full-time roles has been the Angunasuktiit program, launched in 2020 by the Ittaq Heritage and Research Centre (Ittaq) in Clyde River. Angunasuktiit is a full-time, all-year harvesting instruction program. Ittaq hunter-instructors work one-on-one with participants on all aspects of hunting and harvesting. They are on the land most days of the year, learning about and practicing harvesting country foods to support food security in the community. At the heart of the program is viewing and supporting hunters as an essential service critical to the community's health and wellness.

Photo Credit: Janine Lightfoot

Inspired by these initiatives, Inuit in Makkovik, one of five Inuit communities in Labrador, began to offer on-the-land workshops in 2023 for residents to address food insecurity, cultural continuity, Inuit-centered education and skills transfer. In partnership with the Angunasuktiit program, the Makkovik Inuit Community Government (MICG) secured resources to be able to pay hunters, rent equipment, and recruit participants to run a series of workshops that involved hunting, harvesting and Inuit-specific skills development such as seal hunting and skinning.

The first seal workshop resulted in six seals harvested over two days by three different boats. There were 11 participants, five under the age of 12. But the program required more than just the hunt. Planning included meetings between hunter-instructors and program support workers to ensure logistics, supplies, and safety. There was a division of labour between hunters, who determined what was needed for the hunting trips, and program support, who handled the administrative needs to secure the fuel, ammo, boat rental, compensation, and coordination for participants. Equipment also needed to be secured: boats, communication devices (VHF radios), and firearms. All of the hunting programs mentioned above require the same types of administrative, funding, and logistics support.

The seal hunting workshop in Makkovik cost less than $10,000. It supported training for 11 people, and with the hunters and program support staff, 15 were able to provide for their families with their wages earned and food harvested. In fact, food went to even more homes and tables. Meat from the seals was distributed at the regional Elders Gathering, and what was left went to the local community freezer to be accessed when needed. Families also received seal skins for making clothing and skills to pass on to our children and generations to follow. The return on a relatively small investment was and will continue to be significant.

This single workshop demonstrated the economic power of revitalizing hunting practices. Imagine the return on investment of full-time hunting programs.

As Matthias Oschinsky points out above, hunting's "return on investment" from a food security perspective is astounding, providing the required protein for community needs in a majority of Inuit communities.

And there are other benefits.

Hunting involves more than searching for and harvesting an animal. For Inuit, it provides healthier and more culturally relevant food, regular monitoring of the environment by knowledgeable land-users for safety, critical education, language, culture, and skills transfer in our families and communities.

It is an essential service in Inuit Nunangat. Elder Mariano Aupilardjuk reflects on this point in a discussion about the links between the economy and Inuit law. He notes that Inuit laws were diminished with the introduction of schools, churches, and other institutions. Aupilardjuk explains, "These types of laws were relinquished when we ceased to manage and control our own destiny. As soon as we started to be helped by the government, we were made to live in these communities and became reliant on welfare assistance, also called *niqai'ttuq*… When I think back as to how organized Inuit culture was, I really started to wish we did not lose our cultural ways…"

In other words, without the legal frameworks and self-determination to operationalize them, pursuing an economy that supports the community and culture is much more difficult. These elements of Inuit life are interconnected.

Building and sustaining land-based and hunting programs supports Inuit self-determination and our local economies and addresses serious gaps in caring for our communities. Despite years and myriad tactics of colonialism, the knowledge of our environment, animals, weather, seas and harvesting is still accessible. We can reclaim our cultural ways.

HUNTING BENEFITS THE HUNTER, THE FAMILY, AND THE COMMUNITY IN MULTIPLE WAYS BECAUSE WE ARE DOING MORE THAN JUST HUNTING. WE ARE ALSO TEACHING, DISTRIBUTING FOOD, VOLUNTEERING FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE, COLLECTING DATA OR RESEARCH FOR MONITORING PROJECTS, MENTORING YOUTH, AND HELPING WITH DIFFERENT COMMITTEES.

HUNTING IS ABOUT MORE THAN BRINGING IN FOOD; IT'S A LIFESTYLE THAT POSITIVELY INFLUENCES EVERYONE INVOLVED – ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE. WE NEED TO CONTINUE SHARING THE SKILLS AND TRADITIONS OF OUR ANCESTORS FOR OUR CULTURE AND OUR PEOPLE TO THRIVE.

ESA QILLAQ

Return of the Full-Time Hunter

I'm a hunter. I'm also an artist. My income through an average year is usually a combination of hunting, carving, outfitting, guiding and odd contract jobs. Hunting is mostly for food for my family and others, but the skins, tusks, and bones come into play for carving and add to income on a small scale for things like gas, ammo and other needed hunting equipment. Outfitting is seasonal work when available, like taking out tourists or students in land programs. Guiding is seasonal, too — for sport hunters or fishing, and sometimes sealing. It can be good pay, depending on who you work for in a season. Contract jobs are specific. For example, I maintain the community weather stations and sometimes do other work for scientists and prospectors — everything from fieldwork, such as gathering samples and data, to bear monitoring and safety. My skills as a hunter overlap into all of these areas.

I've been hunting my whole life.

I was raised at an outpost camp and started hunting around age ten. I learned to hunt with my grandfather and then hunted with my uncles in my teens. Later, I started hunting on my own and discovered how much I love it and how much it makes me who I am. To this day, I still really enjoy hunting on my own.

I never considered hunting to be a paid profession before working on the Full-Time Hunter Pilot Project through Ittaq.

I was skeptical of the idea but was willing to give it a try. A lot of what happened during that time was unexpected. The hunting was great, but the paperwork took some getting used to. Since this was somewhat of an experiment, documenting everything was part of it. On the hunting side, one of the biggest impacts I noticed was on my ability to be properly prepared all the time. I have never had so much ammo, skidoo parts, new clothing, new knives — new everything. And I had time. Time to work on all of my equipment, clean, and maintain it. And I could buy quality supplies, not just the cheapest option just to get by until it breaks. It is now at the point where, if I have it, others can borrow it — like fishnets, ice chisels, ice jiggers, and harpoons. For 17 years, I had one scope that I would rotate from gun to gun. Now, each rifle has its own.

Being supported as a full-time hunter meant I didn't have to ask my partner for money to pay for new equipment or make a carving to trade. I had more time. I could be more consistent. As a result, the quality of everything goes up: the quality of equipment, of preparation, of the time on the land, of maintaining knowledge and skills.

Sometimes, younger people are in a hurry, but there is great value in taking things more slowly; you can't rush if you're going to learn properly. You can't take shortcuts where the environment doesn't care if you live or die. If you're going to hunt, you have to adjust for the weather and for your equipment — and you must have endurance. These three things have to be learned and practiced your whole life. I have seen examples of people rushing and being careless about what their equipment or the environment can do. One little thing can go wrong, and then everything can go wrong. I used to do these things, but I slowed down. While I still make mistakes, they are fewer than when I used to act with haste.

Being a full-time hunter doesn't mean I hunt more than I need. This is important. That teaching is still there and still practiced.

Another crucial aspect of the full-time hunter role today, now that it has evolved in the community as a program, is that it is a hunter-instructor role. Our full-time hunters are also instructors. They are constantly and consistently taking out students and passing on those skills. That's part of the profession.

There have been several different hunter support programs over the years, all with upsides and problems. For example, "hunter support" once meant giving equipment to anyone to encourage hunting. But this didn't end up benefiting hunters or hunting. Sometimes, the equipment ended up in the hands of people who didn't use it for hunting and sold it to make money. In the end, any type of support or activity around hunting will always involve some tension. That is just how it is. What is important is how we work through it.

Being a respected hunter in a hunting community comes with some expectations. Even if you don't know who is expecting what, those expectations are still there. When you come from a background of skilled people, you want to live up to that reputation, and it feels good when you do. One day, unexpectedly, someone might say, "You did good. You still have your grandfather's blood in you."

These are the unwritten rules about hunting: as part of a community's history, you inherit, respect, and ultimately pass on the skills you carry.

I am sometimes asked what makes me want to keep hunting. It's a combination of things. There is the social expectation, the need for food, and the satisfaction of providing food to other people, especially when they crave their traditional foods. There are very special moments when I harvest a particular kind of food and share it with others. Take shooting a seal, for example. Imagine pulling it out of the breathing hole, cutting it up while it's still warm and harvesting pieces of liver with little bits of fat just as it is starting to freeze. For our people, this is a delicacy. And being able to provide this delicacy to others is good! You can hunt all you want, but if you don't get to try these special things or bring them to others, you're not getting the same feeling a hunter does. After you have felt that sort of satisfaction, you yearn to feel it again. The same applies when you give someone a favourite food and see their reaction. You want to do it again. There is also a health aspect to hunting. Growing up on fresh food makes your body as it should be. As Inuit, we need that kind of food.

HUNTING FULL-TIME IS THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW INTIMATELY THE NEEDS AND PREFERENCES OF PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY....

PROVIDING FOR YOUR COMMUNITY IS BOTH AN INUIT TRADITION AND PART OF BEING A HUNTER.

Hunting full-time is the only way to know intimately the needs and preferences of people in your community. When you have been hunting for long enough, you can tell the difference between the tastes of animals from different locations. You will learn what type people prefer, and then you will learn how they want it prepared. You get to know how different women like their animal skins. You learn who wants what kind of skin, how to cut it for them, and how to transport it properly to them. You also learn how food should be distributed well in the community and understand who needs food, even if they are not asking. Providing for your community is both an Inuit tradition and part of being a hunter. Only a certain number of people have this kind of knowledge, so it is essential to maintain it and pass it on. However, it takes time and consistency.

In fact, a full-time hunting program relies on consistency. A consistent income means I can be prepared and organized to hunt all year, get and maintain quality equipment, constantly practice my hunting skills, and regularly bring food to my house and other places. Additionally, consistent teaching is critical to successfully passing on our knowledge and skills. Consistency is also essential in observing our environment. Being on the ice all year round gives us better knowledge of what's happening and where. This is important for monitoring our environment and comes into play with safety and even search and rescue operations. Consistency on the land all year creates a new level of hunting, knowledge, preparing specialty foods, and reinforcing language around hunting and place names.

