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## Introduction

In 2015, Pauktuutit received funding through the federal Urban Aboriginal Strategy to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the economic participation of Inuit women across Inuit Nunangat. The goal of the project was to engage diverse stakeholders in each region of the North to explore and categorize the barriers that Inuit women face in securing sustainable employment, through entrepreneurship or in the workplace. In this way, Pauktuutit would be able to build partnerships to collaboratively determine priorities and recommendations for action to increase the engagement of Inuit women in the Arctic economy. The final result of this project is the *Angiqatigik* strategy.

The strategy is a reference on the needs, challenges and goals of Inuit women as they build their futures, provide for their families and contribute to their communities. The information and recommendations presented have been collected from Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut regions, with input from more than 37 organizational stakeholders and 145 Inuit women. It is Pauktuutit's intention that this strategy be used to raise awareness and to inform governments, educational institutions, service providers and the private sector across the North in planning to increase the engagement of Inuit women. It is only through the development of policies, programs, training and services that address the unique responsibilities and barriers faced by Inuit women that we will be able to support their equal participation in the social and economic development of Inuit Nunangat.

## Context

Inuit in Canada consistently experience lower economic participation levels than the Canadian average. In 2012, the national average unemployment rate was approximately 7.3 per cent, while for Inuit, the average unemployment rate was more than double at 16.5 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Across Inuit Nunangat, the Aboriginal People's Survey shows that the average unemployment rate for Inuit was 19.7 per cent. This suggests that Inuit in urban centres are more likely to be engaged with the formal Canadian economy than Inuit across the North.

At first glance, Inuit women across the North appear to be more successful at securing employment than Inuit men. Despite fairly similar participation rates, the unemployment rate for Inuit women in 2012 across Inuit Nunangat was 16.2 per cent, compared with a rate of 23.5 per cent for Inuit men.<sup>2</sup> This means that Inuit women and men are actively seeking employment and entrepreneurship at roughly the same rate, but Inuit women are more likely to be successful.

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1 Statistics Canada. *Table 578-0002 - Aboriginal peoples survey, educational attainment and labour force status, by age group and sex, Inuit population aged 15 years and over, Canada and Inuit Nunangat, occasional (persons unless otherwise noted)*, CANSIM (database).

2 Ibid.



The greater success of Inuit women in the labour market is likely due to higher educational achievement. The Aboriginal People's Survey shows that Inuit women are more likely to complete secondary school or equivalent than Inuit men in Canada.<sup>3</sup> This is important because for both Inuit women and men, adults with only some secondary education experience the highest unemployment rates in Inuit Nunangat.<sup>4</sup> Inuit women are also more likely to have a college diploma or university degree than Inuit men.

While comparatively the data appears positive, there is serious cause for concern around the participation of Inuit women in the Canadian economy and their ability to build strong careers and futures for themselves. The Aboriginal People's Survey shows that only 46 per cent of Inuit women aged 18-44 years old had completed the requirements for a high school diploma or equivalent in 2012.<sup>5</sup> The primary reason for leaving school was pregnancy and/or the need to care for children. Furthermore, the labour market participation rate of Inuit women in Inuit Nunangat is about 60 per cent. This means that approximately two out of every five Inuit women are not working and not looking for work.

The economy of Inuit Nunangat is far more concentrated than it is in southern Canada. The regional economies are reliant upon governments, resource development, transportation and a small private sector for the vast majority of employment. The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) indicates that the northern economy is predominantly driven by the natural resources sector (exploration and development activities) and the public sector (public administration, health care, social assistance and educational services).<sup>6</sup> Employment in federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments remains the single largest source of jobs in the region. As well, servicing the 53 Inuit communities across the North requires a vast transportation network, providing a critical source of employment in each community in the region. Trends in economic growth, and therefore job growth, are highly related to investments in natural resource projects and fluctuations in commodity prices.

Despite the strong opportunities in natural resource development and related activities, Inuit women remain relatively excluded from this sector. The 2011 National Household Survey shows that less than 2.5 per cent of employed Inuit women are in trades and related occupations and about 0.3 per cent are in natural resources and related production.<sup>7</sup> This is supported by the fact

3 Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. *Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2012: Gender Difference in Inuit Education and Employment*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1422283951935/1422284231303>.

4 Statistics Canada. *Table 578-0002 - Aboriginal peoples survey, educational attainment and labour force status, by age group and sex, Inuit population aged 15 years and over, Canada and Inuit Nunangat, occasional (persons unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database)*.

5 Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. *Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2012: Gender Difference in Inuit Education and Employment*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1422283951935/1422284231303>.

6 Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency. (2016, March, 21). *Building a stronger north together*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cannor.gc.ca/eng/1458573988380/1458574067957>.

