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Summary

This report presents the results of a project initiated by Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik in the wake of the pan-Canadian movement to conduct a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada. To document and address the issue in Nunavik, Saturviit organized a gathering with victims' families and regional representatives at a campsite near Inukjuak in April 2016. Interviews were then conducted in the summer of 2016 with some workers, including police officers and social workers. Concerns, issues, and needs were raised by family members, regional representatives, and workers about the loss of loved ones, the counseling and therapy services available in the communities, and the general conduct of the justice system in Nunavik.

Saturviit's regional inquiry into Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut has shown a major problem of communication and understanding between the justice system and the people, as well as a great lack of local services and support for grieving families. Consequently, it is urgently recommended that regional and local organizations work together to do the following: come up with new ways to inform the Nunavimmiut about the justice system adequately; implement an adapted training program for all police officers about Nunavimmiut realities and how to work with the communities; develop local capacities in order to provide family counseling and therapy on a continual basis; and continue developing the role of local justice committees. To improve local services in Nunavik, it is important to increase communication between service providers, as well as between service providers and community members, through community and information activities.

Introduction and background

Indigenous women have been especially vulnerable to crime, and since 2005 this vulnerability has been documented more than once by inquiries and reports.¹ For instance, from 2005 to 2010, the Sisters in Spirit initiative carried out a research project on missing and murdered Native women across Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. They listed 582 cases and pointed out the disproportionate number of Native women among crime victims. They called for both preventative action and intervention (Native Women's Association of Canada 2010). In 2014, in a report titled *Invisible Women: Call to Action* (Amber 2014), the Special Committee on Violence Against Indigenous Women in Ottawa pointed to the slowness of the legal process, the lack of support for families, and the gap in services available, and proposed means of improvement. The same year, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police published the report from its inquiry, providing another overview of the national situation by listing 1,181 cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women or girls between 1980 and 2012 (RCMP 2014). The data showed that Indigenous women are much more at risk of being victims of violent crime than are non-Indigenous women. The report also revealed that in 92% of all cases of homicide of Indigenous women or girls, the perpetrator is a family member.

The fact remains that the extent of the problem is underestimated, since a significant number of cases are never reported (Amber 2014). Furthermore, while Inuit across Canada have stressed many times the need to differentiate First Nations' culture and realities from those of Inuit, we still have no data specifically on the situation of missing and murdered Inuit women and girls, or on specific risk factors in the North (Rogers 2014).

In 2014, Quebec Native Women (QNW) decided to make up for the lack of information on the situation in the province of Quebec. To connect with the families of victims and learn about their very sensitive experiences, they organized a gathering of families of missing or murdered women. They also interviewed Native police officers, front-line workers, and coordinators of Indigenous case files within the social services system and the justice system. The report published in 2015 sheds light on the many kinds of violence and “erasing” that Indigenous women have suffered throughout their lives, and which have too often led to either disappearance or death. Once again, present hardship takes us back to colonial history, when disappearances of loved ones first started. The stories of missing or murdered women also attest to the inadequacy of social services and the justice system (particularly policing), racism among non-Indigenous people, and the need to denounce and fight family violence.

While Inuit women living in Montreal were included in the QNW research, the Nunavik region was excluded for various reasons. This is why QNW reached out to Saturviit Inuit Women's Association and asked us to conduct the same project in Nunavik. In the meantime, the newly elected Liberal

¹ A list of reports and recommendations on violence and crime against Indigenous women and girls (VAIWG) can be downloaded from the website of the Native Women's Association of Canada: <https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/List-of-Reports-and-Recommendations-on-VAIWG.pdf>

government in Ottawa announced on December 8, 2015 the holding of a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. After calling for this inquiry for years, Indigenous associations and communities finally won their case. The pre-inquiry phase was launched in January 2016 with consultations of families of victims, asking them how the inquiry should be designed and how families should be involved. National Inuit organizations, such as Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI), initiated pre-inquiry consultations with Inuit from across Canada to ensure that they are heard in the process. ITK and TI submitted together a National Inuit Submission to the government (TI and ITK 2016), and Pauktuutit published a report with a list of recommendations (Pauktuutit 2016). Because Saturviit made a request to carry out an independent project in Nunavik, Justice Canada agreed to allocate funding to Saturviit.