As a child, I used to think of my grandfather's lessons as chores. But one day, he told me, "You will have to be *anguti* one day." As time passed, I realized my grandfather was educating me in the ways of a hunter, and today, I realize how lucky I was to receive that Inuit education.

As Elders teach less and pass on, our traditional skills slowly dissipate and are lost. Passing the torch as my grandfather did — the knowledge, skills, language, and values around hunting — is essential in maintaining the Inuit way of life.

Photo Credit: Janine Lightfoot

From 2017 to 2018, Esa Qillaq and Shari Fox, with support from Tides Canada, worked together on a pilot study called "Reclaiming the role of full-time hunter in an Inuit community." Over the course of the project, Fox interviewed Qillaq as he reflected on the work. Drawing on those interviews, Qillaq and Fox compiled and edited this essay. The pilot project set the foundation for the full-time hunting instruction program, Angunasuktiit, which has operated in Clyde River since 2020.

Learn more about Angunasuktiit at ittaq.ca and by watching this video.

RICHARD PATON

Developing a Conservation Economy in the Canadian Arctic

Over the past half-century, Inuit in the Qikiqtani region[1] and Indigenous peoples around the globe have been faced with environmental degradation resulting from industrial activities and climate change.

Industrial markets, based on extractive activities, are a challenge because they significantly impact our cultural continuity, our ability to travel, access to our harvests, and our ability to pass on intergenerational knowledge between families, communities, and throughout our regions.

As the environment around us changes — the result of international and domestic tourism, mining, and the persistent creation of organic pollutants worldwide, to name a few — our way of life continues to be threatened. Human activity continues to fundamentally transform our world, causing serious and often unexpected negative impacts on species, affecting population numbers, genetic composition, behaviour, and survival. The globally significant ecological services that the Arctic provides, including storing carbon, cooling the planet, and influencing oceanic and atmospheric currents, are also under pressure.

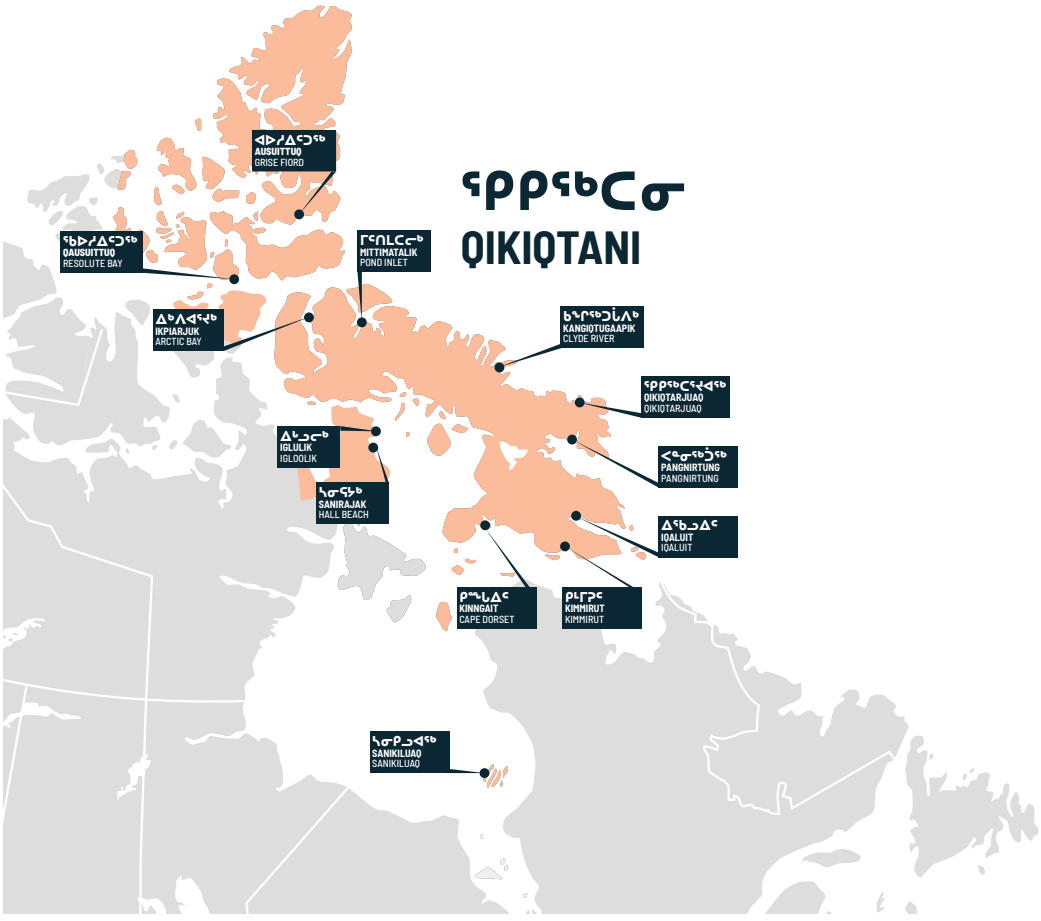
To combat these ominous changes and transition from extractive economies to sustainable ones, we must harness Inuit knowledge, practices, and skills to find solutions.

Qikiqtani Inuit have identified a clear path forward through investment and engagement in conservation economies and by continuing to do what we have done for millennia - living, breathing, harvesting, and passing on our traditional knowledge of the lands and waters around us. This path also creates space for governments to meet international obligations to conserve the marine and terrestrial environments we all rely upon to survive.

HARVESTING FOR CONSERVATION: THE NAUTTIQSUQTIIT PROGRAM

For Inuit, the benefits of a conservation economy are many and overlapping. Inuit-led Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) enable species central to Inuit culture and harvesting, such as seals, polar bears, and narwhals, to have a healthy environment. IPCAs foster traditional livelihoods, including hunting and sewing, which preserve cultural and governance practices such as country food distribution and, more importantly, food sovereignty. Through Inuit Impact and Benefits Agreements, to the extent that they allow Inuit to operate sustainably in the conservation economy or protect marine areas, IPCAs improve financial autonomy in a way that is consistent with the objectives of the Nunavut Agreement.

For decades, Inuit sought to protect the ecological engine of the Eastern Arctic, what is now known as the Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area (TINMCA), established in 2018. A fundamental part of supporting this was the creation of the Nauttiqsuqtiit Inuit Stewardship Program. The Nauttiqsuqtiit program began in 2018 as a pilot program in Arctic Bay, with six stewards, or Nauttiqsuqtiit, the watchers and observers of our environment. The full program now spans five communities, and 35 Nauttiqsuqtiit have formalized Inuit roles in environmental stewardship and harvesting in Tallurutiup Imanga. The program also provides a foundation for training, jobs, and other economic opportunities for Inuit in all 13 communities of the Qikiqtani Region.



An important part of the Nauttiqsuqtiit work is harvesting marine animals such as arctic char, shrimp, and seal. The harvesting is part of their wildlife monitoring work. The animals harvested not only provide valuable monitoring data but also help to feed the communities in which they live.

The strong connection Inuit have with the water and land has fostered

values of environmental stewardship. Since time immemorial, Inuit have acted as stewards of the Arctic's pristine environment. Nauttiqsuqtiit are essential in the promotion of Inuit culture, well-being, the transmission of knowledge to youth, and the delivery of Inuit cultural, social, health and conservation benefits.

While this is a holistic approach to the economy, it is nonetheless a discussion of skills development and training for an Inuit workforce tasked with the revitalization of Inuit economic activity.

CONSERVATION GOVERNANCE

As the Qikiqtani Inuit Association's conservation economy expands, the need to create an Inuit-led Council is increasingly apparent. This council will consolidate and unify our approach to managing conservation economy efforts and, in so doing, demonstrate the ongoing importance of local governance and management. Governance founded on Inuit laws, customs, and knowledge that has adequate structures and resources in place to sustain traditional practices and inform new approaches within the conservation economy will ensure Inuit reclaim economic decision-making roles in areas that we have historically governed.

Fundamental to an Inuit-led economic activity that protects our environment is one that also elevates and strengthens Inuit-led governance using a regional approach.

An example is a Qikiqtani Inuit Stewardship Council aimed at directing governance of conserved areas in the Qikiqtani region, which will expand to work with Qikiqtani communities and partners to make governance decisions and build capacity independent of government and other interests.

The Stewardship Council will play a crucial role in making Inuit-led decisions in the management of conservation areas. This will lead to the creation of a regional network of existing and proposed conservation areas, all managed through a holistic Inuit approach, thereby interconnecting the entire Qikiqtani region across both terrestrial and marine landscapes.
The Stewardship Council will also act as a repository for Inuit knowledge and laws pertaining to environmental protection and conservation from the Qikiqtani Region, which will then be accessible for learning, application, and transmission. Inuit-led research decisions also ensure our knowledge is at the core of program approaches and outcomes. In our conservation economy, applying the elements of Inuit science is central to research and monitoring and creates a process that considers community priorities and concerns. This is not to dismiss other knowledge systems, such as Western science. Prioritizing Inuit science creates a lens through which research and monitoring are conducted ethically for Inuit, but also considers and includes other knowledge systems.

CONCLUSION

Broader policy thinking is still evolving around an economy that protects our environment. Qikiqtani Inuit represent less than 0.05 percent of the Canadian population, yet the Arctic, our homelands, represents more than 10 percent of combined marine and terrestrial conservation targets. Inuit stewardship of lands and waters and a sustainable economy are vital to meeting conservation goals and maintaining ecosystem integrity throughout the Qikiqtani Region. As we take steps towards a conservation economy, we can see a healthy and resilient Qikiqtani Region supporting a mosaic of interconnected conservation areas. A successful conservation economy in our region can serve as a blueprint for conservation economies across the rest of the world.