7 Arriagada, Paula. (2016, February, 23). *First Nations, Metis and Inuit Women*. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14313-eng.htm>.





that only eight per cent of adult Inuit women are educated in a trade.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, more than 35 per cent of employed Inuit men are in trades and related occupations.<sup>9</sup> Where Inuit women are employed in the natural resources sector, they tend to find themselves working in house-keeping, food service and clerical roles. This means that they are likely to be paid less and have lower status and less job security than men.<sup>10</sup>

The National Household Survey data shows that Inuit women are primarily working in (in order of importance): 1) sales and service occupations; 2) education, law and social, community and government services; and, 3) business, finance and administration occupations.<sup>11</sup> In other words, Inuit women are primarily working in the public sector. While the public sector is important across Inuit Nunangat and generally offers job security, leadership opportunities and fair pay, Inuit women appear to experience a significant gender pay gap. Less than six per cent of employed Inuit women are in managerial positions. In the Government of Nunavut (GN), for example, Inuit women tend to occupy positions of low power and low pay. Despite making up nearly 40 per cent of the GN's workforce, they consistently earn the lowest average income compared to Inuit men and non-indigenous women and men.<sup>12</sup>

Overall, this means that while Inuit women are well represented in the workforce, they tend to earn less than Inuit men. In comparison to non-indigenous Canadians, Inuit women are extremely disadvantaged. Both Inuit women with at least a high school education and Inuit women who have not completed high school have lower median incomes than their male counterparts.<sup>13</sup> The composition of income is also different between genders, with Inuit women receiving a greater percentage of their income from government transfer payments than Inuit men. Very few Inuit women earn their income from self-employment. In Nunavut, only about 0.4 per cent of income earned by Inuit women in 2010 was from self-employment.

The data paints a picture of Inuit women facing multiple barriers to sustainable employment. However, the majority of this data is based on projections from limited survey responses.

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8 Statistics Canada. *Table 578-0002 - Aboriginal peoples survey, educational attainment and labour force status, by age group and sex, Inuit population aged 15 years and over, Canada and Inuit Nunangat, occasional (persons unless otherwise noted)*, CANSIM (database).

9 Arriagada, Paula. (2016, February, 23). *First Nations, Metis and Inuit Women*. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14313-eng.htm>.

10 Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. (2106). *Resource in development in northern communities: Local women matter*. Retrieved from: [http://fnn.criaw icref.ca/images/userfiles/files/LWM1\\_IntroductionandOverview.pdf](http://fnn.criaw icref.ca/images/userfiles/files/LWM1_IntroductionandOverview.pdf).

11 Arriagada, Paula. (2016, February, 23). *First Nations, Metis and Inuit Women*. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14313-eng.htm>.

12 Government of Nunavut. (2014, October, 2). 2014-2015 *Public Service Annual Report*. Retrieved from: [http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20170-4\(3\)%20EN%202014-2015%20Public%20Service%20Annual%20Report.pdf](http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20170-4(3)%20EN%202014-2015%20Public%20Service%20Annual%20Report.pdf)

13 Statistics Canada. (2013, November, 13). *Nunavut (Code 62) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Aboriginal Population Profile*. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-011-X2011007. Ottawa. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/aprof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed July 26, 2016).





Anecdotal evidence suggests that the broad socio-economic context of Inuit Nunangat creates many challenges for Inuit women as they look to participate in the economy and pursue secure livelihoods. In turn, without sustainable and secure economic participation, Inuit women may face poverty and broad social and health problems. In order to develop programs and services targeted to support Inuit women, a greater and systematic understanding of these gendered needs and challenges across the North is required.

## Objective

Pauktuutit developed the *Angiqatigik* strategy to reduce the barriers to participation in the economy for Inuit women. By undertaking a comprehensive consultation process, the strategy aims to establish the needs and priorities for Inuit women's economic participation, while building the partnerships required to address these needs. With the strategy, Pauktuutit and its partners have set recommendations targeted to increasing and improving the services, programs and supports available to Inuit women across Inuit Nunangat. It is Pauktuutit's intention that this strategy be used to promote a greater understanding of the specific priorities, needs and challenges faced by Inuit women across the North to support collaborative action moving forward.

## Methodology

The objective of the engagement process was to consult with and gather feedback as broadly as possible from Inuit women, service providers and other key stakeholders in each region of Inuit Nunangat. The findings detailed in the strategy and the resulting recommendations are the outcomes of community engagement sessions with stakeholders and local women across Inuit Nunangat, complemented by an online survey and in-depth interviews as necessary. Throughout the strategy development, Pauktuutit was guided by an advisory committee of regional experts whose feedback on invitation lists, discussion themes and strategy priorities was invaluable.

### Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

Pauktuutit hosted four community engagement sessions across Inuit Nunangat. Larger regional centres were selected to maximize the number of stakeholder organizations and Inuit women consulted. The day-long sessions were held in Iqaluit, NU, Hopedale, NL, Inuvik, NT and Kuujuaq, QC. Recognizing that economic participation is related to diverse and compounded socio-economic issues, Pauktuutit took a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach to engaging organizations. The stakeholders invited included businesses, Inuit organizations, governments, not-for-profits, women's shelters and educational institutions. This facilitated information sharing and partnership building across sectors to maximize capacities and resources. In total, Pauktuutit consulted with more than 65 stakeholders comprising 37 organizations across the North.



Under the guidance of the advisory committee, the session agendas included: a roundtable on existing supports, resources and programs available to support Inuit women's economic participation; discussions of the broader challenges to securing employment and entrepreneurship; a consensus building activity; and, ended with outlining targeted actions.