To carry out its project, Saturviit followed QNW by organizing a gathering of families of missing or murdered people and by interviewing various workers and police officers in the region. Saturviit also decided to include the families of missing or murdered men in its project. This is why the project was named “Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut” (MMN).² We acknowledge the importance of supporting Inuit men and of not putting them aside, believing that each victim deserves a voice and that Inuit men are also victims of violence and crime.³ By including male victims, Saturviit above all did not want to ignore their families.

This report presents the data collected in 2016 during Saturviit’s project on Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut. After providing more details about the conduct of this regional inquiry, we first provide an overview of the stories shared by the families. We then turn towards their specific experiences and concerns with or about the justice system, including the views of service providers in order to shed light on the many issues and challenges faced by the system in Nunavik. We finally attempt to reconcile the different viewpoints and come up with approaches to the many issues raised by participants, by above all promoting better communication and cooperation among all people involved.

2 Although many organizations use the conjunction “and” between “missing” and “murdered,” suggesting that each person was initially missing and then reported murdered, we have chosen, like Quebec Native Women did, to use the conjunction “or” because many missing person have never been reported murdered.

3 Although probably more women than men suffer from severe physical domestic violence and die from it, there is also a very high rate of men abused in different ways by their spouses in Nunavik. This violence is often less visible, since it leaves fewer marks and since victims tend to remain more quiet about it. A lot of men are also victims of fighting with friends or relatives in situations where alcohol is involved (interviews with Lizzie Aloupa, police officers from Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay, and social worker from Hudson Bay).

Saturviit and the Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut (MMN)

Saturviit's mandate and activities

Saturviit⁴ Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik is a non-profit organization whose mandate is to give voice to Inuit women and children, to break down the wall of silence surrounding their experiences, and to support positive, healthy communities. This women's association was reborn after women from Nunavik's 14 communities and from the South came to a gathering. In the summer of 2005, they met at Qilalugaq Camp near Puvirnituq to reflect on Nunavik's political and social situation. They came up with nineteen recommendations that bring attention to the needs of Inuit women and children. They also drafted a manifesto called "Stop Violence"⁵ and asked all individuals and organizations to adopt it. Following the meeting, by the summer of 2006, Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik was formally created. Since then, Saturviit representatives have sat at national, provincial, and regional meetings, attended conferences, advocated for Inuit women and their families, and supported Nunavik women by funding community initiatives.

One of Saturviit's mandates is to develop activities to eliminate violence against women and children, to improve their well-being, and to advocate for them. To fulfil this mandate better, Saturviit carried out in 2013 a study on the living conditions of Inuit women across Nunavik and in Montreal. The results confirmed a very high prevalence of violence in Nunavik households due to overcrowding of houses, difficult marital relationships, alcohol and drug abuse, and past traumas, these being among the most apparent factors. It also addressed the inadequacy of social services and the legal system, which are poorly adjusted to Nunavik realities and to Nunavimmiut culture. Clearly, education must be improved, and connections to elders and cultural identity should be revived in order to empower Inuit, bring hope, and restore peace to their communities (Laneville 2015).

Because Nunavimmiut women and girls are highly vulnerable to violence and crime, Saturviit has been taking part in national events on the issue of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). We attended the first and second National Roundtables on MMIWG, respectively in February 2015 in Ottawa and in February 2016 in Winnipeg, and the Summit of Justice Practitioners on MMIWG in Winnipeg in January 2016. When the federal government launched its pre-inquiry phase in January 2016, Saturviit's representatives were at the Quebec City and Montreal consultation sessions. Saturviit also participated in Pauktuutit's pre-inquiry session in Ottawa in February,⁶ and in ITK's pre-inquiry session in Kuujuaq in March.⁷ We were moreover mandated by TI to organize a pre-inquiry session in Montreal on March 19, 2016. From January 2016 onwards, Saturviit also undertook its regional project in order to shed light on the specific situation of Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut.

