# Final Engagement Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the Province’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, the Province committed to working with Indigenous partners and education stakeholders to support the revitalization of Indigenous languages in Ontario. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s recommendations highlight the importance of Indigenous languages to reconciliation in Canada, and the need to promote Indigenous languages, notably in the areas of education (Call to Action #10.iv), postsecondary institutions (Call to Action #16), and the media (Call to Action #84.i).

In March 2018, Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI) and the Ontario Ministry of Education entered into an agreement through which TI would be tasked to conduct engagement sessions with Inuit communities in the province and to lead research to support the development of an Ontario Inuktitut Strategy. Among the approximately sixty indigenous languages in Canada, Inuktitut is one of the most vibrant languages. In Inuit Nunangat, 84% of Inuit speak Inuktitut. There is also a growing Inuit and Inuktitut speaking population in Ontario, but there is a recognized gap with regards to Inuktitut services in the province.

This Engagement Report provides an overview of the process and key themes of the engagement sessions, describes the project’s successes and challenges, and includes a complete record of engagement sessions held throughout the duration of the project. Key themes identified during the consultations were: 1) enhancing language supports and immersion opportunities focused on children, youth and young adults, 2) providing capacity-building for organizations with Inuktitut-speaking clients and for Inuktitut-speakers, particularly in the area of teacher training, 3) increasing the number of trained translators and interpreters at service providers with Inuktitut-speaking clients, 4) promoting awareness about the links between Inuktitut, Inuit culture and reconciliation, 5) creating Inuktitut learning environments which use Inuit pedagogy and provide safe spaces, and 6) using both syllabics and roman orthography in order to meet the diverse needs of Elders, speakers, learners, and youth.
2. ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

2.1 OVERVIEW

As part of this project, TI staff conducted five community engagement sessions with Inuit communities in different parts of Ontario (Ottawa, Toronto, Guelph, Cornwall and North Bay), two stakeholder/partner engagement sessions, two staff engagement sessions, and one youth-specific engagement session.

The community engagement sessions, including cities and dates, were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa (Community)</td>
<td>Saturday, October 20, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph</td>
<td>Saturday, November 10, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Saturday, November 17, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>Saturday, January 19, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Bay</td>
<td>Saturday, February 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The community engagement session in Ottawa was hosted in collaboration with Inuuqatigiit (formerly the Ottawa Inuit Children’s Centre). We took a unified approach to our engagement sessions and how they contributed to each of our individual research projects.

TI staff also led two stakeholder/partner engagement sessions in order to document the perspectives of front-line service workers with Inuit clients. The first stakeholder/partner engagement session was held with counsellors who provide abuse and trauma-related specialized counselling, education and support services to individuals, families and the community. The second stakeholder/partner engagement session was held with staff of the Youth Life Promotion project, community-based children and youth program that promotes health and wellness of children and youth.

The stakeholder/partner engagement sessions took place as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counsellors (1071 Richmond Road)</td>
<td>Thursday, September 27, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Life Promotion (297 Savard Avenue)</td>
<td>Tuesday, October 9, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, TI staff conducted two staff engagement sessions and one youth-specific engagement session. The first staff engagement session was held at TI’s main location (1071 Richmond Road), and the second staff engagement session held at another TI location (604 Laurier). The feedback from and outcomes of these sessions are explained further in the following section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Engagement - Main location (1071 Richmond Road)</td>
<td>Thursday, August 23, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Engagement - 604 Laurier</td>
<td>Thursday, September 20, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth (297 Savard Avenue)</td>
<td>Wednesday, December 12, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 PROCESS

In order to prepare for the engagement sessions, we hired a co-facilitator to join our team, located appropriate venues in each city, and established local outreach in each city. We also established a number of cultural considerations, such as the inclusion of country food as part of the meal that we served to community members. One of our top priorities was hiring a competent co-facilitator willing to travel with us to each session. We needed to ensure that the sessions would operate in both English and Inuktitut. We believe this to be of the highest importance considering the nature of our engagement sessions. It is the right of participants to be able to speak their preferred language and having both English and Inuktitut support was provided in order to ensure that the community are able to articulate their thoughts better.

We were able to secure comfortable, affordable and accessible venues for each of the sessions planned, and to organize culturally-specific components. This includes serving culturally-specific food to attendees. Also, we reached out to local Inuit community mobilizers to establish outreach for each of the sessions. These contacts helped to promote the engagement sessions within their communities and to connect us with the local Inuit population. Many of our contacts were involved in or assisted with previous community events TI has hosted, and as such, were helpful with connecting our organization with Inuit in the cities and surrounding area we are targeting. Greater outreach and promotion of the engagement sessions by individuals in the community contributed to better turnout, as well as establishing a level of trust. These were both important conditions considered for the success of the engagement sessions. We sought to have as many voices and lived experiences as possible present at our engagement sessions in order that our research and recommendations be representative of the urban Inuit population in Ontario.

During the engagement sessions, notes were taken on large sheets so that community members could read the notes and provide feedback and clarifications when needed. In consultations where there were both Inuktitut speakers and non-Inuktitut speakers, participants would be split into one (or two) English group(s), and one Inuktitut group. This way, participants were made to feel comfortable expressing themselves in the language of their preference. Also, splitting the large groups up into smaller groups made it easier to take notes and foster dialogue in each group.

In addition to the community engagement sessions, we also led two stakeholder/partner engagement sessions in order to document the perspectives of front-line service workers with Inuit clients, two staff engagement sessions and one youth-specific engagement session. The following summarizes a few consistent observations and obstacles identified during the various engagement sessions.

2.3 KEY THEMES

Children, Youth and Young Adults

A key theme throughout the engagement sessions was that there is a need for learning opportunities for children and their parents. Children are at the best age to learn Inuktitut, and
parents asked for resources and programs which would enable them to be able to learn along with their children. Languages nests and an Inuktitut Language Centre would provide spaces for intergenerational interaction and language learning. Also, youth and young adults are keen to learn their language, but there is currently a gap in services for this age group. An Inuktitut-immersion program focused on youth and young adults, would provide opportunities for young Inuit to learn their language and to re-establish intergenerational language transmission when they have children of their own.