### **Community Engagement Sessions**

To complement the stakeholder sessions, Pauktuutit held public consultations to collect first-hand perspectives from Inuit women on the barriers they face in engaging in economic participation. The public sessions included strong individual and community perspectives around recommendations for programs and services targeted to support Inuit women. These sessions provided Pauktuutit with a greater understanding of both the regionally-specific and nationally common needs and challenges of Inuit women. It also allowed for comparison between the priorities of the organizational stakeholders and women themselves.

### **Online Survey**

To include the perspectives of women unable to attend the engagement sessions, Pauktuutit launched an online survey publically available to Inuit women across the country. The electronic survey consisted of 19 questions and provided an opportunity for women to anonymously share their experiences and specify their needs and priorities for support. The survey questions were organized to begin with general socio-demographic questions and lead into more particular questions on available resources and the supports that Inuit women would like to see in their communities to better enable their economic participation.

The survey was actively disseminated online through Pauktuutit's website and Facebook page, as well as other electronic communications with key stakeholders and online information networks. In total, Pauktuutit received 125 completed online surveys. Survey respondents represented all regions, ages and levels of education. In consideration of the challenges across Inuit Nunangat with limited broadband infrastructure, poor computer literacy skills and inadequate access to computers and internet, the response rate is impressive and provides an important examination of Inuit women's needs across all four Inuit regions.

### **Internet Feasibility Study**

Given the infrastructure challenges of internet accessibility across Inuit Nunangat, Pauktuutit conducted a feasibility study to examine the potential for delivering skills training and supports through online mediums. Research for the feasibility study was completed through a literature review of relevant documentation on the technical aspects of broadband connectivity across the North, as well as through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. The results of the study identify the current limitations around internet connectivity and broadband, informing the strategy by assessing technology as a process for engaging Inuit women in the economy.



## Findings

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Organizations should aim to work collaboratively in a centralized fashion through strengthening organizational links

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Many of the themes that surfaced in each of the regional consultation sessions and the survey were common across the regions of Inuit Nunangat. Clear commonalities were identified with respect to the challenges that Inuit women encounter in seeking to gain employment or start a small business, including: awareness and accessibility of programs and services; financial literacy; work-life time constraints and childcare; regulations and government bureaucracy; and, limited self-esteem.

Additionally, there were notable similarities across the regions in how key services and programs are delivered. For example, the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) is a federal basket of services and programs for Aboriginal peoples available in each Inuit region. ASETS offers support with small business development, as well as finding and preparing for employment. ASETS holder organizations in Inuit Nunangat have the flexibility to adjust supports to local employment opportunities and conditions. Similarly, post-secondary institutions across the regions are responsible for adult education, vocational training and other post-secondary education opportunities. While there can be significant differences in how each institution delivers its programming, overall the types of programs and supports offered are comparable.

## Challenges for Economic Participation: Overall Childcare

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The absence of available and affordable childcare is a barrier to female entrepreneurship

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One of the most pressing challenges that impedes the ability of Inuit women to pursue training, find employment, or start a business is the absence of available, affordable and reliable childcare. In the online survey, childcare was identified as the most significant barrier to economic participation. Without a safe and reliable place to leave children, Inuit women are unable to attend training programs, search for and retain employment or devote the necessary time to establishing a business. Where childcare is available, there are often long waitlists and fees that are too expensive for many families. When looking for multiple spaces to accommodate young and growing families, the fees often prove insurmountable, forcing women to rearrange their schedules around childcare availability. Inflexible working hours also add a strain to balancing work-life requirements. This is particularly pressing as women form the vast majority of single-parent households in Inuit Nunangat.

## Education

Educational attainment was repeatedly described as a critical barrier to economic participation across the regional engagement sessions. Inuit women without secondary education are entering the local workforce with limited levels of education and skill, and are therefore struggling to find employment for which they are qualified. When they do secure employment, it is often entry-level positions at a low pay grade, with limited opportunities for promotion. For women who





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Graduating high school with good work ethic and confidence is very important and should be instilled from an early age

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complete secondary education across the North, quality and curriculum challenges mean they often do not have the same levels of literacy and numeracy as southern graduates. This skill difference then leads to difficulties with post-secondary education, as well as with entrepreneurship. For example, many Inuit women explained that their numeracy skills are not sufficient to take on basic bookkeeping and financial management for a business.

The primary reasons identified for choosing not to complete secondary school were pregnancy and the need to look after children (linked with the lack of available childcare), limited supports and lack of engagement with schools and their curriculums. Many Inuit women without secondary education are interested in upgrading, but are not able to access the necessary programs and services to complete their GED in their own community and on their own time.

### **Programs and Services**

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There are programs and services available, many people do not know what programs are available and where and how to access them

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Despite the availability of numerous programs and services to assist Inuit in gaining training, finding employment and starting a business, there are significant numbers of people who are not accessing these supports and may not even be aware of their existence. While much of the discussion with stakeholders centred on identifying the many resources currently available for Inuit women seeking to participate in the Canadian economy, there were serious concerns around the underutilization of these services. Consultations with Inuit women indicate that the reason for this may be a lack of public awareness of existing programs. Specifically, the client base may be unclear about how to access resources and/or which organization should be approached for a specific service. The survey and engagement sessions suggested that limited access to internet-based resources and low self-confidence may also be keeping communities from readily accessing programs. Among programs requested, the need for mentorship was repeated in every region, both for employment and entrepreneurship.