4 "Saturviit" means "people who bring hope to restore peace."

5 The manifesto can be downloaded from Saturviit's website: <http://www.saturviit.ca/category/news/>.

6 A report on this consultation, titled *Nipimit Nanisiniq – Finding Voice*, can be downloaded from their website: <http://pauktuutit.ca/missing-murdered-inuit-women/strategy/report-on-the-pre-inquiry-consultation/>.

7 The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services organized that session.

Gathering of families of MMN

Designing the event

Bringing together family members of victims in an environment conducive to sharing and discussion seemed the best and most respectful way to learn about the situation of missing or murdered Nunavimmiut. The obvious choice was to have the meeting at a campsite on the land. For Nunavimmiut, being on the land is related to a sense of peacefulness and connection to Inuit identity. Healing circles and gatherings on the land are indeed really often requested by community members when they wish to address social issues. The Unaaq Men's Association of Inukjuak's campsite (Elder-Youth camp) was selected because it could accommodate a large number of participants and provide catering and transportation.

The gathering had many objectives: first, to provide the families of victims with support; second, to collect the victims' stories and information about the families' needs; and third, to make the families' voices heard by their representatives and to promote engagement with organizations to address issues and meet needs. The agenda of the gathering then had four kinds of activities: storytelling and sharing with families (day one), reflection on needs (day two), discussions with regional representatives (day three) and, finally, recreation and relaxing activities. The last kind of activity was vital, considering how heavy and heart-wrenching the subject is. The families gathered for a whole week, while regional organization representatives joined the families only on the last day.

It was important that the goals and objectives be clear to the families from the very beginning, so that no one would leave with unfulfilled expectations or frustrations. Obviously, the gathering did not aim to offer personal justice by resolving cases of injustice; nor did it provide answers to questions about specific cases. Even when the Deputy Chief of the KRPF was present, it was impossible to address specific cases both for lack of detailed information on hand, and out of respect for the confidentiality of the people involved.

Two Inuit facilitators were selected to lead the meeting and three health support workers to assist the families and provide on-site counselling. Local resources were used as much as possible, albeit few outside workers were useful as sources of expertise on the national issue. Annie Ittoshat, who lives in Montreal and had facilitated the national pre-inquiry session for Inuit in that city, was selected to facilitate the gathering with Siasi Smiller Irqumia, an Inukjuammuiq who actively works to address social issues in her community. Barbara Sevigny, an Inuk originally from Iqaluit (Nunavut), who works at the Mamisarvik Treatment Centre in Ottawa and was knowledgeable on the national issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, was asked to lead the health support workers' team, which also included Leena Metuq and Anna Samsack from Inukjuak.

An event for the families: outcomes

The gathering took place from April 25 to 29 at the Elder-Youth camp near Inukjuak and hosted around 40 participants altogether. Eighteen family members came from Inukjuak, Puvirnituq, Akulivik, Kangirsuk, and Montreal. Nine regional representatives joined the families on the last day: Pierre Bettez (Deputy Chief at the time of the gathering) and Lizzie Aloupa (Prevention Counsellor) from the Kativik Regional Police Force (KRPF); Laura McKeeman (Family Violence and Sexual Abuse Prevention Agent) from the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS);

Adamie Padlayat (Board Member), Simeonie Nalukturuk (Justice Committee Member) and Rebecca Kasudluak (Justice Development Agent) from Makivik; Benjamin Arreak (Women's and Elders' Issues) and Ida Nayoumealuk (Sapummijit-CAVAC center) from the Kativik Regional Government (KRG), and finally Alana Boileau from Quebec Native Women (QNW). Other participants were facilitators, support workers, coordinators, and Saturviit's Vice-President, Mary Thomassie.

