“The Beginnings of Learning” :
Attempting to Understand Poverty and Poverty Reduction in
Nunavut

by

Margaret Crump

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Abstract

This thesis examines Nunavut's poverty reduction strategy and the public engagement process that produced it. It begins with a brief history of the territory's poverty reduction efforts before examining the theoretical understandings of poverty and poverty reduction that guide this research. It then offers a narrative of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process, followed by an examination of the objectives that shaped its design. Next, the differing perspective on poverty and poverty reduction that exist in Nunavut are explored, as is the focus of poverty reduction efforts on healing and wellbeing. This thesis concludes by arguing that the Roundtable process has created a space to discuss the legacy of twentieth century federal policy and administration in a way that connects it directly to the roots of poverty in Nunavut.

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Acronyms

APTN - Aboriginal Peoples Television Network
CBC - Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CWB - Community Wellbeing Index
CWP - Canada Without Poverty
DIAND – Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
GN - Government of Nunavut
HBC - Hudson’s Bay Company
HDI - Human Development Index
IQ - Inuit Qaujimajutuqangit
ISD – Income Statistics Division
ITK - Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
MLA - Member of the Legislative Assembly
MP - Member of Parliament
NBS - Nunavut Bureau of Statistics
NHC – Nunavut Housing Corporation
NIRB - Nunavut Impact Review Board
NGO - Non-governmental organization
NLCA - Nunavut Land Claims Agreement
NRPR - Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
NTI - Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
NWT - Northwest Territories
QIA - Qikiqtani Inuit Association
QTC - Qikiqtani Truth Commission
RCMP - Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SC – Statistics Canada
TRC - Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN - United Nations
UNDP - United Nations Development Program

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Prologue - The Beginnings of Learning

Anything that is important, is to create the beginnings of learning. Don't worry about the greater detail, it's the beginning, that learning-beginning part, that's always important because everybody has to create the rest of the answers themselves. But you just—. You need the beginning though. And that beginning is what's important of, of understanding. And once that—. You get the right beginning for anything, then all the pieces start to fall into place naturally. When you don't have the right beginning—. You don't get the beginning right, so be it. Then you just have to start all over again, hope you make the next right beginning. And, you know that's, that's how we make mistakes and learn from them... You gotta be fair to yourself first, if you want to be fair to others... It sounds simple, but again it's not always doable.

Joe Karetak, Arviat, 2015

Joe Karetak offered this reflection in the final minutes of a two-hour telephone interview in April 2015. He was in Arviat and I had recently returned from Iqaluit and was just starting to try to untangle the complexities of poverty and poverty reduction. Towards the end of our interview, I had shared with him my worries about being able to adequately convey the interconnected, holistic nature of poverty reduction in Nunavut. This was his response. As the summer progressed, Joe's words were pushed to the back of my mind while I worked my way through the material I had gathered in the spring. I alternated between being thrilled with the insights I had been given access to while conducting my research and worrying about doing them justice. I began the process of writing and revising, worried once again about the scope of my project. One afternoon in late July, while I was working on revisions for some of the early chapters of this thesis, Joe's words about beginnings came back to me. I stopped what I was doing and returned again to the first pages of my thesis, in order to try to make a good beginning for the things that I have learned.

The decision to make understandings of poverty the focus of my Masters research was not made in consultation with a community in Nunavut. It arose out of my personal interest in social justice and in the Canadian North. It is also closely tied to my family's political and social leanings. My parents met in the Yukon and both I and one my sisters were born there. Although the family moved South when I was a child, where my youngest sister was born, my parents

have been engaged in socio-economic and political development work in the Arctic for much of my life and I have always felt drawn to the region's beauty and stories of community.

In what I thought was an effort to distance myself from my parents' careers and interests, my undergraduate studies took me first to Halifax, Nova Scotia and then to Ghana, West Africa to study international development. The focus of my research at the time was climate change adaptation and development policy. However, the jobs I sought post-graduation, which were in the fields of international development, experiential education and the environment, slowly directed my interest in social justice towards the Canadian North. In 2012-2013 when the Southern media began to cover protests of food prices in Nunavut, I was completing an internship at an environmental organization in Norway and thinking about applying to graduate school. I followed the stories about food insecurity closely.

I began my Masters studies in Montreal, where I thought to study food security and climate change adaptation in Nunavut. In my first semester however, I discovered that the more that I read about climate change adaptation and food insecurity, the more I felt that addressing these issues independently of their larger socio-economic context was problematic. My Honours research had argued that adaptive capacity and poverty are connected and that vulnerability and adaptation to climate change will likely help to reinforce unequal economic structures around the world (Cannon, 1994; Kate, 2000 in Adger et al., 2003). The literature I was reading about food insecurity in Nunavut discussed how changing environmental conditions were compounding existing challenges posed by the high cost of both hunting and of store-bought food, but did not explore these other challenges in detail. Increasingly, I felt that I wanted to look more broadly at poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut. After a few difficult months of trying to find a way to fit my research interest into the work that was being done at McGill, I made the decision to transfer to Carleton in January 2014 to pursue my research through the Institute of Political Economy. My studies at the Institute have allowed me to explore the history of Nunavut and the topics of poverty and colonialism in a way that has reinforced my passion for the region and my chosen topic. The mentorship and feedback I have received throughout the process of developing my research project has renewed my determination to continue to explore, ask questions, and to learn.

1 Chapter: Introduction

I embarked on this research with three objectives. I wanted to i) identify and characterize the debates about poverty in Nunavut that exist at the territory and community level; ii) examine what the term ‘poverty’ means to Nunavummiut and how the term is defined; and iii) explore the policy implications of these debates and definitions. Drawing on literature about assessments of poverty and poverty reduction policy, as well as on the literature that explores governmentality, capitalism and settler colonial relations in Canada, my project examines the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction’s public engagement model, the way in which the territory’s poverty reduction strategy was developed and the understanding of poverty it produced.

The Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, in developing the Roundtable, aimed both to focus discussions about poverty reduction on a vision for the future and to create a model for the implementation of Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement (NLCA), which states that Inuit have the right to participate in the design, development and implementation of social policy (Canada, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development [DIAND] & Nunavut Tunngavik Inc [NTI], 1993). Although this model has been well received by Roundtable participants, it faces strong criticism from those outside of the process because it has not yet produced a definition of poverty. Furthermore, there is general skepticism about the cost of the process and lack of tangible outcomes to date.

This thesis argues that although there is no universally agreed upon definition of poverty in Nunavut, the participatory nature of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has created a space for a politicized discussion about poverty and its causes. This discussion has identified the loss of self-reliance, the product of government policy and programs of resettlement and relocation in the mid-twentieth century, as the root cause of poverty. In this way, the participatory nature of the Roundtable model has made room for a discussion about poverty that acknowledges and challenges the structures that have created inequality and identifies the steps that must be taken to reduce it. This is unusual for poverty reduction strategies, which generally tend to de-politicize poverty by problematizing it, identifying experts to help address it and creating indicators to mark progress in its eradication. This makes it difficult to challenge the legal and societal structures that help to create and maintain poverty.

This politicized discussion has produced a holistic approach to poverty reduction, widening the focus of poverty reduction efforts to include healing and wellbeing and reflecting the considerable amount of work that must be done to ensure societal transformation in Nunavut. The holistic nature of Nunavut's poverty reduction strategy, *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*, indicates that poverty reduction in Nunavut is a complex process. Action taken to address any of the Plan's thematic areas contributes to overall poverty reduction efforts. The findings of this research are therefore part of a larger picture of interconnected pieces. Assessing poverty reduction activities and programs cannot be done in isolation from the larger social and policy-context. However, the particular emphasis of the Roundtable discussions on healing and wellbeing reflect the fact that Roundtable participants believe that the success of Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts and long-term societal change can be ensured through the healing and transformation of relationships between individuals, communities and eventually government. The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction offers a forum in which some of the trauma caused by colonial administration and policies in the Eastern Arctic in the period 1950-1975 can be acknowledged and societal transformation can begin.

1.1 Definitions of Poverty in Canada and in Nunavut

In November 2014, the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) aired a program about food insecurity in Nunavut called *Wasting Away*. In an interview for the program, Deputy Mayor of Rankin Inlet Sam Tutanuak said that the high cost of food in his community was forcing people to resort to scavenging in the dump. In a later interview with APTN, Tutanuak said the senior administrative office in Rankin Inlet had received a call from the office of Leona Aglukkaq, then Minister of Environment and Member of Parliament for Nunavut, requesting a letter of apology for his criticism of Nutrition North Canada, the food subsidy program intended to make perishable food options more affordable for Northern residents. Leona Aglukkaq responded to the news report with a written statement saying that she was considering her legal options as such a conversation had never taken place (Aglukkaq, 2014; APTN, 2014; Barerra &

Francis, 2014; CBC, 2014a, CBC, 2014b). The controversy about food scavenging came on the heels of the Auditor General's November report on Nutrition North Canada. According to the Auditor General's report, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, now called the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, does not know if Northern residents are benefitting from subsidies offered to retailers through the programme (Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2014).

Discussions about inequality in the Canadian North are not new (c.f. Jenness, 1964; Berger, 1977; Anonymous, 1979; Pretes; 1988; Irwin, 1989; Canada, 1996). However, poverty in Nunavut has recently begun to receive renewed attention. In 2009, the Government of Nunavut (GN) announced its commitment to developing and implementing a poverty reduction strategy by the year 2013 (Government of Nunavut [GN], 2009a). In 2012 and 2013, Canada-wide coverage of food price protests, rising inequality, income disparities and social welfare grants coincided with the visits of the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, both of whose reports were highly critical of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples and of living conditions in the North (De Schutter, 2012; CBC, 2012; The Canadian Press, 2012; Whittington, 2012; Anaya, 2013).

There is no official definition of poverty in Canada, either at the federal or at the provincial level (Collin 2007; Collin 2008). However, socio-economic disparities do exist across age, gender and ethnic groups, and particularly between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Canada (Pretes, 1988; Kendall, 2001; Cooke, Mintrou, Lawrence, Guimond & Beavon, 2007; Hazell, Gee & Sharpe, 2012; Canada Without Poverty [CWP], 2012; Mas, 2013). The significant disparity in wellbeing that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada is often masked when socio-economic indicators are examined at the provincial or federal level. This is because Indigenous peoples in Canada, while a rapidly growing demographic, make up a little more than 4 percent of the country's population (Pretes, 1988; Kendall, 2001; Cooke et al., 2007; Statistics Canada, 2011; Hazell et al., 2012; Mas, 2013). However, a quick look at the socio-economic indicators of Nunavut helps to reveal the extent of the disparity. Approximately 85 percent of the residents of Nunavut are Indigenous (almost 84 percent of the population is

Inuit) and the territory falls behind the rest of Canada in terms of life expectancy, income and levels of education (Cooke et al., 2007; Statistics Canada, 2007). Nearly 70 percent of preschool-aged children in the territory live in food insecure households. Community-based studies indicate that general rates of food insecurity in Nunavut range from 50-80%, up to six times higher than the national average in the rest of Canada (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2012; Wakegijig, Osborne, Statham, Doucette Issaluk, 2013).

According to both monetary indicators, such as low income measurements, and capabilities indicators, such as the human development index indicators, levels of poverty in Nunavut are high (CWP, 2012; Hazell, Gee & Sharpe, 2012; Impact Economics, 2012). Indeed, a recent study found that the low income rate in Nunavut is approximately 48 percent (Duhaime & Édouard, 2015). However, studies seem to indicate that defining poverty in Nunavut is not as straightforward as simply identifying low rates of income. Morin, Édouard & Duhaime found in their 2010 study, that despite the ‘objective living conditions’ in Nunavut, which both outsiders and Nunavummiut saw as harsh material living conditions, nearly all Nunavummiut were satisfied with their lives in their communities. The Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic acknowledged that living conditions are shaped by an individual’s control of both material and non-material resources, and that an individual’s use of resources is in turn shaped by structural conditions (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2015). In a 1976 article, Peter Usher argued that the “North may well be the only place where a poor man’s table is laden with meat as a matter of course” (119). Strong family and community networks continue to help ensure material existence in Nunavut and give Nunavummiut meaning and belonging in their daily lives (Damas, 1972; Wenzel, 1995; Collings, Wenzel, Condon, 1998; Duhaime, Searles, Usher, Myers & Fréchette, 2004; Morin et al., 2010; Harder & Wenzel, 2012).

Studies commissioned by the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat have argued that poverty, as it is known today (i.e. low levels of income), did not exist in Nunavut until Inuit came to live in modern settlements. Before this transition, through times of plenty and times of hardship and suffering, Inuit were self-reliant and community support figured prominently in individual survival (Battle & Torjman, 2012; Impact Economics 2012). At the opening of the Nunavut Poverty Summit in 2011, former Member of Parliament and former Member of Legislative

Assembly of Nunavut, Jack Anawak stated that when he was born on the land in a seal-skin tent, poverty was not a part of the Inuit worldview (Lenihan, 2012).

Internationally, as in Canada, there is no universally agreed upon definition of poverty. Yet definitions of poverty matter and any definition developed involves a good deal of arbitrary and subjective construction (Laderchi, Saith, Stewart, 2003; Stewart, Saith, Franco, Harriss-White, 2007). More often than not, definitions of poverty are imposed by outside experts and do not take into consideration the views of people experiencing poverty. This has implications for policy development and implementation, because the lens through which poverty is defined shapes the strategies undertaken to reduce it, as well as the indicators developed to measure its reduction (Laderchi et al., 2003; Stewart et al. 2007). These in turn influence the direction and focus of government policies and programs that affect the daily lives of Nunavummiut. Indeed, development practitioners argue that developing a definition of poverty is a delicate and complex task (Laderchi, et al., 2003). Certainly this is the case in Nunavut.

Since 2010, the GN and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) have co-chaired the Nunavut Roundtable on Poverty Reduction, which, through a series of public engagement meetings at the community and regional levels, produced *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction* that same year. The strategy has since been enshrined into law by means of the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act* (GN, 2013a). *The Makimaniq Plan* identifies six areas of focus for poverty reduction efforts: Collaboration and Community Participation, Healing and Wellbeing, Education and Skills Development, Food Security, Housing and Income Support, Community and Economic Development (Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction [NRPR], 2011b). The themes of *The Makimaniq Plan* were developed through direct engagement with Nunavummiut and reflect a holistic and multidimensional approach to poverty reduction. However, the policy document does not offer a definition of poverty. The way in which poverty is understood and discussed in Nunavut is therefore key to understanding the direction of the policy document *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*.

1.2 Research Methods

Around the world, Indigenous communities are heavily researched. Rather than academic research being conducted *with* Indigenous communities, it has tended to take the form of research *on* Indigenous communities. The academic community has historically disregarded culturally respectful approaches to research and knowledge in favour of Western paradigms (Wilson, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Walker, Fredericks, Mills, Anderson, 2014). Research on Indigenous communities has tended therefore not only to be extractive in nature, with few of the research findings actually returning to the communities, but also to focus on negative aspects of life in Indigenous communities, as identified by outside researchers (Wilson, 2008; Canada, 2010; Gaudry, 2011; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). To counteract this phenomenon, for several decades, scholars have emphasized the importance of Indigenous research and the use of decolonized or Indigenous research methodologies to build relationships and enhance the resilience, healing and wellbeing of Indigenous communities (Wilson, 2008; Alfred, 2005; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).

Wilson (2008) describes Indigenous research as a ceremony of relationship-building. He notes that “respect, reciprocity and responsibility are key features of any healthy relationship and must be included in an Indigenous methodology” (77). A researcher must therefore ensure four circles of accountability in the relationships built and nourished during the research ceremony: accountability in the selection of research topic, accountability in the methods used to conduct the research, accountability in the analysis and interpretation of the research findings, and accountability in the presentation and transfer of knowledge.

I tried to keep this in mind while planning my research methods and preparing for my fieldwork. I read extensively and drafted literature reviews on the definition of poverty, on the political history of Nunavut and the Land Claims Agreement, on the history of resettlement across the Eastern Arctic in the mid-twentieth century, as well as on conducting research in Indigenous communities. In December 2014, prior to drafting my thesis proposal, I reached out to Natan Obed and Ed McKenna, who together oversaw the Nunavut Roundtable on Poverty Reduction’s

public engagement process from 2011-2015, in an effort to learn more about the process and *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*.¹ In the weeks leading up to my fieldwork, I spoke with a former staff member of the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, to help me understand the political environment in which *The Makimaniq Plan* had been produced and to start developing a list of potential contacts for my fieldwork.

In March 2015, I travelled to Iqaluit, Nunavut's urban centre, for three weeks. The cost of travel in Nunavut was a factor in making this decision, as was the limited amount of time I had to conduct my research. However, I also chose to conduct my research Iqaluit because, as the capital of the territory, it is the hub of government offices in the region and home to the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, which is housed in the Government of Nunavut's Department of Family Services and works in partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated's Department of Social and Cultural Development (also based in Iqaluit). Because the focus of my research is on the Roundtable process as well as the discourse about poverty that it produced, Iqaluit is a natural place to examine the origins of the territory's poverty reduction efforts and the Roundtable. Since the launch of the Roundtable, residents and officials in Iqaluit have been involved in the discussions and debates about poverty (NRPR, 2014). Furthermore, both my supervisor and I have contacts in Iqaluit, which facilitated the initial outreach to solicit interview participants.

While in Iqaluit, I tried to take part in community life, despite my short visit. I stayed with a distant cousin and her family and worked out of the Nunavut Research Institute offices. As much as possible, I participated in community events and visited with friends and acquaintances. This gave me some understanding of the perspectives of the Southern transplant community. However, I remained conscious of the fact that the lived experience of many Inuit in Iqaluit is very different from that to which I was exposed during my stay.

¹ Neither Ed McKenna nor Natan Obed are presently co-chairs of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. McKenna retired from the GN in the spring of 2015. Obed was elected president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) in September 2015.

I kept my days fairly open and flexible. At my cousin's suggestion, I volunteered at the Qayuqtuvik Society (the Iqaluit Soup Kitchen) during the week for the lunchtime service. There I met several key informants and began to make contact with people involved in poverty reduction work both at the Roundtable and at the community-level. I was invited to sit in on some of the Nunavut Food Security Coalition meetings held in Iqaluit from March 18-20. I also attended the Nutrition North Public meeting on March 26. Both of these meetings helped me to gain a better sense of the discussions around food and poverty in Iqaluit and to gain a better understanding of the public engagement process used by the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction.

Before I travelled to Iqaluit, I had, with the help of my supervisor and a few key informants who have lived in Iqaluit and worked in the field of poverty reduction, put together a list of possible interview participants to contact. Once in Iqaluit I emailed and phoned the people on that list to request interviews. Many, although not all, agreed to participate in my research. Subsequently I used snowball sampling to solicit research participants by asking each person I interviewed to recommend people I should speak with. In total I conducted 18 semi-structured interviews, 15 of which were conducted in Iqaluit. I was also able to set up three Skype interviews that were conducted upon my return to Ottawa. Turnover in government administration is high in Nunavut (White, 2009). However, there has been considerable consistency in terms of the individuals and organizations taking part in the Roundtable process. My interview participants included people with personal experience with the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction process (including several who had been involved in the public engagement process since 2009), as well as several community members who have been aware of the process since its launch.

1.3 Research Methods: Strengths and Weaknesses

As a flexible, accessible qualitative research method, semi-structured interviews allow research participants to answer questions on their own terms, in their own language. In this way, participants in semi-structured interviews help to produce a situated account of the issue being studied that is reflective of local experience and captures individuals' complex attitudes and perceptions (Eyles and Smith, 1988; Hemming, 2008; Qu and Dumay, 2011). The flexibility of the semi-structured interview is perhaps one of its greatest advantages. Although the researcher

puts together an interview guide in advance of the face-to-face encounters, the questions are not fixed, which allows the researcher to ask follow-up questions based on the responses elicited from participants. This also means that the research process becomes an iterative one as the researcher can modify the interview guide in order ensure that the right kinds of questions are being asked and that questions that make participants uncomfortable or interrupt the flow of the interview are eliminated (Berg, 2004; Qu & Dumay, 2011).

I took advantage of this flexibility while conducting my interviews. After the first couple of interviews I conducted, I rewrote my research guide and then used it as more of a tool to help me prepare for each interview than I did as a direct guide for the questions I asked. I tried to approach each of my interviews as a conversation in an effort to create relationships with the people with whom I spoke. I let the participants direct the interview and asked the questions I had written in my interview guide if they fit into the conversation we were having. Although many of the participants were comfortable with our conversation being recorded, four participants asked for the recorder not to be turned on. During those conversations, I took minimal notes and made an effort to commit our conversation to memory, heading somewhere quiet immediately afterwards to make note of the direction of our conversation. As a result of this flexibility, each interview was very different in tone and in content. For example, some of my interviews dealt with the question of ethical research methods, attribution and dissemination of research findings, while others discussed the sample group I was interviewing. Some interviews dealt primarily with the operations of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, while others offered first hand accounts of the challenges faced by those involved in poverty reduction efforts. With respect to the topic of poverty reduction in Nunavut however, the interviews provided me with personal context and insight into the Iqaluit community and the parties involved in the poverty reduction process.

Some of the limitations of semi-structured interviews must be acknowledged. Leading and loaded questions will influence the response elicited from the participant; I did my best to avoid these. Researchers conducting semi-structured interviews must be careful of their body language and questions they ask. Non-verbal cues can reveal the researcher's own bias and make participants uncomfortable. Researchers are encouraged to use active, careful listening and

continuous reflexivity in order to limit the degree to which the researcher's positionality (gender, race, socio-economic class, mood and theoretical biases) influences the research findings (Baxter & Eyles, 1997; Qu & Dumay, 2010).

I attempted to keep my own theoretical biases out of the questions I was asking. However, because I approached my interviews as conversations, the degree to which I kept other elements of myself out of the interview, such as my gender, my race, my Southern identity and my socio-economic class, varied depending on the direction of the conversation. In some of the interviews we discussed my personal connection to Iqaluit. In others we discussed my studies and my supervisor. Revealing these things about myself to my interview participants was my way of situating myself both in the network of relationships between researchers and community members, and in the network of relationships between community members in Iqaluit.

On more than one occasion my positionality or my research methods were directly questioned or challenged by a participant. Several of the people I interviewed wanted first to have a conversation about why I was interested in my chosen topic. Several people challenged the preliminary research title on my ethics forms, which was *Defining Poverty the Inuit Way: Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Policy*. They pointed out the weaknesses in my methods and therefore the misrepresentation this title would offer: being a Southerner, choosing Iqaluit as the location for my interviews, not speaking Inuktitut, not having time to build trusting relationships with community members. I was asked how I would deal with anonymity and confidentiality as some participants wanted to remain confidential and others were dismissive, even resentful of the consent forms I produced at the beginning of each interview. I was also asked how I would share my findings with the Roundtable, with residents of Iqaluit, and with Nunavummiut more broadly.

It would have been impossible for me to move forward with my interviews without bringing myself into these conversations. Furthermore, I was conscious that by connecting myself to my supervisor and my cousins over the course of my interviews, both my interactions with community members as a researcher and my Master's thesis itself would reflect back on them. It was therefore important to me to be accountable to both my research participants and, as much as

possible, to the communities involved in the Roundtable process. Because of this, in many of my interviews, I shared details about my previous academic research and how I had come to my research topic. We talked about my theoretical framework, my evolving thought process, and the questions my research was raising. We discussed my worries about being able to speak with the right people, about my field-work being limited to Iqaluit, about being suitably respectful of the fact that I was requesting a time commitment from my interview participants, about properly acknowledging the material I was gathering, as well as the best way to share my findings in order to ensure that, as much as possible, the relationship of researcher and research participants is reciprocal. Several of the people I interviewed suggested that I develop a two-page summary of research findings to share with them once I completed my thesis [See Appendix A].