### **Housing**

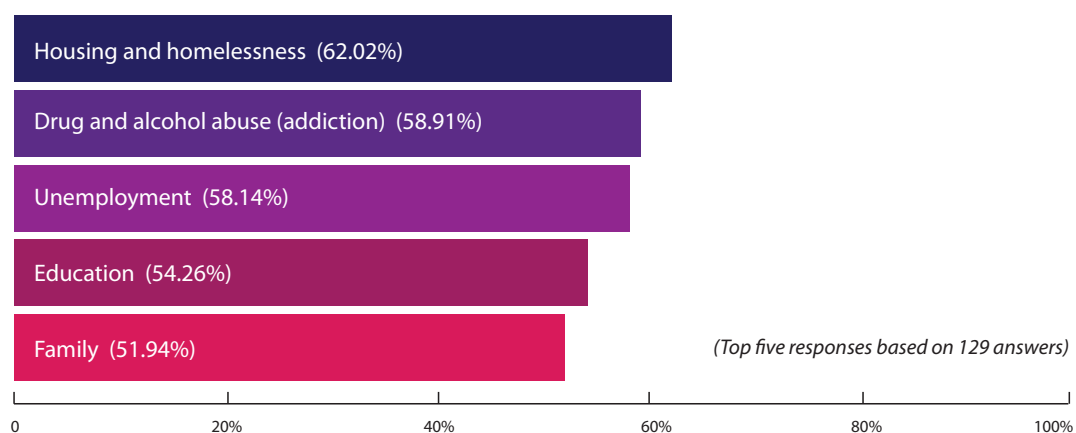
Overcrowding and poor housing conditions were identified as impacting Inuit women's abilities to pursue employment and training opportunities. The health impacts, as well as the lack of a quiet, peaceful place undermines studying and homework habits for students. In terms of entrepreneurship, housing policies can limit or prohibit the operation of home-based businesses. This can be a severe barrier given the lack of business space available in Inuit communities, with women often unable to find a place to produce or sell their product. Furthermore, social housing policies can make starting a business or finding a job counter-productive for some as their income support payments or subsidized rents may adjusted to take into account new sources of revenue. The online survey identified housing and homelessness as one of the most serious issues in Inuit communities.



## Social Issues

Family violence, substance abuse and mental health issues are all universally underserved areas of need across Inuit Nunangat. These and other social issues severely undermine attempts to improve one's employment situation, as without a safe and secure personal life women do not have the energy, time, strength or finances to pursue training, employment or entrepreneurship. It is only by addressing and providing supports for these foundational challenges that women will be capable of exerting the energy and effort required to seek out new economic opportunities and improve their lives.

### Survey Example: What are the most serious issues for women in your community?



## Self-confidence

An important issue that was raised in nearly all of the consultation sessions and the online survey was the fact that many Inuit women face challenges related to self-confidence and self-esteem. The underlying causes of these challenges are complex and vary somewhat across the regions. They can, however, be associated with a number of social problems that are common to all Inuit communities, including: the legacy of the residential school system; cultural and language disconnects; the lack of employment opportunities; and, a poorly functioning education system. Limited self-confidence presents a major barrier for seeking employment and accessing funds to start a business. Furthermore, without strong self-esteem, Inuit women are not taking on leadership or political roles in their communities. This often means gendered issues are not at the forefront of decision-making.

Lack of confidence and fear of failure hold women back from becoming entrepreneurs or entering the workforce



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Entrepreneurship  
can sometimes  
serve as the only  
opportunity for  
job creation

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### **Geographical Isolation**

Perhaps one of the most difficult challenges for Inuit women is simply the lack of jobs and business opportunities that exist, particularly in the smaller and more remote communities. With the fastest growing population in Canada, Inuit communities may not have the employment generating capacity to employ all of their residents. In addition, business opportunities can be equally difficult to identify and develop. Geographical isolation means that the cost of doing business is much higher across Inuit Nunangat than in southern Canada. These high costs can be an insurmountable barrier for businesses at both the start-up and expansion phases.

### **Internet Connectivity**

Lack of affordable, adequate and reliable internet continues to impede not only the development of the northern economy, but also the ability of Inuit women to start businesses or search for employment and training opportunities. The high rates for basic internet and the punitive rate for overage fees prevent many Inuit families from accessing the internet. Lack of access to computers and limited computer skills place Inuit women at a great disadvantage in terms of developing competitive businesses or climbing the career ladder.

## **Challenges for Economic Participation: Employment**

The consultation sessions identified a range of challenges specifically impacting Inuit women's access to employment.