JASON AKEAROK

Navigating the Turbulent Waters of Fisheries' Rights in Nunavut

Canada, often celebrated for its pristine natural landscapes and abundant resources, boasts a rich and diverse fishing industry spanning three coastlines from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the Arctic. However, when it comes to accessing these lucrative fisheries, not all regions are treated equally.

Within the vast territory of Nunavut, located in Canada's far north and home to many Inuit communities, a complex and often contentious relationship exists between inhabitants and the fisheries sector.

This relationship emerged at contact as European explorers sought fish and other marine species in Inuit waters. In this article, I explore some of the contemporary issues surrounding access to the commercial fisheries of turbot and shrimp within and adjacent to the Nunavut Settlement Area, highlighting the disparities in access and the ongoing struggles faced by Inuit in Nunavut.

A BOUNTIFUL SEA, DISPUTED ACCESS

Established as a territory in 1999, Nunavut is home to approximately 39,000 people, most of whom are Inuit. This land is surrounded by an ocean teeming with marine life, highly valued both within local communities as country food and in broader domestic and international markets. Despite its adjacency to these abundant fisheries — and specifically turbot and shrimp fisheries — Nunavut does not have comparable access as other Canadian jurisdictions do. In Atlantic Canada, for instance, they have access to their adjacent fisheries from 80 to 90 percent (GN, 2016). Nunavut does not benefit from the same level of access. In 2019, for instance, Nunavut had access to 76 percent of turbot and only 38 percent of shrimp (Nunatsiaq News, 2020).

Over the past two decades, Inuit organizations have been actively involved in legal battles challenging federal ministerial decisions to achieve fairer quota allocations for Nunavut. In a recent court case, two Inuit organizations brought a lawsuit against the federal government after they allocated a significant portion of a fishing license to a company based in the south (CBC News, 2024). The organizations argued that the Minister had neglected to consider Article 15 of the Nunavut Agreement, which mandates special consideration for Nunavut's adjacency to these fishing grounds when allocating commercial fishery licenses. In 2021, the court struck down the ministerial decision. This matter is still unresolved (CBC News, 2024).

Historical factors have contributed to this stark contrast in access. In the past, Nunavut Inuit were left out of opportunities to join the offshore fishing industry, as government quota allocations prioritized the growth and stability of the fishing sector in Atlantic Canada (Bernauer, 2022). Through years of political effort, there has been gradual progress in increasing Nunavut's involvement in the offshore fisheries, but more is required.

THE POTENTIAL OF THE COMMERCIAL FISHERY

Fishing represents a significant economic opportunity for Inuit communities in Nunavut, with the potential to benefit regional and local economies in ways that extend beyond immediate financial gains. In 2019, the

value of the turbot and shrimp fisheries in Nunavut was approximated at $112 million (Nunatsiaq News, 2020). Achieving parity in terms of access could mean a greater opportunity for Nunavut's economy, including the creation of jobs and increased economic stability within Inuit communities.

Another potential benefit of increased access to the shrimp and turbot fisheries for Nunavut is the availability of a healthy food source. While these species are not historically traditional staples in Inuit diets, the growing seafood sector has the potential to make these nutritious resources more accessible. Shrimp and turbot offer a source of protein and essential nutrients that can contribute to Inuit communities' overall health and well-being, promoting food security.

Finally, greater access on par with other Canadian jurisdictions opens the possibility of more locally based fisheries. Winter fisheries in Nunavut provide economic, social, and cultural benefits back to the community (GN, 2016). This type of local fishing enterprise not only creates economic opportunities but also strengthens the ties between Inuit communities and land-based economic practices.

CONCLUSION

The disparities in access to fisheries resources in Nunavut represent a complex issue rooted in history, legal agreements, and political decisions. For Inuit in Nunavut, fishing represents an important economic opportunity with the potential to benefit regional and local economies, promote food security, and foster cultural connections. As we move forward, it is crucial to recognize the importance of collaboration, transparency, and respect for the rights and knowledge of Inuit. Only by working together and considering innovative approaches can we ensure that the rich resources of the sea benefit all who call Nunavut home. This has the potential to foster economic growth and stability in the territory, particularly through job creation, and strengthens the bonds between Inuit communities and their cultural ties to the sea.

Photo Credit: Yumi Numata

PART 03
The Economy of Arts, Crafts & Care

BARBARA AKOAK

Reflections on the Art and Craft Economy in Nunavut

As an Inuk artist, the path to my craft has not been straightforward or easy. Other Inuit artists — and there are many of us — have taken different routes, but there are many similarities in the challenges we have faced and the recognition (or lack thereof) we receive for the contributions we make to Nunavut's economy.

I am originally from the Kitikmeot (Qitirmiut) region of Nunavut and have been raised with my Inuinnaq and Netsirlikmeot (Natsilingmiut) roots.

After graduating high school in Iqaluit, I decided to enroll in Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) and studied for one-year in their Mental Health Program. I later enrolled in NAC's Jewellery and Metalwork Diploma Program and graduated in 2015. Also at NAC, I enrolled in Pre-Nursing and graduated in 2019. That same year, I decided to move to Halifax and enrolled in NAC's Transition Year Program, graduating in 2020. I am currently at Dalhousie University studying nursing; I hope to one day become a psychiatric nurse and specialize in art therapy.

Beyond my formal mental health education, I have used my training to volunteer as a counsellor at Nunavut's Kamatsiaqtut helpline. With my arts degree, I have been able to build relationships at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the Esker Foundation in Calgary, the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum in Iqaluit, and the Tivi Galleries in Kuujjuaq, Nunavik, among others. I attended Indigenous Fashion Arts when it was originally named Toronto's Indigenous Fashion Week, and alongside my visual arts, I am a throat singer and drum dancer. I have had the opportunity to share my music with director Alex Garland for the FX show "DEVS".

I enjoy my life as an artist and, over time, I have learned how to show and properly appraise my fine art and to sell to galleries and spaces that appreciate me as an Inuk artist.

THE DUAL(ING) ECONOMIES OF NUNAVUT: MONOPOLIES VS. COMMUNITY

The media often describes Nunavut as a "far away," barren, cold, and treeless land. This creates an image of an inaccessible exotic hinterland.

But this is strange to me because, comparatively, a plane ride from Ottawa is a mere three hours; from Halifax, it's just two. Often, during international medical emergencies, planes land in Iqaluit because it's recognized as an international airport. Soon, there will be a ferry to Labrador. Although Nunavut is about 200 million square kilometres and covers three different time zones, the communities here are not as distant or remote as we are often encouraged to believe. But those flights that crisscross the territory are typically flown by a single airline. Canadian North has a monopoly on flights in the region, making it difficult to travel because of inflexible timelines, routes, cancellations, and high prices.
The other notable monopoly in Nunavut is the Northwest Company (NWC), their stores previously owned by the Hudson's Bay Company, which boasts being established in 1670, ironically when the King of the day "gave" them the monopoly to trade in our

Barbara Akoak, 1989, Nuliajuk spoon, 2014,
Silver, copper.

Inspired by Barbara's appreciation for Inuit creations stories and legends she created a spoon in honour of Nuliajuk the Goddess of the sea.

region. For most of its existence, the NWC was the only "commercial" source of goods. For over 300 years, they have been overcharging Inuit. The NWC says shipping is why food is so expensive, even though they have had federal funding through the Nutrition North Program to reduce the costs. Interestingly, the NWC also holds shares in the Canadian North Airline.

Is it really physical geography that is limiting and separating us? Or is it how the geography is defined by a few? Remoteness is a construct to justify monopoly and price gouging. Even though there may be real costs associated with limited shipping options — i.e. heavy reliance on an airline or seasonal ship cargo and no road access to distribution centres — the argument of inaccessible faraway lands seems exaggerated to justify excessive profiteering.

When we think about the economy of the North, these are considered pillars.

But despite this, in a land where two litres of milk is often $11 in Iqaluit and more in the smaller communities, when I think about what holds up Nunavut's economy, it is the immense love Inuit have for our families, not these "common sense" monopolies. Nunavut is rich in land, full of life, culture, and water that we have protected for thousands of years.

The economy Inuit artists and crafters know revolves around the land and our families. The exports we know come from natural materials: fur from foxes, wolves, caribou, and polar bears, and the sea and ocean provide us with seals, fish, bowheads, narwhals, and belugas, to name a few.

We polish the baleen from bowhead whales and use it in jewelry and carvings. We polish and carve ivory from narwhals and walruses. There are also the minerals: gold, titanium, and iron ore, as well as gemstones like amethyst and red garnet. Soapstone becomes fine art, usually sold in galleries. It is a combination of beautiful lands, hunters and huntresses, natural materials, and our abundance of fine artists that creates our economy, or at least the art economy.

Kenoyuak Ashevak's grandchildren fondly remember when she received $216,000 for the "Enchanted Owl" lithograph. Her prints were initially appraised in the $2,000 to $3,000 range. Inuit art is precious and inspiring. This is possible for many others, too. I remember Ashevak's descendant, Tim Pitseolak, once said, "No art is wrong; you made it, how can it be wrong?" He lifts up Inuit artists, and this, too, is possible for others. We can support our families, both immediate and extended, and each other as artists to move away from a Northern economy perceived as far away and vast, supported by airlines and grocery monopolies. We are, and can be, so much more.

> The economy Inuit artists and crafters know revolves around the land and our families. The exports we know come from natural materials...We polish the baleen from bowhead whales and use it in jewelry and carvings. We polish and carve ivory from narwhals and walruses. There are also the minerals: gold, titanium, and iron ore, as well as gemstones like amethyst and red garnet. Soapstone becomes fine art, usually sold in galleries. It is a combination of beautiful lands, hunters and huntresses, natural materials, and our abundance of fine artists that creates our economy...

SUPPLY AND DEMANDING MORE: THE FIGHT FOR EQUITY IN ART

Tim Pitseolak was one of my mentors in my art career very early on. When he told me my art could not be wrong, he was talking about the criticism we get — from Southerners and Inuit, too. It can be a struggle to be considered authentic or legitimate. I have held this close to my work and seen how it's played out in practice. One example is from my throat singing work.