Need for Capacity Building

There is a significant need for capacity building in two areas. First, for service providers that have Inuit clients, there needs to be improved capacity to be able to learn and use Inuktitut with their clients. This will create a more inclusive and trusted space for Inuit in urban areas to visit, find support, and improve overall service delivery. It was suggested that this take the form of Inuktitut language lessons for all staff. However, many organizations and agencies currently lack the resources to be able to facilitate this. Workplace incentives should be introduced in order to increase the number of Inuktitut speakers and the amount of Inuktitut spoken in service providers with Inuit clients. Workplace incentives could include language bonuses, quotas for the number of language speakers, and mentoring arrangements with learners, and would send the message that Inuktitut is a valued career asset akin to French.

Second, there needs to be continued efforts to focus on capacity-building within the Ontario Inuit community in regards to education levels, qualifications, and training to encourage positions within pre-schools, schools, organizations and agencies to be filled with Inuktitut speakers. Currently, it is a challenge for organizations to hire Inuit staff to serve their Inuit clients, because it is difficult to find qualified and trained Inuit applicants. Likewise, there are currently very few certified teachers in Ontario who speak Inuktitut, which makes it a challenge when trying to hire Inuktitut teachers. This points to the need to create teacher-training programs and other types of training programs for Inuktitut-speakers.

Translation and Interpretation Resources for Agencies and Service Providers

There exists a significant gap in the availability of translation and interpretation services for agencies and service providers who have Inuktitut-speaking clients. TI receives dozens of calls a month for translation or interpretation services from hospitals, lawyers, and various agencies in need of this kind of support. TI often lacks these services ourselves and therefore, there are limited ways for Inuktitut-speaking clients to be adequately accommodated. This can have critical effects on the quality of care or services that unilingual Inuit receive in Ontario. Also, the quality of Inuktitut translation and interpretation services varies (due, for example, to unfamiliarity with the Inuit Cultural Institute (ICI) writing system). Therefore, there is a need for an accreditation body in Ontario to provide training, supports and certification to increase the number of Inuktitut translators and interpreters.
Language is Intrinsic to Culture

The revitalization of Inuktitut will be a substantial move forward in the revitalization of Inuit culture in Ontario. The process of learning, relearning or teaching Inuktitut is also a process of learning and sharing the culture of Inuit. Language can play a significant role in healing, reconciliation and becoming closer with one’s culture, especially when it comes to Inuit youth in urban areas. When non-Inuit in government and service organizations invest time to learn Inuktitut, it also enhances the quality of service delivery, shows respect for Inuit culture, and contributes to reconciliation. There is also a need for training and awareness about the importance of language to Inuit culture and reconciliation.

Inuit Pedagogy and Safe Spaces

Participants repeatedly noted that, in designing language programs, it is important to use Inuit pedagogy, such as: the use of hands-on learning, humor, games, play, art and music; the presence of Elders and knowledge keepers; and learning through interpersonal relationships rather than relying only on online tools. It was also noted that it is important to create safe spaces for learners in order to create a supportive learning environment.

Dialects and Writing Systems

There is a high rate of dialectical diversity among Inuktitut speakers in Ontario. This can pose a challenge for speakers, who may experience language-shaming due to their dialect, or who may find it easier to switch to English rather than risk losing some of the meaning by communicating across dialects. High dialectical diversity can also pose a challenge for learners, who may be overwhelmed by the many different ways in which a concept is expressed, depending on the dialect. It is important to create safe spaces in which all dialects are embraced, while recognizing the challenges that high dialectical diversity poses for learners.

With regards to writing systems, many community members wanted to be able to access Inuktitut materials in both roman orthography and syllabics. Providing materials in roman orthography would accommodate youth and learners (who tend to learn faster with roman orthography), and providing materials in syllabics would accommodate Elders and first-language speakers (who tend to be more familiar with syllabics).

3. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Our leading success has been our effective and goal-oriented partnership and collaboration with Inuuqatigiit throughout the project. This success began during our first community engagement session in Ottawa, home to the province’s largest Inuit population outside of the Inuit Nunangat. We worked collaboratively to establish expectations, set goals, knowledge share and delegate tasks to effectively plan and jointly host our community engagement session on Inuktitut language revitalization. We actively advertised the sessions together and made a collaborative effort in combining our resources to ensure the success of the event. Also, we had several meetings with Inuuqatigiit throughout the project in order to review the data collected at our engagement sessions and discuss the results. Overall, this partnership with Inuuqatigiit was
productive and we were able to achieve our shared goals. We engaged in knowledge sharing and maintaining strong communication throughout the process to ensure that together we remained committed to a consistent and unified Inuit voice and vision for Inuktitut language revitalization in Ontario.

Our second leading success has been the engagement we have seen with TI staff on this project. Our calls for participation in our focus groups were voluntary, and we saw a notable interest in staff wanting to participate. The staff at TI offered invaluable insight into the struggles and systemic challenges that our Inuit clients face on a daily basis in Ontario due to language barriers and a lack of language resources. In addition, since the staff engagements on Inuktitut, there have been a number of initiatives started internally within our organization to encourage more use of Inuktitut on a daily basis. This project has become of interest to many of our staff and we have gained widespread support for the project across departments, which was evident in the number of individuals who have either taken the time to speak to us about language or volunteer at our Ottawa community-based engagement session.

In regards to challenges, our main challenge was choosing the locations and dates of our engagement sessions across the province. The Ontario Inuit population is very spread out and transient. Also, public transportation is less accessible in areas outside of Ottawa and Toronto. Therefore, trying to choose locations that are accessible to Inuit and generally central to where higher populations of Inuit live in the South, can be challenging at times. In order to address this challenge, we leaned on the experiences of our colleagues who have also run community-based engagements for which locations seem to be the most accessible for Inuit to get to. Based on this information, we established locations in areas that we believed could attract an adequate number of community members to share their experiences. The exceptionally cold weather this winter may have impacted the ability of some Inuit to attend consultations. We did not have Inuit participation at the Cornwall session, likely due to the cold temperatures on that day. In order to ensure a better turn-out at the last winter session, in North Bay, staff reached out extensively to local Inuit leaders, school boards, the college and the university, which in turn proved to be a success.