### **Sexism**

Discrimination against women and harassment in the workplace were challenges identified in several sessions. Women may not consider themselves to be valid candidates in certain professions due to social pressures and expectations around job options. These social pressures can be carried into the workplace, making women feel uncomfortable or even unsafe in non-traditional employment environments, such as truck driving, heavy equipment operation or mining related occupations. As well, Inuit women are often paid less than men for doing the same or similar work and may face discrimination based on gendered issues, including pregnancy. These factors tend to dampen the interest and enthusiasm Inuit women have for entering non-traditional employment areas.

### **Culture**

Cultural differences in the workplace also impact Inuit women's employment opportunities. A lack of sufficient cross-cultural training in the workplace available for all parties can often mean workplaces are not comfortable environments for Inuit women. Inuit women also tend to be over-represented in lower power, skill and salary positions. In male dominated sectors, such as mining, this is particularly apparent and while progress has been made in some companies, further effort is required.

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Women need to be  
publically recognized  
for their hard work  
and leadership

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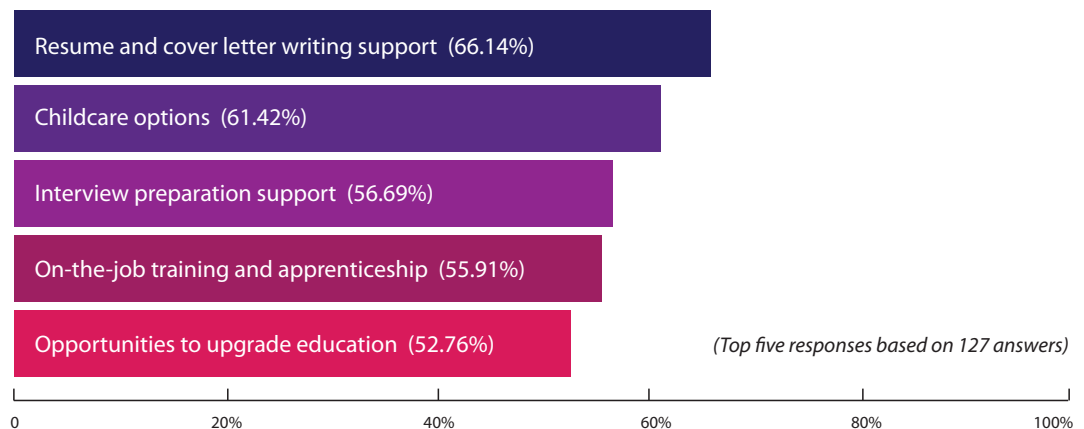
## Travel

Training programs, including specific employment skills and post-secondary education, often require individuals to leave their communities for extended periods to live in larger regional centres. This is not the preferred means of accessing training for many Inuit women, particularly those with children and those concerned with housing issues. Training programs requiring women to leave their community are generally less attended and have lower success rates than those held locally.

## Job Searching

Inuit women may not be aware of different methods of job searching. The consultation sessions revealed that many women rely heavily on community bulletin boards or word-of-mouth to find out about employment opportunities. This is important to note as many large-scale employers, such as mining companies, use a broad array of methods to attract potential employees, often relying on internet-based advertising and application systems. Women also noted that when they find an employment opportunity, the application forms and related information are often complex, intimidating and extremely time consuming. For women with limited literacy skills and experience with employment, these application forms can be a barrier to accessing opportunities.

### Survey Example: What services and resources would you like to have in your community to help women find a job?







## Transportation

Transportation remains an ongoing challenge for many Inuit women. Unable to afford their own vehicle, women are often dependent on family members, friends or taxis (if even available) to access and retain employment. This puts women in a precarious position, particularly in the winter, and they may be unable to work certain hours or keep their job.

## Criminal Record

Inuit women with criminal records often face serious difficulties in securing employment. Many employers conduct criminal records checks as a matter of policy. Applying for pardons can be an incredibly complex and expensive process, leaving many Inuit women at a permanent disadvantage in regards to securing future employment.

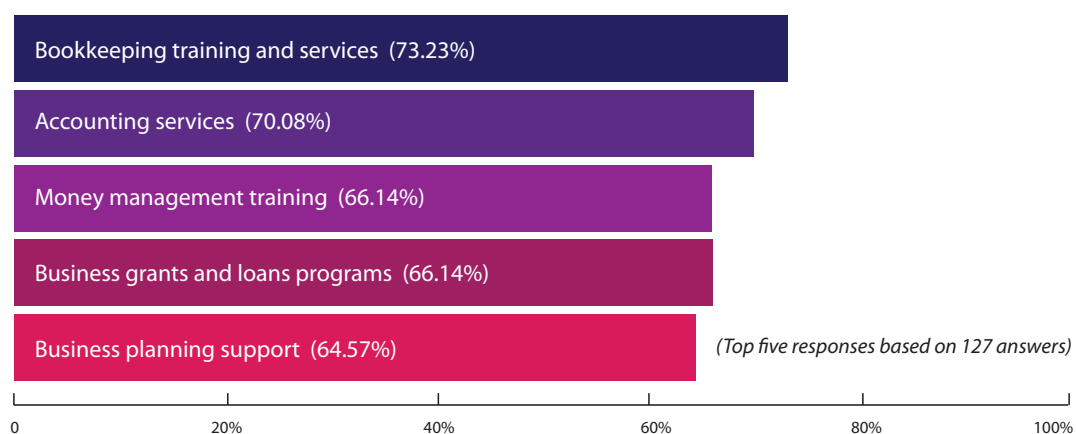
## Challenges for Economic Participation: Entrepreneurship

A number of challenges specifically impact the ability of Inuit women to participate as entrepreneurs in the Canadian economy.