Once, I was approached for an event and offered a contract, clearly copied and pasted from a template, with a modest fee. This made me uncomfortable — as if the organization was seeking a token performance and did not understand the true value of my work. But with the confidence of those who came before me, I worked with the organization and explained the history, labour, and art of throat-singing and was able to secure a fair contract, one that I believed I deserved as an Inuk artist. Unfortunately, my experience is common. There is a trend of underpaying Indigenous and racialized people in the workplace. And that is true in art as well. We deserve to collaborate and work with people that appreciate us.

We should have the space to create.

With my Inuinnaq roots in mind, I intend to make my pieces with good energy. In Inuinnaqtun, "attatak" means "amulet," and with that traditional knowledge, I create these pieces based on what I know from my culture. I thank my parents and grandparents for everything they have taught me. I learned how to sew from my mother, who makes clothing for the weather, with both cold and harsh and warm and hot days in mind. Her father, Abraham Kingmiaqtuq, my maternal grandfather, was a carver full-time. He was also a gallery fine artist. I have seen his work all over Canada. My father's parents were fox trappers and hunters. I remember watching them carefully work as a team to cure the skins. I grew up watching my father hunt seals. Each of them incorporated spirituality in all the steps, too. I remember my dad and his brothers pouring water into the seal's mouth after hunting it to ensure it would not be thirsty in the afterlife. It is with our traditional knowledge we should respect everything, we are even advised not to break any rocks if we do not need to.

There is an innate respect in Inuit values; therefore, I deserve respect as a living being, too. I ask for that respect in the contracts I negotiate as an Inuk artist.

I enjoy singing, drum dancing, drawing, and painting. I have been a fine artist since 2015. I thank my parents for my beautiful upbringing all over Inuit Nunangat and my Inuk ancestry. I extend my gratitude to the huntresses, hunters, and providers of the natural materials I use in my jewelry. This is Inuit economy.

LAAKKULUK WILLIAMSON BATHORY & KUNUK INUTIQ

Decolonial Art and Destructive Economies: Reviving the Art Capital of Canada

Art is an often neglected element of the Northern economy. But Inuit are performers, carvers, painters, crafters, and all manner of experts in material culture and art. The contribution these artists make to local, regional and national economic activity is immense and is, in fact, world-renowned. So, why is it neglected? In this interview, Kunuk Inutiq speaks with Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, the Iqaluit-based multi-disciplinary artist whose practice centres on uaajeerneq (Greenlandic mask dance) and includes acting, curating, drum-dancing, music and writing. Laakkuluk's work is prolific, and she has been outspoken about issues of gender equality in creative spaces, decolonizing museum spaces, and Inuit self-determination in the North. Kunuk and Laakkuluk's discussion spans Inuit relationships to land and water and how that is (or is not) included in discussions of art, politics, and, importantly, economy.

KUNUK: As Indigenous people, we have a unique connection to the land, water, and our environment, or sila. How would you describe this very interdependent relationship in your own words?

LAAKKULUK: I can only speak to what my experience of it is and my family's experience of it because I don't want to put words in other people's mouths. I would say that as a family, we have always seen ourselves as a part of sila, nuna [land], and tariuq [sea], and that we're very lucky to be able to be experiencing it, gaining knowledge from it, and feeding ourselves from it.

This relationship is one that colonization has really tried to destroy over several generations of my family. And yet, we've maintained it in many different ways. Some of the aspects of having a relationship with sila is being able to be peaceful on the land together, being safe, and procuring enjoyment from it.

If I imagine or describe a scenario in which all of those aspects are playing together, it is in the middle of the summer when we're pulling up fish from our net just a few feet from the cabin that we built ourselves. The kids are gutting fish, and we're hanging them and eating them right away. And there's this feedback system where we're being fed by nuna (land) and imaq (water). And we are contributing to the lifecycle of it all. And we feel at peace with it. Also, being able to drink in the vista is such a huge part of our mental health.

KUNUK: Can you talk a little bit more about the "enjoyment" piece? We've had conversations about daring to have enjoyment in the decolonial context. And the way that you're describing being together and safe, and the enjoyment, can you describe more in terms of the importance of that for you and your family and how it feeds you?

LAAKKULUK: Enjoyment is such a huge part of decolonization because it means you have sovereignty over your environment; you know exactly what is going on around you. You are contributing to that environment. And you feel like you're an equal in every different aspect of that environment. So, in political terms, enjoyment is really about feeling and asserting your equality. But in practical terms, of course, enjoyment means being able to feel like all your senses are being fed. You're seeing things that make you feel at peace; you're smelling things that are delicious; you're listening to things that make you feel peaceful; you're touching things — everything is tactile; you're using your muscles as much as you can.

I also think a lot about how lucky I am to be able-bodied in the ways that I am and engage with nuna in the ways that I do because of the way I can move my body. Other people have lots of different kinds of abilities, too, and they have enjoyment as well.

KUNUK: As you're talking, it made me think about ability in terms of how the traumas we experience create that further disconnect from all those senses and sense of self.

In which ways do you think that Inuit worldview principles, values, and guidance play a role in our day-to-day life?

This question is basically to affirm that with the assimilation process, we still live a life where we practice [our culture]. It's not lost. Trying to get a sense of how much we still practice our culture and our worldview. Because a lot of the conversation is from a deficit-based [perspective], and this is trying to capture the opposite of that: that we're still very much rich in terms of practicing our cultural values.

LAAKKULUK: Yeah, I would say that it's probably more helpful to see ourselves in a comparative sense rather than a deficit sense. And to show the stark differences in the way that people practice their daily lives.

And again, going to practical examples is the way that we treat our children every day, the way that we talk to them, whether it's in Inuktut or not. There are still cultural principles involved in how we're raising them, what names or kinship terms we call them. What kind of food we give them. What kind of disciplinary action we give them.

I can see myself doing things in intergenerational ways. And then, when I look at non-Inuit families, the way that they treat their children is completely different; they use a completely different type of discipline and home educational model.

So definitely, it's a part of our everyday life, just doing this on a comparative basis. But if I talk about what we do from an internal place, it is definitely a choice that each one of us is making to continue to be Inuit within ourselves and between each other.

I often think about how the colonial forces have been so strong. If it wasn't for our ability to tell each other stories and our abilities to hunt, the colonial forces might have won, but they never have. It's that ability to tell stories, that ability to be on the land and hunt, that allows us to continue to be Inuit now.

KUNUK: The next question is how we often hear about economic development, sustainable development — terms that are trying to capture and recognize how we do economic development in the Arctic, for example. But they're often synonymous with capitalism and making money only. In what ways would you think an Inuit-defined economy would most serve Inuit?

LAAKKULUK: Inuit often talk about, again, that idea of avatittinit or inutamaat, seeing the extensions of ourselves is actually the land. Avatittinnit can mean "out on the land," but it can also mean "at the tips of your extremities," your limbs. So, in terms of being self-defined and self-sufficient, it would be making sure that we are looking after our entire bodies and minds by having a relationship with the land. And this is not in congruence with the way that modern society will.

In terms of providing ourselves with the essentials of shelter, food, and water, we can do that. We can have our own clothing; we can have our own way of looking after ourselves. But we can also create, like any modern economy, a small economy out there in the world, from Iceland to the Faroe Islands to any of the little island states, where people are providing for themselves in their own cultural contexts. And so, of course, Inuit are more than capable of doing that as well.

IN TERMS OF WHAT I SEE AS MY ROLE AS AN ARTIST IS THAT I HAVE THE CAPACITY TO TAKE THAT STEP BACK, TO SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE. SOMETIMES, I THINK ABOUT HOW ART HAS THIS CAPACITY TO BRING YOU ABOVE THE ORDINARY SO THAT YOU'RE ABLE TO SEE THINGS AT AN EXTRAORDINARY LEVEL. WE'RE EXTRAORDINARY. TO BE ABLE TO FEEL THAT, YOU'RE HAVING PROFOUND MOMENTS OF UNDERSTANDING WHEN YOU ARE EITHER CREATING THE ART OR APPRECIATING THE ART. THAT PROFUNDITY ALLOWS YOU TO COME BACK DOWN INTO YOUR ORDINARY LIFE AND MAKE DECISIONS IN A NEW WAY.

KUNUK: Can you talk a little bit about your work in that context, the role of the arts, and the importance of expression — of decolonizing the ways we've been forced to function in capitalistic and destructive economies?

LAAKKULUK: I work as an artist full time. One of the funny things that I find happening right now is that even though I live in Nunavut, I live in the Arctic, almost zero of my income comes from the Arctic or from Nunavut at the moment. I'm being paid to be an artist by mostly Southern institutions, which I find strange because Nunavut is considered to be the artistic capital of Canada in so many different ways. But you know, that might just be a phase of where my work is coming through at the moment. Maybe I'll have more Nunavut-based work in the next month or two just because of the versatility and flexibility that I have to have as an artist.

In terms of what I see as my role as an artist is that I have the capacity to take that step back, to see the bigger picture. Sometimes, I think about how art has

this capacity to bring you above the ordinary so that you're able to see things at an extraordinary level. We're extraordinary. To be able to feel that, you're having profound moments of understanding when you are either creating the art or appreciating the art. That profundity allows you to come back down into your ordinary life and make decisions in a new way.

So that's kind of what I see my role is: being able to take the time and effort to lift up to a different level than the ordinary life in order to help myself, my family, and the community people I engage with to go back down and make new decisions in new ways.

Aesthetic beauty does play a role — making beautiful things or making beautiful thoughts. That is a part of it, but not necessarily the end goal. I don't need to make beautiful things. And as a result of that, keeping that in mind, I do find that I don't always fit in with people. I have a different way of thinking or a different way of creating, and I create challenges sometimes. I think that's important so people reassess who they are. They can either reassert themselves or try different ways of engaging in the environment around them.
So, it's the creation of art. The appreciation of art, I think, has a huge role in decolonizing or engaging in non-destructive economies, that's for sure.