It should also be acknowledged that my research is focused on Nunavut's poverty reduction process and the discussions of poverty that it generated. I have not attempted to define poverty myself or to study the experience of poverty in Nunavut. During my fieldwork, I sought out people who participated in the public engagement process, rather than community members more generally. As a result, I had limited engagement with the community of Iqaluit as a whole while conducting interviews. Furthermore, my research was conducted only in Iqaluit, which, with a population of about 7,500 is by far the largest community in Nunavut. It also has the highest proportion of non-Inuit residents. Only slightly more than half of the population of Iqaluit are Inuit (Nunavut Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2014a). The city cannot therefore be considered to be representative of the other 25 communities in the territory which, in 2011, ranged in size from 130 (Grise Fjord) to 2,266 (Rankin Inlet) people and were home to significantly fewer non-Inuit residents (NBS, 2011). Finally, due to the large number of Southerners involved in government and other official positions in the territory in general, and in Iqaluit in particular, only five of my interview participants were Inuit and all participants were comfortable expressing themselves in English. The findings of my interviews therefore do not reflect an Inuit perspective on poverty. They do however offer interesting insights into the public engagement process and into the way in which poverty is understood by some of those who are involved in the Roundtable.

In order to gain a better understanding of the policy and ideological context in which my conversations about poverty took place, my research also involved textual analysis. Textual analysis is an exercise in gathering information about sense-making processes, which can help to uncover meaning in particular cultures and communities (McKee, 2003). The methodology is context-specific and requires little technology. Texts are things that we gather meaning from, such as books, documents, television programs, and advertisements. The methodology is used to reveal possible interpretations of texts, rather than a single ‘true’ interpretation of meaning. In this way, it can help to create positive individual and social change and present a challenge to prevailing theory, policy and practice. However, meaning is never fixed and is always open to interpretation. For this reason, the interpretation of the text being analyzed must be contextualized and it must be clear what questions the analysis is trying to answer (McKee, 2003; Mogashoa, 2014).

In the context of my research, the text being studied was *The Makimaniq Plan for Poverty Reduction* and the Roundtable’s public engagement process. I was seeking to identify the understandings of poverty that arose out of the Roundtable public engagement process and how the definition of the term evolved over time. These understandings were teased out through the study of documents produced by or related to the public engagement process. These include interviews with individuals who have been involved in the Roundtable process, and individuals who have not, as well as Nunavut Hansard records dealing with poverty and issues related to it, texts explicitly linked to *The Makimaniq Plan* and public engagement process, and dominant discourses in Nunavut as expressed through the media between 2009 and March 2015. The year 2009 was chosen because it marks the beginning of the Government of Nunavut’s 2009-2013 mandate, under which the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat and the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction were established in 2010 (Lenihan, 2012; GN 2013a; Wakegijig et al. 2013). March 2015 was chosen as the upper limit of the documents I collected because that was the month I travelled to Iqaluit to conduct my interviews.

I began exploring my research topic in the fall of 2013, as the five-year mandate drew to a close and a new government was elected in Nunavut. The election of a new Premier and the release of a new government mandate have offered an interesting opportunity to study both the evolution of

the discussions of poverty in the territory, as well as the continuity of the activities of the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. It is, however, too early to assess the progress of Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts as the Roundtable has not yet released its five-year plan or any indicators by which to measure progress in poverty reduction.

Although Hansard records and media articles are in the public domain, very little documentation related to *The Makimaniq Plan* was available on the website of the Nunavut Roundtable on Poverty Reduction when I began collecting texts for analysis in March 2015. In Iqaluit, I obtained copies of the records of documents from the early stages of the public engagement process from 2010-2012. Reports of meetings of the Roundtable from 2013 onward and Hansard records were available online. Media coverage of poverty was downloaded from Nunatsiaq News Online, as Nunavut News North requires an online subscription and CBC North has a limited online archive.

In total, 304 texts were collected. Using both descriptive and analytic codes, I examined my interview transcripts, notes from the field, media articles, and Hansard records for common themes in the discussion of poverty in the territory. Descriptive codes, which reflect themes or patterns that are obvious in texts or directly stated by my interview participants, were used to identify the differing debates and understandings of poverty in Nunavut. I then used analytic codes to identify the common themes within these understandings, as well as which of these featured most prominently, either explicitly or implicitly, in discussions about the definition or meaning of poverty (Cope, 2010). Then I turned my attention to the documents produced by the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction throughout the public engagement process. Using descriptive codes again, I went through the records of all of the meetings at the community, regional and territorial level to draw out key themes of the Roundtable discussions and to compare them with the themes that had emerged from my interviews, as well as the themes of *The Makimaniq Plan*. In my examination of the Roundtable records, I also used descriptive codes in order to develop a clear image of how the public engagement process operated, which I later fleshed out with the help of descriptive codes from my interviews. The findings of this process are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Once this was complete, I assembled a list of preliminary findings in order to identify which topics and themes featured most prominently in the discussions of poverty in Nunavut. As I did this, it became clear just how complicated the issue of poverty is and how difficult it would be to narrow the focus of this thesis. Each of the thematic areas of action in *The Makimaniq Plan* came up in the early Community Dialogue sessions and were identified as being interconnected. Running throughout the discussions of the Roundtable however, was an emphasis on the need for collaboration, healing and wellbeing in order to ensure the success of poverty reduction efforts. This perspective was reiterated by many of my interview participants. These two thematic areas have therefore become the focus of my thesis. The discussion on collaboration, healing and wellbeing that will take place in Chapter 6 reflect the themes that were discussed during the Community Dialogue sessions. However, in an effort to address the ethical challenges of quoting individuals for academic purposes without their permission, the discussion of that chapter draws primarily on the findings of my semi-structured interviews and the reports assembled by the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat for Regional Roundtable meetings.

1.4 Conclusion

The way in which poverty is understood affects the focus and direction of the policies and programs developed to reduce it. *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction* does not expand on a definition of poverty. The way in which poverty is understood and discussed in Nunavut is therefore key to understanding the direction of the policy document. This thesis will argue that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process has produced a holistic approach to poverty reduction in Nunavut and has created a space for a politicized discussion about the issue, identifying the period of relocation and resettlement in the Eastern Arctic as the cause of poverty.

This chapter has offered a brief overview of the issue of poverty in Nunavut and the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. It offers insight into my research questions and methods. The following chapters will explore definitions of poverty, differing approaches to its reduction, as well as the development of *The Makimaniq Plan* in order to help understand the individual perspectives on poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut that I encountered during my fieldwork.

Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of the creation of Nunavut in 1999 and the origins of *The Makimaniq Plan* ten years later. It situates the territory's poverty reduction efforts within its recent political history, in order to facilitate the review of the literature on definitions and indicators of poverty that I pursue in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 introduces one of the theoretical frameworks that guide my research, literature on poverty. It offers a survey of the various approaches to understanding and reducing poverty internationally, in Canada and among First Nations and Inuit in particular, and argues that an understanding of the historical processes that create inequality are needed in order to effectively reduce poverty. In the case of poverty in Nunavut, this requires an understanding of government policy and colonial intervention in the Eastern Arctic in the second half of the twentieth century.

Chapter 4 introduces the second theoretical framework that guides this thesis: literature on the intersection of governmentality and capital under colonial rule and the administration of poverty. It offers a brief history of federal administration of Canada's Eastern Arctic and explores the process of relocation and resettlement in the region which *The Makimaniq Plan* has identified as the root cause of poverty.

Chapter 5 explores the origins of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and the territory's poverty reduction strategy. It outlines each stage of the public engagement process as well as the key themes it produced, before discussing the objective of the Roundtable, arguing that the collaborative and participatory approach was intended to transform social policy development in Nunavut, bringing it more in line with Article 32 of Nunavut Land Claim Agreement.

Chapter 6 delves into my specific research questions. It begins by exploring the differing perspective on poverty and poverty reduction that exist in Nunavut before examining the key concerns raised by Nunavummiut throughout the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process. It also examines public responses to the Roundtable, both the criticism and praise it has received. The chapter then explores the way in which the collaborative

Roundtable process has fostered a politicized discussion about poverty which acknowledges and challenges the structures that have contributed to its production, and has widened the focus of poverty reduction efforts to include healing and wellbeing. It concludes by arguing that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction offers a forum in which the trauma of colonial administration and Inuit resettlement can be acknowledged and where work towards societal transformation can begin.

In the final chapter of this thesis I offer a brief summary of the complexity of defining poverty and the interconnected nature of poverty reduction in Nunavut. I argue that the slow, iterative development of policy through the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, which has faced considerable criticism, is an important process not simply because it is a model for the application of Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, but also because it has created a space for Nunavummiut to discuss the legacy of twentieth century federal policy and administration in a way that connects it directly to the roots of poverty in Nunavut. This is unique to poverty reduction strategies, which generally do not identify or address the root causes of inequality. By facilitating this politicized understanding of poverty, the Roundtable has helped to foster discussions that challenge the structures that create and maintain inequality in Nunavut and has helped to articulate a vision for a happy, healthy territory. I close this research project with a discussion about areas for future research on poverty reduction in Nunavut. I reflect on what I have learned during this project and on the importance of beginnings.

2 Chapter: Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Initiative

A discussion about poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut cannot be held without some historical context. Beginning with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), this chapter offers a brief overview of the history of Nunavut. It discusses the hopes for change that the new territory inspired in the public, as well as the caution scholars and Inuit leaders expressed about the immediacy of such change. The chapter then describes the governance structures of the new territory and explores some of the challenges Nunavut has faced in the first decade of its existence. This chapter explores the way in which the beginnings of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction are connected to the disappointment Nunavummiut felt about the realization of the vision of Nunavut ten years after the territory's birth. It concludes by offering a brief introduction to the process that produced *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*. Once this background is in place, Chapter 3 and 4 will explore the theoretical frameworks that have guided my research.

2.1 Nunavut: Canada's Youngest Territory

The new territory of Nunavut came into being on April 1, 1999. The creation of the territory was a provision of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, which was signed on May 25, 1993, following two decades of negotiation with the Canadian Government. The agreement was a major achievement for the Inuit. It covers 1/5 of Canada's land mass and a large marine area, making it the biggest land rights agreement in Canada (Merritt, 1993; Hamely, 1995; Hicks & White, 2000; Kusugak, 2000; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami [ITK], 2015). In June 1993, legislation was enacted in the Canadian Parliament which, alongside the ratification of the Nunavut Agreement, set out guidelines for the creation of a new territory in the central and eastern portion of the Canadian Arctic. Nunavut, which means 'our land' in Inuktitut, came into being six years later (Kusugak, 2000; Hicks & White, 2000).

In exchange for the surrender of Aboriginal title, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement acknowledged Inuit title to 356,000 square kilometers of land, including 38,000 square kilometers of fee simple title which grants beneficiaries surface and mineral rights in promising areas. Where Inuit have surface title to the land only, they have the right to negotiate with

industry for impact mitigation and socio-economic benefits. The agreement also granted Inuit a 5% share of any royalties the federal government receives from oil, gas and mineral development on Crown land and contained provisions for a capital transfer payment of \$1.148 billion payable over 14 years (Canada, DIAND & NTI, 1993; Kusugak, 2000; Hicks & White, 2000).² While Nunavut arose from the desire for Inuit self-government and the desire to ensure Inuit cultural survival and development, it did not result in complete autonomy. The Inuit position throughout the land claims negotiations was firm: “No Nunavut Territory, No land claim agreement” (Merritt, 1993, 4). However, negotiators were willing to accept a territory governed through public government rather than aboriginal self-government. Nunavut was therefore designed to fit within the larger, Euro-Canadian political system. The system of governance in the territory is not radically different from the rest of Canada (Hamley, 1995; Hicks & White, 2000).

In 1999, public expectations for the new territory were high (Bell, 1992; 1993; Maghagak, 1999; Dobrota, 2007; Weber, 2009). In addition to all the rights secured in the land claim agreement, the public hoped that the creation of a territorial government would increase levels of employment and that an Inuit-run territory would help to improve the lives of Inuit (Hamely, 1995; CBC News, 2004). However, both scholars and Inuit leaders were cautious about the degree to which the creation of Nunavut would bring about immediate change.

Scholars pointed out that Inuit unemployment would probably remain high in the years immediately following the creation of the territory as a lack of education and skills training among Inuit was likely to result in many of the new territorial government jobs being filled by non-Inuit in the short term. In 1995, less than half of the population of Nunavut had received a secondary education and the territory had the lowest literacy rate in the Canadian North. Concerns were also voiced about how the new territory would deal with its rapidly growing

² The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement also gives Inuit priority rights to harvesting wildlife for domestic, sport and commercial purposes in the areas covered by the Agreement. It included provisions for the establishment of three national parks, an increase in Inuit employment in government and a \$13 million training trust fund. Inuit have equal membership with government on the institutions of public government created by the land claim including the Wildlife Management Board, the Water Board, the Impact Review Board, the Nunavut Planning Commission and the Surface Rights Tribunal (Kusugak, 2000; Hicks & White, 2000).

population, which was projected to grow by 130 percent between 1986 and 2016 (Hamely, 1995).

Unlike in the provinces, revenues generated by the natural resources on Crown Land in the Canada's territories are collected by the Government of Canada. The Government of Nunavut therefore relies upon territorial transfer payments to support the programs and services it offers (Hamely, 1995; Mifflin, 2008; Feehan, 2009). As early as 1995 the Nunavut Implementation Committee raised concerns about the Government of Nunavut's limited sources of revenue stating: "there is good reason to fear that some of the economic problems already starkly apparent in Nunavut may become more troubling in the future" (1995, 6).

Scholars also pointed out that the creation of a territorial government curtailed the degree to which Inuit would experience self-government. Territories, unlike provinces, cannot borrow money and do not have a constitutionally protected right to the equalization and transfer payments that provinces receive to ensure comparable standards of living, infrastructure and social services across the country (Gray, 1994; Mifflin, 2008). Furthermore, the federal government was to provide most of the funding for the creation of the new territory (Hamely, 1995).

In the period between the passing of the Nunavut Act and its coming into force, scholars and Inuit leaders were careful to emphasize that the Land Claims Agreement was part of a process of empowerment rather than an end in and of itself. It was argued that the land claim should be seen as a building block towards real Indigenous political power and a transition stage in the relationship between Indigenous people and the Canadian state (Merrit, 1993; Kusugak, 2000; Hicks & White, 2000). John Amagoalik, who was one of the first to call for an Inuit homeland and is known as the father of Nunavut, cautioned that the creation of Nunavut would not transform things overnight:

We cannot expect miracles. Sitting over a hole in the ice for hours, not moving, waiting for a seal, takes patience. It took a lot of patience to get self-government. Now it will take more patience to solve our many problems (in Hicks & White, 2000, p 93).

2.2 Nunavut Today

Nunavut is home to 36,702 residents, living in 25 small settlements spread across roughly two million square kilometers of land (NBS, 2015a). Approximately 81% of the Nunavummiut are Inuit and the territory's non-Inuit population is concentrated in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay (Mayer, 2007; Miller & Rowe, 2013; NBS, 2014a). Nunavut has the highest birth rate in Canada. Approximately 50% of its population is under the age of 25 and nearly 30% of the population is under the age of 15 (NBS, 2014b). It is estimated that the population will exceed 44,000 people by the year 2020 (Mayer, 2007). There are no roads directly connecting any of the communities to each other or to communities outside the territory. Passenger travel in the territory is limited to travel by air, skidoo, all-terrain vehicles and boats. Nunavummiut are heavily dependent on the sea lift from July to September for supplies and necessities, including the diesel fuel which is used to generate electricity across the territory (Mifflin, 2008; Miller & Rowe, 2013). As a result, the cost of living in the territory is high.

There are three key players in the governance of Canada's newest territory: the Government of Canada, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), and the Government of Nunavut (GN). The roles and obligations of each of these entities is laid out in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (White, 2009). NTI, Canada's largest land claims organization, is responsible for ensuring that Inuit rights under the Agreement are respected and enforced. Its operations are funded by the Nunavut Trust and the organization invests and manages the money received through the land claim agreement, as well as the mineral resource revenues generated on Inuit-owned lands on behalf of Inuit beneficiaries (White, 2009; NTI, 2014). Under the land claim, the organization works closely with the Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut on issues like wildlife management, economic development, and skills training (White, 2009).

NTI and the three Regional Inuit Associations represent the beneficiaries of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement. The Regional Inuit Associations administer Inuit land, manage certain provisions of the Agreement and lobby on behalf of the Inuit of the Kitikmeot, Kivalliq and Qikiqtani regions (Kitikmeot Inuit Association, 2015; Kivalliq Inuit Association, 2015; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2015). NTI, in contrast, is a voice for Inuit interests at the federal level. It advocated for example, for the compensation of Inuit residential school survivors. NTI also

works to promote Inuit culture, delivers employment training and fosters economic development. Indeed, one of the first activities of the new territorial government was to formalize its relationship with NTI through the *Iqqanaijaqatigiit*, also known as the Clyde River Protocol (White, 2009). NTI partners with the GN on suicide prevention, language standardization, poverty reduction, and initiatives related health and food security (NTI, 2014). It also provides some social services to beneficiaries of the land claim, offering financial assistance to hunters, making annual payments to Inuit elders and subsidizing urgent travel for Inuit who cannot afford the high cost of travel across the territory (White, 2009).

NTI does not shy away from criticism of the government at the territorial or federal level (White, 2009). In 2006 for example, NTI filed a \$1 billion lawsuit against the Government of Canada for failing to implement various promises made in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, including providing the funding and support needed for the GN to provide the social, cultural and economic benefits promised in the Agreement (Mifflin, 2008; White, 2009; NTI, 2015). A settlement agreement was reached in the spring of 2015 (NTI, 2015).³ The organization is also actively involved in the development of GN policies on issues like education, healthcare and wildlife management. It has been a strong voice for the incorporation of Inuit culture into the daily operations of the territorial government, as well as the education and justice systems, and exerts considerable influence on the work of the territorial government (White, 2009; NTI, 2014).

The vision of Nunavut was to have a form of public government that embodied Inuit values (White, 2009). However, incorporating Inuit values into the operations of government has proven difficult because “in reviewing the technical design of the GN, it is obvious that the GN was not designed to reflect Inuit cultural principles” (Price, 2007, 13). Nunavut’s public governance structures were modelled on those of the Northwest Territories (Légaré, 1998; White, 2009). The Legislative Assembly’s 19 members are non-partisan and the chamber technically operates on political consensus. In practice however, the lack of party affiliation in

³ As part of the settlement agreement, reached in May 2015, the Government of Canada will pay NTI \$255.5 million in compensation which NTI has committed to training for Inuit employment in the territorial civil service (CBC News, 2015; NTI, 2015).

the legislature means that the Assembly operates in a majority rules fashion. Members of the Legislative Assembly have the opportunity to express their views but unanimous agreement is not required for decision-making (Légaré, 1998; Nunavut Legislative Assembly, n.d.).

The GN's bureaucratic structures are also similar to those in other territorial, provincial and federal governments. Government departments deliver services to the public and each is overseen by a minister who is supported by a deputy and assistant deputy minister (White, 2009). However, the operations of the Government of Nunavut are highly decentralized, with departmental field offices and department headquarters dispersed throughout the territory (Légaré, 1998; White, 2009). Because the public sector is the primary employer in Nunavut, decentralization is an attempt to spread employment opportunities more evenly across the territory and to encourage Inuit to join the public service. Decentralization also aimed to ensure that political power was dispersed across the territory and that community members had good access to government (White, 2009).

The first fifteen years of the Government of Nunavut's existence have been challenging ones. The territory oversees education, social welfare, health, culture, civil law, transportation and municipal governments. However, a rapidly growing population and remote geography makes the provision of services and energy expensive and the GN has a limited tax base. In 2012 for example, the annual average income in the territory was \$29,220 (White, 2009; NBS 2014c). The government also has a limited borrowing capacity because under the Nunavut Act, the Federal Government determines how much debt the GN can carry. Despite discussions about it for several years, the process of devolving control of non-renewable resources has been slow. Revenues from natural resource extraction on Crown or Inuit-owned lands are transferred to federal and NTI coffers respectively (Mayer, 2007; White, 2009). Furthermore, although decentralization has successfully distributed nearly 500 jobs across the territory and Inuktitut is the language of operation for service provision and in some decentralized GN offices, the tone for the government's operations is set in Iqaluit, where more than two thirds of jobs are held by non-Inuit and English is the dominant language (White, 2009).

In 2009, the GN, led by then premier Eva Aariak, commissioned a review of the effectiveness of the programs and services it offered. Entitled *Qanukkanniq? The GN Report Card*, the review found that although Nunavummiut remained inspired by the vision that had created the new territory, they were highly critical of the way Inuit cultural values had been incorporated into the business of government. According to the Report Card, Nunavummiut felt that the improvements they had hoped would be made to government programs and services had not occurred. Many people stated that they felt more distanced from the government than they had when Nunavut was part of the Northwest Territories. The Report Card found that Nunavummiut were particularly critical of the lack of improvement in education and training outcomes across the territory since 1999, as well as the increase in poverty and reliance on income support (North Sky Consulting Group, 2009).

The Government of Canada has no official definition of poverty and Statistics Canada does not collect or compile data that directly measures its prevalence in any province or territory. The Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, however, has compiled a set of ‘proxy’ poverty indicators, which suggest that poverty is widespread in the territory. These proxy indicators include rates of high school graduation, household food insecurity, life expectancy, core housing need, the percentage of the population living in public housing and the territory’s income support caseload (CWP, 2012; Impact Economics, 2013). Life expectancy in Nunavut for example is ten years below the national average for men and twelve years below the national average for women. The territory’s infant mortality rate is more than double the national average and Nunavummiut suffer from higher rates of self-assessed ill-health than the rest of Canada (Impact Economics, 2012).

Nunavut experiences high rates of unemployment when compared with the rest of Canada, particularly among Inuit (Impact Economics, 2012; Battle & Torjman, 2013; NBS, 2015a). In 2011 for example, the Inuit unemployment rate was 22.5 percent, while the employment rate for individuals over the age of 15 was 46.3 percent. That same year, the non-Inuit employment rate for those above 15 was 89.2 percent with virtually no unemployment (NBS, 2015b).⁴ The

⁴ High levels of employment among non-Inuit reflects the fact that employers in Nunavut, particularly the GN and the Government of Canada, recruit Southerners with skills and experience to fill vacancies (White, 2009). Many

territory's growing mining sector offers some promise with respect to the creation of new full-time and part-time job opportunities. However, at the end of the 2009-2010 school year, Nunavut's high school graduation rates, were at 39.5 percent, an all-time territorial high and incoming mining companies seek employees with higher levels of education and skills than the local population can usually provide (Impact Economics, 2012). In 2011, 50 percent of Nunavummiut required income support for at least a portion of the year and 60 percent of the population were living in public housing (Impact Economics, 2012).⁵

While the housing and unemployment figures are striking, it would be misleading to rely solely on such indicators as proof of levels of poverty in Nunavut. Although in Southern Canada, residing in public housing is often considered an indication of poverty, this is not the case in the Canadian North. Indeed, most of the housing in Nunavut's smaller communities is made up of public housing stock (Carter, Jacobucci, Janzen, 2003). Public housing in the Eastern Arctic can be traced back to the Government of Canada's 'Northern Vision' for Northern Development in the late 1950s. Housing programs were first introduced at this time partly in response to criticism about Inuit health and housing, partly over concerns about sovereignty in the North, partly in response to growing interest in resource development in the Canadian North, and partly to address difficulties in administering health and welfare services to the region's dispersed population (Rea, 1976; Carter, Jacobucci, Janzen, 2003; Bonesteel & Public History Inc., 2006). Although the housing program was initially conceived to be a loan program to promote home ownership, many Inuit had limited experience managing cash income and had difficulty making monthly mortgage and utility payments. Federal housing programs therefore began to include rental housing in the early 1960s, with the launch of the Eskimo Rental Housing Program in an

non-Inuit employees are transient, returning home when their terms are finished or for new job prospects in the South.

⁵ Given the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in Canada's prisons and Nunavut's high rates of police-reported crime (32,345 incidents per 100,000 population in 2013 – the third highest rate in Canada), a comprehensive study of poverty among Inuit in Nunavut should include an examination of the criminal justice system and rates of incarceration (Monture, 2006; Razack, 2015; NBS, 2015c). However, because my research focused on the themes and discussions that emerged during the public engagement process of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, and because of the space constraints of a Master's thesis, I have not discussed these issues here.

effort to have all Inuit in community housing by 1971. Tenant rent was scaled to income and the monthly cost of utilities was either included in the rent or also subsidized (Bonesteel & Public Housing Inc., 2006).

