



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UPR OF CANADA

## Food Sovereignty in Inuit Nunangat

### INUIT NUNANGAT (INUIT HOMELANDS)

- Four land claim regions make up Inuit Nunangat: Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Nunatsiavut.
- There are 47,330 Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat.
- Inuksuiti is Inuit traditional foods also referred to as country food; Country foods are important to the economic and cultural health of Inuit and come from the land and sea, including arctic char, seal, muskox, caribou, whale, walrus, clams, berries, and more.

### FOOD SECURITY

- Inuit in Canada face the highest documented prevalence of food insecurity of any Indigenous population living in an industrialized country.
- Food insecurity in Inuit Nunangat is one of the longest lasting public health emergencies in Canadian history.
- Access to country food is increasingly difficult due to cost, reduced knowledge sharing and climate change; Country food now accounts for 18% of caloric intake among Inuit in Nunavut.

### POVERTY

- In 2018, the median individual income for Inuit in Nunavut was \$24,768 – less than two-fifths that of the Canadian average of \$62,100 CAD.
- The cost of living in Nunavut is 2.2 times higher than the Canadian average.
- An official poverty line has not yet been established in Nunavut but recent research has shown that the poverty line for a family of 5 in Iqaluit is \$118,786 per year.



### SALARIED POSITIONS FOR INUIT HUNTERS

- Hunters are essential lifelines for their communities by distributing country food through traditional sharing networks. The high cost of hunting activities are paid out of pocket and largely force hunters into poverty in order to provide food to their families and communities.
- Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) started the now expanded pilot project, Nauttigsuqtiit (Inuit stewards), that has hired full-time hunters in the community of Grise Fiord. These hunters act as environmental stewards in the Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area as well as harvest country food for the community.
- QIAs model demonstrates the feasibility and success of this program model, showing that with adequate and sustainable support similar salaried hunter programs could be effectively replicated across Inuit Nunangat. This can be implemented quickly with simple administrative resources as an effective means to address this long standing public health crisis.

## SUICIDE

- Suicide rates in Inuit Nunangat are 9 times higher than the national average in Canada and rose in direct relation to the economic collapse created by the European Sealskin and Seal product ban in 1983.

## NUTRITION NORTH CANADA

- This federal food subsidy program has no control over the retailers' pricing practices and lacks an evaluative matrix to guarantee if the subsidies are being passed on to consumers.
- Country food remaining within the territory does not receive the NNC subsidy, resulting in imported foods from the south often being less expensive than fresh, nutrient-dense, and locally sourced country foods.

## HOUSING

- Overcrowded housing affects 52% of Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat, the highest rate in Canada.
- In Nunavut, 50% of the population lives in public housing provided by the Nunavut Housing Corporation; 80% of tenants make less than \$23,000 CAD annually.
- An estimated 3,000 homes are required to address the housing needs of Nunavut's population.

## WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

- 86.8% of water treatment facilities and 84.4% of water pump stations in Nunavut were reported to be in poor condition in 2020.
- Boil water advisories are common across Nunavut – 14 were issued in the territory in 2021 alone.
- Insufficient water infrastructure is impacting development and housing in the territory's capital city; Iqaluit is unable to create new lots to build the needed 1,400 new homes to solve Iqaluit's current housing crisis.

## OTHER RESOURCES

- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy (2021)
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuit Nunangat Food Security Strategy Implementation Plan (2022)
- Inuit Circumpolar Council, Food Sovereignty and Self-Governance: Inuit Role in Managing Arctic Marine Resources (2020)
- Qikiqtani Inuit Association, Food Sovereignty and Harvesting Report (2019)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create and adequately fund salaried positions for hunters in Inuit Nunangat
2. Create and adequately fund targeted basic income in Inuit Nunangat
3. Develop infrastructure in Inuit Nunangat
4. Recognize Inuktut and other Indigenous languages as official languages of Canada