KUNUK: We're in the land claim era. So we've established these institutions as part of a governance structure that we've adopted – government, Inuit organizations, hunters and trappers. How would you like to see these organizations playing a role in the overall economic well-being of Inuit?

LAAKKULUK: I think one of the most important things is taking away the idea that the product of each of these organizations turns into an economic number, dollar amounts. Money comes into, for example, the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO), which creates all sorts of programmes and activities based on its mandate. But it doesn't mean that there's a certain dollar amount that comes out from all of this programming and mandate. It's really important to see the cultural value and its effect on the whole person. And I really like thinking about Inuit — I mean all human beings — as whole people. But in this context, so many times, Inuit are not treated as a whole person. For example, at the doctor's office, they just look at how "H. pylori is affecting your guts," but they don't focus on the mind-gut connection. Or somebody's got to quit smoking, but how nicotine addiction, or the soothing effect of smoking, is blanketing a deeper socio-psychological issue is ignored. It's very small aspects, not taking into consideration the entirety of that person who belongs to a family, who is literally living in certain circumstances and is applying themselves in different ways.

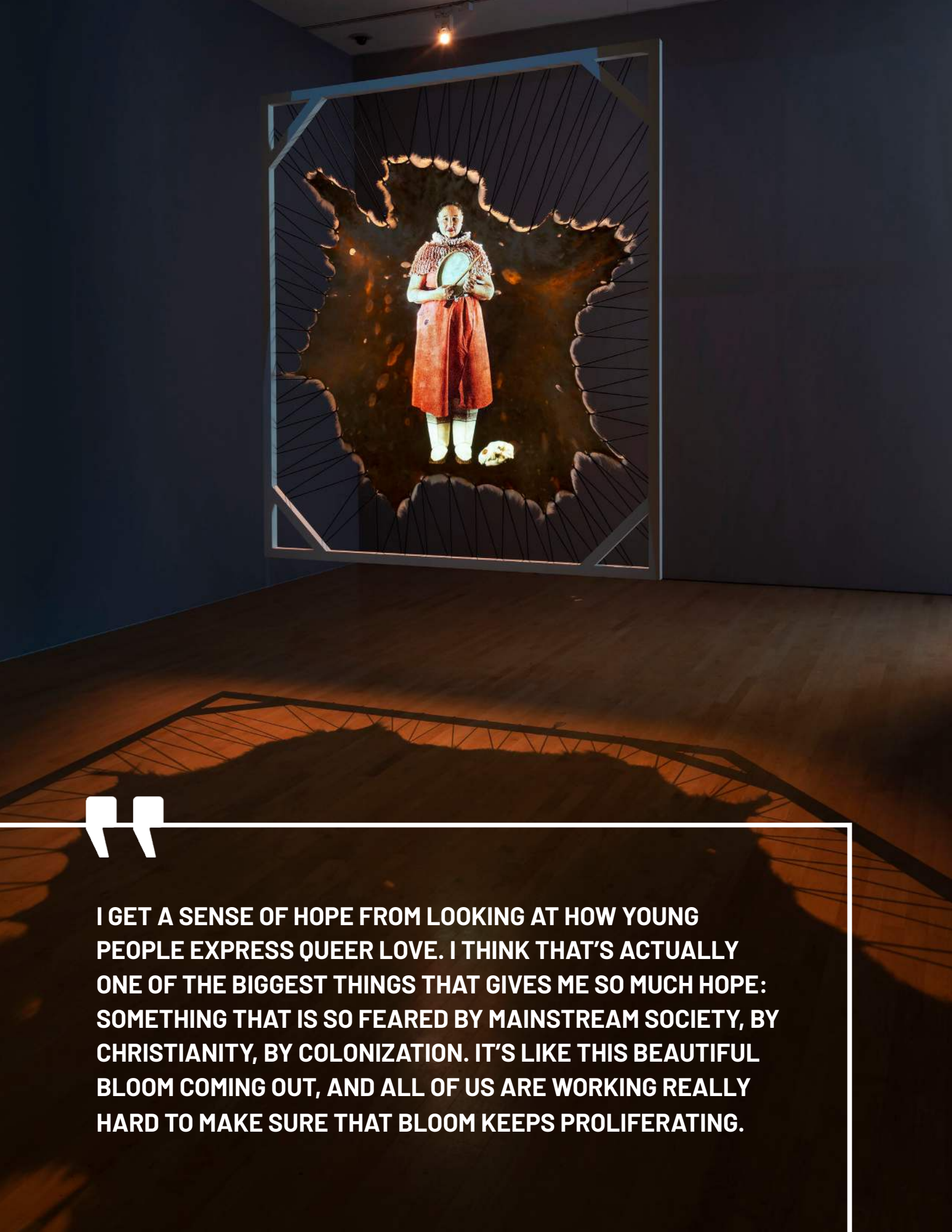
It's so important for the different organizations to see how they affect the whole person and the network of people coming together. I think when you do that, it's easier to go away from the monetary value of each of these places.

KUNUK: When these organizations are so focused on money and not the actual impact they're having on lives, they seem very disconnected from our communities.

LAAKKULUK: I found that particularly frustrating when I was working in the nonprofit sector — both in the daycare system here in Nunavut, as well as in the art system — where nonprofit societies have that word right in their title. You're not supposed to be focusing on making a profit through them, but the actual model of how to set up an organization and its governance is totally mirroring the corporate profit-making world. So, even though you're trying to make an artistic product, an artistic project, you still have to make sure that all the funding models, all the governance models around this project, are all supposed to make this pinnacle of capital. And here we are, you know, looking after kids in daycare or making a play. You can't count that way. You can't look at the work as a capitalist project. But that's the only way of assessing within the nonprofit world.

KUNUK: Conversations around how you create other ways of measuring success, or how we define success, become very difficult conversations around pride and self-empowerment or empowerment. Do you have any thoughts on that?

LAAKKULUK: We've been touching a lot on it already in the conversation in terms of finding ways of amplifying people's self-directed enjoyment in life and assessing a person by their entirety. Not just going in for doctor's appointments or looking after different aspects of your



I GET A SENSE OF HOPE FROM LOOKING AT HOW YOUNG PEOPLE EXPRESS QUEER LOVE. I THINK THAT'S ACTUALLY ONE OF THE BIGGEST THINGS THAT GIVES ME SO MUCH HOPE: SOMETHING THAT IS SO FEARED BY MAINSTREAM SOCIETY, BY CHRISTIANITY, BY COLONIZATION. IT'S LIKE THIS BEAUTIFUL BLOOM COMING OUT, AND ALL OF US ARE WORKING REALLY HARD TO MAKE SURE THAT BLOOM KEEPS PROLIFERATING.

humanity, but organizations treating you as a whole person. How are you doing as a family member? How are you doing as a community member? How was what you are contributing to the organization affecting your entirety?

KUNUK: And then the last question is, what are some of the things you hope for your children, or your young relatives, in terms of types of work, workforce, or education in the future?

LAAKKULUK: So, my panik (daughter) just started university this past fall. And when she was born, when I gave birth 18 years ago, I thought, "Wow, that's almost 20 years in the future. I hope she can go to a university in Inuktitut, in the homeland." And it hasn't quite happened. But I always still hope you know that there are more and more opportunities for all three of my kids to be able to enter a space where they feel like they are comfortable as these modern mixed-heritage Inuit learning more Inuktitut, learning more land skills, and feeling like they're contributing as equal members of our society.

KUNUK: What do you think that would do? In terms of the personal and social effects of having an Inuit university delivered in Inuktitut?

LAAKKULUK: The effect would be that we have self-direction as a society. We already know that intellectual thought, rigour, and critical analysis exists. It's just that with these huge waves of colonization coming over, we're never able to fully assert this idea of us being university-providing community members.

It would cause families to stay together. We're going through this massive feeling of empty nesting. Our daughter lives far away from us now. And she has to fend for herself without inussiutit (Inuit food). So it would keep families together, assert what we've always known about ourselves, and create, again, coming back to the beginning of the conversation, this environment of intellectual safety and intellectual enjoyment.

KUNUK: What do you see as the biggest barrier to creating spaces for a decolonized approach, whether it's our relationship to the land or how we define our economy?

LAAKKULUK: I think the biggest barrier is this multifaceted ball of monopolies controlling far too much in the Arctic. There is not enough housing, not enough food sovereignty, not enough self-determination. You can't say it's just one thing — it's this very complicated ball of different aspects of colonization that isn't allowing this to happen. We're always talking about these transient qallunaat (white people) that come and really run this place, run Nunavut. Or they don't even come to Nunavut; they have jobs based in the South, and they're working so hard for mega dollars to control Inuit lives from away. You know, if there was an end to this pervasive transience — these thoughts coming in, thoughts leaving, thoughts coming in, thoughts leaving — and there was more consistency and more long-term, like from birth onwards, education about how to be in this place, we'd be a lot better.

KUNUK: What gives you hope?

LAAKKULUK: I get a sense of hope from looking at how young people express queer love. I think that's actually one of the biggest things that gives me so much hope: something that is so feared by mainstream society, by Christianity, by colonization. It's like this beautiful bloom coming out, and all of us are working really hard to make sure that bloom keeps proliferating.

Photo Credit: Shari Fox

ROMANI MAKKIK

Reflections on Meaningful Work: Working for a Community Organization

The most important thing I have learned working for the Ilisaqsivik Society is that in a time of "reconciliation" between governments and Indigenous people, between the South and the North, we need to consider what "reconciliation" really means. Ilisaqsivik is one of the few places where one can truly reconcile with one's past, with one's trauma, and better understand the collective trauma of our people – Inuit. It is also a place to reconcile the ideas of "workforce" and "workplace." I have seen these through some of the people I have met through Ilisaqsivik. Inuit are thinking about different ways to create meaningful work, especially to support our fellow Inuit, and especially after having helped themselves with the support of Ilisaqsivik.