Furthermore, public housing in the Canadian North is not solely occupied by Inuit. Since the Second World War, territorial and federal governments have built subsidized housing for their employees in an effort to attract and retain qualified and skilled employees in the region (Bonesteel & Public Housing Inc., 2006). Well into the twenty-first century, Nunavut's housing market remains small, and public or subsidized housing remains the primary source of housing units (Nunavut Housing Corporation [NHC] & NTI, 2004; Tester, 2009; Income Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, Nunavut Housing Corporation [ISD, SC, NHC], 2010). Indeed, according to the 2009/2010 Nunavut Housing Survey, of the 8550 permanently occupied dwellings in the territory, 4400 of these were public housing units, 1350 were government staff housing units and 350 were non-government staff housing. In contrast only 1880 units were owner occupied, 340 were private market rentals and 240 were other types of rentals (ISD, SC, NHC, 2010).

What is perhaps more telling than the number of Nunavummiut in public housing, is the condition of the territory's existing housing stock and levels of overcrowding. Nunavut's rapidly growing population, coupled with the high cost of construction for privately owned homes means that there is a long waitlist for public housing. Every community is affected by overcrowding. More than 50 percent of Inuit resided in overcrowded homes, compared with less than 10 percent of the rest of the Canadian population (Tester, 2009). In 2004, the Nunavut Housing Corporation and NTI estimated that 3000 public housing units were needed immediately to bring levels of overcrowding in Nunavut down to those in the rest of the country. Despite some efforts to address housing issues in the territory, the 2009/2010 Nunavut Housing Survey found that 49 percent of the housing units in Nunavut were either in need of major repair and/or were crowded (ISD, SC, NHC, 2010).

It is also important to note that, Nunavut's employment and unemployment numbers are produced by the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics by means of a labour force survey. Employment

according to this survey, does not include traditional activities for personal consumption (NBS, 2009). These figures therefore do not reflect the reality of Nunavut's mixed economy, where Nunavummiut move between land-based activities and wage labour depending on the opportunities available and individual preferences. Land-based activities continue to provide a significant proportion of food products and other necessities consumed by Nunavummiut and remain important for individual health and wellbeing, as well as for cultural continuity (Condon, Collings, Wenzel, 1995; Usher, Duhaime, Searles, 2003; Abele, 2009; Cunsolo Willox, Harper, Edge et al., 2011; Harder & Wenzel, 2012). As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, indicators of poverty related to income and consumption, although commonly used, are highly criticized for their lack of regard for non-monetary variables. In Nunavut, non-monetary variables play a key role in ensuring individual subsistence and wellbeing, making indicators of poverty difficult to measure.

2.3 Origins of Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Efforts

In 2009, well aware of the troubling statistics and in response to the GN Report Card, the Third Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, led by then Premier Eva Aariak announced a social vision for the territory that aimed to address the problems faced by Nunavummiut by the year 2030. Entitled *Tamapta 2009-2013*, the Government's five-year mandate aimed to promote community self-reliance and identified poverty reduction as a key government priority (GN, 2009; Battle & Torjman, 2013). As part of the *Tamapta* mandate, the GN committed itself both to developing and implementing a poverty reduction strategy and to working with Inuit organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations, as well as the business community to develop policies and programs to eliminate poverty (GN, 2009). Subsequently, between October 2010 and November 2011, the Anti-Poverty Secretariat, jointly led by NTI and the GN, launched an extensive poverty-reduction public engagement process across the territory. Through this public engagement process, the Anti-Poverty Secretariat hoped to gain a better understanding of poverty in Nunavut, to determine the collective priorities of Nunavummiut and to develop a plan of action. The public engagement process involved a series of Community Dialogue Sessions, several Regional Roundtables, as well as a Poverty Summit, and culminated in the release of *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach for Poverty Reduction*.

The Makimaniq Plan was designed to be an interim plan of action and was supposed to be replaced within 18 months by a five-year plan. However, it has been extended by two years as the five-year plan has not yet been finalized. As a requirement of the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act*, the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction must use a public engagement process to develop an official definition of poverty that includes indicators to measure progress. This means that although the plan and definition are being drafted by the Anti-Poverty Secretariat, the members of Roundtable have had the opportunity to review the five-year plan and provide their feedback to the Secretariat. Poverty policy development is therefore a slow process (GN, 2013b; Scott Interview, 2015). When the fieldwork for this project was conducted in March 2015, both the five-year plan and the definition of poverty were still being finalized. Since then, an infographic detailing the Roundtable's shared understanding of poverty reduction has been made public [See Appendix B]. However, the five-year plan itself and the definition of poverty have not yet been released.

2.4 Conclusion

The creation of Nunavut following decades of negotiations raised public hopes for a dramatic change the living conditions for Inuit and in the structure of government. However, the pace of such change has been slower than anticipated, much to the disappointment of Nunavummiut. The GN Report Card revealed that Nunavummiut are concerned about an increase in levels of poverty and a growing reliance on social assistance in the territory. Shortly after the Report Card's release, the GN launched the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, the public engagement process that would produce the territory's poverty reduction strategy. The Roundtable public engagement process and its objectives will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 5. Before delving into this study however, it is important to understand how different approaches to poverty influence the policies and programs put in place to reduce it. In an effort to situation the discussion of poverty in Nunavut within the academic and policy literature on poverty, Chapter 3 explores the various approaches to assessing and reducing poverty that exist in the international development community, in Canada generally, and among First Nations and Inuit specifically.

3 Chapter: Understanding Poverty

There is no universally agreed upon definition of poverty (Collin, 2008; Stewart, Laderchi & Saith, 2007; Akindola, 2009). From a policy perspective however, developing a clear definition of poverty is necessary in order to assess the progress of any poverty reduction initiative.

Different definitions of poverty span what Stewart et al. (2007) call different “spheres of concern,” emphasizing different indicators of wellbeing. As indicators of wellbeing are identified however, the issue of poverty reduction becomes a technical, scientific problem the progress of which can be easily measured. These various indicators of wellbeing not only identify different individuals or groups as poor, therefore giving rise to policy interventions with different areas of focus, but also tend to de-politicize poverty in such a way that makes it difficult to address its root causes (Boyle, 1999; Stewart et al., 2007; Li, 2007; Collin, 2008; Akindola, 2009; Razack, 2015). The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has not yet developed an official definition of poverty, but it has developed a holistic, politicized understanding of the issue that inform the focus of *The Makimaniq Plan*.

In an effort to illustrate how challenging the process of developing a definition of poverty can be, this chapter aims to situate the discussion of poverty reduction in Nunavut in the wider body of literature on poverty and poverty reduction. The chapter begins with an overview of the four key approaches to poverty found in the literature about development and poverty reduction. It examines the strengths and weaknesses of each approach and briefly discusses where the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction falls within this body of literature. The chapter then provides an overview of the perspectives on poverty in Canada, before exploring perspectives on poverty among Canadian First Nations and Inuit. The chapter concludes by arguing that in order to understand poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut, it is important to study the historical processes that have contributed to the production inequality in the Eastern Arctic.

3.1 Approaches to Poverty

The most prevalent definition of poverty in Canada and across the developed world looks at the issue from a monetary perspective (Stewart et al., 2007; Akindola, 2009). Indeed, the bulk of the empirical work on poverty makes use of this lens — including some of the literature on poverty

in Nunavut (c.f. Carter et al., 2003; Battle & Torjman, 2012; Duhaime & Edouard, 2015). The monetary approach defines poverty as economic deprivation and assesses personal welfare by measuring an individual's total level of consumption, either through their spending or their income (Stewart et al., 2007). Those who are poor have insufficient purchasing power to meet the food, shelter and clothing requirements that are necessary for physical wellbeing (Akindola, 2009).

The monetary approach to defining poverty has several limitations. Firstly, poverty levels are usually determined by political consensus and these value judgments tend to be made without the involvement of the poor themselves. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the monetary approach considers poverty to be a one-dimensional phenomenon. Although some proponents argue that the most accurate assessment of welfare can be obtained by measuring consumption, such measurements rarely include non-market goods and services in their estimates of consumption nor do they explain why some people's levels of consumption are higher than others (Stewart et al., 2007). This criticism is particularly relevant in the context of Nunavut's mixed economy, where it has been noted that Inuit practices of sharing food have begun to expand, albeit in a more limited fashion, to the giving of money, the lending of equipment, and the provision of ammunition, fuel and parts (Wenzel, 1995; Harder & Wenzel, 2012).

Poverty as a concept can be understood in both absolute and relative terms. Absolute poverty is defined as the inability to obtain the necessities of life and is primarily used in developing countries, where people have limited access to water and sanitation, health care, education and economic opportunities. Relative definitions of poverty are generally used in developed countries to compare wellbeing to the societal average. A household is considered to be poor in relative terms if its standard of living falls behind those considered normal or decent in that country or culture (Engberg-Pedersen & Webster, 2002; Collin, 2008; Akindola, 2009). If poverty can be defined in either absolute or relative terms, then it is not, in fact, one-dimensional in nature as the monetary approach suggests (Akindola, 2009). Additionally, scholars argue that if quality of life and wellbeing are incorporated into our understanding of poverty, then issues like vulnerability, powerlessness and physical and social isolation become important indicators (Bourguignon & Chakravarty, 2002; Akindola, 2009). In fact, it is increasingly accepted that indicators of

economic development do not provide a complete picture of social wellbeing (Boyle, 1999; Bourguignon & Chakravarty, 2002; Duhaime, et al., 2004; Akindola, 2009). Wellbeing, and therefore poverty, is influenced by both monetary and non-monetary variables. Although money improves a person's chances of wellbeing, it is increasingly accepted that assessments of poverty should include other variables such as data about housing, life expectancy, rates of literacy and sense of community (Bourguignon & Chakravarty, 2002).

A strong sense of community is particularly important because humans are both individual and social beings. Our disposition towards individuality resonates with the mainstream economic notion of competition, hence the general tendency towards individual assessments of wellbeing. However, humans do not act solely as individuals. People often undertake tasks through collective action because they cannot complete them efficiently, or at all, as individuals. Therefore, some scholars argue that poverty may be a sign that individual or collective needs are not being met (Boyle, 1999). Indeed, there is a growing school of thought that argues that definitions of poverty should encompass both the individual and collective dimensions of human nature and that social capital and social cohesion are key indicators to understanding how a society is actually functioning (Boyle, 1999; Engberg-Pedersen & Webster, 2002; Duhaime et al., 2004).

This growing body of literature on poverty has given rise to several alternative approaches to conceptualizing poverty. The capabilities approach explores what a person is able to do (their functionings) and the freedom they have to carry out to their functionings (their capabilities) in pursuit of a valued life (Bourguignon & Chakravarty, 2002; Stewart et al., 2007). From this perspective, poverty is the failure to achieve a minimum number of basic capabilities. The capabilities approach places emphasis on the outcomes of quality of life and has shifted poverty assessments away from monetary indicators towards non-monetary indicators. This approach is popular amongst development professionals (Stewart et al, 2007; Akindola, 2009). For example, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) uses the capabilities approach in its international assessments of levels of human development (Cooke et al., 2007; Akindola, 2009). Created in the early 1990s, the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) is made up of three broad, inter-related dimensions: income, knowledge and health, which are combined and

weighted equally to give each country an overall HDI score. HDI is credited with widening the focus of development studies and is considered an important tool for poverty reduction experts and professionals (Cooke et al., 2007; Stewart et al., 2007; Collin, 2008; Hazell et al. 2012). However, on a theoretical level, the capabilities approach also has a number of weaknesses.

Firstly, there is no universal set of minimum essential capabilities required for leading a valued life. Definitions of poverty according to the capabilities approach are context specific and somewhat arbitrary, usually made through external assessment. Secondly, although the capabilities approach acknowledges that communities and households are important determinants of capabilities and functionings, it focuses primarily on the individual. Lastly and most importantly, the approach describes an individual's situation at a particular moment in time. It does not engage in an analysis of the causes of the current situation and therefore is unable to capture the fundamental causes of poverty (Stewart et al., 2007).

Increasingly, it is believed that poverty reduction requires an understanding of the historical processes of impoverishment and enrichment that have resulted in the marginalization of certain groups (Engberg-Pedersen & Webster, 2002). The social exclusion approach to poverty is premised on this belief and focuses specifically on societal causes of poverty. The approach is popular in industrialized countries, particularly in the European Union, as a way of explaining the process of marginalization and deprivation that occurs within a society that, in general, seem to be prosperous (Stewart et al, 2007). Those who experience social exclusion are marginalized as a result of the actions of one or more agents and the future prospects for their inclusion are influenced by their current circumstances. Because the characteristics of social exclusion tend to be society-specific, this is a relative, multidimensional approach to understanding poverty. Defining and collecting data about levels of poverty from this perspective can therefore be challenging. However, it is the only approach to poverty that focuses on the processes and dynamics that cause deprivation and allows the study of societal structures that generate exclusion (Stewart et al., 2007).

A fourth approach to assessing poverty, the participatory approach, is commonly used in developing countries. As with the capabilities and social exclusion approaches, proponents of the

participatory approach argue that although low-income definitions are easy to measure, they do not capture the extent or complexity of poverty in any particular community (Akindola, 2009; Lenihan, 2012). The participatory approach to poverty engages people who experience poverty in the assessment of the condition in an attempt prevent externally-developed value judgments about the meaning and magnitude of poverty from influencing policy solutions. Participatory poverty assessments have been developed along the lines of participatory rural appraisals and make use of a wide range of qualitative participatory tools, including mapping, modeling, seasonal calendars, and wealth and wellbeing rankings (Stewart et al., 2007). As will be discussed in more detail in the next chapters, the public engagement process conducted by the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction was a modified participatory assessment of poverty and made use of both community mapping and World Café methods of discussion. In turn, the participatory process produced a poverty reduction strategy that reflects the social exclusion approach to assessing poverty, by identifying the root causes of poverty.

The qualitative nature of this approach is one of its key strengths, but also one of its weaknesses. Although participatory poverty assessments may be conducted by poor people themselves, it is usually outsiders, such as academics or development professionals, who collect the assessments and interpret the results. Furthermore, the term ‘participatory’ is questionable. Not only do time and language barriers affect people’s abilities to participate in such assessments, but the approach does not account for the fact that people may face marginalization or exclusion within their own community (Stewart et al., 2007). Finally, participatory assessments generally lack data for measuring social exclusion and although the method assesses economic wellbeing and individual capabilities, gaps in data make it difficult to determine if any progress is being made in anti-poverty initiatives (Impact Economics, 2012). This is currently the case in Nunavut. Although it is working on developing one, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has not yet produced a definition of poverty with measurable indicators. This is the basis of strong criticism of the Roundtable and its process.

3.2 Approaches to Poverty in Canada

In Canada, as internationally, there is no single understanding of poverty. As a result, there is considerable debate in Canadian civil society about how to define and measure poverty and what should be done to address it (Collin, 2007, 2008; Hay, 2009; MacKinnon, 2013). Generally speaking however, approaches to poverty reduction in Canada reflect a monetary or a social exclusion approach to poverty. The capabilities approach is not as prevalent in Canadian poverty discourse, however Canada's annual HDI ranking is used to compare national levels of wellbeing to those of other countries. As a whole, Canada ranks reasonably well among industrialized countries (Collin, 2008). In 2011 for example, Canada ranked 6th out of 187 countries. However, a national HDI score masks regional inequalities within Canada. Calculations of provincial and territorial HDI scores for 2011 found that Alberta had the highest HDI score in Canada. The province would have ranked third on the international index that year. In contrast, Nunavut had the lowest score and would have ranked 38th out of 187 (Hazell et al., 2012).

Building upon HDI and in response to concerns about socio-economic conditions in First Nations and Inuit communities that have been identified through national low-income measurements, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (now Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) developed the Community Wellbeing Index (CWB). The CWB allows for a more nuanced understanding of the relative wellbeing of communities across Canada. Similar to the HDI, the CWB index assesses socio-economic aspects of wellbeing and assembles a score out of four equally weighted components: income, education, housing and labour force. Because of its socio-economic focus, the CWB does not capture elements of physical, psychological and cultural wellbeing. It is not therefore considered a final 'diagnostic' of wellbeing in First Nations and Inuit communities. However, proponents argue that it is a step towards an improved understanding of the poor socio-economic conditions that First Nations and Inuit face compared to the rest of Canada (Senécal & O'Sullivan, 2006).

For the most part however, Statistic Canada's measurements of low income, a monetary approach to poverty, dominate Canada's policy discussions. Statistics Canada measures low

income in three ways: low-income cut-offs, market basket measures, and low-income measures (Hay, 2009). Although not an official measurement of poverty, the low-income cut-off is the most commonly used ‘indicator’ of poverty in Canada (Collin, 2007, 2008). The low-income cut-off, most commonly measured after tax, is reached when a family spends at least 20 percent more of their income on food, clothing and shelter than the average Canadian family (Collin, 2008). Although it does not capture regional differences in costs, something that is important to consider in the context of poverty in Nunavut, it is widely used by anti-poverty advocates as Canada’s poverty line (Collin, 2007, 2008; MacKinnon, 2013). Statistics Canada’s low-income measure meanwhile, is used to compare Canada’s low-income levels internationally and measures low-income levels as half the median family income adjusted for different household types (Collin, 2008; MacKinnon, 2013). The third Statistics Canada measurement is the Market Basket Measure, which was developed in the late 1990s to complement low-income measures (Collin, 2008; MacKinnon, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2013). The Market Basket Measure is the estimated cost of a ‘basket’ of goods and services, including food, clothing, shelter and transportation, that are deemed to represent the standard of consumption for a family of two adults and two children. According to this measurement, low-income households are households that do not have the disposable income to purchase the goods and services in the basket (Collin, 2008). Although the Market Basket Measure does take regional differences in costs of living into account, the decision about what goods are included in the basket is made somewhat arbitrarily and the accuracy of the measurement is dependent on how frequently the prices in the basket are updated (MacKinnon, 2013).

The Fraser Institute rejects Statistics Canada’s low-income measurements, arguing that because such measures are relative, the poverty line is constantly moving, making it difficult to eradicate entirely. Instead, the Fraser Institute advocates for the basic needs approach to poverty. This is a monetary approach to poverty that defines individuals as poor when they lack the items required to maintain long-term physical wellbeing at a minimum acceptable standard. The basic needs approach to poverty tends to calculate lower poverty lines, rates and trends than any other approach (Collin, 2008; MacKinnon, 2013).

Statistics Canada's monetary approaches to poverty have identified certain populations that are at risk of poverty in Canada: single parents, particularly women; single individuals, particularly those between the ages of 45 and 64; individuals with work-limiting disabilities; recent immigrants, particularly refugees; and Indigenous people. These groups have higher rates of unemployment and are more likely to find low-paid temporary, part-time or self-employed work than other Canadians (Collin, 2007). In particular, the low-income cut-off is useful for determining what kinds of economic gaps exist within Canadian society and for assessing how well Canadian redistributive policies are addressing inequalities. However, the low-income cut-off does not identify who is poor, where exactly people who are poor live, the depth of poverty in Canada, the extent to which people are transitioning out of poverty, or how their incomes compare to those of other Canadians (MacKinnon, 2013).

Because of prevalence of a monetary understanding of poverty, discussions about poverty reduction in Canada tend to focus on material hardships and bringing people into the workforce, without consideration for the social and economic context in which poverty exists (MacKinnon, 2013). As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5 and 6, a similar approach to poverty is prevalent in discussions about poverty reduction in Nunavut's Legislative Assembly and the media. It also appeared throughout the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process. However, addressing unemployment is not the sole objective of *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*, which is multi-dimensional in its focus and holistic in its approach. Instead, *The Makimaniq Plan* takes a social exclusion approach, seeking to address the root causes of poverty and the structures that perpetuate it. As will be seen below, when addressing poverty among First Nations and Inuit it is important to consider both the social and economic context in which it exists.

3.3 Colonialism and Indigenous Poverty in Canada

Although there is some theoretical literature on the production of poverty and inequality in Northern Canada (Irwin, 1989; Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, 1989; Coulthard, 2007, 2014a, 2014b), there has been more theorizing about inequality among First Nations more generally. Wotherspoon and Satzewich (2000) have conducted a review of perspectives on First Nations

poverty (although their study does not deal specifically with theories about poverty among Inuit). They argue that the literature has tended to fall within one of two theoretical perspectives: the Chicago School tradition and the Internal Colonial tradition. The Chicago School tradition, which examines the process of assimilation and the social and economic consequences of assimilation or lack thereof, has long dominated sociological analyses of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Proponents argue that Indigenous peoples share certain cultural characteristics that create a culture of poverty. For example, Indigenous peoples are thought to be present-oriented and do not plan or save for the future, they value mutual aid without expecting something in return, they do not value material wealth, they do not appreciate the monetary value of time, they do not have a work ethic (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000). These attitudes are dated and no longer considered politically correct, however they continue to exert considerable influence over public and private attitudes and discussions about Indigenous poverty in Canada (Abele, Graham, Maslove, 1999; Palmater, 2011; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000).

Over the past 40 years, in response to Indigenous protest and political mobilization across the country, Aboriginal policy in Canada has evolved from the view that poverty in Indigenous communities is a product of unequal individual and citizenship rights, towards a perspective that recognizes the importance of collectivities and collective rights to individual wellbeing. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is a product of this shift. The quest for Indigenous peoples' self-government in Canada is driven by a desire to have collective rights, as well as Indigenous land rights recognized by the federal government. In response to these demands, federal Canadian policy has shifted away from treaties, which require the extinguishment of all Aboriginal title, rights and interests, towards comprehensive land claims negotiations, which require the extinguishment of title only to surrendered lands (Abele et al., 1999).

However, scholars have pointed out that despite this shift, the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state has not been fundamentally transformed. Federal policy continues to promote individual initiatives that, while they may appear beneficial, ultimately result in assimilation (Alfred, 2005; Palmater, 2011; Coulthard, 2014a, 2014b). Alfred argues that self-government and economic development are proposed as reforms because "they are

useless... in the struggle to survive as peoples” (2005, p 37). Palmater (2011) argues that the effectiveness of the shift in policy towards self-government depends on its underlying policy objectives. She points out that while eliminating the Indian Act might strengthen formal recognition of First Nations jurisdiction, it might also be used to eliminate the special recognition and responsibility the federal government has towards First Nations in Canada. The continuity of the relationships between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. However, it should be noted here that for nearly all Indigenous peoples in Canada the land, its use, preservation and role in shaping identity, remains a key source of contention in their relations with the federal government (Abele et al., 1999; Coulthard 2014a, 2014b).

A second theoretical framework for understanding Indigenous poverty in Canada emerged in the 1970s: the internal colonial model (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000; Hicks, 2004). The ideas at the core of the internal colonial have been drawn from the literature about the position of African Americans in American society. Proponents of this approach define colonialism as an exploitative relationship driven by capitalist impulses between a ‘mother nation’ and a ‘subject nation’ and argue that such relationships exist within states where Europeans settled, established European institutions and subjugated both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000). The internal colonial model has been a popular means of explaining the social marginalization of Indigenous peoples and has led to a considerable body of literature on underdevelopment and dependency in First Nations and Inuit communities (c.f. Pretes, 1988; Weissling, 1989; Huskey & Morehouse, 1992; Kendall, 2001; Hicks, 2004). Indeed, the concept has been used both by the Dene and the Inuit to describe their relationship with the Crown (Hicks, 2004).

However, scholars have argued that the internal colonial model does not examine the role and influence of the state in shaping the lives of Indigenous peoples (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000; Hicks, 2004). In an attempt to address this, Wotherspoon and Satzewich (2000) offer a political economy approach to understanding Indigenous experiences and issues that takes into consideration the broader race, gender and class relations that characterize the processes of domination and resistance that are a part of capitalist development. This perspective allows for

an understanding of the state's role in managing the development of the nation and the position of Indigenous populations within Canadian society.