An additional challenge which arose was re-staffing the term position of Languages Act Advisor. The temporary nature of the work leads to a lack of job stability, and may contribute to staffing issues. More broadly, there is a need for stable/multi-year funding for language projects in order to ensure consistency. Inuktitut is extremely important to Inuit in Ontario, and sustainable investments with a long-term vision will have a positive impact for the Ontario Inuit community.
4. CONCLUSION

Throughout this project, it was our goal to formulate a comprehensive and detailed report of our research and experiences, as well as to provide a better understanding of Inuktitut in Ontario. The engagement sessions brought out the perspectives of a variety of community members, including speakers, learners, Elders, parents, youth and children. Key themes from the engagement sessions focused on language immersion opportunities for children and youth; capacity-building to increase the number of Inuktitut-speakers in service providers and schools; increasing the number of translators and interpreters; promoting understanding about the importance of Inuktitut to Inuit culture and reconciliation; employing Inuit pedagogy and creating safe spaces for language learning; and using both syllabics and roman orthography in order to meet the diverse needs of Elders, speakers, learners and youth.

The feedback from communities received during engagement sessions across the province has informed the recommendations set out in our *Uqausivut Sanngitilavut* (Keeping Our Language Strong): *Recommendations for an Ontario Inuktitut Strategy*. The gaps identified in the consultations have directly informed our recommendations. For example, Inuit communities in Ontario noted the need 1) to create a space to learn and speak Inuktitut, 2) to increase the number of Inuktitut-speaking staff and teachers in Ontario, and 3) to increase the number of certified interpreters. The recommendations set out in *Uqausivut Sanngitilavut* would address these identified gaps through, for example, 1) an adult Inuktitut immersion program, 2) a teacher-training program for Inuktitut speakers, and 3) an Inuktitut Language Centre which would serve as a safe space for learners, and as a training and certification body for interpreters.

Moving forward, we will be available to engage with the Province in the development of an Inuktitut Language Strategy for Ontario. Ultimately, we believe that our work completed throughout the course of this project will act as a foundational and leading document for Inuktitut language revitalization across the province of Ontario. We will continue to work with the province to implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to support reconciliation and Inuktitut preservation in Ontario.
5. COMPLETE RECORD OF ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff conducted five community engagement sessions with Inuit communities in different parts of Ontario (Ottawa, Toronto, Guelph, Cornwall and North Bay), two stakeholder/partner engagement sessions (one with counsellors and one with Youth Life Promotion), two staff engagement sessions, and one youth-specific engagement session. Below are the notes taken at each of the engagement sessions.

5.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

5.1.1 Community Engagement Report – Ottawa

Tungasuvvingat Inuit/Inuuqatigiit
Saturday, October 20, 2018
Knox Presbyterian Church, 120 Lisgar Street

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit and Inuuqatigiit staff
Elder/Qulliq Lighting
32 Participants / 17 Inuit / 15 non-Inuit / 15 Fluent Inuktitut Speakers

Group 1 (English)

Question 1: What are the barriers in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Speaking English too often causes a loss in the ability to read Inuktitut
- Speaking English so often is causing a loss in the ability to speak Inuktitut fluently
- There are not many Inuktitut speakers actively around youth or programming for community members (nowhere to practice Inuktitut consistently)
- Elders/knowledge keepers need to be utilized more often
- Inuit are often shamed if they do not speak Inuktitut, considered “not Inuk”. This also directly effects self-worth. Not being able to speak Inuktitut makes some Inuit feel like they do not belong/fit in, in the South or the North
- It is hard for youth to learn Inuktitut when they are shamed for not being able to pronounce words properly. Discourages them from using Inuktitut daily
- There are no consistent language classes offered
- Most learning is done during the early years of life. Not many language programs for older youth/adults
- More opportunities are needed to implement the use of Inuktitut

Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Classes that teach the language consistently
- Starting early – learning Inuktitut first and English second because English is easier to learn as a second language
- Different ways of learning – experiencing and learning about the environment around you instead of in a classroom
• The use of humor/the way things are said causes the words to have different meanings in Inuktitut
• More opportunities to travel ‘home’ (back to the north) when Inuit are down for medical or in group homes. Many Inuit in group homes did not choose to move down south, and it is unfair that they are directly affected because they are losing their language and culture connections as a result
• Group homes for Inuit need Inuit staff members and Inuktitut speaking staff members. They also need a budget to bring programs and services to the Inuit clients living in the south
• Funding is needed to provide access to elders and knowledge keepers for Inuit living in group homes
• There is a gap in services for the ages 24+. Most programming is for youth, not many opportunities for young adults and older community members to access services
• UOttawa/Carleton (university/college) based classes to learn Inuktitut. (Queens University has had Inuktitut classes in the past)
• Games and play-based learning
• Learning from Inuktitut songs works well as Inuktitut is an oral language

**Question 3:** What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?

• Facilitating festivals in the south to celebrate Inuit culture and language. Something similar to the Toonik Tyme festival that happens in Nunavut yearly – annual celebration of Inuit traditions and return to spring
• Classes and programs run by people who speak Inuktitut
• Recognition of the Inuit language and art in city buildings/office spaces. “Makes me feel amazing to see syllabics or Inuit art displayed. More people will be educated this way”
• French is going to most likely be the predominant second language most urban Inuit will have to learn because it will have more benefits than Inuktitut in the south unless there are jobs that are created for Inuktitut speakers
• Youth are very interested in Inuktitut classes. Youth want to learn Inuktitut
• Group homes/medical homes for Inuit needing to live down south need better language and culture supports

**Group 2 (English)**

**Question 1:** What are the barriers in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

• Inuktitut is a hard language to learn
• Inuktitut is not used often in Ontario. It is mostly English in Ontario. Inuktitut is mainly spoken at home if parents choose to speak it. Even in Inuit organizations, Inuktitut is lacking
• Community members speak to each other in Inuktitut but not to staff members or in public as often
• At community gatherings there is a lack of Inuktitut use
• There are no supports in educational institutions or medical facilities
• Lack of awareness of resources
• Different dialects – can make communicating difficult between Inuit
• Southern Inuit losing their language because English and French are way more predominant/priority
• There is a need for long-term Inuktitut supports
• The public does not know very much about Inuktitut if anything at all
• The responsibility/onus is on Inuit to know English
• There are no signs in Inuktitut to accommodate Inuit living in the south in public places
• There is a need to find people to teach and speak Inuktitut well
• A barrier is age. Younger Inuit are more comfortable speaking English and can be wary of speaking to elders in Inuktitut

**Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?**

• Building a sense of community in learning language – different levels of learning are needed – introductory/intermediate/advanced
• Need the younger generation to learn to carry on the language
• Services and courses are need to be provided to youth for Inuktitut language lessons because English and French are the main language exposures – Saturday school language programming
• Similar structure to English and French as a second language program – Rosetta stone program
• Better exposure to services offered in Ontario. Many Inuit are not aware of the current services available
• It needs to be about exposure to Inuktitut, not just services
• The younger generation needs to use and practice Inuktitut more than just at programs and school i.e. Language Saturday school, at home, with each other
• Oral and written communication works well. More exposure to syllabics and oral communication is needed
• Need a combination of formal courses and community gatherings
• Indigenous languages as an option in schools. To ‘normalize’ the language
• Need a safe space to learn and practice Inuktitut language

**Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?**

• Need to learn from elders – Government needs to create this space and organizations need to support this
• Need signs in English, French and Inuktitut in main service areas (hospitals, courthouses, etc.)
• Government needs to interact on a nation-to-nation bases. Not “top down” – let community decide how these resources should be used
• Organizations need to get resources out there about available Inuktitut resources
  • Promote at community events for parents and children
• Outreach to other organizations, hospitals and courts
• Be aware of the past and mistrust of the government supporting language
• Quantify the need of language supports and who wants to learn
• Want the revitalization of Inuktitut through organizations and services – each facility should have a minimum of one Inuktitut speaker per program as there is a duty to accommodate people based on population of Inuit in the south
• It is not just about language learning but also furthering the accessibility of services provided to the public i.e. legal system
• Need supports on how to speak Inuktitut well – phonetics
• Language revitalization is about communicating language knowledge and should be a priority
• Through education
  • Government supports other language programs i.e. Chinese, French, ASL etc. Needs to support Inuktitut as well

Group 3 (Inuktitut)

Question 1: What are the barriers in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

• Do not mix Inuktitut and English when speaking. When speaking in Inuktitut, speak entirely in Inuktitut and when speaking in English, speak entirely in English. Do not mix both languages in a sentence
• Inuit are a minority in the city. Therefore, it is difficult to learn and retain Inuktitut in the city
• The School Boards lack Inuktitut instructors. Inuktitut is not being taught in the schools
• Children are being bullied and there is language shaming because of their dialect(s). This causes children not to speak Inuktitut
• Teachers do not want to hear Inuktitut being spoken. This disables students to speak their own language
• Workplaces also do not want people to speak Inuktitut, because they don’t understand the language. This causes Inuit not to converse in their own language
• There are no Inuktitut classes available for the Inuit. Inuktitut is not being taught
• Children’s Aid Society, Group Homes and Elders’ Care Facilities do not have Inuktitut speaking workers. They also don’t have Inuktitut interpreters. The unilingual Inuit in these facilities are not receiving services in Inuktitut
• Inuktitut language services should be provided during Inuit organization meetings and also Inuit resource people have to be hired for these meetings and organizations to function properly. Organizations should provide more Inuktitut services
• Hospitals, Baffin Larga (Medical Boarding Home) and the hotels where patients stay at do not have Inuit Interpreters
• Inuktitut is not being spoken at home or there is not enough use at people’s homes
• There is a sense of no more ownership of Inuktitut
• In Ottawa, there is not enough or no publications in Inuktitut and there is no public Inuktitut signage
• There is no or not enough prayers conducted in Inuktitut by the people who are praying for people

Question 2: *What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?*

• There should be Inuktitut keyboard training and learning
• People should speak in Inuktitut as much as possible and regularly

Question 3: *What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?*

• There should be Inuktitut public announcements provided in Inuktitut in the media, during the news, sports and weather broadcasts
• In the schools, Inuktitut instructors should provide assistance in teaching Inuktitut and providing services in Inuktitut
• At meetings, Inuktitut speaking Elders should be facilitating the meetings
• At Government departments, Inuktitut services should be provided
• Daycares should hire more Inuktitut speakers
• Inuktitut language courses should be provided to employees
• For the people who are providing services to the Inuit, there should be Inuktitut languages training in speaking and writing Inuktitut
• Roman Orthography should be taught
• Medical staff should be taught anatomy in Inuktitut
• There should be Inuktitut signage
• Like English and French, Inuktitut should be recognized as an official language
• Inuktitut should be a recognized, taught and used in schools
• Books should be published in Inuktitut and public displays should be in Inuktitut
• More employees who speak Inuktitut should be hired and employed
• Inuit Organizations need to hire more fluent Inuktitut speakers
• An Inuktitut Language Advocacy should be formed to assist Inuit Organizations and Inuit Associations to ensure that Inuit are served in Inuktitut
• Internet services should also have Inuktitut applications on the Internet
• Inuktitut teachers/instructors should be teaching in the schools
• There should be a daily Inuktitut word instruction
• Inuit language for Inuit by Inuit. There should be an Inuit Organization formed to ensure that other organizations are providing Inuktitut services
• Inuit leaders are elected, they have to listen to and enact what the Inuit want and need
**5.1.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT – GUELPH**

Saturday, November 10, 2018  
10C Shared Space, 40 Carden Avenue

**Facilitators:** Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff  
**Participants:** 22 in total / 10 Self-Identified Inuit / 1 Inuktitut speaker

**Group 1 (English)**

**Question 1:** What are the main barriers in learning, using and maintaining Inuktitut?

- Families/Inuit in Southern Ontario area do not know other Inuit
- Not having access to language teachers/language keepers in the area
- Programs like Rosetta Stone are only offered in one dialect – this isn’t helpful as we know the importance and big differences between dialects
- There still exists feelings of shame associated with being Inuk – this shame has had a significant effect on language retention
- Shame also exists around not being able to speak Inuktitut – this needs to be part of the conversation
- There is a lack of everyday visuals that would make Inuktitut familiar (signs, books, labels, etc.)
- Many people feel alone, not knowing any other Inuit
- There needs to be support from Northern organizations and governments
- Need for central location for Inuit to share details, events, contacts for Southern/Ontario-based Inuit (i.e. website, app, calendar). There is a significant need to connect with others
- For children in care, no information is given on culture or language. They are only given broad “Indigenous” resources, focused on First Nations culture/language. They are told there is concern from CAS in regards to keeping their culture, but given no support that is Inuit-specific to do it