FOUNDING AND GROWING ILISAQSIVIK SOCIETY

Founded in 1997, the Ilisaqsivik Society is a registered charity and not-for-profit organization in Clyde River (Kangiqtugaapik), Nunavut.

Ilisaqsivik strives to provide programs, services, and space that draw on and support Inuit culture and language and help people realize their full life potential. Ilisaqsivik supports individuals' physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being through every stage of life to create thriving, sustainable communities. Ilisaqsivik designs and delivers various community programs — dozens every year. Everything from prenatal and children's programs to a youth drop-in centre, to various training programs, such as on-the-land skills through the full-time Angunasuktiit hunting instruction program and environmental research and monitoring through the Ittaq Heritage and Research Centre (a division of Ilisaqsivik), to delivering the Inuusita Ingiranivuu or "Our Life's Journey," Inuit Counsellor Training and Mentorship Program, the only Inuktut language counsellor training program in Nunavut. Ilisaqsivik also runs the school breakfast and lunch programs, an early childhood education program, after-school programs, and a youth and adult drop-in library with access to computers to use the Internet. They also have Elders and sewing programs running throughout the year.

These programs are all delivered in Inuktitut, and all the work, the ways of teaching and doing, are planned by Inuit, for Inuit. That is what I love about Ilisaqsivik Society. Working there feels like coming home and feeling complete being in my world.

I grew up in Igloolik, Nunavut, and have worked with Ilisaqsivik for the last few years, travelling for my work in and out of Clyde River. I had the opportunity to work in Inuktut, which I have had to relearn. Through that process, I have come to understand that although I speak Inuktitut, I speak more English-Inuktut, meaning I tend to translate word for word, sometimes losing the meaning of what I am trying to say. I also have had to unlearn the strict rules around work that I had learned in Western institutions, like at other workplaces, in university, in high school, from Settlers, where I had to work in certain ways by "leaving my feelings at the door," for example, or sometimes, working in environments where I did not feel safe. By not feeling safe, I mean in the sense of often feeling helpless in some jobs due to policies and practices that did not allow me to navigate or understand how to work within and with what felt like confined agencies. Leaving me feeling disempowered in the work I was attempting to do. I am grateful for the opportunities I had to learn from Settlers, but I felt disconnected from my community and fellow Inuit because I was trying to behave, talk, and be like the Settler. A whole other way of speaking, thinking, and doing, feeling like I had to fit into a prescribed behaviour, all the while trying to make sense of it.

INUIT HEALING AND SAFETY

Speaking, thinking, and doing with my fellow Inuit, amongst Inuit, I feel like I finally really understand the importance of worldview. I came in as an academic, a researcher, an observer, a listener, and an analyzer, feeling like an outsider. It still happens, and it makes me think more about what "reconciliation" with our past really means. The Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC, 2013) translates "reconciliation" into Inuktut as "saimmaqatigiingniq," and the way they have translated it back into English means "a new relationship when past opponents get back together, meet in the middle, and are at peace" (QTC, 2013:14-15). How do we reconcile with the trauma and pain of our "past opponents" when it is all worldview?

I have come to realize that, as Inuit, we need to have the time and safe space to work through our own trauma and pain and recognize our individual, family and collective trauma. This includes in our workplaces. Inuusita Ingiranivuu, or Our Life's Journey, is delivered by Inuit who have learned counselling skills and are using their lived experience and knowledge to teach those who are already and want to continue to help their fellow Inuit through counselling. Inuit working for Inuit. Inuit being part of the change from the bottom up.

Ilisaqsivik's counsellors and the majority of their employees are Inuit from Clyde River or people who moved there from nearby communities. The frontline workers, early childhood educators, food program

coordinators, hunters, seamstresses, administration support, and youth working at Ilisaqsivik are all Inuit. The majority of the staff I have encountered have participated in Inuusita Ingiranivuu and found it useful to improve their family and work relationships. The Board of Directors, who approve the policies and procedures that direct Ilisaqsivik, are all Inuit. In March of 2024, the organization hired its first Inuk Executive Director, making the entire staff Inuit.

As a charity and non-profit society, Ilisaqsivik pulls together funding that enables them to hire people in the community, contributing to the economy of Clyde River. There are limited options for employment there unless you land something with the Hamlet office or Piqqusilirivvik, the Inuit Cultural School operated by Nunavut Arctic College and located in Clyde River. You could get employment at the Baffinland Iron Mine, which would often have you flying in and out to the mine site over 100 kilometres away. Currently, major construction is happening for a small craft harbour, and some people have been able to obtain employment with that project, but it is seasonal and temporary. Realizing there are few to no employment options made me think of how much we, as Inuit, need to be involved more in community development, program development, and delivery, including policy development. We must have the time and space to think of where and how we want to work with and for Inuit, and more importantly, how we can do things in different ways. As Inuit, and maybe for Indigenous people in general, we have to think about how to do things from both worldviews: how the Inuit do it and how the Settlers do it.

Participating in Inuusita Ingiranivuu for the last five years has helped me see the importance of having a sense of purpose, particularly as it relates to the wellness of our people.

Ilisaqsivik was created because community members saw a need for Inuit counsellors to be available as Inuktut speakers. From one counsellor, the organization has grown to employ a large team, even people from outside of Clyde River, working as community counsellors, counselling training facilitators, as well as Trauma Response Team members, who are called upon when a crisis response is needed in a community. People can attend training in Clyde River to build skills. The resilience and passion I see in Clyde River to help their fellow Inuit has been very inspiring and gives me hope for more involvement of our people in social, systemic, and institutional change.

Since making "Wounded Healers,"[19] a video about my experience with healing and counselling at Ilisaqsivik, I have worked with the organization, helping update their Inuusita Ingiranivuu training manuals based on observations and participation in the workshops. I have also assisted with managerial duties as and when needed. I have felt a sense of purpose, for once, in helping my fellow Inuit. Ilisaqsivik has made me think about what Inuit-centred programs and policies really look like for Inuit.

Photo Credit: Aimo Paniloo; Clyde River, Nunavut

INUIT-CENTRED FOCUS WITH NON-INUIT ALLIES

While this kind of programming should be Inuit-led, it still has a role for non-Inuit. Ilisaqsivik draws on the expertise of southern firms and consultants, especially now that the organization has grown so large. Finance, payroll, and human resource administration are mostly southern-based contractors and non-Inuit, with Inuit staff in Clyde River acting as bridges between other staff and local administration. Training plans and professional development are included in work with southern consultants to transfer skills and build capacity at the organization so that they can be run locally in the future. This has made me think of how non-Inuit can be our allies or accomplices, working to make change with us and for us. Rather than imposing priorities, goals, or ideas, their focus is on administration and similar duties, supporting and enabling staff to continue strengthening their skills. The Board and staff come up with programs and delivery methods that enable them to lead. All the while, the staff are also very aware of community dynamics and how those can contribute to the organization's operations.

One time, I observed how the Clyde River staff managed when programs and space were overbooked. The way the staff of three different programs happening at all once were able to maneuver and manage people who were learning and doing different activities at the same time, all the while a drop-in program was going on, and having after-school coordinators prepare for the end of the day was exciting to witness. Everyone worked together to manage the overcrowded space. Staff did not complain or say once that they would have to cancel one event to accommodate another; they made it all work. Watching everyone move in a perfect dance in the little space the organization currently has in the old health center was great. The people on the ground know how to ensure there is space for everyone and opportunities stay open. I have observed a need for a certain level of flexibility and understanding of the needs of the staff and what is going on at the community level. I believe it has to do with the fact that Ilisaqsivik ensures they keep an Inuit-centred focus, and they do this by accommodating the needs of the staff, being understanding and trusting that the people have their own way of ensuring accountability. Being reflective of their actions.

I have had to unlearn the things I learned about "working 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday," or incorporating one of the eight Government of Nunavut-defined Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Societal Values, like pilimaksarniq or pijitirniq,* just to name a couple. Ilisaqsivik and the programs they deliver are defined by the people, as much as possible, such as the Angunasuktiit, sewing programs, and Inuusita Ingiranivuu. They are built from Inuit experience, knowledge and wisdom. Ilisaqsivik and other community wellness organizations, such as Tukisigiarvik, Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre, Aqqiumavik Society and the Cambridge Bay Friendship Centre, strive to provide access to work, money, food and a way of life by providing employment and various training programs to ensure Inuit have access to some of their basic needs at times.

*Pilimaksarniq or pijitirniq translates to the training or development of skills to be confident

> Participating in Inuusita Ingiranivuu for the last five years has helped me see the importance of having a sense of purpose, particularly as it relates to the wellness of our people. Ilisaqsivik was created because community members saw a need for Inuit counsellors to be available as Inuktut speakers...
>
> Ilisaqsivik has made me think about what Inuit-centred programs and policies really look like for Inuit.

RECONCILIATION AND THE ECONOMY

Ilisaqsivik can be a safe space to learn, share, eat and hang out. People build friendships, and once an individual starts getting help, they may have an impact on their family and the community; they may have a sense of belonging and may even find purpose. People who attend Inuusita Ingiranivuu learn to become counsellors with their fellow Inuit and have the space for self-reflection to ensure they are strong counsellors. One of the best things I heard from people I have spoken with has been that they have come to recognize the work needed to address the trauma of our past. Recognizing that although we have collective trauma due to colonization, our great-grandparents', grandparents' and parents' experiences are theirs, for us to honour and recognize. As younger generations, we have our own hurt and strengths to recognize.

To get this in Clyde River, amongst my fellow Inuit, from Elders and new friends, who are using their experience, strengths and hope to address our collective trauma has been enlightening, but it also has me wondering about partnerships between community non-profit organizations and government services, such as mental health or family services.

For Inuit and community non-profit organizations to be part of social, systemic, and institutional change, we need better and stronger engagement from government services and Inuit organizations to share our ways of doing. We need better recognition of our Inuktut terminology and language to help address some overdue changes. We need stronger partnerships to provide mental health awareness and access to resources, which could include community counsellors, trainers, and more people to help people.