However, this proposed approach does not explicitly acknowledge the ongoing nature of settler colonialism. Although they acknowledge that the inequalities that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are the product of colonization, the way in which Wotherspoon and Satzewich (2000) frame colonial relations suggests that the period of primitive accumulation is in the past. They cite the treaty-making process between First Nations and the Crown as a moment of primitive accumulation in Canadian history and argue that: “[by] the 1820s, colonial consolidation had been accomplished through the merger of the North West Company and the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1821, massive land transfers, and the establishment of stable territorial boundaries” (Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 2000, 117). This view does not reflect the Inuit experience of colonialism. The Inuit had no treaties with the Canadian government until 1993 when the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed. Furthermore, this approach does not acknowledge settler colonialism as an ongoing project, which scholars describe as a process of racism and structured dispossession of the land (Wolfe, 1999; Lawrence, 2003; Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Coulthard, 2007, 2014a, 2014b; Alfred, 2009; Kuokkanen, 2011; Arvin, Tuck, Morrill, 2013; Brown 2014).

3.4 Conclusion

Definitions of poverty matter. The definition chosen will influence the focus of poverty reduction policy. In Canada, measurements of poverty tend to draw on monetary assessments such as low income cut-offs or low income measurements. However, there is general consensus within the development community that assessments of poverty should include more than an individual's income. Effective poverty reduction strategies, according to most development practitioners, require an understanding of the historical process that created the conditions of impoverishment. The most commonly used explanations of poverty in Canada do not acknowledge the historical and structural processes that shape it. However, according to Nunavut's poverty reduction strategy, poverty in the territory is the product of a clash between structures of governance that began to emerge in the Eastern Arctic following the creation of contemporary settlements.

Chapter 6 will explore how Nunavut's poverty reduction strategy, developed through an inclusive and participatory process, has opened space for a discussion about the historical processes that have produced poverty in the territory. However, Chapter 4 will first examine the intersection of governmentality and capitalism under colonial rule and the administration of poverty before offering a brief historical overview of the practices and policies that created poverty, as identified in *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*.

4 Chapter: Colonial Relations and the Production of Poverty

It is generally accepted among development practitioners that addressing poverty, rather than relying on a measurement of income (or lack thereof), requires an understanding of the historical processes that have produced the condition (Engberg-Pedersen & Webster, 2002). The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction alludes to these processes in the second paragraph of *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*:

The root causes of poverty lie in the distinct differences between Inuit forms of governance and the model of governance we use in Nunavut today. These two systems came together with the creation of our modern settlements and have not been reconciled fully. Genuine collaboration will lead to that reconciliation and return to the people the process of making decisions. This is the path to self-reliance, to healing the root causes of poverty (NRPR, 2011b, 1).

Chapter 5 will explore in detail the Roundtable's participatory public engagement process and the objectives behind its design, which included extending Article 32 of the Nunavut Lands Claim Agreement into the development of the territory's social policy. Before I delve into a discussion about the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction or the development of the territory's poverty reduction strategy however, this chapter will explore the historical processes that have produced poverty in Nunavut as identified in *The Makimaniq Plan*. This chapter will begin with a study of the way in which governmentality and capitalism intersect under colonial rule and are key to understanding historical and contemporary dispossession and poverty. A brief overview of the critical literature on settler colonialism in Canada will follow. The chapter will then examine the period of Inuit relocation and resettlement⁶ and the creation of modern settlements in

⁶ Inuit movement from *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* (a place used regularly or seasonally by Inuit for hunting, harvesting and/or gathering) into the communities that exist today has been described in many ways: settlement, in-gathering, sedentarization, centralization, relocation. The Qikiqtani Truth Commission has pointed out that although prior to 1950 "Inuit were much more permanent and continuous in their use and occupancy of the land than Qallunaat [non-Inuit]" (QIA, 2013, 202), official reports about the Eastern Arctic of the period referred to "settlements" and "camps" to describe the areas where Inuit lived, with the term "settlement" referring to places where outside agencies like the Hudson's Bay Company had built and maintained infrastructure. The use of the terms "relocation" and "resettlement" in this thesis is therefore done deliberately in an effort to acknowledge the permanence of Inuit movement between *ilagiit nunagivaktangit* prior to this period. These are also the terms that were used by my interview participants to describe the creation of the communities that exist in the territory today.

Nunavut, which is the period that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has identified as the source of the clash between methods of governance in Nunavut and the origins of poverty in the territory.

4.1 Critical Perspectives on Poverty

The ways in which neoliberal governmentality and capitalism intersect under colonial rule are key to understanding historical and contemporary dispossession and poverty (Harvey, 2003; Li, 2007). The beginning of the description, classification, and management of the condition of poverty began alongside the rise of liberal governmentality in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Liberal governmentality, or liberalism, is an “art of government... [that] appears as the management of freedom” (Foucault, in Walters, 2012, 31). Under liberalism, most Western populations were assumed to have the capacity for autonomous action but the majority of the world’s population, including the poor and the colonized, were not (Hindess, 2001; 2004; Rojas, 2008; Walters, 2012).

Capitalist relations are both a means of accumulation and a means for teaching the habits that create the ideal liberal, autonomous subject (Li, 2007). However, capitalism is not an autonomous system and primitive accumulation is a violent process. Interventions are necessary to stimulate economic growth. These interventions set the conditions that have secured settler dominance and accumulation and have dispossessed Indigenous peoples’ of the land (Razack, 2002, 2015; Harvey, 2003; Li, 2007; Coulthard, 2014a). Capitalism therefore also requires experts and trustees to manage the impoverishment produced by the interventions that stimulate economic growth.

Governmentality intersects with capitalist relations to ‘improve’ impoverished and colonized populations, through the education of desires as well as the configuration of habits, aspirations and beliefs (Scott, 1995; Hindess, 2001; Rojas, 2004; Li, 2007; Razack, 2002, 2015). Those who are considered to be incapable of autonomous action, including the poor and the colonized, are seen as subjects of improvement. Their capacities can be developed only through paternalism,

compulsion or extended periods of discipline. This is achieved through programs of intervention (Scott, 1995; Hindess, 2001; Rojas, 2004; Li, 2007; Razack, 2002, 2015). Governmental programs of intervention first identify a problem that can be improved upon. Then the problem is “rendered technical,” (Li, 2007, 7) which helps to develop indicators that measure improvement and simultaneously de-politicizes the issue (Razack, 2015). Experts therefore offer improvements of the poor or the colonized without addressing the causes of dispossession. At the same time, they can use a population’s failure to improve or conserve nature as a rationale for assigning resources to a population that will make ‘better’ use of them. A population’s failure to improve can be used to justify dispossession (Razack, 2002, 2015; Li, 2007). As will be discussed in further detail below, in the Eastern Arctic, such paternalism and compulsion were clearly evident in the federal policies and programs implemented in the period between 1950-1975.

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first century, development practice has translated issues of poverty, landlessness and hunger into technical public health issues in a way that removes them from the political discourse “and [recasts them] in the neutral language of science” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, in Li, 2007, 10; Hindess, 2011; Razack, 2002; Rojas, 2004). Contemporary poverty reduction efforts therefore, tend to be designed in a way that impede any challenges to both those who control the means of production and the structure of law that has created systemic inequalities (Li, 2007; Razack, 2015). As will be discussed in Chapter 5 and 6, although the governmental will to improve populations continues to exist in Nunavut, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has created a space that challenges this common approach to poverty assessment and policy-making. The policy discussion about poverty in Nunavut is politicized and identifies federal administrative policies and the creation of contemporary settlements in Nunavut as the root cause of poverty.

According to Taiaiake Alfred (2009), European powers and the Canadian state have had the consistent goal of seizure, use and control of Indigenous lands for resource-based extractive industry and profit. This goal has resulted in the extinguishment of rights, resource exploitation on indigenous lands, residential schooling and wardship. It has limited Indigenous freedom,

disrupted community behaviour and psychologies, and contributed to welfare dependency in Indigenous communities.

In a similar vein, Glen Coulthard (2014a, 2014b) argues that economic, gendered, and racial hierarchies of power and domination have characterized relations between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. State power, structured into these hierarchical social relations, has continued to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands and deny their right to self-determination. Settler colonial domination has been maintained in Canada by means of force, fraud, and ‘negotiations’ for land and resources, which are both the source of material of spiritual sustenance of Indigenous peoples, and the source of capitalist development.

According to Coulthard (2014a), a modified approach to Marx’s theory of primitive accumulation is needed in order to understand the history of dispossession experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada as a result of settler colonialism. Coulthard (2014a) challenges Marx’s temporal framing of primitive accumulation, arguing that the escalation around the world of state-led enclosures that have coincided with the rise of neoliberalism is proof of “the *persistent* role of dispossession in the reproduction of colonial and capitalist social relations” (19). He also refutes the developmentalism of Marx’s early iterations of the theory, which sees primitive accumulation as an inevitable moment in history that marks the transformation of backwards societies into modern ones. Coulthard argues that by shifting the focus of investigation from capital relations to colonial relations, it is possible to shift the analysis from the position of the “waged male proletariat [in] the process of commodity production” (Federici in Coulthard, 2014a, 11) to the position of the “colonized vis-à-vis the effects of colonial dispossession” (Coulthard, 2014a, 11). Lastly, Coulthard argues that settler colonial rule has secured primitive accumulation through a new type of governmentality that produces “specific modes of colonial thought, desire and behaviour that implicitly or explicitly commit the colonized to the types of practices and subject positions that are required for their continued domination” (2014a, 16). Coulthard (2007; 2014b) calls this type of governmentality the ‘politics of recognition,’ that is, recognition-based models of liberal pluralism that try to reconcile Indigenous claims of nationhood with Crown sovereignty through the negotiation of land claims

agreements. Although he writes primarily about the experience of the Dene Nation, Coulthard's definition of colonialism is useful for understanding the history of colonialism in Nunavut.

4.2 Early Administration of the Eastern Arctic

The environment of the Central and Eastern Arctic influenced the timing and nature of Inuit-European and later Inuit-state relations. Until relatively recently, it was much less accessible than other parts of Canada, including the Yukon and the Mackenzie Valley. As a result, settler colonial relations emerged in the Eastern Arctic later than in other parts of Canada. Although there had been centuries of sporadic contact between Inuit and Europeans, Inuit had no treaties with the Canadian government and received few government services. Well into the twentieth century, most interactions between Inuit and non-Inuit remained economic or religious in nature. Between 1867 and 1939, the government of Canada adopted to *laissez-faire* "better left as Indians" approach to governance in the North. Despite a Supreme Court ruling in 1939 that Inuit were a federal responsibility under the Indian Act, it was only with the onset of the Cold War, excitement about mineral resource exploration and international outcry about living conditions in the Arctic in the late 1940s and early 1950s, that Inuit lives came under direct influence of the Canadian government (Armstrong, Rogers, Rowley, 1978; Pretes, 1988; Clancy, 1989; Weissling, 1989; Canada, 1996; Hicks & White, 2000; Loukacheva, 2007; Abele, 2009; Goldring, 2010; McGregor, 2010).

In the first decade of northern intervention, there was considerable diversity of opinions with respect to whether or not Inuit should remain dispersed on the land in self-sufficient settlements, or whether Inuit should embrace wage labour in a few centralized settlements because Inuit land-based economies would become obsolete (Marcus 1995; Goldring, 2010). Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the belief that Inuit should remain on the land dominated. This was held primarily by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) contact agents and northern missionaries, who either did not see the Inuit as competent economic actors, or whose own economic interests required the Inuit to maintain a land-based way of life. There was no agreement among public servants about what type of economic activity Inuit should be encouraged to pursue, although there was agreement that school curricula could be improved.

Officials were preoccupied with the perceived decline of the land-based economy, the growing dependency of northern Indigenous peoples on relief payments and the construction of non-traditional dwellings around HBC outposts (Clancy, 1989; Marcus, 1995; Goldring, 2010). The government officials, HBC employees and representatives of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches who participated in the 1952 Conference on Eskimo Affairs did not come to a consensus (Clancy, 1989). For the time being it was decided that “the most immediate need was to assist the natives to continue to follow their traditional⁷ ways of life as ‘hunters’” (in Marcus, 1995, 48). At the time, this was not at odds with the Government of Canada’s desire to assert its territorial sovereignty over the high Arctic. In the early 1950s, the government relocated several Inuit families from Northern Quebec to Ellesmere and Cornwallis Islands in an attempt to address concerns about overpopulation and natural resource depletion and to bolster national sovereignty claims (Marcus, 1995; Hicks & White, 2000; Henderson, 2007).

However, the notion that Inuit should embrace wage labour and a ‘modern’ way of life steadily gained popularity as federal investments in schools, housing, and military infrastructure grew, as did efforts to bring the southern way of life to the North (Goldring, 2010). By the 1960s, reformist liberal notions of development had begun to dominate the objectives of government administrators (Dickerson, 1992; Goldring, 2010). State intervention was seen as the solution to the social and economic problems faced by northern Indigenous peoples and employment, education and training were thought to be the key to improving their wellbeing. Believing that the fur trade would never recover, that subsistence ways of living would disappear, and that the Indigenous peoples were unable to fend for themselves, administrators aimed to increase standards of living in the Northwest Territories through the diversification of economic activity and growth, and strengthening ties to national and international markets (Abele, 1987; Weissling, 1989; Dickerson, 1992; Marcus, 1995; Duhaime, 2004; Henderson, 2007; Goldring, 2010; McGregor, 2010; Coulthard, 2014b).

⁷ The notion of a ‘traditional life’ was a southern invention, as the Inuit had been adopting and developing practices, such as fur-trapping and the trade in arctic fox, for decades (Marcus, 1995).

This could only be achieved however, “by letting obsolete cultural norms and identities wither” (Goldring, 2010, 32). Although the language of ‘civilizing primitive peoples’ had been abandoned and the term ‘assimilation’ was not generally used, the attempts to eradicate distinctive elements of Inuit society, as well as the encouragement of any interest Inuit showed in wage-labour, point to an underlying belief in modern, southern technological superiority (Hicks & White, 2000; Goldring, 2010). Official statements reflect these notions and reveal the desire to improve the poor and the colonized at work in Northern Canada. In 1965, Arthur Laing, then Minister for the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources stated:

The job of developing Canada must always go on but the day that the Eskimos can develop in the same framework as the peoples in the provinces is fast approaching.... The development of the Eskimos will continue until they themselves achieve the rights and responsibilities which they seek and deserve – the heritage of Canadian citizenship (in Goldring, 2010, p. 40).

Inuit families were encouraged by force and by persuasion to abandon centuries-old, multi-family, multi-year settlements scattered across the Eastern Arctic and to relocate into a few permanent communities, transforming Inuit structures of family and governance and radically altering the way of life (Abele, 1987; Weissling, 1989; Dickerson, 1992; Marcus, 1995; Hicks & White, 2000; Wenzel, 2000; Duhaime et al., 2004; Damas, 2002; Goldring, 2010; Qikiqtani Truth Commission [QTC], 2010).

This period of active interventionism and federal ‘improvement’ in the Northwest Territories, was prompted in part by hopes of discovering minerals, oil and gas to fuel the national economy, as well as the belief that this would create jobs for the resettled Inuit (Abele, 1987; Canada, 1996). Southern officials believed that the hardships faced by northern Indigenous peoples were the product of their unpreparedness for wage employment and a lack of viable economic opportunities. Dispossession and alienation from the land through the development of an Indigenous labour force and the creation of business and employment opportunities, as well as the provision of social programs, had come to be seen as the key to Inuit improvement (Abele, 1987; Goldring, 2010). However, growing Indigenous resistance to political exclusion, oil and gas exploration and the construction of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline would transform the governance of the territory (Abele, 1987; Coulthard, 2014b).

4.3 Political Activism and Land Claims Negotiation in the Canadian North

Scholars have argued that the Canadian North has been administered as an internal colony. Although the Inuit were never governed under the Indian Act, throughout much of the twentieth century, the Inuit lacked economic and political control over their own affairs (Hicks, 2004; Goldring, 2010). Until 1951, when three members from the District of Mackenzie were elected to the Northwest Territories Council, the Northwest Territories was governed by a handful of appointed administrators in Ottawa (Legislative Assembly of NWT, 2015). Residents of the territory were unable to vote in federal elections until 1962 (Hicks & White, 2000). In 1967, the administrative centre of the Northwest Territories was moved from Ottawa to Yellowknife, which was seen by southern officials to be advancing legitimate, responsible government north of the 60th parallel (Dickerson, 1992; Coulthard, 2014b). However, relocating the seat of the Northwest Territories Council led to an increase in the power of the government of the Northwest Territories and to an increase in the territory's non-native constituency. At this time, Indigenous peoples, who made up the majority of the territory's population, were not being consulted on governance or resource development issues (Abele, 1987; 2009; Dickerson, 1992; McGregor, 2010; Coulthard, 2014b). A fully elected council would not be convened until 1975, at which point Dene, Métis and Inuit would make up the majority of the 15 member council.

The slow devolution of power in the Northwest Territories coincided with growing excitement about the possibility of oil and gas development in the Western Arctic. The discovery in 1968 of commercial quantities of oil in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska stimulated oil and gas exploration off the north coast of the Northwest Territories and triggered discussions about infrastructure and pipeline development through the Mackenzie Valley. The majority of Dene, Inuit, Inuvialuit and Métis objected to the idea of a pipeline. This, along with the release of the federal government's 1969 White Paper on Indian Policy⁸, mobilized Indigenous political movements across the

⁸ The White Paper announced a new direction for Indian policy in Canada. It redefined Indigenous peoples as 'disadvantaged Canadians' who needed support to participate in mainstream Canadian society. Its abandonment of historical treaties and assimilationist stance angered Indigenous peoples, mobilizing resistance movements across Canada (Abele, 1987; Coulthard, 2014b).

Canadian North (Abele, 1987; Coulthard, 2014b). Between 1969 and 1972, the Dene, Inuit, Inuvialuit and Métis of the Northwest Territories each established a political organization to represent their rights and economic interests at the national level (Abele, 1987; Coulthard, 2014b). Although each organization had its own political agenda, they shared a common goal of self-government in order to have more control over their own affairs (Dickerson, 1992).

In 1973, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Aboriginal land rights and title had not been fully extinguished in Canada. In response, the federal government announced a new comprehensive land-claims policy in order to “exchange the claims to undefined Aboriginal rights for a clearly defined package of rights and benefits set out in a settlement agreement” (in Coulthard, 2014b, 68; Abele et al., 1999). It is in this context that the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada⁹ first put forward its land claims proposal in 1976 (Canada, 1996; Hicks & White, 2000; Loukacheva, 2007). Two decades of negotiations followed before the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed in May 1993 and the territory of Nunavut came into being in April 1999 (Kusugak, 2000; Hicks & White, 2000; Loukacheva, 2007).

Although the creation of Nunavut was designed to accommodate the desire for Inuit self-government it was an agreement that was shaped to fit within the existing governance structure of Canada. When Inuit self-governance was first proposed by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, as part of a comprehensive settlement of Inuit land claims, the federal government was unwilling to negotiate self-governance under the terms proposed. Subsequently, Inuit leaders endeavoured to highlight that their land claims proposal fit within the framework of sovereignty of the Canadian State. A speech made in 1976 by the second president of Inuit Tapirisat Canada makes this clear:

We are not extremists. We are not separatists. We have no history of hostility and confrontation... but one of co-operation. And we are optimistic that the Government of Canada will accept our proposed land sharing settlement in a spirit of co-operation. We are willing to share our land and its resources. It's just that we want benefits... and to ensure that the land is preserved as we know it for future generations of Inuit (James Arvaluk, in Hicks, 2004, p. 11).

⁹ Inuit Tapirisat of Canada is now called Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK, 2014).

Inuit negotiators conceded to model Inuit self-government according to the Euro-Canadian pattern of legislative and executive institutions. However, they were committed to incorporating *Inuit Qaujimajutuqangit* (Inuit values, principles and methods of governance) into the Nunavut Act (Canada, 1996; Loukacheva, 2007). One of the core principles of self-governance is to allow Inuit to govern their communities according to their own cultural values. However, this must still be done within the larger, federal Euro-Canadian political framework (Stern, 2005; Loukacheva, 2007). As was discussed in Chapter 2, the body and operations of the Government of Nunavut (GN) were not designed to reflect Inuit values and principles (Price, 2007). Despite Inuit leaders and scholars cautioning that the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement (NLCA) was part of the process of Inuit political empowerment and not an end in and of itself, hopes for dramatic immediate changes in employment and the lives of Inuit following the creation of the territory remained high. The 2009 GN Report Card revealed that many Nunavummiut felt distanced from the GN and were disappointed in the way in which *Inuit Qaujimajutuqangit* has been incorporated into government policies, programs and services (North Sky Consulting, 2009). As will be explored in the next chapter, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's participatory process was designed to be more inclusive of Inuit perspectives and values and to offer a model by which social policy development can be aligned with Article 32 of the NLCA, which states that Inuit have the right to be included in the design, development and implementation of social policy (Canada, DIAND & NTI, 1993).

4.4 Conclusion

Development practitioners generally agree that an understanding of historical structures and processes is needed in order to address poverty effectively. The intersection of programs of improvement with the primitive accumulation of capital characterize the Inuit experience of settler colonialism. Federal administration of the Eastern Arctic came much later than other parts of Canada. Until the second half of the twentieth century, colonialism in the Canadian North was dominated by mercantilist and religious interest. By the 1950s and 1960s however, the desire of Canadian officials to improve Inuit living conditions intersected neatly with the government's vision of national economic development fuelled by mineral resource extraction in the North. Inuit dispossession of the land was a prerequisite for future economic growth but also a condition

for the colonial improvement of their wellbeing (Clancy 1989; Goldring, 2010). Inuit political resistance to decision-making dominated by Southerners and non-Inuit coincided with a shift in federal policy on Indigenous peoples, enabling the Nunavut land claims negotiations process.

Through decades of negotiation with the federal government, Inuit have shaped the system of public government that exists in Nunavut today. However, *The Makimaniq Plan* states that a balance between current models of governance and Inuit forms of governance has yet to be fully achieved. The next chapter will examine the public engagement model of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and explore the way in which the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat designed the Roundtable as a model for engaging Nunavummiut in the development and implementation of social policy. In its efforts to align Nunavut's poverty reduction policy with Article 32 of the land claim, the Secretariat fostered a space for a politicized discussion about the root causes of poverty in Nunavut.

5 Chapter: The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction identifies the clash between Inuit and non-Inuit forms of governance as the root cause of poverty in Nunavut and emphasizes the need for community participation and collaboration in the territory's poverty reduction efforts. The Roundtable records and the interviews I conducted for this research reveal the importance placed on collaboration in poverty reduction efforts. It has also revealed a politicized discussion about the source of poverty in Nunavut, which will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 6. However, we must first understand the political and policy context in which these discussions emerged. This chapter examines in detail the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process and its objectives. It begins with a narrative of the origins of Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts following the release of *Qanukkanniq? The GN Report Card* and *Tamapta: Building Our Future Together*. An examination of the Roundtable meetings, as well as the key themes and concerns that emerged through the public engagement process, will follow. The chapter will also study the Roundtable's public engagement methodology, its intended objectives and how, in some ways, the efforts of the Roundtable fall under governmental programs of improving populations. It will conclude by arguing that the Roundtable's collaborative and participatory approach was intended to serve as a model for the implementation of Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, thus creating space for Nunavummiut to have input in the design and implementation of social policy.

The source material for this chapter comes primarily from the records of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, although I also draw on my interviews with Roundtable participants themselves. The Roundtable documents trace the early stages of the public engagement process from 2010 to 2012, spanning the official launch of the territory's poverty reduction efforts, discussions about poverty at the community level, as well as the regional meetings which took place before and after the Poverty Summit was convened and *The Makimaniq Plan* was drafted. Although the Roundtable records offer a fairly clear image of how the public engagement process worked, there were gaps in some of the records. The documents I was given access to did not include records of the Community Dialogues in four communities: Cape Dorset, Repulse

Bay, Resolute Bay and Whale Cove. There were also no records from the Poverty Summit itself. Additionally, much of the public engagement process was conducted in Inuktitut and although the majority of the material I had access to had been translated, not all of the meeting documents were available in English. These holes have been filled as much as possible by the discussions about the Roundtable process that occurred during my interviews.