**Question 2:** What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

*Facilitator’s Note: A big focus was on their children learning – parents/guardians had no resources to be able to learn with or let their children learn their language. All parents present were not Inuktitut speakers – but were interested in learning with their children.*

- Recordings that are paired with visuals (i.e. books) so that we can tackle pronunciation
- Access to radio programs/auditory resources to encourage listening and being able to hear Inuktitut being spoken
- Videos/movies/shows; a database with all of these would be helpful
- In order for children to learn, exposure to language up North has really helped
- Major issue facing the whole group was trying to find accessible resources to introduce language to children
• Children are extremely interested and at an age where they are ready and best able to learn, but there are no resources available (to their knowledge)
• Local or satellite supports in Southern Ontario are felt to be necessary to help with this (& other resources)
• Summer/March Break camp focused around language and culture suggested and agreed upon as great potential idea to get the seeds of language learning planted.
• Need for language lessons that are consistent
• Language lessons that are for children and parents to take together may also be helpful so that learning can be a family-oriented process
• More resources like Anaana’s Tent would be useful
• Desire to have resources easily available in the library, like books, movies and cultural resources – one participant suggested that maybe it would be better to have these available through Indigenous spaces
• Another participant recognized and shared that Inuuqatigiit (through their website) has really good, free resources available
• Indigenous languages should be more present in schools – ALL Indigenous languages – students don’t have the opportunity to learn if not given the option
• Online courses – like those that are offered in university

Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?

• There needs to be more acknowledgement that Inuit are around outside of Ottawa and other major cities
• There needs to be efforts to improve and encourage better communication – a common resource centre for people to get information from could assist in this
• Northern governments need to take ownership through a supportive role in helping Inuit in the South
• The rights of children and individuals should be above politics. There should be an open and fluid transfer of knowledge between the Government of Nunavut and the Ontario Government
• The Ontario government should pursue the opportunity to partner with the Government of Nunavut to gain support for Southern Inuit and share knowledge that we know the Government of Nunavut has (i.e. hundreds of high-quality language-learning materials/resources, best practices to integrating Inuktitut into schools)
• Increase funding for language initiatives and increase the amount of initiatives like this (make them more common)
• Create a centralized database for resources and communication for Southern Inuit
• Acknowledge the existence of Inuit – stop taking a pan-indigenous approach. Inuit are unique and are different than First Nations or Metis
• People need help! There are no resources, there is no communication, there are no connections that can help them teach or give their children the opportunity to learn their language.
Group 2 (English)

Question 1: What are the main barriers in learning, using and maintaining Inuktitut?

- Lack of resources available for adoptive children
- Couldn’t find anyone in the area for additional support or resources
  I.e. There are no Inuktitut speakers at the University or OFIFIC
- Feels isolating, as if they are the only Inuit in the area
- Video language resources are not equivalent to learning Inuit culture
- Don’t have access to cultural education
- Can’t find people to speak the language to pass along the knowledge
- Don’t have someone to share the cultural knowledge
- No access to elders, programs, or funding to fulfill the need
- People misconceive Inuit culture for First Nations
- Story of an individual who adopted an Inuk son. They wanted to adopt his siblings but were refused because as they wouldn’t take him to a Pow Wow, they were not incorporating his culture
  - When the parents explained that the Pow Wow was not an Inuit cultural component, they were told that “any Native is better than no native”
  - Unfair that the family and children are punished due to a lack of resources available
- No services in urban southern Ontario that provide translation services within the healthcare system
- Internet technology can bring people together (ex. Kids programs such as Isuma)
- Difficulty learning the language includes pronunciation, there is a need for an audio resource (ex. Duo lingo)
- No teachers or other community members to practice with
- Solutions include:
  - Weekly or monthly group practice sessions
  - Recording to assist with the audio understanding of the language
  - If TI begins language courses, have them available through skype
  - Model after MOOC online course to learn the language anywhere

Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Having a community to practice and talk with
- More media in Inuktitut
  - Language, news, or music
  - Youtube music covers – know the song but easier to pick up in a different language
  - Learned quite a bit from Jerry Cans, Youtube, Internet, and APTN
- Need to ingrain the syllabic chart in the head to foster better understanding
  - Use for everyday items
  - Put the chart to a song to remember better (just how we sing the ABCs)
- Online pool or database of all language resources
• There are online French materials that are constantly in use, why not Inuktitut
  • Duolingo has Klingon but not Inuktitut; This illustrates a blatant disregard for Indigenous languages
• Good examples include:
  • Aboriginal Student Centre at Conestoga College
  • White Owl for children has some programs
  • Want TI resources in the South
• Grammar book for Inuktitut
• Flashcards and games are a great interactive way to learn
• Videogames or platform games

**Question 3:** *What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?*

• Hub to obtain resources pertaining to language
• There are various hub such as health, family, early years, but all very separate
• More Friendship Centres in the area and less First-Nations based
• Want resources that include art training, folklore, group activities like mitt-making
• Currently facing difficulty navigating resources available and need them to be more easily accessible
  • Ottawa and Montreal have a wealth of resources
• Want an established institution for language
• Centre with resources in the South
  • Many resources are only available in the North and excludes the South
• Language classes
• Perhaps a language culture camp or school courses
  • Key to be financially supported to meet all people’s needs
  • Or send people North to engage in culture and language (would require subsidy)
• Interactive book
• Program on Ipad to help read English and Inuktitut
• Want Inuktitut to be offered in the school system
• Utilize IEACs

**Group 3 (Inuktitut): Interview with Elder**

**Question 1:** *What are the main barriers in learning, using and maintaining Inuktitut?*

• Not spending enough time with his grandchildren is a big issue for him because he works at night. He tries to teach his grandchild. The child only understands some words but not enough

**Follow-up question:** *Do you think Inuit living in the South are losing their language skill? Why?*

• Yes definitely. He is forgetting certain words because they speak only English down here
• His children do not speak it but do understand simple words like “I love you”, “daughter” (panik), etc.
• He would love for my children to speak Inuktitut but his family not spend enough time together, with everybody working
• If there were tools and resources available in Inuktitut, it would help them to teach their children more

Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

• Spending more time with his grandchildren

Follow-up question: In your experience, what works best for you?