The unification between NGOs and the government to support Inuit in recognizing options for the help and support they want is overdue. Partnership can include outreach and information about emotional and mental health, intergenerational trauma, addictions, and other contributing factors to the state of Inuit wellness. The government needs to do better at reaching Inuit and providing information and access to mental and emotional health resources that would enable our people to support each other in ways we want and actually heal to participate in economic activity, whether it is the wage economy or hunting economy. Inuusita Ingiranivuu is one way Inuit have found ways to help our fellow Inuit through counselling, addressing past trauma, and responding to ongoing trauma, such as sudden loss and grief, rather than imposing approaches others think may help us. Why not ask us about our experiences, knowledge, and wisdom for true reconciliation?

CONCLUSION

Re-Imagining Economic Development in Inuit Nunangat

This report is meant to help generate dialogue on Inuit-defined economy, its trajectory and, perhaps, reimagine that path. The chapters in this report centre Inuit perspectives on the concept of economic development with a focus on the hunting economy, arts and economies of care, and community-based efforts that renew and build Inuit values and connections. Meanwhile, it challenges the status quo of resource development, which offers few clear benefits to Inuit but significant threats to Inuit ways of life and the land itself.

The report's authors have reflected several essential and overlooked themes in the discussion on a Northern Indigenous economy.

First, the report underscores the paramount importance of Inuit economic activity, such as hunting, which not only provides food security and cultural continuity but also represents significant socioeconomic value.

The report raises a crucial question: Should these activities not be recognized as the starting base for thinking about what an economy is? Frameworks for a "conservation economy" or "hunting economy" challenge the mining-or-nothing scramble we see today and offer a more balanced approach that respects the land.

Moreover, by using an economic analysis, the report demonstrates that investments in Inuit-led economic sectors yield higher job and income multipliers compared to the mining sector. This finding strongly supports the argument for a diversified economic approach that includes substantial support for land-based activities.

Second, the "economy," as it is traditionally conceptualized, exists in a compartment seemingly independent of culture and Inuit lived experiences. However, this is not the case for Inuit visions, where social, legal and cultural elements of life are integral.

Amidst this conceptualization, Inuit values and language are critical. How we talk about the economy should flow from Inuktut — once again — pushing us toward balance.

The research we've produced here also shows language education in schools leads to better academic outcomes and overall well-being, a key element to actually participating in economic activity, broadly imagined.

Third, we know Inuit face significant socioeconomic inequalities, including lower educational attainment, wage disparities, and limited employment opportunities in high-paying sectors. Even when Inuit seek to participate in the wage economy, they face significant structural barriers maintained by a non-Inuit class that is only interested in status quo power relations and economic benefits. This is racism and discrimination, and there appear to be few avenues to challenge or address this, meaning generations of socioeconomic inequality for Inuit will be reproduced unless change is made.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is a re-orientation of Inuit self-determination in discussions of the economy. Of course, Inuit organizations often advocate for economic development and, in some cases, even in some cases mining – but under their terms – because this is Inuit land, and their voices and interests should be privileged. This includes reclaiming control over economic activities and resources and reimagining the economy through Inuit values and Inuit power.

In sum, we hope we have made a compelling case for rethinking economic development in Inuit Nunangat. At the least, we hope that this report brings others to the discussion of the economy in the North. We need to hear from Inuit and Indigenous people more generally about the role of resource development, energy, transportation and construction, and the growing and often extractive research economy. We need to hear about the economic activity generated by the service economy and the arts. We need more conversations to fill other gaps, including in tourism, entrepreneurship, and other sectors. There is much more to consider amidst the drive for a higher and higher gross domestic product (GDP) that speaks to cultural vitality and wellness. Those perspectives should be privileged in policy, regulatory, and legislative discussions instead of being relegated to performative inclusion, as is currently the case.

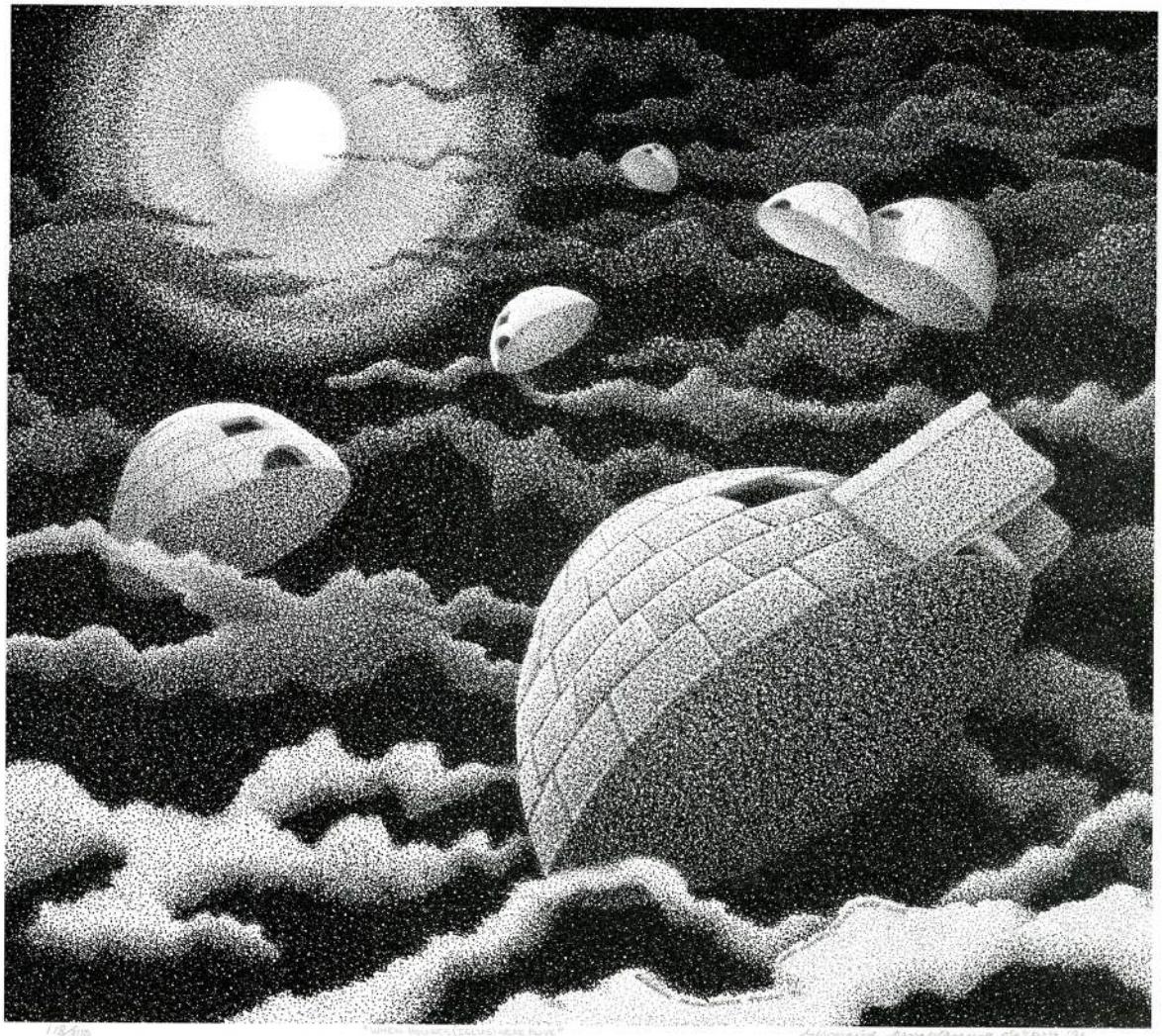


Illustration Credit: 'When Houses (Iglus) Were Alive,' Lithograph, 1996, by Germaine Arnaktauyok

Endnotes

— Kunuk Inutiq, "Recovering Ourselves through Kaujjajjuk"

[1]Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind, the Politics of Language in African Literature* (James Currey Publishers, 1986).

[2]Harrison M. Wright, ed. *The "New Imperialism": Analysis of Late Nineteenth Century Expansion* (D C Heath and Co., 1976).

[3]Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, 1961): 106.

[4]Margaret Nakashuk, "Minister's Statement 436 – 6(2): Elders' Access to Country Food," (Transcript, Nunavut Hansard, May 27, 2024).

— Matthias Oschinski, "The Current State of the Northern Economy for Inuit in Nunavut"

Canada, Government of Canada, Budget 2023 – *A Made in Canada Plan*, (2023): 83

Canada, Government of Canada, Budget 2024 – *Fairness for Every Generation* (2024): 180.

Canada, Government of Canada, "Tax incentives for mining and exploration," (2023).

Canada, Government of Canada, "Minerals and the economy," (2023).

Government of Canada, "Tax incentives for mining and exploration."

Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, "Minister Vandal announces investment of over $400,000 to support the Hunters and Trappers Organizations of Nunavut," *Government of Canad*a, March 14, 2023.

Aluki Kotierk, "Nunavut's government must do more to reclaim Inuktut for Inuit," *The Globe and Mail*, March 3, 2023.

Office of the Auditor General of Canada [OAGC], Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut – 2010 Human Resource Capacity-Government of Nunavut, (Ottawa: OAGC, 2010): 1-34.

United Nations, "Educate children in their mother tongue, urges UN rights expert," *UN News*, March 11, 2020.

— Richard Paton, "Developing a Conservation Economy in the Canadian Arctic"

Qikiqtani Inuit Association. "About the Qikiqtani Region." Accessed September 12, 2024. https://www.qia.ca/about-qikiqtani/

— Romani Makkik, "Reflections on Meaningful Work: Working for a Community Organization"

Makkik, Romani. "ᐃᑭᓛᑦ ᒪᒥᓴᐃᔩᑦ | Wounded Healers." Posted by lisaqsivik Society, 14 Dec 2020. YouTube, 27:34. https://youtu.be/ErLuPakgc1s?si=s4QtzKB25HR8GIoN

Bibliography

— Kunuk Inutiq, "Recovering Ourselves through Kaujjajjuk"

Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Grove Press, 1961.