5.1 Roundtable Origins

As discussed in Chapter 2, the origins of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction can be traced both to the mandate of the Third Legislative Assembly and to *Qanukkanniq? The GN Report Card*, both of which were released in 2009. *Tamapta: Building Our Future Together*, the Government of Nunavut's 2009-2013 mandate was tabled in the Nunavut Legislature on April 1, 2009. The document described the first ten years of Nunavut's existence as a period focused on the development of a good system of governance for the territory. It announced that the next five years would focus on "communities and people working with government to build [Nunavut's] future" (GN, 2009a, 4). The government's priorities for the period included improving education and training, reducing poverty, connecting communities and supporting vulnerable community members, improving housing, increasing support for culture and arts, supporting the development of sustainable economies in communities, and improving health among Nunavummiut (GN, 2009a). The following month, the Government of Nunavut (GN) undertook a review of its programs and services. In October 2009, the release of *Qanukkanniq? The GN Report Card* revealed that many Nunavummiut felt more distanced from the Government of Nunavut than they had from the Government of the Northwest Territories, and drew attention to widespread concern about rising levels of poverty and reliance on income support (North Sky Consulting Group, 2009). Although *Tamapta: Building Our Future Together* had already indicated a commitment to reducing poverty during the sitting of the Third Legislative Assembly, the *Tamapta Action Plan 2009-2013* expanded on this, committing the government to developing and implementing a poverty reduction strategy through active engagement with its partners "including Inuit organizations, other governments, NGOs and [Nunavut's] business community in the development of policies and programs" (GN, 2009b, 11).

The language about actively engaging with multiple sectors of society had been written into the government's mandate by the policy team at the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, which at the time was under the direction of Ed McKenna. Shortly thereafter, he was asked to work on the development of a poverty reduction strategy as the Director of the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat. McKenna's personal interest in public engagement, a means of engaging multiple perspectives on complex issues in policy-making, shaped the process that followed (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts were officially launched on October 18, 2010. In an Inuktitut-language video message captioned with English subtitles, Premier Eva Aariak and Acting President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) James Eetoolook announced that the GN and NTI had joined forces to reduce poverty, and encouraged all Nunavummiut to become involved in the process:

James Eetoolook [to Eva Aariak]: We are hopeful that poverty will be reduced by working together, that is the only way.

EA [to JE]: In order to deal with this issue, first of all, we will need to talk about poverty, do some brainstorming on how we can deal with this, reducing poverty, coming up with solutions with Government and non-profit organizations, Inuit organizations and business owners, individuals, the entire population, to talk to each other and to listen to new ideas. That is what we need to do first.

JE [to EA]: It will be better when each community is involved in working on the solution allowing all people to be involved in discussing how to reduce poverty in the communities. If we try to come up with a solution alone... no, it could not be done, it would be too hard. If everyone is involved, it will be exciting and poverty reduction will be seen.

EA [to JE]: Yes I agree, that's how it has to be started with the entire population being involved. (Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, 2010a).

What followed next was an extensive participatory poverty reduction process, designed to follow an assets-based model for community development. Through the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Anti-Poverty Secretariat sought to engage Nunavummiut in Inuit-led discussions about poverty and the development of policy relating to its reduction by focusing on the strengths that communities could build upon to address poverty (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; CWP, 2012; McKenna Interview, 2015; NRPR, 2011g; Obed Interview, 2015). Although the Roundtable model was designed by the Anti-Poverty Secretariat, the leader of which was non-Inuit, as were many of the staff involved, the Roundtable process itself was governed jointly by NTI and the GN, and was endorsed by Inuit staff at NTI.

Between February and November 2011, approximately 900 Nunavummiut met on numerous occasions to discuss poverty reduction across the territory. Between February and May, 21 communities ran Community Dialogue Sessions to discuss poverty reduction. Between May and June, four Regional Meetings brought representatives from each of the communities together to help identify different regional priorities. In November, community representatives and policy makers were invited to Iqaluit by the Anti-Poverty Secretariat for a Poverty Reduction Summit to develop a poverty reduction strategy (NRPR, 2011b; 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; NTI, 2011; Nunatsiaq News, 2012a).

5.2 The Roundtable's Public Engagement Process

The public engagement process began with a pilot workshop, held in Iqaluit, in January 2011, where the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat tested their public meeting model on a group of locally-based volunteers in order to get community feedback on the timing and flow of the workshop (Anonymous Interview G, 2015). With the help of the Hamlet councils, Nunavummiut from across the territory were then invited to attend one of six facilitator-training workshops held in the Qikiqtani, Kivalliq and the Kitikmeot regions between February and March 2011. These workshops offered members of each community training in facilitating public discussions at the community level (Anonymous Interview G, 2015).

Facilitator workshop participants were introduced to the Poverty Reduction Action Plan and the idea of Community Dialogue Workshops. Then they were walked through a model workshop. The public meeting model proposed by the Secretariat was inspired by the World Café method, an asset-based model of community development designed to engage a large group of stakeholders in a collective decision-making process.¹⁰ (Hurley & Brown, 2009; NRPR, 2011a; Anonymous Interview G, 2015). Participants were divided into small groups and asked to discuss concepts from *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. The small groups then discussed a series of questions that focused on a vision of happy, healthy communities before returning to a larger group to share their thoughts and ideas [Figure 1] (McKenna Interview, 2015).

The workshop participants then discussed facilitation logistics and support, as well as ways to record and share information. Workshops, small group dialogues, informal conversations and radio programs were explored as ways of engaging community members in the discussion about poverty reduction. Participants were also provided with English- and Inuktitut-language toolkits that they could refer to upon their return to their community, as well as with the Makiliqta Survey and dialogue questions that could be used to prompt discussions [Appendix C & D]. Although facilitators were not required to follow this particular model, it appears that most of the subsequent Community Dialogue sessions drew upon the methods and tools provided in the facilitators' toolkit.

In total, 50 Community Dialogue sessions were held across the territory between March and May 2011 (see Appendix E for complete list of meetings). Community members participated in a variety of different sessions including call-in radio shows, public workshops, the Makiliqta Survey, youth workshops, elders' workshops, interagency meetings, poverty reduction committee meetings, Hamlet discussions, focus group discussions and a Photovoice project. The

¹⁰ According to the World Café philosophy, the world we inhabit is created “through the networks of conversations in which we participate” (Hurley & Brown, 2009, 3). Meetings hosted using the World Café model divide participants up into small groups seated around tables. Discussions are divided into twenty minute rounds and each round is launched with a question that has been specifically designed for the purpose of the meeting. After each round of discussions, participants move to a new table and the conversations continue. Once the small-table discussions are completed, meeting participants eventually share their personal or group insights with the entire group and these are recorded at the front of the room (World Café website, 2015).

transcripts and findings of these meetings were shared with the staff of the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat. The Secretariat amalgamated the findings from each community into regional reports entitled “Ideas and Issues for Change” ahead of the four Regional Meetings that were held in Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, North Qikiqtani and South Qikiqtani between May and June 2011.

Model Community Dialogue Session	
1. Inuit Value Cards	
2. Identification of Community Assets	
3. Community Visioning	
	When we imagine our community healthy and free of poverty, what do we see?
4. Ideas for Action	
	What can I do to reduce poverty? What can family and friends do?
	What can be done in our community to reduce poverty and reach our visions?
	What are some important issues and ideas for action that should be addressed territorially?
5. Next Steps and Wrap Up	

Figure 1 – Model Community Dialogue Session

The Regional Meetings were attended by representatives from each of the communities, representatives from each government department, people with policy expertise in each of the thematic areas that had emerged from the community discussions, as well as people with lived experience of poverty. Participants met for three days to review the “Ideas and Issues for Change” that had been developed through the Community Dialogues. The six overarching themes had emerged from the Dialogues were presented to the participants for feedback. These were similar across each of the regions, albeit with slight variations in their wording and in their ranking of priorities for action. The thematic headings that emerged, listed here in order of priority as identified in three of the four regional reports, were the following:

- Healing and wellbeing;

- Education, training and skills development, including Inuit societal values, knowledge and core life skills;
- Food security and country foods access;
- Housing and income support programs;
- Community economic development, employment and cost of living; and
- Other issues and ideas.¹¹

Following the review of the themes, the participants discussed what could be included in the territory's poverty reduction action plan. A consolidated report on the "Options for Action" developed during the Regional Meetings was prepared by the Secretariat leading up to the Poverty Summit, where it was used to support the drafting of the Nunavut poverty reduction strategy (Obed Interview, 2015). The Poverty Summit took place in Iqaluit November 28-30, 2011 and was attended by approximately 50 participants, including elected officials, government employees, and community organizations from across the territory.

Due to weather conditions, some participants, including all those from the Kivalliq region, were weathered out (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; NRPR, 2011b).

Figure 2: The Makimaniq Plan's Thematic Areas of Action

The first two days of the Poverty Summit were spent discussing the six themes that had emerged from the Regional Meetings. By the end of the second day, participants had achieved general consensus about what they wanted to see in the poverty reduction strategy. The staff of the

¹¹ This category included recommendations for changes in government policies, ensuring that the justice and health system works for Inuit, reducing greenhouse gases, reducing taxes, reducing freight and flight costs, improving research, and a community's reflections on the question "what is poverty?" (NRPR, 2011d, 2011e, 2011f).

Secretariat spent that evening drafting text for a poverty reduction plan. On the last morning of the Summit, the draft was read back to the meeting participants, line by line until general agreement on the draft text was achieved for *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction* (Obed Interview, 2015; NRPR, 2011c). Six thematic areas for action were identified in the Plan [Figure 2]. These do not differ greatly from those that emerged in the Community Dialogue sessions:

- Community collaboration and participation;
- Healing and wellbeing;
- Education and skills development;
- Food security;
- Housing and income support; and
- Community and economic development (NRPR 2011c; CWP, 2012; GN, 2013b).

Before the Poverty Summit drew to a close, Premier Eva Aariak committed the GN to several actions in support of poverty reduction: a review the public housing rent scale; establishing a culturally-appropriate program for addictions treatment; convening a Nunavut Food Security Coalition to improve food security in the territory; and developing and introducing legislation that would ensure the implementation of a long-term Poverty Reduction Action Plan in collaboration with the partners of the Roundtable (McKenna Interview, 2015; NRPR, 2011c). These last two commitments would be the major focus of the Roundtable's activities in the coming two years.

The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction was finalized by the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat and released by the GN and NTI in February 2012 (Nunatsiaq News, 2012a). Between May and September of that year, the Secretariat held gatherings in each region to get regional feedback on *The Makimaniq Plan*, as well as to discuss its implementation and the poverty reduction activities already taking place in some of the communities (NRPR, 2012a; 2012b; 2012c). A Memorandum of Understanding between NTI and the GN was signed in October of the same year renewing their partnership in leading the territory's poverty reduction (NRPR, 2011c; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015). The Food Security Coalition was convened in 2012 and began work on a food security strategy in

January 2013 (Nunavut Food Security Coalition, 2012; NRPR, 2013; McKenna Interview, 2015).¹²

During this period, the staff of the Anti-Poverty Secretariat were drafting what would become the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act*. The legislation, which was enacted into law in May 2013, extends Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement to the territory's poverty reduction efforts. It requires the government to work with other members of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction to produce a five-year plan for poverty reduction, and, within the first five years of the plan's implementation, to develop an official definition and indicators to measure the progress of poverty reduction efforts (CWP, 2012; GN, 2013a; GN, 2013b; McKenna Interview, 2015).

In June 2013, the first official meeting of the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction was held in Iqaluit to assess the progress of poverty reduction efforts and to identify priorities for the five-year plan. Territorial elections were held in the fall of 2013. Since 2014, Roundtable meetings have been held biannually. The meeting in Rankin Inlet in May 2014 focused on parenting and the meeting in Iqaluit in November 2014 focused on justice and community healing. At that meeting it was determined that the focus of the next meeting, to be held in the spring of 2015, would be income support (Lightfoot Interview, 2015; NRPR, 2015; NRPR, 2014b; Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015:).

Meetings of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction are spaces that encourage collaboration between government departments, between the GN and Inuit organizations, as well as between government and non-governmental organizations, the business community and community members. The Anti-Poverty Secretariat acts as a facilitator of collaboration, bringing together local projects, initiatives and government departments, thus creating a network of support for the poverty reduction efforts that are underway at the community level.

¹² The Nunavut Food Security Coalition launched its 2014-2016 Strategy and Action Plan on May 5, 2014 (Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, 2014a). I sat in on the final day of the Food Security Coalition's annual meeting in Iqaluit on March 19, 2015 as I was orienting myself to the town and the people involved in the Roundtable process. During this meeting, the participants were finalizing the Terms of Reference for the Coalition and discussing the 2014 implementation of the Strategy and plans for the upcoming year.

(NRPR, 2012a; NRPR, 2012b; NRPR, 2012c; Scott Interview, 2015)

5.3 “That’s How You Fight Poverty”: Objectives of the Roundtable

This overview of the history of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has highlighted the way in which the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, the Roundtable and the Roundtable’s public engagement process emerged as part of the GN’s 2009-2013 mandate. Due to the nature of non-partisan government in Nunavut, a few government employees played a pivotal role in shaping the public engagement process that produced *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach for Poverty Reduction* (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Scott Interview). However, because many GN employees are non-Inuit and, in this particular case, because the design of the Roundtable’s public engagement model was led by both Inuit and non-Inuit policy experts, it should be noted that Nunavut’s poverty reduction process is in some ways an example of the governmentality of poverty reduction and the improvement of populations in that it is overseen by experts, many of whom are outsiders to the lived experience of poverty in Nunavut. Certainly, the design of the public engagement model drew heavily on the knowledge of experts – both Inuit and non-Inuit. As was discussed in Chapter 4, experts tend to problematize issues like poverty in a way that depoliticizes them, making it difficult to address their root causes. However, within this project of improving populations in Nunavut, the Roundtable’s public engagement process has fostered discussions about the impact of colonialism and the root causes of poverty. These politicized discussions will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 6. The following section will examine the underlying objectives of the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat in its design of the Roundtable public engagement process in an effort to understand how these politicized conversations about poverty emerged.

A key objective of the Roundtable process was to foster a discussion about poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut without having the conversation focus on the suffering and the misery of the lived experience of poverty (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015). In order to do this, the Roundtable

conversations were directed towards a vision of what Nunavut would look like free of poverty (Anonymous Interview G, 2015). This is not to suggest that the Community Dialogues did not touch on the challenges faced by Nunavummiut or on personal stories of suffering due to poverty. Those conversations did indeed occur (c.f. Healey, 2011; Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, 2011q; Grise Fjord Community Dialogue, 2011; Pond Inlet Community Dialogue, 2011h; Qikiqtarjuaq Community Dialogue, 2011c). However, the questions the Community Dialogue sessions addressed helped participants articulate a vision of healthy communities. Because of this focus on the future, the process did not produce a definition of poverty (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; NRPR, 2011h; 2011i; 2011j; 2011k; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015). However, participants in the Roundtable argue that the lack of definition has not hindered the work of the Roundtable (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Karetak Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

The definition of poverty remains an important and open question. But having a precise definition has not been critical to [the Anti-Poverty Secretariat's] work. It's of course reasonable to ask: "How can you fight poverty if you can't say what it is?" Well the answer is simply, you ask people who are dealing with the issue what it is. And in fact, you don't really have to ask that. You ask people: "How do you fight poverty?" And they'll say: "Well... get my extended family housing. They're all living with me! There's sixteen of us living in a three-bedroom house!" That's how you fight poverty (McKenna Interview, 2015).

This excerpt from my interview with McKenna hints at another objective of the Anti-Poverty Secretariat as it oversaw the development of the territory's poverty reduction strategy. One of the overarching goals of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process has been to transform how government operates in the territory in a way that would engage Nunavummiut in decision-making and align social policy development with Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015). Article 32 states that Inuit have the right to participate in the development of social and cultural policy and in the development of cultural and social programs and services in the territory (Canada, DIAND and NTI, 1993). To date however, it seems that this is not a common occurrence:

Government hasn't yet found an effective means of working on social issues with the public and in particular, with NTI, with Inuit. We have hoped that as we developed the [Food Security] Coalition and the Roundtable models that *eventually* this approach will get used more and more... with a broad range of social issues that require meaningful public engagement. Recently the Government of Canada agreed to provide additional support to the co-management bodies – the Nunavut Planning Commission, the Nunavut Impact Review Board, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board... These structures are comparatively well-funded. They have staff and they have boards and they have a governance structure that everybody agrees on. So there's no argument about whether Government and Inuit should discuss and agree on, say, an issue like restricting access to a declining caribou population. A structure for these discussions has been created in the Land Claim for wildlife, and for resource development issues, land use planning... But for social and cultural issues? There's almost nothing to work with in the Claim.

And so people are *often* at loggerheads on social issues. The Department of Education will invite—as they have *many times*, but particularly with the development of the Education Act—will invite participation from Inuit by engaging the Department of Social and Cultural Development at NTI. But when there's a dispute about how to proceed or what should be included in the work that will be undertaken together, the Department of Education 'picks up it's ball and goes home.' And as a result Inuit feel they're being left out of decision-making on a critical social issue. This has happened with housing issues, public health, suicide prevention, family violence — a whole range of social issues.

We were *determined* that with the poverty issue this wouldn't happen. We would find a way to work with Inuit. To do otherwise, to limit decision-making to those of us in government would be inconsistent with our public engagement methodology of course, but most importantly with Article 32 in the Claim. But some government departments and senior managers just *don't see* it that way. They see it as they see it as *their* job to do these things – to make the decisions on social policy. And they'll consult... but their idea of consultation is limited to saying: "Here's what we're doing, give me your feed back and I'll take it into consideration as we roll out our plans." Well, that's not collaboration. We hope that senior managers in government will see eventually that it's a lot more productive to work collaboratively than to "consult." Disputes and public criticism of government social programs arise when people feel they have been excluded from involvement in the processes used to design and develop these programs (McKenna Interview, 2015).

In contrast to the process described above, the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process was designed to promote collaboration between government departments, Inuit organizations, and Nunavummut. It was also designed to allow communities to be involved in policy development and therefore to feel ownership over both the process and the strategy it produced (Obed Interview, 2015). The Anti-Poverty Secretariat envisioned a process where "decisions are made together about what needs to be done and who will do it. A plan is prepared

together, after which, everyone takes action” (Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, 2010b, 2). The staff of the Anti-Poverty Secretariat based the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction’s public engagement process on three different participatory methods for policy development: the three-stage model of public engagement in New Brunswick that had helped produce the province’s poverty reduction strategy in 2009, the Public Policy Forum’s public engagement model, as well as Jackie Price’s Kitchen Consultation method (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Impact Economics, 2012; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015). With the exception of Price, the sources of inspiration for Nunavut’s public engagement model are drawn from outside expertise. However, Roundtable participants I spoke with told me that the process was designed to serve as a model of governance more closely aligned with Inuit values and problem-solving (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; CWP, 2012; Scott Interview, 2015).

The Public Policy Forum’s public engagement model differs from conventional consultation, because it is predicated on the belief that together, groups of people are able to solve complex problems collaboratively. According to the Forum, consultation, generally, provides citizens and stakeholders with the opportunity to present their views on particular issues to government in the hopes of influencing the policy decisions that the government will make (Lenihan & Macaulay, 2010).

Jackie Price has argued that the authority of the GN influences how Inuit believe things should be done and shapes public consultation processes.

In consultation, the GN has a monopoly of conceptual space. The GN directs the dialogue, owns the dialogue once it is completed, determines what information will be used for what solutions, and implements solutions.... The more this interaction is supported, the more it cements the idea that doing things the government way is the best way to get things done. This thinking creates no opportunity to recognize the times when the government way is fundamentally different from Inuit cultural ways (2007, 67).

In an effort to stem this trend, Price proposed a Kitchen Consultation Method to support territory-wide consultation in Nunavut. She argued that in each community in Nunavut, a single core community group could support the consultative needs of an outside political organization by organizing public meetings, group meetings, and kitchen table meetings. These three levels of meetings would give communities control over the consultation process and allow community

members to raise questions, concerns and comments in a setting that they are comfortable with, in order to ensure that a wide range of community perspectives are included in the consultation process (Price, 2007).

Drawing on these models of policy development as it designed the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process, the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat sought to ensure that the communities were involved in the process of policy development and decision-making from the very beginning [see Figure 3] (Obed, 2015).

Participants sat around tables and

Figure 3 – Roundtable Public Engagement Process

everyone was offered the space to speak and be heard. At the

regional and territorial level meetings, the Anti-Poverty Secretariat responded in real time to the ideas and concerns in the room. The way in which the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat amalgamated and presented the findings of the Community Dialogues was discussed at each of the Regional Meetings that followed. *The Makimaniq Plan* was drafted by Secretariat staff after-hours during the Poverty Summit in order to present and revise draft versions in the room on the last day of meetings (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015). In this way, the Roundtable was able to achieve general agreement from the text of the documents produced. *The Makimaniq Plan* therefore, is a document of consensus, produced by all the participants in the public engagement process, not simply the GN or NTI. Because of this, the Roundtable process is frequently cited as the best example of Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (GN & NTI, 2012; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015).

Participants in the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction acknowledge that such methods make policy development a slow-moving, cyclical process, however they argue that it has two important benefits. The Roundtable process, it is believed, will allow for the development of meaningful indicators to be developed for poverty reduction. Furthermore, in adhering to Article 32 of the NLCA, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has created an arena where the collective knowledge of participants is used to transform policy. Roundtable participants and Secretariat staff feel that collective knowledge and collaboration is needed in order to challenge the colonial systems that remain in place in Nunavut (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015).

I think one of the major success factors of the project was that the project leader within the GN [McKenna] was committed to working collaboratively with other organizations, especially Inuit organizations. He managed his portion of the project such that staff from several organizations could work together – and not just talk or plan together, but really *work* together – from the beginning. He was walking the talk of the whole NRPR project. He was always focused on the systemic changes needed for long-term poverty reduction, especially a shift in the balance of power between Inuit and largely *qallunaat*-informed government processes and policies. He wanted to create spaces for people to have a voice and contribute to decisions. The specific discussion topics were usually the everyday manifestations of poverty, such as issues related to housing, income, education, mental health and so on, but I think the project leaders and all of us involved were equally interested in the processes we have for addressing these issues overall—who is involved? Whose perspectives inform decisions? Whose needs and interests are represented? We didn't use the word decolonization in official communications, but that was always the underlying purpose of the work, which we agreed is foundational to real poverty reduction. I think that's what kept our inter-organizational group together even through rough patches (Anonymous Interview G, 2015).

5.4 Conclusion

The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction was developed through extensive public engagement with communities across Nunavut from January to November 2011. The feedback from the Community Dialogue Sessions shaped the direction of the Regional Roundtables that followed. *The Makimaniq Plan*, the culmination of this intensive process, was agreed upon line by line, by those who attended the Poverty Summit. The public engagement process of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, inspired and designed by Inuit and non-Inuit experts, was intended to transform social policy development in Nunavut and to confront the colonial legacy of southern-influenced decision-making by promoting collaboration

between Nunavummiut, Inuit organizations and government departments in the design of the territory's poverty reduction strategy. The Roundtable's participatory and collaborative approach was designed to align the development of social policy with Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and to serve as a model for future policy development and decision-making. As will be shown in the next chapter, considerable disagreement remains over the definition and use of the term, as well as over how to go about reducing poverty. Nonetheless, the Roundtable process is important because its open and inclusive nature has opened up a space for a politicized debate about poverty that acknowledges and challenges the structures that have caused it, thus widening the focus of poverty reduction efforts to include healing and wellbeing.

6 Chapter: Some Perspectives on Poverty in Nunavut

One of the key strengths of participatory poverty assessments, in addition to allowing those whose lives are affected by poverty reduction policies and programs to influence their design, is that participatory methods reveal the complexity of the lived experience of poverty. The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction is a participatory method of policy development that has done just that. The Roundtable process has allowed the voices of Nunavummiut to be heard from across the territory and has fostered a discussion about poverty that examines the causes of social exclusion in the territory. However, it has also shown that there is no single understanding of poverty in Nunavut and opinions about the priority areas for poverty reduction differ, particularly between Nunavummiut who have participated in the Roundtable process and those who have watched it from afar.

