



# ENGAGING THE PUBLIC TO REDUCE POVERTY

## NUNAVUT\*

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

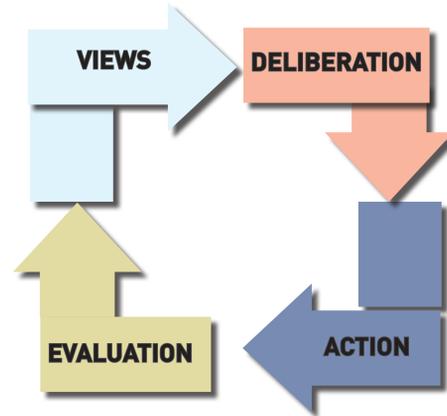
## NEW BRUNSWICK\*

**“Healing is the key to poverty reduction.”**  
- Natan Obed

### Context of 2011 poverty reduction strategy

- 34,000 people; 85% Inuit; spread over 2 million<sup>2</sup> kms; history of colonisation
- Sponsoring partnership: Nunavut Anti-poverty Secretariat, Department of Economic Development and Transportation, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (created to ensure that land claims agreements are honoured)

- Tamapta 2009-2013 (Nunavut government action plan) prioritized poverty reduction, decision-making based on dialogue and consensus, and integrated solutions (families, businesses, government, Inuit organizations)
- Partners put Inuit ways of solving problems (Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit) at the centre of the process
- Chose subjective definition of poverty: “the condition we experience when our basic needs are not met ... Poverty is about more than just money ... human capabilities and social inclusion must have equal parts”<sup>a</sup>



Developed by: Canada's Public Policy Forum - [www.ppfourm.ca/sites/default/files/FRAMEWORK%20PAPER20.pdf](http://www.ppfourm.ca/sites/default/files/FRAMEWORK%20PAPER20.pdf)

“The public engagement approach casts participants as partners with government to find and implement solutions to complex issues.”<sup>b</sup>

To begin, ask questions about the appropriateness and framing of the public engagement process:

- Can the public accept the way the issue has been framed?
- Is government able to implement the solutions on its own?

**“When everyone in a community is affected by a problem, everyone should take part in finding solutions to that problem.”**<sup>c</sup> - *A Choir of Voices*; p.4

### Context of 2011 poverty reduction strategy

- 756,000 people; 14% live in poverty; one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada
- Premier appointed three people to guide the process: the Minister of Social Development and two respected leaders from the voluntary and business communities

- What causes poverty?
- What can be done to reduce it?

### The process in NU

### 4 Stages

### The process in NB

Community dialogues in 25 communities, guided by process principles of 1) learn from each other; 2) build on our strengths; 3) work together for a common cause; 4) being involved in decision-making. Facilitators trained in the dialogue process.

Four regional roundtables with citizens and experts to review dialogue ideas and propose Options for Action.

Three-day poverty summit, with 60 representatives, prioritized issues and developed solutions. Everyone had the same speaking platform.  
Result: The Makimaniq Plan: A shared Approach to Poverty Reduction

### Results

- Roundtable for Poverty Reduction established on a permanent basis (2011)
- Bill 59 - the Collaboration for Poverty Reduction Act (2013) established long-term commitment
- Nunavut Food Security Strategy and Action plan released (2014)
- Roundtable gathering to review progress on Makimaniq plan (2014)
- Food security strategy and action plan launched May 2014

### 1. Views

Participants state their views on poverty and poverty reduction. Engagement treats issues holistically from the start.

### 2. Deliberation

Participants

- consolidate the views (fairly conventional analysis),
- reframe the issue (mapping the policy space), and
- propose broad solutions (high level)

Participants are asked how issues and solutions affect them, as people who will carry out the action; they must weigh competing priorities, make trade-offs.

### 3. Action

A subset of participants

- develop a strategy to implement the solutions. Criteria: efficient, effective, realistic, treat all interests fairly
- assign roles & responsibilities: all participating organizations accept responsibility for specific actions

### 4. Ongoing evaluation

Adopt indicators to assess the process (trust, openness, inclusiveness, mutual respect, personal responsibility) and the effectiveness of components of the action plan.

Face-to-face dialogues in 16 communities (2009), involving inventive outreach approaches, resulted in A Choir of Voices draft report, which was revised through public comments, leading to a final report.

People with lived experience with 30 experts worked to find fair, reasonable and transparent ways to assess and implement citizen views (2009).

50 citizens (public, business and government) agreed to the Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan, calling for a massive overhaul of the social assistance system, universal drug plan and increased minimum wage. Goal: reduce income poverty by 25%, and deep income poverty by 50% by 2015 (2009).

### Results

- Creation of the Economic and Social Inclusion Act and Corporation (2010) - with 22 members from government, business, community and people living in poverty - to lead implementation of the plan
- 12 Community Inclusion Networks that prioritize and carry out the plan, supported by paid coordinators
- 4% rise in social assistance rates
- Increased availability to health benefits for children from low-income households
- Proposed drug plan for the uninsured
- A revised Overcoming Poverty Together plan (2014-2019)

## REFERENCES

- a. Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. (2011) Makiliqta community dialogue toolkit. Iqaluit, NU p. 5,6
- b. Lenihan, Don. (2012) Rescuing policy: the case for public engagement Canada's Public Policy Forum [http://www.ppfourm.ca/sites/default/files/rescuing\\_policy\\_ebook.pdf](http://www.ppfourm.ca/sites/default/files/rescuing_policy_ebook.pdf)
- c. Government of New Brunswick, (2009) “A Choir of Voices”, pg. 4. Retrieved from <http://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/esic/pdf/WhatWasSaid-e.pdf>

Visit the NCCDH resource library at [www.nccdh.ca](http://www.nccdh.ca) to find related resources.

- A guide to community engagement frameworks for action on the social determinants of health and health equity

### NCCDH Case studies

- Fostering health through healing: engaging the community to create a poverty reduction strategy in Nunavut
- Empower the community: New Brunswick's approach to overcoming poverty

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