Nakashuk, Margaret. "Minister's Statement 436 – 6(2): Elders' Access to Country Food." Transcript. Nunavut Hansard. May 27, 2024.

Thiong'o, Ngugi Wa. *Decolonising the Mind, the Politics of Language in African Literature*. James Currey Publishers, 1986.

Wright, Harrison M. ed., T*he "New Imperialism": Analysis of Late Nineteenth Century Expansion.* D C Heath & Co, 1976.

— Matthias Oschinski, "The Current State of the Northern Economy for Inuit in Nunavut"

Anderson, Thomas and Thompson, Amanda. *Assessing the social determinants of self-reported Inuit health in Inuit Nunangat*. Statistics Canada. February 22, 2016. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-653-x/89-653-x2016009-eng.htm

Angelo, Denise, Disbray, Samantha, Singer, Ruth, O'Shannessy, Carmel, Simpsoni, Jane, Smith, Hilary, Meekii, Barbra et. al. "Learning (in) Indigenous languages - Common ground, diverse pathways." *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 278. (2022): 1-107. https://doi.org/10.1787/19939019

Berman, Matthew, Robert Loeffler, and Jennifer I. Schmidt. "Long-term benefits to Indigenous communities of extractive industry partnerships: Evaluating the Red Dog Mine." *Resources Policy 66* (2020): 101609. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2020.101609

Caine, Ken J., and Naomi Krogman. "Powerful or just plain power-full? A power analysis of impact and benefit agreements in Canada's north." *Organization & Environment 23*, no. 1 (2010): 76-98. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026609358969

Canada. Government of Canada. Budget 2023 – *A Made in Canada Plan.* 2023. https://www.budget.canada.ca/2023/pdf/budget-2023-en.pdf

Canada. Government of Canada, Budget 2024 – *Fairness for Every Generation.* 2024. https://budget.canada.ca/2024/report-rapport/budget-2024.pdf

Canada. Government of Canada. "Tax incentives for mining and exploration." Last modified May 26, 2023. https://natural-resources.canada.ca/our-natural-resources/minerals-mining/mining-policy-taxation-and-industry/taxation/mining-taxation-canada/mining-specific-tax-provisions/8892

Canada. Government of Canada. "Minerals and the economy." Last modified May 29, 2023. https://natural-resources.canada.ca/our-natural-resources/minerals-mining/mining-data-statistics-and-analysis/minerals-and-the-economy/20529

Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency. "Minister Vandal announces investment of over $400,000 to support the Hunters and Trappers Organizations of Nunavut." *Government of Canada.* March 14, 2023. https://www.canada.ca/en/northern-economic-development/news/2023/03/minister-vandal-announces-investment-of-over-400000-to-support-the-hunters-and-trappers-organizations-of-nunavut.html

Conference Board of Canada and Future Skills Centre. "The Role of the Hunter in Nunangat's Mixed Economy." Presentation. 2023. https://fsc-ccf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/the-role-of-the-hunter-in-inuit-nunungat_2023.pdf

Delprato, Marcos. "Indigenous learning gaps and home language instruction: New evidence from PISA-D." I*nternational Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 109 (2021): 101800. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101800

Feir, Donn, Foley, Kelly, and Jones, Maggie E. C. "Heterogeneous Returns to Active Labour Market Programs for Indigenous Populations." *NBER Working Paper Series*, No. 30158. (2020): 1-63. https://doi.org/10.3386/w30158

Kenny, Tiff-Annie and Chan, Hing Man. "Estimating Wildlife Harvest Based on Reported Consumption by Inuit in the Canadian Arctic." *ARCTIC*, Vol. 70, No. 1. (2017): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.14430/arctic4625

Kotierk, Aluki. "Nunavut's government must do more to reclaim Inuktut for Inuit." *The Globe and Mail*. March 3, 2023. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-nunavuts-government-must-do-more-to-reclaim-inuktut-for-inuit/

Nunatsiaq News. "Liberal minister promotes new Indigenous training program in Iqaluit." *Nunatsiaq News*. July 9, 2019. https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/liberal-minister-promotes-new-indigenous-training-program-in-iqaluit/

Nunavut News. "Nunavut Mining: Critical minerals key to going green, Patterson says." *Nunavut News*. April 26, 2023. https://www.nunavutnews.com/business/nunavut-mining-critical-minerals-key-to-going-green-says-patterson/

Office of the Auditor General of Canada [OAGC]. *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut – 2010 Human Resource Capacity–Government of Nunavut*. Ottawa: OAGC, 2010. https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/docs/nun_201003_e_33568.pdf

Palesch, Nico, Creating Opportunity in Inuit Nunangat: The Crisis in Inuit Education and Labour Market Outcomes," *CSLS research report* (2016): 1-77. http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2016-12.pdf

Rajagopal, Divya. "Canada's budget measures brighten funding prospects for critical miners." *Reuters*. April 10, 2023. https://www.reuters.com/markets/canadas-budget-measures-brighten-funding-prospects-critical-miners-2023-04-09/

Rodon, Thierry and Lévesque, Francis. "Understanding the Social and Economic Impacts of Mining Development in Inuit Communities: Experiences with Past and Present Mines in Inuit Nunangat." *The Northern Review*, Vol. 41. (2015): 1-27. https://doi.org/10.22584/nr41.2015.002

Searles, Edmund (Ned). "To sell or not to sell: Country food markets and Inuit identity in Nunavut." *Food and Foodway*s, Vol. 24, No. 3-4. (2017): 94–212. https://doi.org/10.1080/07409710.2016.1210899

Statistics Canada. "Table 36-10-0595-01. Input-output multipliers, provincial and territorial, detail level." December 8, 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/3610059501-eng

Statistics Canada. "Table 41-10-0044-01. Harvesting activities by Aboriginal identity, age group and sex." February 4, 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/4110004401-eng

Statistics Canada. "Harvesting and handicraft activities among Inuit: Findings from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey." November 26, 2018. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2018046-eng.htm

Statistics Canada. "Table 41-10-0046-01. Reasons for harvesting, by Aboriginal identity, age group and sex." February 4, 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/4110004601eng

Statistics Canada. "Table 41-10-0025-01. Aboriginal peoples survey, reasons for making handcrafted goods, by age group and sex, Inuit population aged 15 years and over, Canada and Inuit Nunangat." November 9, 2015. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/4110002501-eng

Statistics Canada. "Table 13-10-0835-01. Food insecurity by selected demographic characteristics." April 26, 2024. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/1310083501-eng

Statistics Canada. "Table 98-10-0451-01 Labour force status by highest level of education, Indigenous identity, age and gender: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts." November 30, 2022. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/9810045101-eng

Statistics Canada. "Table 98-10-0428-01. Employment income statistics by Indigenous identity and highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions." June 21, 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/9810042801-eng

Statistics Canada. "Table 98-10-0588-01. Employment income statistics by industry sectors, Indigenous identity, highest level of education, work activity during the reference year, age and gender: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts." June 21, 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25318/9810058801-eng

United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Education, language and the human rights of minorities - Report of the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues.* New York: UN Headquarters, 2020. https://daccess-ods.un.org/tmp/7212611.43684387.html

United Nations. "Educate children in their mother tongue, urges UN rights expert." UN News. March 11, 2020. https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059241

Varennes, Fernand de. *Education, language and the human rights of minorities: report of the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues*. New York: United Nations, 2020. https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc4347-education-language-and-human-rights-minorities-report-special

Warltier, Duncan W., Landry-Cuerrier, Manuell and Humphries, Murray M. "Valuation of Country Food in Nunavut Based on Energy and Protein Replacement." *ARCTIC*, Vol. 74, No. 3. (2021): 355–371. https://doi.org/10.14430/arctic73390

Wyatt, Quinn, "Increasing the cultural competence of Inuit education," *HMJ School of International Studies, University of Washington*, April 14, 2021, https://jsis.washington.edu/news/increasing-the-cultural-competence-of-inuit-education/

— Jason Akearok, "Navigating the Turbulent Waters of Fisheries Rights in Nunavut"

Anselmi, Elaine. "Nunavut's offshore fishery contributes $112M to territory's economy: report," *Nunatsiaq News*, March 30, 2020. https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/nunavuts-offshore-fishery-contributes-112m-to-territorys-economy-report/

Bernauer, Warren. "Commercial fishing, Inuit rights, and internal colonialism in Nunavut." *Polar Record* 58 (2022): e1. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247421000747

Department of Environment, Fisheries and Sealing Division, *Fisheries Strategy*: *2016-202*0. (Nunavut: Government of Nunavut, 2016). https://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD-277-4(3)-EN-Department-of-Environment's-Nunavut-Fisheries-Strategy,-2016-2020.pdf

Wat, Samuel. "Court quashes federal decision to allocate fishing licences in Nunavut to non-Inuit," *CBC New*s, May 7, 2024. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/federal-court-decision-inuit-fishing-allocations-clearwater-mi-kmaq-1.7196608

— Richard Paton, "Developing a Conservation Economy in the Canadian Arctic"

Qikiqtani Inuit Association. "About the Qikiqtani Region." Accessed September 12, 2024. https://www.qia.ca/about-qikiqtani/

— Romani Makkik, "Reflections on Meaningful Work: Working for a Community Organization"

Makkik, Romani. "ᐃᑭᓛᑦ ᒪᒥᓴᐃᔩᑦ | Wounded Healers." Posted by lisaqsivik Society, 14 Dec 2020. YouTube, 27:34. https://youtu.be/ErLuPakgc1s?si=s4QtzKB25HR8GIoN

X

@yellowhead_

INSTAGRAM

@yellowheadinstitute

FACEBOOK

fb.me/yellowheadinstitute

WEBSITE

yellowheadinstitute.org

Yellowhead Institute