In this chapter, I attempt to do justice to the many differing perspectives I have encountered in my research on poverty reduction in Nunavut. The chapter begins by examining the various discussions about poverty in Nunavut and mapping the points of tensions and convergence between them. It explores the different ways in which poverty is discussed in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly, by the media and at the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction before discussing some of the key areas of concern that emerged in the Roundtable process. An examination of the response Nunavummiut have had access to the Roundtable process, both positive and critical, will follow. The chapter then explores the way in which the participatory Roundtable process has revealed the complexity of poverty reduction and fostered a politicized discussion about poverty as a product of colonial interventions and programs of improvement and resettlement. This is unusual for poverty reduction strategies, which tend to address poverty as a technical problem, to be addressed with the use of indicators of measurements without examining the social, economic and political structures that contribute to its production. And this politicized understanding has influenced the focus of poverty reduction efforts in the territory, widening it to include healing and wellbeing as a thematic area of focus for the Roundtable. The chapter concludes by arguing that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction offers a forum in which the inter-generational trauma caused by resettlement can be acknowledged and work towards societal transformation can begin.

I also want to clarify what this chapter will not be doing. I do not intend for this chapter to be prescriptive. I am not offering a definition of poverty in Nunavut. Neither am I offering conclusions on the ability of *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction* or the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction to effectively reduce poverty. Poverty reduction is in its early stages in Nunavut. Furthermore, from a policy perspective, there are no official indicators, yet, by which to measure the success or failure of the territory's poverty reduction policy. I do, however, believe there is value in examining the many voices and perspectives on poverty and poverty reduction that exist in the territory. These voices highlight the fact that poverty is a complex issue, connected to historical process and not easily untangled. In bringing together some of these differing view points and in showing some of the common themes and concerns that run through them, I hope that this outsider's study of the Roundtable process and perspectives on poverty in the territory may be useful to the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, Roundtable participants and other Nunavummiut working on poverty reduction.

6.1 On the Voices in this Chapter

The perspectives offered in this chapter are not representative of all Nunavummiut. Nevertheless, I feel that the stories shared with me during my research are an accurate reflection of the complexity of poverty in Nunavut. As discussed earlier, during my fieldwork, most of the people I interviewed live in Iqaluit. Many of these individuals are involved in the Roundtable in some official capacity, although some are not. Given my limited resources and time, I did not speak directly with many community members about their understanding of poverty. Instead, I have relied heavily on the Roundtable transcripts and reports on the public engagement process. These contain the many perspectives and wealth of knowledge that Nunavummiut shared during the Community Dialogue Sessions and Regional Roundtable Gatherings. This has helped to round out the voices and perspectives shared with me during my interviews.

In reviewing the Roundtable records, I was struck by how alive they were and by how clearly the voices of individual participants could be heard. At the Community Dialogue sessions for example, there were similarities in the conversations being had across the territory. Communities discussed their visions for economic development, new infrastructure, food security, housing,

education, counselling centres, income assistance and government representation and transparency, as well as a reduction in elder abuse and violence, healthy communities and families, local involvement in decision-making and stronger traditions and language. However, the unique character of each community came through clearly in the notes taken at each meeting. In addition to public Community Dialogue sessions, some facilitators held call-in radio shows. Some of these were transcribed verbatim, with the names of participants recorded. Some of them were not translated but concerns raised in the call-in programs were paraphrased. Some communities shared the minutes of their local poverty reduction committee meetings with the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat. A youth Photovoice project in Pangnirtung was included among the records I was given access to in Iqaluit, as was a transcript of the instantaneous Inuktitut-English translation of the Elders' workshop held in Arviat. The records from the Regional Gatherings did not include raw data or meeting minutes. However, the regional gathering reports carried the voices of communities and individuals. They quoted individual elders and youth and shared the stories of community-level poverty reduction initiatives.

I feel very fortunate to have been given insight into the discussions of the Roundtable through these voices and perspectives. They have given me an understanding of the concerns of Nunavummiut that would otherwise have been inaccessible to me. However, the records also presented an ethical challenge. Some of the voices in the records of the Community Dialogue sessions are not directly named, but are very clearly quoted. I did not want to present voices here that have been disconnected from people. Other voices are named and their communities indicated in the Roundtable records. Although it can be argued that the raw data from the early stages of the Roundtable process are in the public record, I did not want to use quotations for academic purposes without permission. Nor did I have the time or the means to contact these individuals and establish a relationship with them that would have allowed me to feel comfortable asking for permission to use their quotations. As a result, the voices presented here belong to the individuals with whom I spoke while conducting my fieldwork or to those who were quoted in the reports assembled by the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat for the Regional Roundtables. The decision not to include some of the voices from the Roundtables records has meant that the trauma and grief felt by Nunavummiut, both as a result of resettlement and the challenges of daily life, has lost some of its immediacy in this thesis. Furthermore, my reliance on

interviews primarily with residents of Iqaluit does introduce a bias towards the Iqaluit perspective of the work of the Roundtable. However, I found that the conversations about poverty that emerged from my interviews echoed the discussions that can be found in the records of the Roundtable's community dialogues. In particular, the emphasis on healing and wellbeing as a key to the success of *The Makimaniq Plan* came through clearly in both my interviews and in the Roundtable records and is reflected in my findings in this chapter.

Finally, I am conscious of the reasons for the ethical preference for anonymity within academia. I am equally conscious of the concerns about anonymity in Inuit and First Nations research being part of the theft of Indigenous knowledge for the benefit of academics. The voices in this chapter are therefore anonymous where individuals have chosen to remain anonymous and are named where they have requested to be named. To preserve, as much as possible, the voices of the individuals whose perspectives are offered here, I have not edited the quotations in this chapter for grammar or sentence structure. Where necessary, square brackets indicate editorial clarification. However, all the quotations from the interviews I conducted were sent to my interview participants for approval. Some have been edited for flow or clarity by the speakers themselves.

6.2 Perspectives on Poverty in Nunavut

As has been discussed in previous chapters, defining poverty and setting out to reduce it is a difficult task. Not surprisingly, it is clear from the Roundtable records and the interviews conducted during my research, as well as from Hansard records of the Nunavut legislature and media coverage of the issue, that poverty in Nunavut is a complex, contentious topic. Across the territory, within government and among the public, there is considerable disagreement about how to define poverty and how to reduce it. There is general agreement however, both within and outside the Roundtable process, that poverty is not an Inuit concept.

In Nunavut, the condition of poverty is widely seen to have come about as a product of Canadian colonial administration of the North. Participants in the Nunavut Roundtable's Community Dialogue sessions argued that poverty did not exist before the creation of the communities that

exist today (McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015). This is reflected in the second paragraph of *The Makimaniq Plan*: “[t]he root causes of poverty lie in distinct differences between Inuit forms of governance and the model of governance we use in Nunavut today” (NRPR, 2011b, 1). The Plan traces these tensions to the moment of Inuit resettlement and the government policies and programs that came along with that process. Anger about the societal upheaval that these policies produced remains.

And I think — and most of the time I was really upset about this whole thing so I would say things like, you know: Poverty is a deliberate act! It’s a — it doesn’t have to exist. There’s no need for a wealthy country such as Canada to even have that at the volume of which it is existing. And I’d get upset at the leadership structure of this country because it... You know, I would think it had cynical reasons for [creating poverty] such as, if we had rights to give up the land and it’s our right to give up the land and we’re not going to give it up and you start to squeeze us... We’re going to give it up. Well, we gave it up. We already gave it up. There’s no need to continue to be squeezing. The land is already theirs. It’s already been done. We should be sharing in the profits equally. And I don’t think we are (Karetak Interview, 2015).

There has been less agreement however, about how to go about tackling poverty, who should go about doing so, and what the word even means. Poverty is seen, by some, to have been created by government policies and programs. Because of this, the Government of Nunavut’s (GN) decision to address poverty in its 2009-2013 mandate was a contentious one, resisted by some of the Members of the Legislative Assembly. Ed McKenna, former Director of the Anti-Poverty Secretariat describes this:

Some Inuit have said that there was no poverty in their society before re-settlement. I believe the first time I heard that was when Tagak Curley made a statement on poverty in the Legislative Assembly four or five years ago, at the time we were beginning our poverty reduction work. My first reaction to the claim that there was no poverty in traditional Inuit society was to dismiss the statement as simply ‘politics.’ However, Tagak Curley is one of the most thoughtful MLAs we’ve ever had, and it didn’t take me too long after we started the poverty reduction work to realize that he was right. Poverty is an outcome of re-settlement. It is a condition created not by Inuit, but by people like me, non-Inuit, who created and now maintain the southern social systems we have today. [Now] my interpretation of Tagak Curley’s position is that he was saying: ‘Poverty is your problem. You invented it, and you non-Inuit should own it. Poverty was not created by Inuit. Inuit are a rich people, and should not be characterized by a condition they did not create.’ As our poverty reduction work proceeded, I found this to be a very constructive position to take on the nature of poverty in Nunavut (McKenna Interview, 2015).

Another source of tension in the discussion about poverty in Nunavut is the meaning of the word itself. There is no agreed upon definition of poverty in the territory. This may be because there is no word for poverty in Inuktitut, although there are words that could be interpreted to have a similar meaning (Anonymous Interview A, 2015; Iqaluit Community Dialogue; 2011e; Tagalik Interview, 2015). Many people argue that poverty is context-specific and in the case of Nunavut, connected to the loss of *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit*, rather than a measurement of material comfort:

Poverty, I think, is something that can be defined quite differently in our case.... But from an Inuit perspective, poverty is something that becomes what it is if you don't abide by the rules. If you don't abide by the laws, if you don't respect the IQ principles, you don't stand by values and beliefs, if you don't live in harmony and balance, [then] you're not producing human beings... That's where the— That's the one that I think creates a certain kind of poverty. Poverty is something that you're going to experience anyway, even if you were sound [in IQ principles], because you don't control the environment and you're an animal-based, harvesting-type society and they [the animals] ain't walking around in your neighbourhood. You're going to be hungry. But does that mean poverty? It's just natural that people go through. Even animals don't eat for days, the predators. And that's — Is that poverty for them? It's just part of nature. So you accept that [hunger]. You accept that and don't think of it as poverty... And so... the definition of poverty is something that was varied quite a bit depending on what background you came from (Karetak Interview, 2015).

For others, the term poverty is a Southern construct that does not accurately describe the situation that many that Nunavummiut face today because material conditions in the communities are more comfortable than they were in the past:

“It's very much a southern term, poverty. Some of us who are a bit older, we know what poverty is, not like today.”

— Joe Savkataaq (Hansard, March 6, 2015, p.35)

Under the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act*, during the first five-year plan, the Government of Nunavut must develop a definition of poverty with indicators for poverty reduction in collaboration with the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. This is something the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat is still working on (McKenna Interview, 2015). However, the territory's poverty reduction strategy has been in place since 2012 and meetings to discuss poverty have been held since 2011. Some people, like Madeleine Redfern, former Mayor of Iqaluit and former Executive Director of the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC), worry that without a clear definition, the GN's poverty reduction efforts will never fully tackle the issue:

As I said I'm *glad* the issue has gotten some attention. I'm glad some work is being done. My fear is that if the work that's being done is inadequate or insufficient, then we'll never really tackle the issue properly....

If you haven't defined it [poverty] and *then* you actually haven't figured out how many people are living in poverty, in different forms of poverty, and you develop an action plan but you have no baseline data... How do you measure? How do you *measure* [if] any of the things that you're doing is actually moving more people out of poverty? Because you have no baseline data. 70 percent of people are living in poverty. There are different levels of poverty. Are there less people on social assistance? That is that the most effective way to sort of figure out whether or not you're making progress!? (Redfern Interview, 2015)

To others both inside and outside of the Roundtable process however, the pursuit of a definition of poverty creates the risk of narrowing the focus of the work that needs to be done to improve social conditions in Nunavut. It also risks excluding people from the process.

You know, I don't want to generalize, but I think that the folks that are not from the North or from outside Aboriginal communities tend to label things. You know, it's certainly a western concept. I think that's... I think a lot of people would describe it as small-minded. It's like — that's so limiting, right?

And I think you'll hear that from many places. Like, why are you talking about the pebble? You know? We're talking about the entire universe. And I think that's the approach you'll find in many... many Inuit communities. Like, why are we talking about the bloody pebble? I mean, we should be talking about the cosmos and understanding what... you know, why are things the way they are (Ejesiak Interview, March 2015).

I see any definition of "poverty" as a political statement about how we, as a society, frame this issue. Does our definition tend to blame individuals, for example, or systems? I am nervous about how we will define "poverty" because we may back ourselves into a corner by validating only one point of view, while our broader goal is to foster an inclusive process that supports collaboration between people and organizations with *different* perspectives. We may end up communicating, unintentionally, that this process can welcome one group but not another because the definition only reflects one group's understanding of poverty. I hope that the definition we develop supports the more politically conservative-minded people and the more politically liberal-minded people to work together and share their different strengths (Anonymous Interview G, 2015).

The Makimaniq Plan emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to poverty reduction and herein lies a fundamental tension in the discussions about poverty reduction in Nunavut. Poverty reduction strategies tend to be developed with very particular areas of focus, removed from the political context in which poverty occurs. This allows for the development of indicators and the

measurement of progress, but limits the amount of structural change that poverty reduction efforts will achieve. However, *The Makimaniq Plan* has six interconnected thematic areas of focus and reveals a politicized discussion of poverty. As a result, the Roundtable places considerable emphasis on collaboration as well as healing and wellbeing, both of which are difficult to measure and quantify. It is perhaps not surprising therefore, that the way poverty is discussed in the Legislative Assembly and the Southern-influenced media differs from the way in which it is discussed at through the Roundtable process.

6.3 Comparing Public Discussions about Poverty in Nunavut

A quick survey of Nunavut's Hansard records from the period 2009-2015, reveals that the discussion about poverty in the Legislative Assembly primarily addresses the work of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and the government's commitment to collaboration in poverty reduction. There is no real debate among Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) about the definition of poverty. At first glance this might seem surprising, however the discussions in the legislature are reflective of the overarching objective related to poverty in the GN's 2009-2013 mandate, which was to work in collaboration with Inuit organizations and other governmental and non-governmental organizations to develop a poverty reduction strategy, rather than to specifically define poverty. It is interesting to note however, that prior to opening of the Third Legislative Assembly in the fall of 2008, the term poverty had been mentioned in the Legislature fewer than 100 times. Approximately half of these mentions occurred in the Fourth Session of the Second Assembly. This seems to indicate that the public discussion about poverty and poverty reduction is relatively new, at least as a political issue. Indeed, in response to a question in June 2008 about whether or not he would consider convening a working committee to address poverty, then Premier Paul Okalik acknowledge poverty as an important issue and stated that it would make a good platform for the upcoming election (Hansard, June 3, 2008, p. 4497).

Generally speaking, between 2009 and 2015, poverty has been discussed in the Legislative Assembly as one of many social ills that the territory is dealing with. Poverty and food insecurity, poverty and employment, poverty and homelessness, and poverty and education and

training are frequently mentioned together (c.f. Hansard, March 23, 2009, p. 274; Hansard, June 10, 2010, p. 2385; Hansard, October 20, 2011, p. 1160; p. 2524; Hansard, June 1, 2012, p. 2594; Hansard, March 3, 2015, p. 7). Concerns about poverty and food insecurity feature most prominently in the Hansard records however. The discussions about food insecurity occurred alongside growing public concern and protest over the territory's food prices during the same period. Attention in Southern Canada was drawn to food prices and hunger in Nunavut in 2012 and 2013 due to national coverage of unprecedented food price protests across the territory and coverage of the UN Special Rapporteur on Food's visit to Canada (De Schutter, 2012; CBC, 2012; The Canadian Press, 2012; Whittington, 2012; Anaya, 2013). However, such concerns were being voiced locally several years before that (Keelan, 2003; Minogue, 2005; Thompson, 2008; ITK, 2012; Nunatsiaq News, 2012e). The discussions about food insecurity in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly reflect the urgency felt across the territory about poverty and hunger. They also hint at the dramatic changes that have occurred since the mid-20th century in a society that until relatively recently relied primarily on hunting, fishing and gathering, as well as strong sharing networks to that ensure everyone had enough food to eat.

They [Inuit] are living in poverty and experience hunger due to their inability to afford their groceries at the stores. When Inuit turn 18, the social assistance they are provided with is never enough to purchase groceries for the month and that is how expensive groceries are. That is how prevalent poverty is in Nunavut.

— Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (Hansard, October 20, 2010, p.2524)

There are many aspects of poverty, but there is one that can be addressed without delay: food insecurity. One-third of Nunavut households face problems with food quantity and quality. We will help communities to respond to this problem by supporting the distribution of country food, launching a program to help municipalities upgrade, repair, or replace community freezers and encouraging hunters to fill them for the common good.

— Commissioner Edna Elias (Hansard, February 28, 2011, p. 4)

I was in Cambridge Bay a couple of weeks ago and I chaired our Kitikmeot regional Poverty Reduction Strategy and we had 30 to 35 people every day and into the evening come out to talk about poverty reduction. Food again was a high priority. People were very concerned that there are too many people in Nunavut going hungry and that we have to do something about it. They are calling upon all levels of government, other organizations, the private sector as well, to work together in partnership to find ways to address poverty in Nunavut, which would include affordable ways offering people and give them the opportunity to live healthy lives in their communities.

— Hon. Keith Peterson (Hansard, June 1, 2011, p. 637)

Discussions about poverty in the Nunatsiaq News are similar to those in the Legislative Assembly. The newspaper's stories about poverty in the period 2009-2015 are predominantly reports on the public engagement process undertaken by the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, on the collaborative work of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and on concerns about food insecurity raised at the Roundtable meetings (c.f. Dawson, 2012; Dawson 2013a; Gregoire, 2014b; Nunatsiaq News, 2012a; Nunatsiaq News, 2012c; Nunatsiaq News, 2014a; Windeyer, 2011a; Windeyer 2011b). The articles and editorial pieces that discuss poverty without delving into the GN's poverty reduction efforts, discuss poverty in relation to issues like food insecurity and the need for money, often linking the two (c.f. Dawson 2013a; Nunatsiaq News, 2012e; Nunatsiaq News, 2013d). An editorial published in July 2012 makes a monetary understanding of poverty in Nunavut explicit:

In hindsight, the spectacular growth of the Nunavut-based Feeding My Family Facebook group and its associated food-price protests should surprise no one.

The only surprise is that such protests took so long to develop. Large numbers of Nunavummiut have struggled for years against the highest cost of living in Canada. But except for the fortunate few who enjoy high-paying government and quasi-government jobs, too many Nunavummiut engage in this struggle armed with the lowest possible cash incomes.

Yes, the Nunavut land claims agreement and the Nunavut territorial government have succeeded in creating a secure space within which Inuit language and culture can enjoy protection and nourishment.

But on just about every other economic and social issue that matters to regular people, the Nunavut project continues to fail. One of the symptoms of this failure is the leadership's continued rejection of reality and continued acceptance of utopian fantasy.

Perhaps — and on this we can only speculate — this explains why so few can see the obvious: large numbers of individual Nunavummiut need more money (Nunatsiaq News, 2012e).

This monetary perspective is in marked contrast to the discussions about poverty that have occurred through the Nunavut Roundtable on Poverty Reduction. This is not to suggest that money has not been a topic of concern in the Roundtable process. Indeed, concerns about job skills and training, income assistance and community economic development come across clearly in the Community Dialogue Sessions. These concerns are reflected in three of the six thematic areas of *The Makimaniq Plan* (NRPR, 2011b). However, participants in the Roundtable process emphasize a holistic approach to poverty reduction (Anonymous Interview F, 2015;

Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Karetak Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015). Joe Karetak, who works as Community Education Development Coordinator for the GN and has participated in the Roundtable activities since 2011, told me: “everything is integrated into everything and everything is impacted by all” (Karetak, 2015).

This holistic understanding reflects the widely accepted argument among development experts that while money improves an individual’s chance at wellbeing, it does not guarantee it (Bourguignon & Chakravarty, 2002). It also creates space for multiple understandings of poverty in Nunavut. The following excerpt from the report on Kivalliq Regional Gathering, which took place in the spring of 2012 following the release of *The Makimaniq Plan*, illustrates the fact that self-reliance is seen to be crucial to poverty reduction and that it encompasses more than financial independence.

Elders have many concerns of their own, yet they choose to speak first about the needs of the younger generations. Elders expressed concern that Inuit society is not taking care of their young ‘who might not know the proper Inuit way of self-sustaining livelihood or the ‘Qablunaaq’ way of living’

Elders’ long-term view of what it means to ‘reduce poverty’ in Nunavut is to “prepare a pathway for your younger people.” In other words, “we need to teach our young people about our history and our own periods of hardship and starvation, and the ways of persistence, patience, true honest values, and not the value of money as the only necessity.”

Our elders insisted that there is a ‘gap’ that needs to be bridged. If this does not happen, it will be difficult to pass down valuable life skills and traditions. In consequence, they insist, closing this gap is very much a part of poverty reduction. (NRPR 2012a, p 3-4)

Participants in the Roundtable process discussed a wide range of issues including low education outcomes, substance abuse, violence, homelessness, the lack of safe spaces and the need for new infrastructure. However, considerable emphasis was placed on healing, wellbeing and food security. Although it increases the complexity of its reduction, a holistic understanding of poverty has allowed the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction to examine the root causes of poverty.

6.4 Key Concerns of the Roundtable

The interviews I conducted focused on the history of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and its process, as well as individual understandings of poverty. Food insecurity and hunger were key concerns of the Roundtable meetings and did come up in my conversations with interview participants. Although I did not delve into the issue in great detail, I will briefly mention three things I learned about food security in Nunavut that fall under *The Makimaniq Plan* and are interesting in their own right. The first is that participants in the Community Dialogue sessions talked about how family and food sharing networks can no longer be relied upon to ensure food security (Arctic Bay Community Dialogue, 2011b; Baffin Facilitators Workshop 1, 2011; Baffin Facilitators Workshop 2, 2011; Cambridge Bay Community Dialogue, 2011b; Grise Fjord Community Dialogue, 2011; Kugaaruk Community Dialogue, 2011c; NRPR, 2011h; Pond Inlet Community Dialogue, 2011h). Secondly, community-led research seems to indicate that increasingly, Nunavummiut prefer store-bought food over country food. This is particularly true of youth. Young people are not developing a taste for country food because parents, associating country food with poverty, choose to purchase food from the store to feed their children (Tagalik Interview, 2015). Finally, one of the people I interviewed spoke about food security, the cost of hunting and the moratorium on caribou hunting on Baffin Island that was in place from January 1 to August 24, 2015.¹³ They told me that caribou used to be the food of the poor in Iqaluit, available to those who could not afford store-bought food, and now was only accessible to those who could afford to purchase caribou harvested in other parts of the territory (Anonymous Interview C, 2015). Food insecurity is already the subject of much research in Nunavut, often around changing food preferences and climate change (c.f. Chan, Feduik, Hamilton et al. 2006; Ford, 2009; Ford & Berrang-Ford, 2009; Beaumier & Ford, 2010). However, these three perspectives indicate that the study of food insecurity in relation to a holistic understanding of poverty might offer new insights into the crisis.

¹³ The moratorium, the first ever placed on caribou in Nunavut, has since been replaced by a harvest quota of 250 males. The Minister of Environment, Johnny Mike has strongly suggested that the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board divide the quota between Central and South Baffin, as any harvest in North Baffin “may create conservation concerns” (in CBC News, 2014d; Nunatsiaq News, 2015b).

In addition to food insecurity, throughout the Roundtable meetings, discussions centred on people's spirits, healing and family. Concern was consistently voiced about the lingering impacts of the massive societal change experienced by Inuit and their connection to poverty. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, the period of dispossession of the land caused by Inuit resettlement and relocation across the Eastern Arctic is widely seen in Nunavut as the origin of the poverty seen in the territory today.

From 2007-2010, the Qikiqtani Truth Commission investigated the "history of decisions and events that affected Inuit living in the Qikiqtani region in the decades following 1950" (Qikiqtani Inuit Association [QIA], 2013, 14). It was later charged with beginning a truth and reconciliation process to promote healing. The Commission produced 13 community histories, as well as several thematic reports on topics including colonial administration, health care, housing, policing and education (QIA, 2013). It found that the Inuit experienced considerable cultural, personal and economic upheaval and trauma between 1950 and 1975, "the effects of which are still being felt, and in some instances have been passed on to younger generations" (QTC, 2015).