### Entrepreneurship as an Option

One of the main challenges identified is the fact that Inuit women do not recognize starting their own business as a viable option for employment. Although there are a substantial number of businesses owned and operated by Inuit women, widespread awareness of these successful Inuit women entrepreneurs is lacking. Related to this the limited awareness of the programs and services available to support the start-up of Inuit-owned businesses, including numerous grants and loans that Inuit women are eligible to apply for. Many Inuit women are currently producing arts and crafts for sale or informally providing services without considering themselves to be in business and without the knowledge of how to formalize and expand.

**Survey Example:** What supports and services would you like to have in your community to help women start businesses?





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The cost of childcare can often time be more than people's income

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### **Financial Management Skills**

Many Inuit women do not have the requisite skills, namely literacy and numeracy, to feel comfortable starting and operating a small business. Running a business, including applying for grants and loans, frequently involves a whole new vocabulary and skill set from what Inuit women are used to. In particular, many women lack the fundamental business skills associated with finance and administration, including: bookkeeping; invoicing/ billing; cash flow planning; pricing; credit management; and, managing relationships with financial institutions and accountants. These skills were identified in the online survey as an important need for training in communities to help women start businesses.

Furthermore, potential entrepreneurs can be intimidated and put off by the complex and lengthy processes involved in obtaining grants and loans as initial capital, complying with licensing and regulatory requirements and dealing with financial institutions. For an individual with limited business experience, the paperwork required and terminology used in applications can act as a barrier to entrepreneurship.

### **Cost of Business**

Businesses owned by Inuit women are not immune to the high cost of doing business across Inuit Nunangat. High costs associated with operating a business in the region include: small markets; high utility costs; high transportation costs; high telecommunication costs; shortage of available and affordable business spaces; insurance costs; and, labour costs. Raising sufficient capital to survive the start-up phase and establish the business long enough to gain sufficient cash-flow remains a major challenge for all small businesses. This, however, is a major impediment for Inuit women who do not have access to the skills, experience and resources available to people in southern Canada.

One of the greatest potential costs of starting a business is the risk that the business will not succeed. Risk of failure and the resulting financial loss is of particular concern for Inuit women who often bear primary responsibility for the welfare of their family as single parents. This responsibility can preclude adopting strategies associated with risk, as failure can have a profound family impact.

### **After-care Support**

While many existing programs and services target business start-up, both stakeholders and Inuit women identified a need for ongoing support once a business is up and running. A lack of "incubation" and after-care supports for starting a business are a primary reason why some nascent businesses falter and fail. This is particularly true in regards to the first few years of a business's operation when cash flow can be limited, the learning curve is sharp and access to additional capital is challenging. For Inuit women with limited entrepreneurship experience, having a supportive network or mentor for ongoing after-care support can be the difference between successful growth and failure. Business mentorship was suggested as a program to provide continuous guidance and support to new Inuit entrepreneurs and has been successful in other regions of the country.

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Inuit women are lacking appropriate support and mentorship even when they are eager and willing to learn and grow in their career field

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## Priorities

Given the findings from the consultations sessions and online survey, the following priorities for action were identified.

1. Holistic supports and programs
2. Childcare
3. Organizational collaboration
4. Communications and outreach
5. Empowerment and self-esteem
6. Targeted business and employment training
7. Mentorship
8. Youth engagement and education

## Recommendations

1. All programs and services must take into consideration the context of Inuit women's lives.
  - The availability and accessibility of programs and services for single parent families headed by women should be reviewed and increased as necessary.
  - Employment and entrepreneurship supports must address the social and health challenges of women to be successful in the long-term, including family violence, mental health, substance abuse, food insecurity, overcrowded housing and homelessness.
  - Education and training programs must provide holistic supports and funding to reduce the barriers to academic upgrading and post-secondary opportunities, including supports for housing, culture and childcare.
2. The accessibility and availability of childcare that is affordable, reliable, safe and culturally relevant must be increased.
  - Home-based childcare should be examined and promoted as a business opportunity for Inuit women that addresses community needs.
  - Public investment in infrastructure is needed to expand and/or build new childcare centres.
  - Childcare centres should consider flexible hours to allow women to pursue diverse opportunities.