• Growing up, he learned how to read from the Bible at church
• He never touched a computer in his life, but his daughter found out about the session on social media, he and his family were able to attend
• The tools and resources he used growing up were from conversing with other hunters, but they are in Ontario

Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?

• Not knowing if there are other Inuit live in the area is a big issue.
• He found out who else lives in Guelph from this gathering. If there was an office setup in the perimeter where we live indicating there are other Inuit living in the area, it would be a definite asset

Follow-up question: What do you think is needed to help Inuit in the South to learn and keep Inuktitut language skills?

• Teaching the children (gathering place) through traditional Inuit songs
• If there was a centre available for Inuit to get together would be amazing, as right now there is no place to go for gatherings on a regular basis
• He believes learning Inuktitut is a community priority so that our children/grandchildren will learn to speak/read and write it
5.1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT – TORONTO

Saturday, November 17, 2018
Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, 16 Spadina

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff
Participants: 7 people/ 5 Inuit / 4 Inuktitut Speakers / 1 Inuktitut Learner / 2 TI Staff

Group 1 (English)

Question 1: What are the main barriers in learning, using and maintaining Inuktitut?

- There are no peers, no one their age to speak Inuktitut with – especially not a lot in postsecondary academic spaces
- Community is small and so is the access to language in this city
- Feelings of being scared, because if their Mother isn’t around to speak Inuktitut, they may lose it
- Children are not surrounded by Inuktitut, and therefore it is challenging to teach children on your own
- Lack of connection to other Inuit children
- Many people around you don’t know about Inuit culture, let alone share it
- There is still the need to navigate through misunderstandings and stigmas associated with identifying as Inuk – being Inuk in a big city like Toronto is a barrier in and of itself
- There are sentiments of feeling like an exhibit when speaking Inuktitut in public – everyone is watching like there is a show happening – this is a barrier and a disincentive to speak in public
- A lot of Inuit are born or are adopted in Ontario and don’t have access to Inuit culture and language – this creates a long-term feeling of lacking connection and feeling out of place in the South
- Having a partner that is from the South or non-Inuk can be a barrier – they are not able to understand Inuit culture/language/being raised differently
- Format of delivery – previous attempts at language learning have consisted of not very good resources, not being consistent or having little to no structure
- There is a need for context-driven language learning – i.e. there are so many ways to say snow and it is hard to translate/explain directly between Inuktitut and English
- There is a strong presence of lateral violence – negative things are often said to folks about not being able to speak Inuktitut – even situations where people refuse to talk to them until they learn
- There is a need for trauma-informed learning, teaching and facilitating language – language is so intrinsic to culture and therefore there is trauma associated with language learning
- No set dialect within Toronto
- Smaller Inuit languages/dialects are not addressed in past language revitalization
Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Hearing it – learning pronunciation
- Contexts – learning context
- Resource similar to Duolingo – Inuktitut version, with choices of dialects and acknowledgement of dialects
- Elders – there are not enough Elders and logistics are challenging, but they play an essential role in teaching language – they are the keepers of Inuit storytelling
- Technology is not ideal, but may be the easiest – reminder that internet is not always accessible, especially in the North where it can be very expensive
- Inuktitut learning phone line – creation of a toll-free number/hotline to talk to and learn from

Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?

- No idea what to do
- Where do we start? There are so many issues to disentangle
- Language goes so much deeper than just learning language as a communication tool – it can’t be separated from culture, history, trauma, emotions, connections, family, etc.
- Recommendation is to go deeper and take a more holistic approach to language revitalization – there are prevalent structural challenges that exist
- Need for more availability of Inuktitut programs – funding!
- Avoid just looking at numbers, look at contexts and needs in deciding where to fund, where to continue to fund, where to invest resources

Group 2 (Inuktitut): Interview with Elder

Question 1: What are the main barriers you face in learning, using and maintaining Inuktitut?

- Having completely no signs in Inuktitut anywhere in the city is the biggest barrier, as well as there is no Inuktitut speaking employees anywhere. It is a breath of fresh air when we finally speak Inuktitut with Inuit when we do get together, like today for instance.
- Having no interpreters for Inuit that require interpreters for hospital visits (appointments/treatment). One participant has been called from the hospitals to interpret for Inuit patients.

Follow-up question: What are some of the everyday challenges and barriers faced by Inuit who speak Inuktitut?

- Not enough spending time with other Inuit who speak Inuktitut in the city.
- Different dialect could be a challenge.

Follow-up question: Is it hard to retain or keep your Inuktitut language skills?
• Yes, when there is no one to speak it with

Follow-up question: Do you think Inuit living in the South are losing their language skill? Why?
• Yes definitely, if you don’t speak it regularly

Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?
• Making sure the children listen to the language being spoken on a daily basis at home, not just at schools, but from family and friends

Follow-up question: Can you give examples of programs and services that for work for Inuit?
• It is nonexistent in the city of Toronto.
• There needs to be an interpreter for the unilingual Inuit that come down here for hospital/appointments. It is way too challenging because the medical terminology can be hard to understand

Follow-up question: Have you ever tried using Inuktitut learning tools found on the internet?
• There is hardly anything on the internet. If you can speak English, then you can navigate around and can find some things but there is hardly anything
• Are there tools or resources used in other parts of Canada that should be used in Ontario?
• If there are more gatherings for Inuit, it would definitely be an asset
• TI does have programs here at this office but there isn’t enough going on due to lack of funding. We wait for long periods of time for funding for arts and crafts or events
• Have an Inuktitut speaking person at the offices (an Inuk staff), especially at the offices of social services, housing association and hospitals
• It seems we are forgotten as First Peoples of Canada
• Interpreter is needed at the hospitals (was the main topic throughout)

Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?
• Have interpreters at major centres such as hospitals, housing associations and social services
5.1.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT – NORTH BAY

Saturday, February 9, 2019
Nipissing University, 100 College Drive, North Bay

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff
20 Participants / 11 Inuit / 9 non-Inuit / No fluent Inuktitut Speakers

Question 1: What are the barriers in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Inuktitut is not a necessity, is not used in the home
- English and French are more dominant
- Children are losing language skills in the South because they are not immersed
- Many grandparents speak Inuktitut but they tend to live in the North and don’t have enough time to teach grandchildren the language
- Parents would like their children to learn Inuktitut to enhance their pride in their identity
- The focus of Indigenous language classes in schools is on the local First Nation dialect
- There is not much Inuit content in the school curriculum
- There are many dialects, which makes it more difficult to learn
- The Rosetta Stone for the Nunatsiavut dialect isn’t available anymore
- It’s hard to learn Inuktitut from an app, there needs to be interaction with fluent speakers, but there aren’t many in North Bay
- There are no services in Inuktitut in North Bay
- There aren’t enough children to create an Inuktitut immersion school in North Bay

Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Phone calls between children and grandparents to help kids learn Inuktitut
- Create Inuktitut apps and resources, including the phonetic spelling
- Create Inuktitut cartoons in different dialects
- Offer Inuktitut language courses for adults, available online
- In language classes, use project-based learning (i.e. sewing something and learning about Inuktitut words associated with sewing at the same time)
- It’s easier to read Inuktitut in roman orthography than in syllabics
- It’s easier to learn by focusing on one dialect
- Kids are like sponges, focus on teaching kids and providing Inuktitut classes for them

Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?

- Make language preservation a government priority
- Create more Inuktitut books for kids and adults
- Set up an Inuit-specific office within Indigenous Friendship Centers in Ontario
- Strengthen community bonds, for example by offering an Inuit Day in different parts of Ontario
• The government should provide more funding for TI to work on this
• Inuktitut sewing classes, arts and crafts
• Some parents stated they are willing to travel to Ottawa for Inuit language and culture events
• More Inuktitut in the schools, especially the elementary schools
• Teaching children Inuktitut songs
5.2 STAKEHOLDER/PARTNER ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

5.2.1 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – COUNSELLORS

Thursday, September 27, 2018
1071 Richmond Road, Ottawa

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff
Group Input

Question 1: Do you believe that there are adequate Inuktitut language services and supports? If not, what could be helpful?

- Inuktitut is traditionally an oral language. Syllabics is a non-Inuit writing system created by priests
- There is a need to develop Inuktitut resources for counselling, self-help
- Professional translators are needed. An organization could accredit Inuktitut translators in Ontario
- It is important for Inuit organizations to hire Inuktitut speakers rather than Anglophones
- Inuit need access to education and training so that they will have the qualifications to take on jobs

Question 2: How does language affect your ability to provide front-line services and support your clients?

- There are different dialects in different regions. Different dialects can create barriers to talking in Inuktitut. Some words are lost even when Inuktitut is translated to English and then back to Inuktitut
- There should be programming that is strictly in Inuktitut, as it will encourage everyone to speak their language
- Sometimes English speakers think that it is rude when Inuktitut speakers use the language at work, but it is simply the only time Inuit have the opportunity to speak Inuktitut. Using Inuktitut is not an exclusionary act
- Language and culture go together
- The lack Inuktitut resources hinders programming. For example, it is hard to find Inuktitut resources that speak to the trauma or lessons on healing.
- Having resources in English changes the way the clients start to think. If it is in English, clients learn to start thinking in a mainstream way and they lose their culture and traditional ways of thinking

Question 3: Do you have any additional thoughts?

- Inuktitut language is beneficial when serving clients. English policy and terminology is not Inuit-client friendly
• Procedures that Inuit clients have to follow are often lost in language, and translation is challenging and tiring for clients and staff. Clients going through CAS often don’t understand the process due to language barriers
• Not being able to access Inuit staff or have access to the language is not helping the vulnerable. Many clients are in pain already, and when they don’t know what to do or how to fill out the forms, it is frustrating for them. Forms should be translated into Inuktitut
• There are words in Inuktitut that don’t translate into English. For example, if someone says “tiresome” and “challenging”, it means much more in Inuktitut. In English, there are politically correct ways of stating things, but Inuktitut is blunt
• In terms of Inuktitut storytelling, there are morals and lessons found beneath the surface
• Inuktitut needs to be taught in schools, and the Ontario Education Act should include reference to Indigenous languages
• Many Inuit come to Ontario for health care reasons. There are translations on the wall in the hospitals, but this needs to include Inuktitut, not just French
• A lot of challenges and conflicts stem from language and culture misunderstandings

Question 4: Do you have any thoughts for future consultations?

• Often, there is a lot of ridicule for those who don’t speak Inuktitut, which includes harassment and belittling. This can impact self-identification of Inuit
• Language is a very emotional topic
• Having to speak another language can be straining. People have mentioned that once they moved to the city, their anxiety level has gone up because people have to overthink what they are going to say and what they are going to do
• Revitalizing culture and language allows people to be themselves
Question 1: Do you believe that there are adequate Inuktitut language services and supports?

- There are not enough resources to learn, practice or use Inuktitut in urban areas, especially compared to up North and in Nunavut
- The movement of language from the north to urban has led to the development and use of urban slang in Inuktitut. For example, some youth are now using the word “snow” to refer to drugs

Question 2: How does language affect your ability to provide front-line services and support your clients?

- Organizationally, there is a major dream of having a paid position for an individual whose sole job description is language support for all programs to use – i.e translation, interpretation, teaching, language support, etc. The belief is that a position like this would help all programs and allow us to better support all of our clients
- There is a need for staff to have access to language training – as well as lateral violence training – which occurs often in experiences with language. This should become a part of HR mandatory training
- There should be investment in youth programs regarding language

Question 3: How do you think a revitalization or improvement of Inuktitut in Ontario would impact your services or clients?