This heartrending and successful event was the first of its kind in Nunavik. Thanks to the meeting's agenda, the availability of support workers, and the setting of the meeting, the families were able to tell their stories and talk about their suffering in a respectful, confidential, and intimate atmosphere. For some participants, it was the first time they had ever talked about what they had gone through, and the experience was tough but therapeutic. The participants felt understood and supported by one another and created support networks for the future. The families also learned about some services provided by regional organizations and about the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In return, regional representatives learned about missing or murdered Nunavimmiut directly from the victims' families, and began a dialogue on future joint efforts to meet their needs. The event was so well run and appreciated that participants ended the week with a feeling of having built a new family. They also expressed their desire to participate in another gathering of this kind in the near future.

It is important to note that the event focused more on the needs and concerns of the families than on how and why their loved ones had died or gone missing. It was also more focused on the present and the future than on the past. Most family members neither knew nor understood what had really happened to their loved ones and they had no interest in discussing something they neither knew nor could explain. The only thing they knew was the pain they had gone through every day ever since, when support and services had been absent or inadequate.

Nunavik regional inquiry into MMN

Following the gathering, telephone interviews were conducted with nine *Qallunaat*⁸ and Inuit workers in the fields of legal, social, and health services. Funding, distance, time, and availability of experienced and interested workers unfortunately limited the number of interviews. The objective of the interviews was to complement the information from the families in order to understand this issue in Nunavik better. It was considered important to obtain the point of view of service providers on crime and on the many challenges to the justice system and services in the North. They were questioned among other things about their role, their relationship to the community, the obstacles they face in their work, and the cases of missing or murdered Inuit. We interviewed two police officers, two social workers, one family member, two workers for justice committees, and two Inuit counsellors. Here is the list of the interviewed with their respective titles and interview dates. Names appear only when these workers made no request for anonymity, be it for work-related or personal matters.

8 The Inuit term "Qallunaat" (plural of "Qallunaaq") is used in this report to refer to White people in general.

1. Lizzie Aloupa, Prevention Counsellor for the KRPF (interview on July 12)
2. *Qallunaaq*, social worker on the Hudson Bay coast (July 29)
3. *Qallunaaq*, police officer on the Hudson Bay coast (August 12)
4. Family member on the Hudson Bay coast (August 19)
5. Inuk, police officer on the Ungava Bay coast (September 2)
6. *Qallunaaq*, social worker on the Ungava Bay coast (September 20)
7. Barbara Sevigny, Inuk counsellor at the Mamisarvik Treatment Centre in Ottawa (September 28)
8. Lyne St-Louis, Nunavik Justice Officer for Makivik (October 17)
9. Phoebe Atagotaaluk, Justice Committee Coordinator in Inukjuak (November 9)

In this report, we first aim to give victim families a voice. We intend to spell out the many issues that come up in their stories and to shed light on their needs. Very few names and quotes appear in this report. Due to the sensitivity of the topic and the private atmosphere of the gathering, no discussion was recorded and we preserved the total confidentiality of all family members.

Saturviit hopes this report will promote better understanding of the situation of missing or murdered Nunavimmiut and further collaboration between regional and local organizations and governments in order to take concrete actions to meet needs. At the end of the gathering, Saturviit was encouraged to keep on coordinating efforts for collaboration among partners, with the specific aim of discussing the priorities that had emerged from the gathering and the actions each organization should do. A regional meeting was slated to follow publication of this report.

Stories about lost ones and their families

In this chapter, we will hear the families and the workers interviewed speak about these victims and about the personal experience of losing a loved one. We will first try to explain what we mean by a missing or murdered Inuit, and also include a section about sexual exploitation in Nunavik and Montreal. We feel that such exploitation is closely linked to the vulnerability of many Inuit women and thus to the main issue of this report.

What is a missing or murdered Nunavimmiut?

When people were invited to come to the gathering, Saturviit deliberately avoided suggesting any definition of what is a murdered person and what is a missing person. One of the goals of the project was precisely to define what is for Nunavimmiut a missing or a murdered person, and the answer is not as obvious as it seems.