Inuit relocation caused significant cultural disruption. Indigenous scholars have emphasized the significance of this. Okeke and Nwankpa (1996) have argued that cultures that have experienced disruption and marginalization have undergone a process of cultural dispossession. According to Alfred (2009), cultural disruption and the dispossession of land have created among Indigenous peoples in Canada, a condition of "near total psychological, physical and financial dependency on the state" (42). The process of resettlement and relocation eroded traditional ways of life and Inuit culture. In addition to having led to a loss of traditional skills, 'modern' settlements have not produced suitable or sufficient employment opportunities for Inuit (Abele, 2009; QIA, 2010; Impact Economics, 2012). Shirley Tagalik, principal consultant at Inukpaujak Consulting, pointed out that cultural disruption has negatively affected the mental health of Nunavummiut and creating a poverty of spirit and a lack of self-reliance.

As I say, those early discussions about: What is poverty? How do we define poverty? Why do people think of themselves as poor is really very critical too because it leads to decisions that really are often colonized decision-making and it leads to people feeling *bad* about themselves. Whereas in the past, even though they may have been operating with very little, they felt very good about themselves.

And so it's — many of the discussions are: It's poverty of *spirit* that we're talking about, it's not... People *lived* without the dollars and cents, but now it's poverty of spirit. They don't have a direction. They don't have a strong sense of self. They don't have the capabilities to operate independently and be self-reliant. *This* is the kind of poverty that *really* is at the root of everything else (Tagalik Interview, 2015).

Madeleine Redfern describes how the process of relocation led to the erosion of self-sufficiency and the production of poverty:

And it's not just the simple issue of relocation. It's actually the shift in disempowering people so they stop being self-sufficient. Inuit were self-sufficient. And they, you know, *some* Inuit — not all Inuit — in different places, for different reasons could suffer periods of hardships. Just the same way that any society—. Let's say your family suffers a parental loss and the only bread-winner dies. A shift happens. So that's pretty much how it was... But the intervention of government controlled almost every aspect of Inuit lives; like who got a house and who didn't. Who gets a job and who doesn't. Whose children are sent away and whose not. Who gets provided training or, you know, or skills or not. And so it's no longer a question of individual choice. And that is the foundation of why and how — there are some people who moved off the land first. Got the first houses. Got the first jobs. Certain families were liked by area administrators over others and if they got that initial leg up, those families usually continued to do well. The Inuit who came in later, or were forced, or were not liked by government officials, did badly. Three, four, five generations now have not done well. (Redfern Interview, 2015)

Natan Obed, former Director of the Department of Social and Cultural Development at NTI and co-chair of the Nunavut Roundtable process believes that *The Makimaniq Plan* is part of a process of confronting the trauma of this period of upheaval, of healing and transforming society. He argues that what makes The Plan unique as a poverty reduction strategy is the emphasis it places on the need to address inter-generational trauma and mental health issues.

It's interesting how we're still trying to untangle ourselves from a lot of the things that happened so quickly and really, I don't think, without malice in what was acted out in many cases. But the policy shifts at that time were so drastic and had such huge implications, and at that time there was just no interest in how Inuit felt about any of the changes, that poverty is still, I feel, a direct result of a lot of the things that happened at that time because people still haven't been able to recover and heal. People still don't have the ability to get the opportunities that would otherwise be given to us if our society hadn't been thrown out and completely exchanged with the Canadian southern systems. It's not that we need to go back there. It's just the recognition of how difficult it's been for Inuit means we have to undo a lot of that trauma to unlock the potential for people in the territory. And that's what the Makimaniq Plan is all about (Obed Interview, 2015).

As I reviewed the records of the Roundtable process made available to me, the importance of healing came through clearly. During the Roundtable's Elders Workshop that was held in Arviat as part of the Roundtable's Community Dialogue Sessions in 2011, Joe Karetak, who chaired the workshop, emphasized the need for Nunavummiut to heal from the past:

These communities were created to be part to Canada. All of these communities were created to gather Inuit in certain areas, to be part of Canada. They can say that we are Canadian. We cannot live as we used to live, living however we wanted, camping and travelling. We all need to be living in a community now. In the past, camps were broken and some families were told to get rid of their dogs... to start living in communities. But we are still paying for those changes that were given to us Inuit. We cannot rewind and change things, but we do need to rewind and understand exactly what pain was caused.

Let's face these problems and work on them. I am asking you to be open. Take out your pain. That is the only way we can work on our healing. After healing we can help others. Let's release; let's let go of the pain. Let's let go of the changes that were dumped on us. Tell us what pains, what changes we had to face reluctantly. We went through many, many changes in our lives. It was all a bit too much for us. We need to work gradually with another person... you do not dump all kinds of duties, all kinds of responsibilities on people all at once... too much was dumped on us all at once! It was issued we would accept it. Yes, we have to accept it, but it was too much. It is way too much. (in Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, 2011q)

Participants in the second Kitikmeot Regional Gathering agreed that healing is partly about collaborative decision-making, access to the land and living according to Inuit values (NRPR, 2012b, 3). The Roundtable public engagement process also identified both the strengthening of relationships, particularly relationships with elders, and education in Inuit parenting as part of the collective healing that must happen for poverty reduction to be successful in Nunavut. Family and community wholeness are seen as vital to poverty reduction (Kivalliq Facilitator Workshop 2, 2011; NRPR, 2012b). Inuit ways of *Inunnguiniq*, of making human-beings or childrearing, were disrupted by resettlement, throwing family relationships into upheaval (Karetak Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015). Parenting is therefore an important part of poverty reduction and an entire Roundtable meeting was devoted to parenting in the spring of 2014 (NRPR, 2014b; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

The elders from across Nunavut say that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, initially, was destroyed by the income support system and that Inuit today, you know, one of the reasons why we

have high youth suicide rates and family dysfunction etc. etc... is that, through colonization people were — the Canadian government specifically wanted to make people dependent. And in creating this dependency, all of the processes that were in place, in Inuit — integral to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, were set aside. And those processes were dedicated to creating self-reliant, capable individuals. So the result is, we don't have self-reliance, we have dependence. And we don't have capable individuals, we have a whole bunch of fragile egg people who want to be supported through life. So that's what, from the elders' perspective, that's why *parenting* for example — interventions in parenting become a very important piece. And not just interventions in parenting, but revitalizing parenting from the Inuit perspective, which was a process called *Inunnguiniq*. So, these concerns that are rising from the grassroots *have* been heard at discussions at the Roundtable and that's why in the spring, the meeting centred on parenting. And that's why I was there doing the presentation on *Inunnguiniq* curriculum. So originally people would have thought: Oh, they're talking about poverty reduction — never suspecting that parenting might be a key topic. But because of concerns coming out of the communities, parenting has *become* a key topic. And not just parenting but *redefining* relationships I think is part of everything that's happening in Roundtable. And redefining relationships is about a proactive approach to decolonizing, to healing. Healing is a huge theme that came up. And rebuilding the strength that Inuit always had, as a self-reliant people. (Tagalik Interview, 2015)

The Makimaniq Plan's thematic areas of action do the Roundtable's public engagement process credit. They reflect the concerns that community members voiced early on in the process and that the Roundtable participants are generally supportive of the process (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Karetak Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015). However participatory methods are slow, iterative ones, which do not immediately produce outcomes. Furthermore, the focus of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's efforts is long-term societal change. As a result, those who have not been directly involved in the work of the Roundtable have raised concerns about the time, money and work put into the public engagement process and the lack of tangible progress that has come out of it.

6.5 Praise and Criticism for the Roundtable and The Makimaniq Plan

The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has faced considerable criticism. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, *The Makimaniq Plan's* lack of a definition of poverty has been sharply criticized. People question how poverty can be reduced if there is no clear understanding of what you were working to eliminate. The public and the media have also challenged the

Roundtable's lack of acknowledgment of the root causes of poverty (Anonymous Interview C, 2015; Ejesiak Interview, 2015; Nunatsiaq News, 2012e; Redfern Interview, 2015).

Another criticism the Secretariat faces is the lack of tangible outcomes of the Roundtable and *The Makimaniq Plan* to date. In the week before I travelled to Iqaluit, Nunavut MLAs raised questions about the amount of money being spent on poverty reduction and about the number of meetings being held without anything to show for them.

I want to ask a question related to one of my colleagues' question, if I am correct in recalling the member, I believe it was Mr. Mikkungwak. Last fall I believe he raised the question on the timing of the meetings as he asked, when will you stop discussing this in meetings and planning? When will you start implementing the recommendations that have been raised, and stop this continuous round of meetings? In our eyes, all you are doing is spending money on endless meetings.

When, which is my question: when will the funds be released and available to assist the people experiencing food insecurity or living in poverty and not expend it on meetings? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

— Hon. Joe Enook, (Hansard, March 6, 2015, p. 22)

If we are looking at this, in a four-year span, \$9 million is possibly going to be spent mainly on administration, except for \$800,000 a year for the homeless shelter, which comes out to roughly \$3 million. In four years, it seems like \$5 million is going to be spent on administration and meetings. If that is, in fact, true, are we going to be spending \$5 million in a four-year period for meetings to talk about poverty and actually not doing anything about it? Thank you.

— Hon. George Hickes, (Hansard, March 6, 2015, p. 34)

Many of my interview participants were skeptical of the Roundtable process and *The Makimaniq Plan*. Some spoke about a culture within the GN of poorly organized meetings with minimal outcome (Anonymous Interview B, 2015, Anonymous Interview F, 2015; Redfern Interview, 2015). Some were concerned that the Anti-Poverty Secretariat is stretching itself too thinly, as it manages the Food Security Coalition, as well as the Roundtable itself. (Anonymous Interview C, 2015). Others wondered how a government was going to address as complex an issue as poverty within a four-year electoral mandate (Ejesiak Interview, 2015). Madeleine Redfern voiced her concern that that GN, in emphasizing collaboration, is neglecting its responsibility to lead in policy implementation, placing the burden on individual communities instead:

Some of the recommendations on how to alleviate poverty are legitimate. And some of it less so. So the GN's mindset was we the government alone can't reduce poverty. And I agree! The government alone can't probably do it. Nor should be required to do it. But they have a big, big role. But their mindset was like: It's not our responsibility so let's — it's the community's responsibility to address poverty (Redfern Interview, 2015).

Underlying all this, the criticisms of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction seem to reflect a general scepticism of the GN and its efforts to produce social change. This is not altogether a surprise given the profound disappointment many Nunavummiut feel about the perceived failure of the Nunavut project. This scepticism may indicate that feelings towards the GN remain largely unchanged since the 2009 Report Card was released. It should be noted, however, that the criticisms I encountered in conducting this research come primarily from people who are not and have not been intimately involved in the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. I would argue that this is not a reflection of failure on the part of the GN or the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, rather that such criticisms indicate that Nunavummiut are engaging with the legal and political systems of the state with scepticism and caution because the high expectations for an Inuit territorial government have not been met.

Participants in the Roundtable public engagement process are aware of the criticism it has faced. They admit that not only has there been criticism from the public, but that officials higher up in government in the GN have been difficult to convince of the importance of the Roundtable, particularly because the Roundtable does not have a pool of money to draw on in order to finance poverty reduction activities (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

In contrast to the critics however, the majority of people I spoke with who have been engaged in the public engagement process are positive about the work of the Roundtable and see it as a highly inclusive process. Roundtable meetings are held in English with simultaneous Inuktitut translation and many of the discussions during the early public engagement process, particularly at the community level, were held in Inuktitut (Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, 2011q; Clyde River Community Dialogue, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Grise Fjord Community Dialogue, 2011; Hall Beach Community Dialogue, 2011; Karetak Interview, 2015; NRPR, 2011h, 2011i, 2011j, 2011k; Pangnirtung Community Dialogue, 2011; Pond Inlet Community Dialogue, 2011a,

2011c, 2011d, 2011g, 2011h; Rankin Inlet Community Dialogue, 2011). The emphasis on collaboration and community input has also been well received. The people I interviewed who have participated in the Roundtable feel that this makes it a very democratic process, one that is reflective of territorial interests and not dominated by Iqaluit-based officials (Karetak Interview, 2015; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015;). Indeed, it was cited by several participants as the best example of Article 32 in practice (Lightfoot Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015).

I think it's a very healthy, very positive process that will begin to have some really exciting results. It's a long haul process. But I think that like most long haul processes, you get a much better result and you hopefully get a result that is sustainable (Tagalik Interview, 2015).

This positive response to the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction also comes across in the records of the early public engagement meetings (NRPR, 2012a, 2012b). That is not to say that there has been no criticism of the process from participants. Early meeting records include requests that poverty reduction not be a matter of preaching solutions, as well as concerns about the slow pace of action (NRPR, 2011d, 2012c). Participants at regional gatherings voiced concerns about the small numbers of elders and youth who attended the regional meetings and about the general lack of youth representation through the early Roundtable process. The Anti-Poverty Secretariat acknowledged these criticisms of the process directly during the Regional Gatherings held in 2012, following the release of *The Makimaniq Plan*. Despite these criticisms however, the early records of the Roundtable reflect that participants' responses to the public engagement process have been positive overall, in large part due to the fact that the Roundtable offers a space for discussions about healing and wellbeing (NRPR, 2011q, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat/Pangnirtung Inter-Departmental Group, 2012).

6.6 The Impact of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

"We will achieve this in the later days. Our goal may be very far away."

— Curtis Taqaugaq, in NRPR, 2012c

"I think the slow, plodding, chaotic, incremental conversations are actually the change."

— Anonymous Interview G, Iqaluit, 2015

“This file, although it might seem to some to be a slow-moving file, touches on every single social issue that we deal with in our department [Department of Social Policy at QIA] and, I would argue, in the territory.”

— Bethany Scott, Iqaluit, 2015

The lack of an official definition of poverty in Nunavut has allowed two differing discussions of poverty to coexist in the territory. One takes a monetary perspective of poverty and places heavy emphasis on indicators. The other is a holistic approach that focuses on social exclusion and the causes of poverty in the territory. Within the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction itself, these two discussions co-exist. The thematic areas for poverty reduction produced by the Roundtable’s public engagement process include issues such as income assistance, education, and economic development, the indicators for which measurement indicators may be straightforward to develop. Indeed, throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, development practitioners and experts have sought to govern and manage the poor using indicators in these areas to measure the performance of poverty reduction strategies. However, *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction* has also placed considerable emphasis on collaboration and community participation, and healing and wellbeing. The latter, in particular, are difficult to measure. This makes Nunavut’s poverty reduction strategy and the Roundtable an easy target for criticism. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, some Nunavummiut question how it is possible to effectively reduce something that hasn’t been measured. However, the emphasis that the Roundtable participants I interviewed placed on healing and wellbeing reflects the politicized discussion about poverty that the Roundtable has fostered.

Rather than simply designing a program of intervention directed by experts, who in turn shape the understandings of poverty held by Nunavummiut, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has engaged residents of the territory in a participatory process that values collective knowledge and collaboration and attempted to make the Anti-Poverty Secretariat accountable to them. This has fostered the politicized discussion about poverty that has identified federal

programs of intervention and improvement in the Eastern Arctic and the dispossession and cultural upheaval that followed their implementation in the mid-20th century as the root causes of poverty. It has also fostered a transformative vision of the future of Nunavut. As a result, *The Makimaniq Plan* identifies collaboration, healing and wellbeing as thematic areas of focus that Nunavummiut feel will address the structures that have created poverty. The Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat's public engagement model has turned the Roundtable into a forum in which the trauma of colonial administration, Inuit resettlement and the subsequent societal and political structures in the region can be publicly acknowledged. This process, originally a program of improvement overseen by Inuit and non-Inuit experts, challenges the existing system of governance in a way that threatens the power of individuals and government structures and may make the strategy and the Roundtable unpopular. However, several of the Roundtable participants I spoke with argued that the work of the Roundtable is already creating change.

Indeed, it is clear from the interviews I conducted, that one of the key outcomes of the Roundtable's participatory public engagement process, is that there is now more space for a holistic discussion about the social issues that Nunavummiut face. My interviews also revealed the interconnected nature of the social crises faced by Nunavummiut and therefore the enormous complexity of attempting to tackle any one of them. While in Iqaluit, I heard poverty in Nunavut described as a series of chaotic, unplanned events, such as material hardship, family crises, and sudden deaths, that are ongoing, compounded, and that must be continuously navigated (Ejesiak Interview, 2015). The thought of attempting to address all of this at once is overwhelming. A holistic approach to poverty reduction offers some guidance in addressing an enormous social crisis, and *The Makimaniq Plan* sees action taken to address any of these issues (education, physical and mental health, food insecurity, overcrowding, unemployment) as part of the poverty reduction process, thus creating an inclusive space for Nunavummiut to work towards the same objective in whatever way they chose (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

The holistic approach of *The Makimaniq Plan* also highlights the crucial role that healing and wellbeing play in reducing poverty in Nunavut. Having the *space* to talk about healing and

wellbeing, is seen by Roundtable participants to be particularly important because it contributes to a public discussion about the impact of colonialism on Inuit society (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Karetak Interview, 2015; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

I don't think as many people were saying as loudly as some people do now that poverty is linked with the history of colonization. Of course, people often talked about that in conversation, but I don't think the blatant connection had been made so strongly in a formal, large-scale public forum before. We talked about the connections between historical colonialism and current policies and procedures and how these are linked with poverty today. We also talked what steps we want to take today to mitigate the impacts of colonialism and historical trauma. I think many people have a strong gut sense of the connections between the massive social changes Inuit have gone through in the last hundred years and conditions of poverty today. The roundtable forum supported participants to strengthen their collective voice about the past and hopes for the future (Anonymous Interview G, 2015).

Many young Inuit today, although they are now several generations removed from the upheaval and transformation of lifestyle that occurred in the mid-twentieth century, have inherited the trauma of that period (QTC, 2015). The pain and the lasting impact of transition and resettlement in the form of poverty, dysfunctional family and community relationships, and alcohol and substance abuse, comes through clearly in the Roundtable records, particularly in the Community Dialogue sessions, the transcript of the Elders' Workshop and in the Youth Photovoice Project carried out in 2011. However, it is not just grief that comes through in the texts I studied for this research. Running throughout the Roundtable records is the determined resilience of Nunavummiut in the face of massive social change and the resolve to transform the lives of Nunavummiut in the future by addressing the root cause of poverty. In order to do this, Roundtable participants believe that attention must be paid, both to recent history and to the legacies of the federal colonial administration. Relationships must be strengthened, between individuals, generations, within communities and access to the land must be increased:

Focusing on the root causes of poverty involves promoting opportunities for healing, such as those that take people out on the land.... Access to the land is the doorway to healing, and to acquiring self-knowledge in relation to one's community, to the land, to the past, and to the present (NRPR, 2012b, p. 16).

The public space in which the trauma of the policies and programs that have contributed to poverty in Nunavut can be acknowledged has only recently been created. Between 2007 and

2010, as it gathered testimony on what Inuit experienced in the twenty-five year period from 1950 to 1975, the Qikiqtani Truth Commission began to open this space for the first time (QTC, 2015). The Inuit Sub-Commission of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission held hearings across the Arctic in 2011 and 2012, offering another opportunity to publicly acknowledge the upheaval that Inuit have experienced in recent history (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015). The early Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction meetings coincided with the hearings for both of these Commissions. With the Roundtable seeking to develop a poverty reduction strategy by means of a vision of happy, healthy communities, it is not a coincidence that it has also become a space for discussion about the impacts of colonialism (Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015). These discussions have played an important role in creating a vision for social change in Nunavut.

Before our community discussions, there was no strong consensus on what issues are associated with reducing poverty, at least not within government. Some people assumed that the public engagement process would confirm that what we really need to reduce poverty in Nunavut is more jobs. Now, after the public engagement process, we have broad consensus on a holistic vision of poverty reduction and a stronger collective sense of a shared vision of change. “Where do we [see] ourselves going,” we asked each other (Anonymous Interview G, 2015).

The Qikiqtani Truth Commission presented its final report and recommendations to QIA in 2010 and released its thematic reports and community histories in 2013. The report offered 25 recommendations in four areas: acknowledging and healing past wrongs, strengthening Inuit governance, strengthening Inuit culture and creating healthy communities (QIA, 2013). In his discussion about Inuit governance, Commissioner James Iglooliorte noted that in the years since the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) and the creation of Nunavut, initial expectations for an Inuit-led government have not been met. The Commissioner recommended that the Government of Nunavut, in keeping the NLCA, should work collaboratively with Inuit organizations to advance Inuit goals and aspirations (QIA, 2013). The collaborative work of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction addresses that particular recommendation.

The Roundtable’s collaborative process is unique in Nunavut. The vision driving it is that, in time, the methods of public engagement and community participation will expand beyond the

Roundtable and the Food Security Coalition into other government departments and operations (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015). It is too early to know if this will be the case, or how long the Roundtable will continue to exist in its current form. While I was in Iqaluit, I heard hints of shifting political priorities, which may mean change for the operations of the Roundtable (Anonymous Interview G, 2015). However, in the short-term, I see value in the Roundtable's collaborative nature. Indeed, it seems to me that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has been an important social process in the territory. It has engaged Nunavummiut in policy development and fostered a politicized discussion about poverty that challenges the status quo, precisely because of its holistic and collaborative approach to poverty reduction. By bringing together people from different backgrounds to tackle the issue of poverty together, the Roundtable has created a space where people can give voice to concerns and ideas, and then work to address them. The processes that allow the voices and visions of Nunavummiut to be heard are a crucial part of poverty reduction because they allow Nunavummiut to challenge the structures that contribute to the social ills they face (Anonymous Interview G, 2015; Lightfoot Interview, 2015; McKenna Interview, 2015; Obed Interview, 2015; Scott Interview, 2015; Tagalik Interview, 2015).

Of course, through this [public engagement] process, we weren't able to reduce poverty in [immediate] concrete, measurable ways, but from my perspective the process of engaging citizens in planning and taking action is how poverty gets reduced for the next generations—by increasing individuals' sense that they can rise up, on their own terms (Anonymous Interview G, 2015)

6.7 Conclusion

The differing voices and perspectives on poverty and poverty reduction presented in this chapter offer a sense of how complex the issue is in Nunavut. Although poverty has been a political issue since 2009, there is no political or public consensus about the meaning of the term or even of the appropriateness of its use in the context of Nunavut. The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction faces criticism because it has not yet produced a definition of poverty, as well as for its perceived lack of activities to reduce poverty. Many Nunavummiut remain sceptical about the likely success of the GN's poverty reduction efforts.

However, the Roundtable has been an important forum for politicized discussions about poverty. The Roundtable's public engagement model is a unique approach to policy development in the territory and has helped to create this discussion, shifting Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts away from the technical focus of poverty reduction experts and towards an approach that acknowledges the structures that contribute to the production of poverty in the territory. Nunavummiut have identified twentieth century federal administration and the programs of intervention and improvement that relocated and resettled Inuit into communities as the root cause of poverty. The discussions about the legacies of colonialism held at the Roundtable, have highlighted the fundamental importance of healing and wellbeing to Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts and shaped the territory's poverty reduction strategy. The focus of *The Makimaniq Plan* on healing and wellbeing are part of efforts to address the lasting impact of that social, political, cultural and economic upheaval. The Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, in an effort to align the work of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction with Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, has created a forum in which the trauma of colonial administration and resettlement can be acknowledged and where work towards societal transformation can begin.

7 Chapter: Concluding Thoughts

From the beginning we always felt like these answers weren't simple because the questions and the discussions had never really been had. We know that people have a desire to learn. But at the same time we have a very low grade 12 graduation rates. And we have very few people with university degrees. [Pause]. It's just the way in which everything has happened in Inuit society over the last fifty and sixty years that has led us up to this point in time. So when you talk about poverty, it's not just giving people more money. Or, it's not just reducing the rate of food insecurity. In many ways it's healing from the past and then having the opportunity provided for you in the present, which will allow you to succeed in the future. And the opportunity in the present isn't necessarily just replicating what opportunities exist for people in the South. It is making community-level decisions about how to raise children, about how to educate, about what sort of opportunities are available in communities, about what language is used in the workforce. All of these things play into the opportunities that people have and ultimately the way that they feel about themselves. If we are empowered in these decisions hopefully poverty will be reduced within the society, I guess maturing into a society that has a foot in two worlds.

— Natan Obed, Iqaluit 2015

Genuine collaboration will lead to that reconciliation [between Inuit traditional forms of governance and the forms of governance used in Nunavut today] and return to people the process of making decisions. This is the path to self-reliance, to healing the root causes of poverty.