3. Service providers and stakeholder organizations must build or strengthen partnerships to share expertise, resources and knowledge around the needs of Inuit women.
  - Regional stakeholders should enhance communication and collaboration to eliminate gaps in the delivery of programs and services.
  - Regular opportunities for pan-regional sharing of best practices in relation to training, employment and business programming should be encouraged.
4. Service providers must be innovative in their communications strategies to engage Inuit women locally, regionally and nationally.
  - Organizations should seek to provide clear and consistent messaging to increase awareness of available services, resources and contact people.
  - Communications should use a variety of mediums tailored to different audiences, including in-person, media, social media and online resources.
5. Opportunities to build Inuit women's leadership capacity and empowerment must be developed and promoted.
  - Leadership training to build self-esteem, identity and confidence should be included in programming for women and youth.
  - Inuit women must be directly involved in the decision-making and development of policies that will affect them.
6. Targeted public investment in infrastructure is required to reduce the costs of business and seeking employment.
  - Investment should be made in internet connectivity to ensure that Inuit women have access to affordable and reliable internet service.
  - Public access to computers for the purposes of job searching and resume and cover letter writing should be made available.
  - Commercial real estate development is required to support the growth of Inuit businesses through access to appropriate and affordable business space.
7. Entrepreneurship services and programs must aim to provide a continuum of support to Inuit women, from pre-start up to after-care.
  - Education curriculums should incorporate business skills education and increase awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option.
  - Pre-start up training and planning programs for women should be established to build basic entrepreneurial skills and reduce financial risk.
  - Business service providers should consider working with appropriate government agencies to reduce barriers to home-based businesses.



- Innovative business models should be explored to address the needs of potential businesswomen, including cooperatives and shared office spaces.
  - Incubation programs or after-care services should be developed to provide ongoing support once a business is established.
8. Employment environments, services and training programs must seek to accommodate the specific responsibilities, needs and challenges of Inuit women in the workplace.
- Alternative flex-work models of employment should be examined to accommodate the needs of women, including telecommuting, time-shifting, job sharing and part-time roles.
  - Access to employment readiness training should be increased for women, including interview preparedness, computer skills, assistance with job applications and job expectations.
  - Inuit cultural awareness training programs should be developed for workplaces.
  - Awareness of employment and training opportunities for women in non-traditional jobs and industries must be increased.
  - On-the-job training should be promoted to encourage women and youth to explore new opportunities, build employment skills and gain experience.
  - Employers must fulfill their responsibilities to protect the rights of women in the workplace and ensure a safe environment free of discrimination and harassment.
9. Mentorship and networking opportunities must be developed to connect Inuit women with each other, elders and topic experts for ongoing guidance and support.
- Workplace mentorship programs are needed to increase retention and support career advancement for Inuit women entering the workforce, particularly in male-dominated sectors.
  - Business mentorship programs should be developed or expanded across Inuit Nunangat to provide expertise, resources and motivation to businesswomen and potential businesswomen.
10. Educational institutions, programs and services must seek to engage youth and accommodate their needs to support the development of future leaders, businesswomen and executives.
- Opportunities for youth to gain hands-on experience in careers and business should be increased through summer employment, job shadowing, apprenticeship programs, mentorship, internships and practicums.
  - Opportunities to build financial literacy skills in youth should be developed and made regularly available.



## Appendices

### Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement Session Attendance

Inuvialuit Region		
Inuvik, NT - November 19, 2015		
Name	Job Title	Organizations
Bright Lubansa	President	Inuvik Chamber of Commerce
Jackie Challis	Community Economic Development Officer	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Meghan Etter	Counselling Services Manager	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Matilda DeBastien	Corporate Manager	Inuvik Community Corporation
Mandy Day	Brighter Futures Coordinator/ Community Development Facilitator	Inuvik Community Corporation
Michel Lemieux	Manager	Trade and Investment, Beaufort Delta Region/ Department of Industry, Tourism & Investment, Government of the Northwest Territories/ Delivery Agent, Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation (BDIC)
Miki O’Kane	Business Development Officer	Department of Industry, Tourism & Investment, Government of the Northwest Territories
Debbie Boudreau	Economic Development Officer	Department of Industry, Tourism & Investment (ITI), Government of the Northwest Territories
Anne Kokko	Tourism Development Officer	Department of Industry, Tourism & Investment, Government of the Northwest Territories
Celina Jerome	Career Development Officer	Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Government of the Northwest Territories
Katherine Peter	Career Development Officer/ Apprenticeship Training Officer	Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Government of Northwest Territories
Shirley Elias	Community Wellness Worker	Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services (BDHSS)
Shirley Kisoun	Board Member	Inuvik Transition House Society
Donna Rogers	Executive Director	Inuvik Transition House Society
Yvonne Dimaano	Loan Officer	Western Arctic Business Development Corporation
Mavis Jacobson	Community Support Worker	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Craft Shop
Sandra Elanik	Education Manager	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Lynn MacKinnon	Human Resources Development Manager	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Sarah Tilley	Director	Aurora College, Inuvik Campus
Tuktoyaktuk, NT (Telephone call)		
Bessie Hagen	Executive Director	Aimayunga Women and Emergency Foster Care Shelter