As Quebec Native Women brilliantly brought out in its report on Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women in Québec (FAQ 2015), if one takes the point of view of a family member, someone is missing when the family can no longer contact that person and has no idea where she is and with whom. The person may not necessarily be officially reported missing. But for the family, it is all the same because they have no idea what has happened to their loved one and what situation she is in. Nor do they have any way to get in touch with her. This can happen when a person leaves her community and never comes back or contacts her family again. The family suffers from her disappearance. Such cases of disappearance happened countless times when residential schools existed and through placements of children by Youth Protection, for instance. This kind of disappearance still happens when someone runs away to the city because of unbearable family issues in her community, this being another typical example.

As for cases of murder, a family may say they have lost a loved one through murder even when there has been no murder trial or court verdict and when no one has been recognized as the murderer. The justice system may be unrelated to the family's experience, perception, and conception of what happened. For instance, when someone's death is reported as a suicide, the family may remain convinced that the deceased never took his or her life and that the justice system failed to do a proper investigation. Also, when someone causes the death of another person, he or she may be cleared of all charges because of the circumstances (alleged self-defence, for instance) or mental issues. Therefore, a family may see a murder even where there is no convicted culprit. What matters to them is rather their belief and feeling that someone unfairly caused their loved one's death.

During the gathering, with about ten distinct families present, we heard stories from fourteen men and women who had been considered missing or killed, most of them over the last ten years or so. All of the stories took place in Nunavik, except for one in Montreal and another in Quebec City. The social workers and police officers we interviewed for the present report also referred us to a few cases without providing information about victims' identity. Although each story is unique, we have identified certain types of situations. After removing all details and personal information that might endanger anonymity, we present here these victim stories in terms of three typical situations of missing persons, and three typical situations of homicide. The cases and stories we will present here obviously do not provide the whole picture of missing or murdered Nunavimmiut. There have certainly been other situations and life journeys.

Missing Nunavimmiut

Past hospitalizations

Lizzie Aloupa, the Prevention Counsellor at the KRPF, recalled for us the stories of sick people who had been sent to hospitals in the South many years ago and had never come back North. The families never knew what had happened to those people. She also remembered stories about mothers giving birth in a Southern hospital and, likely after medical intervention, never seeing their babies again.

Hunters lost in the tundra

During the gathering, four stories were told about missing persons. In all cases, the missing person, a man, went hunting on the land and never came back home. Although some searches were done, the body was not found. The family and/or the municipality organized searches and got at times help from other communities. Sometimes, alcohol consumption was involved and may have caused the man to lose his way and die. Sometimes, bad weather was probably the main reason. Because the family was unable to find the body, the impact was the same as with any other disappearance; they had no idea what really happened and could not grieve. Some family members kept searching and searching on the land, even putting their own lives at risk. At some point, unfortunately, they too had to give up. According to the police officer from Hudson Bay, in cases where the body of people who go missing on the land was never found, some evidence of what happened was however established.

Nunavimmiut moving to Montreal and losing touch with their families

Many families have also lost track of relatives who have moved down South, most often to the big city of Montreal. Most of these relatives moved not by their own choosing but out of necessity because of untenable health or family issues, such as violence and sexual abuse, lack of housing, and lack of adequate support resources in the North. It is widely known that many Inuit have gone to Montreal and that, due to their great vulnerability, have become homeless vagabonds, prostitutes, or drug traffickers, while continuing to suffer from alcohol addiction and domestic violence. This is particularly dangerous for those who are unfamiliar with the city and its services because there are no Inuit-specific services. It was also mentioned that gangsters are often on the lookout for Inuit women, and Indigenous women in general, right after they arrive in the city, and lure them into prostitution or drug trafficking. According to a social worker from Hudson Bay, people with mental issues, such as schizophrenia, will leave their region for Montreal because no one wants them anymore, thus forming a group particularly at risk.

When a woman, or an man, leaves her community, time often passes without any news from her. The family may think she is taking time to get back in touch, until they realize she is never coming back. When they report the disappearance to the police in their village, they sometimes find out that their relative had brutally died. When a body is found, and the family has not reported anyone missing, the body cannot be readily identified, with the result that the cause of death cannot be readily determined either.⁹

9 Most of these concerns were also raised during national pre-inquiry sessions in Montreal and in Kuujuaq.

Murdered Nunavimmiut

Most of the stories heard during the gathering in Inukjuak were about murdered young adults (from about 20 to 40 years old), either male or female. In ten of the stories, four of the adults were women and seven were men. One woman had been killed by a relative who was not convicted due to mental problems. Most of the other women were victims of their spouses, and most of the men were killed in altercations either with another Inuk or with a police officer.