—The Makimaniq Plan, 2011

When Nunavut came into being in 1999, the vision of the territory's future was that an Inuit-run territory would improve the lives of Inuit and incorporate Inuit values and customs into the structure, policies and programs of government. Ten years on, *Qanukkanni? The GN Report Card* found that although many Nunavummiut remained inspired by the vision for Nunavut, they felt disillusioned by the growing distance between the Government of Nunavut (GN) and the people it governs. The Report Card also voiced concerns about growing levels of poverty in the territory and recommended that the territory develop a poverty reduction strategy. Under its 2009-2013 mandate, the GN sought to develop a poverty reduction strategy in collaboration with Inuit organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations and Nunavummiut more broadly. The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process therefore engaged with stakeholders across the territory to develop *The Makimaniq Plan: A Collaborative Approach to Poverty Reduction*.

Because *The Makimaniq Plan* does not offer an official definition of poverty in Nunavut, I embarked upon this research project seeking to i) identify and characterize the debates about poverty that exist at the territory and community level; ii) examine what the term ‘poverty’ means to Nunavummiut and how the term is defined; and iii) explore the policy implications of these debates and definitions. Through this research I have learned that poverty is an immensely complex topic. Although, it might at first appear to be a straightforward issue connected to levels of income, an examination of the literature on poverty, from both the perspectives of development practitioners and critical scholars of poverty, reveals that this is not the case.

Development scholars and practitioners do not agree on a universal definition of poverty. This is because the meaning of the term is context-specific. Definitions of the term are often reflective the personal interests of the people who develop them, people who, often, do not have a lived experience of poverty themselves. Furthermore, the development of poverty indicators often depoliticizes the issue in a way that makes it difficult to address its root causes. Participatory poverty assessments, such as the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction’s public engagement process, create the opportunity for the perspectives of those who experience poverty to shape the policies and programs that will address it. However, in so doing, participatory approaches to poverty lay bare the complexity of a lived experience of poverty and reveal the arbitrariness of developing a definition of the issue. And yet definitions of poverty are important from a policy perspective because they direct the focus of any poverty reduction plan and because they offer direction for the development of indicators of poverty to facilitate the assessment of a poverty reduction strategy’s success. This has material implications for those whose lives are affected by poverty reduction policies and programs.

The study of poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut shows this tangle clearly. Indeed, the fact that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has not yet released an official definition of poverty, despite four years of participatory process points both to the complexity and to the political nature of defining the issue. As a result, two understandings of poverty exist alongside each other in Nunavut, a monetary approach, which dominates media coverage and discussions of poverty in the legislature, and The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction’s participatory,

social exclusion approach, which is written into the territory's poverty reduction strategy.

According to *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*, tackling poverty in Nunavut is not simply a matter of offering skills training for employment, improving income support, or reducing food insecurity by making store-bought food accessible and promoting community freezers. It is all of these things, but there it is also more than this. The Roundtable sees poverty reduction as a holistic process. Only with a holistic approach, can the social vision of a happy, healthy Nunavummiut become reality.

Critical Indigenous studies, as well as the study of settler colonialism and governmentality can offer insight into why a holistic approach to poverty reduction is necessary in Nunavut. An examination of settler colonial relations reveals the relationship between dispossession and evolving forms of governmentality. The ongoing objective of settler colonialism is the control of land and resources for industry and profit (Scott, 1995; Alfred, 2009; Coulthard, 2014a, 2014b). In Canada, state domination has historically ensured the success of this objective through dispossession and paternalistic, racist programs of intervention conceived to improve Indigenous populations in Canada. More recently, governmental programs of improvement have been replaced by the politics of recognition (Coulthard, 2014a; 2014b). Through the negotiations of land claims, this form of governmentality attempts to simultaneously accommodate Indigenous nationhood, while securing Crown sovereignty and capitalist interests in Canada. Capitalist relations however, are an assault on the relationships Indigenous peoples have with each other and the natural environment (Coulthard, 2014b). When poverty in Nunavut is viewed through this lens, it becomes clear why a holistic approach to poverty reduction is so important. It also helps to explain the particular emphasis of the territory's poverty reduction efforts on healing and wellbeing.

The Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process has traced the roots of poverty in Nunavut to colonial administration of the Canadian North and the federal programs of intervention and improvement that began to take shape in the mid-twentieth century. Federal policies of relocation and resettlement of that period have resulted in considerable social and cultural trauma and have negatively affected Inuit self-reliance, contributing to the many social

crises that exist in Nunavut today, including poverty. While there is, as of yet, no territorial definition of poverty, the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's public engagement process has created space for a politicized discussion about poverty. This is reflected in *The Makimaniq Plan*'s discussion about the root causes of poverty in Nunavut, in the Roundtable records and in my interview participants' comments about the loss of self-reliance among Nunavummiut. Nunavut's poverty reduction strategy therefore, rather than focusing on technical problems and their indicators, has widened its focus to include collaboration, healing and wellbeing as a focus of poverty reduction efforts. Individual healing from the trauma of the past will help to ensure success in personal endeavours such as education and employment, and improving self-reliance. This, coupled with a concerted effort to work towards individual wellbeing, will lay the foundations for healthy relationships within families and between youth and elders. Stronger relationships between individuals will, in turn, help to achieve the vision of a stronger sense of community that was articulated in the Community Dialogue Sessions.

On a societal level, healing must address the legacies of governance and administrative structures that have historically excluded Inuit perspectives from decision-making processes. The vision behind the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement was a form of self-government that incorporated Inuit perspectives and knowledge into all aspects of governance, including in the realm of social policy. As *Qanukkanni? The GN Report Card* revealed, this has not yet been fully realized. Here again, critical Indigenous studies, settler colonialism and governmentality can offer some insight. Specifically, these theoretical approaches can help to explain why the improvements that Nunavummiut hoped would be made to government programs and services following the creation of the territory have not yet come to pass.

The Nunavut Land Claim Agreement was negotiated between Inuit and the Canadian government through the politics of recognition. The Agreement therefore reflects both the degree to which the State was willing to accommodate different modes of life, different political systems, and different economies and the way in which Inuit negotiators decided to pursue the Inuit vision of self-government given the framework imposed by the State. The resulting

structure of Inuit public government is based on the modified Westminster parliamentary model that was already in place in the Northwest Territories. As a result, the structure of the GN does not align itself easily with the Inuit way of governance.

This, to me, is what makes the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction such an interesting topic of study. In an effort to align social policy development with Article 32 of the Land Claim Agreement, the GN's Anti-Poverty Secretariat designed an inclusive and participatory public engagement process, endorsed and co-chaired by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, where all Nunavummiut could collaborate on the development of poverty reduction policy. While seeking to transform the way in which social policy is developed in Nunavut, the Roundtable has become a collaborative, participatory forum in which the historical causes of poverty can be publicly acknowledged and challenged. The Inuit leaders involved in the negotiations of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement argued that the Agreement was not itself an end goal, but rather part of a process of political empowerment. The Roundtable may be another step in that process. There can be no doubt that that structural and societal change is a long-term effort, but over time it is possible that the Roundtable and *The Makimaniq Plan* may help to transform government structures and community relationships so that they are more in line with both the vision for an Inuit-led government negotiated in the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement and with the vision for a happy, healthy Nunavut articulated in the Community Dialogue Sessions.

7.1 The Beginnings of Learning: Opportunities for Future Research

Because Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts are only recently underway and given *The Makimaniq Plan*'s holistic approach to long-term change, there are considerable opportunities for future studies on the topic. There are four areas of research that would, from my perspective, make for interesting and useful research on poverty reduction in Nunavut. The first is a long-term study of *The Makimaniq Plan* to assess its success in reducing poverty. Once an official definition and indicators of poverty are released by the Roundtable, it will be easier to assess how successful the strategy is at addressing the social crises the territory faces and to compare Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Strategy with those in other strategies in Canada. A comparative study of poverty reduction efforts in the three territories, particularly the Northwest Territories

might also be interesting. A second area for future research would be a study of the long-term effect (if any) that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has on transforming government operations and bringing social policy development more in line with Article 32 of the NLCA. However, both of these studies can only be conducted several years down the road.

In the short-term, a study of community responses to the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and *The Makimaniq Plan* would add to the study of Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts that I have begun in this thesis and may offer more concrete insight into how Nunavummiut understand poverty. Another opportunity for future research is an in-depth study of *The Makimaniq Plan*'s holistic lens. For example, the insights my research offered into the issues contributing to food insecurity in Nunavut, discussed in Chapter 6, would be interesting to pursue in a larger research project. Many of the areas of focus in *The Makimaniq Plan*, including food security, are already the subject of a considerable body of research. However, a study of the Plan's holistic approach to poverty reduction and the interconnected nature of the issues the Roundtable is dealing with would offer a new perspective on the topic of study that would, in my opinion, be both challenging and rewarding.

7.2 The Beginnings of Learning – What I Know Now

I am grateful for the insights and time my research participants shared with me, as well as for the access I was given to the records of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. From these records and interviews I have learned about humility, generosity and forgiveness. I have learned about the role of strong families and communities in making human beings. I have learned about the importance of healing the heart and nurturing the spirit in the transformation of individuals and societies. Writing this thesis has been my attempt at a beginning in learning about poverty and poverty reduction in Nunavut. I hope that it is a good beginning and that the findings of this research prove useful to those who work in poverty reduction in Nunavut.

Poverty in Nunavut is an immense issue and the challenge of poverty reduction in the territory is compounded by its interconnected nature. A hundred pages does not do justice to enormity of the

issue or to the many differing perspectives and voices that can be heard in the discussions about poverty in Nunavut. This thesis can only offer a glimpse into the complexities and challenges of poverty reduction in the territory. It is only a beginning, the product of the beginning of my own learning about poverty reduction, Nunavut and the Canadian Arctic. Since embarking on this research, I know more intimately the history of the region and its politics. I have a better understanding of the hope and inspiration offered by the vision of Nunavut, as well as the heartbreaks that Nunavummiut confront on a daily basis. This research has reaffirmed my desire to engage in work towards a more equitable, just and inclusive future for all Canadians. I know now that this is a field I would like to continue to pursue, be it academically or professionally.

At the same time, learning about the settler colonialism in Canada and the colonial production of poverty has required me to acknowledge my family's complex colonial complicity in the history of Canada and challenged my ideas about how I might be able to contribute to such a future. My ideas about poverty reduction and development learned during my Bachelors degree have been challenged. Any future work that I pursue in this field will be shaped by an understanding of the importance of examining the root causes of poverty and the role of historical processes in creating social conditions seen today. I question how poverty can be effectively reduced from within the structures that produce it.

In the context of Nunavut however, I believe that the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction may be doing just that. Its vision for a happy, healthy Nunavut was created by Nunavummiut themselves. Collaborative and participatory Roundtable discussions have highlighted the need to address the trauma of the past. The discussions are an attempt to challenge decision-making structures inherited from colonial governments. The discussions themselves are important.

The positivity of the Roundtable participants I spoke with is catching. In the midst of immense social crisis, members of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction see the slow, iterative, public engagement process as the foundations of change. There may not yet be any tangible or measurable outcomes from the Roundtable process, but the beginnings are there. And beginnings are important.

Appendices

Appendix A Plain Language Summary of Research Findings

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

“The Beginnings of Learning”: Attempting to Understand Poverty and Poverty Reduction in Nunavut

By: Margaret Crump
Supervisor: Dr. Frances Abele
MA Thesis in Political Economy
Carleton University
December 2015

Background

Definitions of poverty matter. Differences in values have resulted in the monitoring of different variables and indicators related to poverty. This in turn leads to differing policy interventions with different areas of focus, which has material implications for those whose lives are affected by poverty reduction policies and programs. The way in which poverty is understood in Nunavut is therefore key to understanding the territory’s poverty reduction efforts.

Since 2011, the Government of Nunavut (GN) and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) have co-chaired the Nunavut Roundtable on Poverty Reduction (NRPR), which, through a series of public engagement meetings at the community and regional levels, produced *The Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*. The strategy has since been enshrined into law through the *Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act*. Although it includes six thematic areas of focus (Collaboration and Community Participation; Healing and Wellbeing; Education and Skills Development; Food Security; Housing and Income Support, Community and Economic Development), *The Makimaniq Plan* does not offer a definition of poverty.

My Masters research sought to develop a better understanding of the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and the *The Makimaniq Plan*. It aimed to i) identify and characterize the debates about poverty in Nunavut that exist at the territorial and community-level; ii) examine what the term ‘poverty’ means to Nunavummiut and how the term is defined; and iii) explore the policy implications of these debates and definitions.

Methodology and Theoretical Frameworks

The data collected for this research was collected over a two-month period in the spring of 2015. It draws on the records of the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat’s public engagement process, Hansard records, texts explicitly linked to *The Makimaniq Plan* and the NRPR, and media coverage of poverty in the territory, as well as from the 18 semi-structured interviews I conducted in person and over the phone, in both Iqaluit and Ottawa. Interview participants were identified through snowball sampling, with each interview participant suggesting other people to

speak to next. Interview participants included people with first-hand experience with the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction process, as well as several community members who have been aware of the process, but not participated in the Roundtable. Only five of my interview participants were Inuit. As a result, the interviews do not reflect an Inuit perspective of poverty. However, they do offer insights into the operations of the NRPR and the way that poverty is viewed by some of those who are working towards its reduction.

I drew on two bodies of academic literature to help make sense of the data I collected. The first body of literature deals with the various understandings of poverty among international development practitioners and in Canada. This helped me to understand the NRPR's approach to policy-making and poverty reduction. The second body of literature examines Canada's colonial history and the production of inequality between Indigenous peoples and settlers. This helped me to make sense of the history of resettlement and relocation in the Eastern Arctic and the loss of self-reliance among Inuit, which *The Makimaniq Plan* has identified as one of the root causes of poverty in Nunavut.

Overview of Key Findings

- There is no single understanding of poverty in Nunavut. Discussions about poverty in the media and in the legislative assembly reflect a monetary understanding of poverty and poverty reduction and have been particularly focused on the cost of food and food insecurity in the territory. In contrast, the understanding of poverty reduction held by members of the NRPR is a holistic one. While job skills and training and improving income assistance and community development are seen as important, they are not the sole focus of poverty reduction efforts. Instead, the Plan's six thematic areas of focus are interconnected.
- The Makimaniq Plan's holistic understanding of poverty is the product of the participatory public engagement model that was used to develop the strategy. Between March and November 2011, 50 Community Dialogue sessions, four Regional Roundtables, and one Poverty Summit were held across Nunavut. The meetings were designed to build upon the collective knowledge of Nunavummiut to work towards a vision of a happy, healthy territory and develop a poverty reduction strategy. An examination of the records of the early NRPR public engagement process reveals that *The Makimaniq Plan* is a direct reflection of the concerns and priorities identified by community members in the Dialogue sessions.
- The NRPR's participatory public engagement process was designed to serve as a model for applying Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) to social policy-making. Article 32 states that Inuit are required to have the opportunity to be involved in the development of policies, programs and services related to social and cultural issues in Nunavut. However, the GN has not yet effectively developed a model for working with Nunavummiut and Inuit to develop social policy. The NRPR was designed by the Anti-Poverty Secretariat to offer a framework through which such collaboration could be fostered.
- The NRPR's participatory public engagement process helped to create a space for a politicized discussion about the root causes of poverty. The NRPR's inclusive and participatory nature allowed Nunavummiut to take the discussions about colonial administration, relocation and resettlement that were occurring in other forums over the same period (2010-2012), like the Inuit Sub-Commission of the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission and the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, and incorporate them into the discussion of poverty. *The Makimaniq Plan* reflects the politicized nature of the discussions of public engagement process. In its second paragraph the Plan draws a clear connection between the transformation of Inuit government structures in the 20th century, the loss of self-reliance and poverty in Nunavut. This is unusual for poverty reduction policy, which generally is developed with the help of external experts and tends to problematize poverty in a way that de-politicizes it.

- The politicized discussion about poverty in Nunavut has resulted an emphasis on healing and wellbeing in *The Makimaniq Plan*. A depoliticized approach to poverty reduction limits the degree to which those experiencing poverty can challenge the structures that have created their living conditions. However, the NRPR public engagement process has fostered a politicized discussion about the role of colonial administration in creating inequality in Nunavut. In turn, this has revealed the need to confront the trauma of relocation and resettlement and promote healing. Roundtable participants believe that doing so will help to transform relationships on an individual and community level, within and without government, and will ensure long-term societal transformation.

Conclusion

The NRPR faces strong criticism because of *The Makimaniq Plan*'s lack of definition of poverty and there is general skepticism about the Roundtable process and Nunavut's poverty reduction strategy, particularly about the cost of the process and lack of tangible outcomes to date. However, the Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, in developing the NRPR, aimed to develop a new model for policy development that would apply Article 32 of the NLCA to the creation of social policy. The inclusive nature of the Roundtable has created a politicized dialogue about poverty that challenges the structures that have created and perpetuate poverty. Societal change is a long-term effort, but the model offered by the NRPR offers a means by which Nunavummiut can challenge the structures that have created poverty in their territory. Finally, the holistic nature of *The Makimaniq Plan* means that poverty reduction is a complex process. Action to address any of the Plan's thematic areas contributes to overall poverty reduction efforts. This means that the findings of this research are part of a larger picture of interconnected pieces. Assessing poverty reduction activities and programs cannot be done in isolation from the large social and policy-context.

Areas for Future Academic Research

Because Nunavut's poverty reduction efforts are only four years along and because *The Makimaniq Plan* takes a holistic approach to poverty reduction, there is considerable room for more study. Below are four topics that, I believe, would offer useful and interesting research for poverty reduction in Nunavut.

- An in-depth study of *The Makimaniq Plan*'s holistic lens;
- A study of community responses to the NRPR and *The Makimaniq Plan*;
- A long-term study of *The Makimaniq Plan* to assess its success in reducing poverty, once an official definition and indicators of poverty have been released by the NRPR;
- A study of the long-term effect, if any, of the NRPR on transforming government operations and bringing the development of social policy more in line with Article 32 of the NLCA.

B.2 Inuktitut Infographic

[illegible]

Appendix C Facilitator Resources

C.1 Makiliqta Survey (English)

Makiliqta Community Dialogue Resources for Participants

Makiliqta Survey

All Nunavummiut deserve to have their basic needs met, so that we can live healthy and satisfying lives. To “reduce poverty” is to take action to ensure that all Nunavummiut have their basic needs met.

We want to hear your views on poverty reduction in your community and in Nunavut.

Please use this survey to share your ideas. Send it to us directly or return it to the community facilitator or the Economic Development Officer in your community. ***The deadline for submission is March 31, 2011.***

Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
PO BOX 1000 STN
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Fax: (867) 975-7880
Email: nrpr@makiliqta.ca

In your opinion...

What are some of the **most important issues** that must be addressed to reduce poverty in our communities?

What are some **actions** that could be taken to reduce poverty and support more Nunavummiut to have their basic needs met?

I will know that my community is healthy and that poverty has been reduced when I see...

Do you have any other comments, ideas or questions that you want to share?

ᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ ! Quana! Thank you!

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C.3 Dialogue Questions (English)

Issues and Ideas for Action

Appendix D List of Public Engagement Meetings 2010-2012

Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction Public Engagement Process

QANUAQ ISUMAVIT EPISODE ON POVERTY REDUCTION		
January 11, 2011	pan-Nunavut (Inuit Broadcasting Corporation)	15 participants
FACILITATOR WORKSHOPS		
February 12, 2011	Iqaluit, Qikiqtani Region	21 participants
February 18, 2011	Iqaluit, Qikiqtani Region	11 participants
February 25, 2011	Kugluktuk, Kitikmeot Region	14 participants
March 1, 2011	Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq Region	9 participants
March 3, 2011	Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq Region	8 participants
March 8, 2011	Cambridge Bay, Kitikmeot Region	5 participants
COMMUNITY DIALOGUES		
Kitikmeot		
March 16, 2011	Kugaaruk Inter-Agency Meeting	14 participants
March 29, 2011	Cambridge Bay Public Workshop	48 participants
March 29, 2011	Cambridge Bay Makiliqta Survey	11 completed
March 29, 2011	Gjoa Haven Public Workshop	30 participants
March 29, 2011	Kugluktuk Public Workshop	10 participants
n/a	Taloyoak Public Workshop	n/a
Kivalliq		
January, 2011	Coral Harbour, Hamlet Discussion	number of participants not recorded
March, 2011	Chesterfield Inlet, Interviews	number of participants not recorded
March, 2011	Baker Lake Meeting with Community Stakeholders	4 participants
12 April, 2011	Arviat Public Meeting	19 participants
12-14 April, 2011	Arviat Elders' "Think Tank"	11 participants
14 April, 2011	Arviat Youth Workshop	10 participants
4 May, 2011	Rankin Inlet Public Workshop	47 participants
Unknown	Whale Cove	Unknown
Qikiqtani		
30 January, 2011	Iqaluit Pilot Workshop	24 participants
1 March, 2011	Arctic Bay Radio Program	number of participants not recorded
9 March, 2011	Arctic Bay Public Workshop	53 participants

11 March, 2011	Qikiqtarjuaq Radio Program	number of participants not recorded
12 March, 2011	Pond Inlet Radio Program	min 18 participants
15 March, 2011	Pond Inlet Public Workshop	number of participants not recorded
15 March, 2011	Iqaluit Elders Workshop	10 participants
15 March, 2011	Hall Beach Public Workshop	26 participants
22 March, 2011	Pond Inlet Poverty Reduction Committee Meeting	8 participants
23 March, 2011	Pond Inlet Focus Group Meeting	number of participants not recorded
24 March, 2011	Qikiqtani Inuit Association Youth Workshop	10 participants
28 March, 2011	Iqaluit Youth Workshop	16 participants
29 March, 2011	Pangnirtung Radio Program	number of participants not recorded
30 March, 2011	Iqaluit Public Workshop	62 participants
31 March, 2011	Pangnirtung Public Workshop	27 participants
31 March, 2011	Qikiqtarjuaq Inter-Agency Workshop	10 participants
1 April, 2011	Iglolik Makiliqta Surveys	entire grade 10 social studies class
2 April, 2011	Qimaavik Women's Shelter Workshop	12 participants
2 April, 2011	Kimirut Public Workshop	9 participants
4 April, 2011	Apex Community Workshop	26 participants
13 April, 2011	Iglolik Poverty Reduction Committee Meeting	7 participants
5 May, 2011	Grise Fjord Public Workshop	number of participants not recorded
18 May, 2011	Clyde River Public Workshop	52 participants
10-12 June, 2011	Pangnirtung Youth Photovoice Project	10 participants
Unknown	Sanikiluaq Public Workshop	50 participants
Unknown	Resolute Bay Workshop	Unknown
Unknown	Cape Dorset Workshop	Unknown
REGIONAL ROUNDTABLES: DEVELOPING "OPTIONS FOR ACTION"		
May 17-19, 2011	Cambridge Bay, Kitikmeot Region	25 participants
May 25-27, 2011	Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq Region	38 participants
June 13-15, 2011	Pond Inlet, North Qikiqtani Region	37 participants
June 22-24, 2011	Iqaluit, South Qikiqtani Region	67 participants
POVERTY SUMMIT		
28-30 November, 2011	Iqaluit	50 participants
REGIONAL GATHERINGS TO DISCUSS THE MAKIMANIQ PLAN		

31 May, 2012	Rankin Inlet, Kivalliq Region	33 participants
12 June, 2012	Cambridge Bay, Kitikmeot Region	21 participants
20 September, 2012	Iqaluit, Qikiqtani Region	35 participants
NUNAVUT FOOD SECURITY SYMPOSIUM		
22-24 January, 2013	Iqaluit	Unknown
FIRST OFFICIAL GATHERING OF THE ROUNDTABLE FOR POVERTY REDUCTION		
10-12 June, 2013	Iqaluit	Unknown
SECOND GATHERING OF THE ROUNDTABLE FOR POVERTY REDUCTION		
12-14 May, 2014	Rankin Inlet	Unknown
THIRD GATHERING OF THE ROUNDTABLE FOR POVERTY REDUCTION		
26-28 November, 2014	Iqaluit	Unknown
NUNAVUT FOOD SECURITY COALITION MEETING		
17-19 March, 2015	Iqaluit	Unknown

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