<b>Nunavut</b>		
<b>Iqaluit, NU - December 8, 2015</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Organizations</b>
Joamie Eegeesiak	Community Economic Development Officer	City of Iqaluit
Peter Autut	Inuit Employment and Training Coordinator	Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Melissa Alexander	Career Development Officer	Department of Family Services, Government of Nunavut
Monica O'Connor	Policy Analyst	Nunavut Housing Corporation
Rhoda Palluq	Policy Analyst, Human Resources Policy	Department of Family Services, Government of Nunavut
Tina DeCouto	Implementation Project Officer	Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
Rhoda Ungalak	Board Member	Pauktuutit
Joanne Ashley	Community Training Officer	Nunavut Municipal Training Organization
Nancy Guyon	Director, Tourism and Cultural Industries	Department of Economic Development and Transportation, Government of Nunavut
Beth Beattie	Executive Director	Qullit Nunavut Status of Women
Becky Kilabuk	Businesswoman, National Inuit Youth Council Member, Youth Programs Coordinator	Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Oana Spinu	Executive Director	Nunavut Broadband Corporation
Chris West	Executive Director	Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce
Rowena House	Executive Director	Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association
Sherri Rowe	Chief Executive Officer	Nunavut Business Credit Corporation
Angela McPherson	Senior Advisor of Business Services	Nunavut Business Credit Corporation
Sylvie Renaud	Regional Director	Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor)
Tina Price	Inuit Impact and Benefits Agreement Manager	Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation
Sheryl Basil		YWCA Agvik Nunavut
Suny Jacob	Executive Director	YWCA Agvik Nunavut
Rosemary Wall	Director	Qimaavik Women's Shelter, YWCA Agvik Nunavut
Michelle Zuben		YWCA Agvik Nunavut
Eric Doiron	Manager of Business Development	Department of Economic Development and Transportation, Government of Nunavut
Elizabeth Kingston	General Manager	NWT/Nunavut Chamber of Mines
Hal Timar	Executive Director	Nunavut Economic Developer Association
Madeline Redfern		Ajungi Arctic Consulting



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## Nunavik

### Kuuujuaq, QC - January 21, 2016

Name	Job Title	Organizations
Julie Grenier	Director of Television Production	Taqramiut Nipingat Inc. (TNI)
Annie Arnatuk	President	Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik
Isabel Parizeau	Director General	Kativik Regional Government
Adel Yassa	Director	Regional and Local Development Department, Kativik Regional Government
Sabine Georges	Employment Services Advisor	Regional and Local Development Department, Kativik Regional Government
Elyse Tratt	Employment Services Advisor	Regional and Local Development Department, Kativik Regional Government
Benjamin Arreak	Counselor of Elders and Women's Issues	Kativik Regional Government
Linda Roy Makiuk	Administrative Secretary	Regional and Local Development Department, Kativik Regional Government
Richard Desrosier	Employment & Training	Regional and Local Development Department, Kativik Regional Government
Susie Gordon	Loan Officer	Regional and Local Development Department, Kativik Regional Government
Olivia Ikey Duncan	Coordinator	Youth Employment Services (YES)
Charles Dorais	Executive Assistant to the Vice President	Economic Development, Makivik Corporation
Gregory Lowe	Adult Educator	Kativik School Board (Adult Education and Vocational Training Centre, Kuuujuaq Office)
Jeannie Gordon	Adult Education Student	Kativik School Board (Adult Education and Vocational Training Centre, Kuuujuaq Office)
Dolly Mesher		<i>Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS)</i> , Kativik Regional Government

## Nunatsiavut

### Hopedale, NL- March 21 and 22, 2016

Name	Job Title	Organizations
Kim McLean-Campbell	Executive Director	Labrador Inuit Women's Association
Emma Kalleo	Coordinator (Nain)	Labrador Inuit Women's Association
Brenda Jararuse	Program Developer	Department of Education and Economic Development, Nunatsiavut Government
Rachel Edmunds	Business Owner (Makkovik)	
Aimee McIntosh	Aboriginal Head Start Family Worker	Department of Health and Social Development, Nunatsiavut Government

### Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL (Telephone call)

Jennifer Elson	Executive Director	Labrador Friendship Centre
Sandra Kershaw	Human Resources Specialist, Aboriginal Liaison	Serco Goose Bay



## Appendix B: Stakeholder Engagement Session Draft Agenda

### Engaging Inuit Women in Economic Participation

#### Draft Agenda

8:30 am	<b>Breakfast &amp; Registration</b>
9:00 am	<b>Overview of Meeting Objectives</b>
10:00 am	<b>Overview of the Engaging Inuit Women in Economic Participation Project</b>
10:45 am	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:00 am	<p><b>Where are we now? Exploring existing supports, challenges and opportunities</b></p> <p>This opening session will identify various opportunities and challenges that impact Inuit women's economic participation. Existing supports, resources and programs available to support Inuit women's economic participation will be explored, with a particular focus on promising practices.</p>
12:30 pm	<b>Lunch (Provided)</b>
1:30 pm	<p><b>Where do we want to go? Vision and priorities for promoting Inuit women's economic participation</b></p> <p>This session will focus on creating a vision and setting priorities to enhance women's economic participation. These measures and conditions could include policies, institutional mechanisms, resources, supports and programs to enhance the involvement of women in economic life.</p>
2:45 pm	<b>Coffee Break</b>
3:00 pm	<p><b>How do we get there? Charting a path for future action</b></p> <p>This session will focus on responding to the unique set of challenges and opportunities faced by Inuit women</p>
4:15 pm	<b>Wrap-up</b>
5:00 pm	<b>Close meeting</b>