- Youth programs are hugely impacted by language and its revitalization
- Despite them not acknowledging it, most Inuit youth in Ottawa can speak some Inuktitut. However, many are very shy in using their language
- There is a significant need to create safe spaces to learn language. When youth begin to learn more Inuktitut, there is a huge sense of pride related to that skill
- There needs to be encouragement around language learning – this can build confidence, the feeling of being included and the feeling of being an Inuktitut speaker and learner
- Language creates a connection to Inuit community and identity. The loss of language severely impacts Inuit youth’s identity and can be directly linked to the high rates of suicide in Inuit youth
- When speaking to reconciliation, language is only one layer - but it is an important one and must be addressed in order to address all others
- In youth programs, art has become a tool to encourage youth speak Inuktitut
- Music and art are both a coping mechanism for trauma and a learning method
5.3 STAFF AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

5.3.1 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – TI STAFF (1071 RICHMOND ROAD)

Thursday, August 23, 2018
Main location (1071 Richmond Road, Ottawa)

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff
10 staff

Question 1: Do you believe that there are adequate Inuktitut language services and supports? If not, what could be helpful?

- Government organizations frequently call Tungasuvvingat Inuit due to interpretation needs (hospitals, detention centres). There needs to be more Inuktitut translators in Ontario, not just for medical services but also the legal system and other government services
- Even translation bureaus in Ontario rarely have Inuktitut translators. This causes TI to rely on friends to translate, which is problematic for proper translation. This problem can be addressed by obtaining funding to hire a permanent translator/interpreter on site at TI
- There should be programs in the work context that promote Inuktitut language learning, including an Inuktitut word of the day and mandatory Inuktitut learning modules
- Inuktitut signage should be used in Inuit organizations
- There can be language shaming due to different dialects

Question 2: How does language affect your ability to provide front-line services and support your clients?

- Speaking the language is very important for front-line services serving Inuit
- There aren’t many Inuktitut-speakers with a social services background, so there is a need for training
- For serving Inuit, having staff who speak Inuktitut is just as important as having staff who meet formal educational requirements
- It is important for Anglophone staff to make the effort to speak Inuktitut. The effort to try and speak, even with a word or two, makes a huge difference in delivery of service and connecting with clients

Question 3: Do you have any additional thoughts?

- Elders should be acknowledged for their linguistic knowledge
5.3.2 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – TI STAFF (604 LAURIER)

Thursday, September 20, 2018
604 Laurier, Ottawa

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff
Group Input

Question 1: Do you believe that there are adequate Inuktitut language services and supports? If not, what could be helpful?

- Staff need access to language training, such as mandatory Inuktitut learning modules and language courses
- Currently, Anglophone staff rely heavily on Inuit staff for translations, but that is not their job. There is a need for a position dedicated to translations and promoting Inuktitut revitalization
- Although there is a court translator now, if she is not available, then clients do not understand the system and can be agreeing to things without fully understanding the situation
- There needs to be a better understanding of the importance of language to Inuit living in Ottawa
- With dialects, words can mean something have very different meanings
- Many clients prefer to speak Inuktitut

Question 2: How does language affect your ability to provide front-line services and support your clients?

- There is a pressing need for an Inuktitut-speaker in CAS for Inuit files. Currently, Inuit files are dealt with by the French section, so both the Inuit families and the French caseworkers are communicating in their second language (English). Because of this, there is a high risk of misunderstandings impacting families
- Inuit have the right to have a translator in the court and to have documents translated, but many do not know of this right. An example of miscommunication is that sometimes, Inuktitut-speakers in the legal system do not fully understand the implications of a guilty plea
- Interpretation services are needed for housing clients. For example, in the past some Inuktitut-speakers were almost evicted because they did not understand a notice that was in English

Question 3: How do you think a revitalization or improvement of Inuktitut in Ontario would impact your services and/or clients?

- Language is extremely important
- Inuktitut teaching needs to be interactive and taught by folks who want to teach
- Teaching methods could include a word of the day, games, contests, and more structure activities such as language courses
Question 4: How can we make language a priority while managing work/case load?

- Language learning should be a mandatory part of training and the workplan
- Language and culture go hand in hand. Non-Inuit need training on why language is important, not just culture. Also learning the language will help know the culture more
- Inuit organizations should have more Inuktitut signage and labelling
- Use Inuktitut books, dictionaries, social media and apps
- For labelling, use both roman orthography and syllabics

Question 5: Do you have any additional thoughts?

- Language barriers have become a systemic issue for Inuit living in and navigating urban centres
- Inuit need access to language supports in the urban environment. Many Inuit feel shame if they don’t know their language and although they want to, they are afraid to try and speak it
- Putting in time and resources to learn Inuktitut shows respect for the culture
- Create a mentoring system to bring elders and youth together
- Need more Inuktitut resources online
- Many Inuit did not have a positive experience with the education system because they were not taught in Inuktitut
- In the spirit of reconciliation, Inuit do not want to assimilate into English but rather for Qallunaat to learn Inuktitut
5.3.3 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – YOUTH

Wednesday, December 12, 2018
297 Savard Avenue, Vanier, Ottawa

Facilitators: Tungasuvvingat Inuit staff
Participants: 7 in total/ 5 self-identified Inuit/ 5 Inuktitut speakers

Question 1: What are the main barriers in learning, using and maintain Inuktitut?

- Some Inuktitut concepts can’t be translated into English
- No one at the Group Home speaks Inuktitut
- Inuktitut speakers with different dialects often speak to one another in English because it is easier than trying to understand all of the dialects
- If you’re not around other Inuit often, it makes it harder to use Inuktitut

Question 2: What could work best in learning and retaining Inuktitut?

- Using Inuktitut at home, with parents
- Hang out with Inuit
- More Inuktitut lessons for intermediate and advanced speakers (for example, teaching Inuktitut terminology related to hunting)
- Producing Inuktitut materials in both syllabics and roman orthography
- Promoting Inuktitut rap – the youth who is not living with Inuktitut-speakers was able to keep his language through music

Question 3: What should the Government and other organizations do to support the revitalization of Inuktitut in Ontario?

- Create an organization or group where Inuktitut is spoken all the time
- Create a dictionary for Inuktitut
- Create an online program to learn Inuktitut
- Organize an Inuktitut rap battle for youth in Ottawa
- Give students the option of learning Inuktitut instead of French in school
- Increase Inuktitut content on TV and in social media