Spousal killings of women

The stories from three families at the gathering illustrate the high rate of domestic violence in Nunavik;¹⁰ boyfriends or ex-boyfriends killed three of the victims. Each case went to trial for murder, and the culprits were convicted for different lengths of time, ranging from seven to twenty-five years. A sentence of twenty-five years is the longest sentence possible for murder; the offender must be found guilty of first-degree murder. We heard of only one such case in Nunavik.

When a woman dies from domestic violence, she normally has been suffering from abuse for a long time and has had severe injuries more than once.¹¹ Alcohol is more often than not involved in serious aggression and murder, but a spouse is not always violent because of alcohol. In cases of murder, the victim has obviously failed to break free from abuse, partly due to lack of resources and services in the community, such as a psychologist and shelter, and also because of shame and fear to speak out. The housing shortage, the shortcomings of the justice system, and fear of intervention from the Youth Protection have also a lot to do with the cycle of violence continuing.

Among the stories heard from families, there was one about a man who had killed his wife after a series of quarrels over a few weeks. When he tried to strangle her, she hit him and was sent to jail. Soon after she was released, he killed her under the influence of alcohol. During the interviews, we also heard the story of a woman poisoned, 25 years ago, by her ex-boyfriend during a party, probably out of jealousy. He then poisoned himself.

Men killed during altercations with other men or with police officers

Of the seven murdered men, three were killed apparently by accident during disputes with other Inuit men. The families were unsure about the cause of each dispute, and how it led to death, but in some cases alcohol was involved and in most cases a firearm. There was also a homeless man killed by another Native man in Montreal.

According to the families, police officers shot the other three male victims: two in Nunavik and one in Quebec City. The circumstances were unclear to the families, and they did not know whether the police officer had been legally charged. They actually wondered whether a police officer would be investigated and tried like anyone else charged with homicide. The families were obviously offended by this kind of incident between one of their own and the police, whose mission is to serve and protect.¹²

10 In Saturviit's report on living conditions of Inuit women, about 41% of all respondents revealed that they had been victims of domestic violence (Laneuville 2015: 57-58). According to Duhaime, in Nunavik in comparison to the rest of Quebec, "there are between six and ten times more women who are victims of conjugal violence" (Duhaime 2008: 22)

11 The social worker from Hudson Bay remembered women victims being evacuated for medical care after serious injuries, and yet they would not press charges and would return to their spouses.

12 For examples of fatal altercations with police, see the article by Rogers published in Nunatsiaq News on April 27, 2015 (Rogers 2015b).

In their experience, some people thought that some Inuit men are so desperate and angry that they may provoke an altercation with the police on purpose and often under the influence of alcohol. Sadly, the altercation sometimes ends tragically. For instance, the murdered son of one of the participants was resentful of the police because of a past incident between his brother and a police officer. It was also mentioned that some Inuit are so afraid of getting a jail sentence that they would rather try to kill themselves or be killed by a police officer than go to prison. This certainly raises questions about the conditions and treatment of Inuit in Southern correctional facilities.

With respect to incidents between Inuit men, the primary causes would be jealousy, marital infidelity, and quarrelling over ownership of bottles of alcohol or cigarettes; fighting usually takes place when one or both men are intoxicated. This kind of homicide happens often on impulse and is hard to predict, especially because the culprit may have no criminal record. Women may fight for the same motives, but there seems to be less risk of the fight ending in death.¹³

Women murdered in the South

As we just mentioned, a family may lose contact with a relative who has moved to Montreal, only to learn later about the death of their loved one. Too often, the body has the marks of a brutal death, suggesting murder, even when no culprit can ever be found. This was the story of a woman from Inukjuak, described by her family as a loving and caring person, whose body was found in the river, hands and feet tied, after being reported missing by her family for a few months. This was about twenty years ago. The corpse could be identified thanks to her jewellery, and so the family, after weeks of worry and searching, knew about her death. They were grateful that the body had been found and sent home for a funeral, while crying over the definite loss of their loved one. They remembered that during the same period another Inuk woman about the same age had been reported missing.

Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation¹⁴ is only briefly addressed in this report although it is closely related to the issue of missing or murdered Indigenous women. As we have said, participants at the family gathering, and at national pre-inquiry consultations, mentioned the reality of many women moving to the big city and being targeted right away by pimps. These women are vulnerable and particularly at risk of being found dead one day or another. It is thus very important to fight recruitment and entry of Indigenous women into the sex industry right from the beginning, for instance by hiring community workers who will reach out to the newcomers right at the airport or the bus station.

Sexual exploitation in Nunavik communities is still poorly known. According to a social worker from Hudson Bay, there are probably prostitutes in each community, and any kind of woman of any age is subject to sexual exploitation: single women, spouses, mothers, teenagers, and others. Women with mental issues are more at risk. In some situations, a spouse may encourage or force a woman into prostitution. We also heard that in the past a mother might do the same with her children.

¹³ Interviews with police officer and social worker from Hudson Bay.

¹⁴ According to the Coalition des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle (CLES), sexual exploitation includes sex trafficking and prostitution. It defines all situations where a person has undesired sexual intercourse in order to meet personal needs or the needs of others, relatives for instance, or to meet the requirements of others (see their information leaflet at: http://www.lacles.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/CLES-Guide_information-2.pdf).

According to the information we collected, both Inuit and *Qallunaat* men are consumers of sex services in Nunavik. *Qallunaat* are often construction workers. The same social worker thought that women are especially misled by promises from White men. Inuit women dream of having a romantic, gentle lover, and they feel such love is possible with them but not with Inuit men. Obviously, most of the time the man leaves the community not too long after, often leaving a fatherless child behind. Because alcohol is usually offered in exchange for sex, the social workers we interviewed considered the situation to be sexual exploitation. This kind of trade has become so problematic that construction companies have started to prohibit alcohol consumption for workers during their work assignments.¹⁵ In this respect, the mining industry remains poorly studied and deserves further investigation.

Offering alcohol, or even drugs, in return for sexual intercourse is not limited to White men. According to a social worker from Ungava Bay and a police officer from Hudson Bay, this is certainly the most common form of prostitution in Nunavik. Women and even underage girls struggling with alcohol and drug addiction are particularly vulnerable, and many men take advantage of this vulnerability. In some Nunavik communities, this kind of exchange has even become an implicit social norm: when a man and a woman drink together, they are supposed to sleep together. Even when some women regret what they have done, or when the situation has become abusive, they usually do not speak out because they feel that the fact of being given alcohol legitimizes this exchange. In addition, when overconsumption of alcohol causes blackout, a woman may have sexual intercourse without consent but will not denounce her assailant. According to the social worker from Ungava Bay, women usually feel responsible because they could not defend themselves.

Experiences of the victim families

When a family loses a loved one, their experience has been obviously one of pain and struggle, and unfortunately not so conducive to healing. There are of course both broad similarities and specific features in these stories as we go from one family to another. We are therefore presenting the experiences, perceptions, and feelings of these families by describing five major components or aspects that somewhat vary from one story to the next: ignorance, inability to search, forgiveness, breaking away from the family, and lack of support.

Being left in the dark

When listening to the families' experiences, we were struck by their almost complete ignorance about the exact circumstances of the death, or the disappearance, of their loved one and the ensuing legal process. The families had many unanswered questions. What happened exactly? Who killed her? Why? Was the murderer sentenced? And so on. These are all questions that they may not even have had an opportunity to put into words. All in all, they felt a lack of communication and compassion from the justice officials who took over the situation after the death. They felt inadequately informed and consulted, forsaken during the investigation and criminal procedures, and sometimes judged for the way they expressed their feelings. Some also felt that they had not received enough support from the community. For a family in this situation, knowing the circumstances of the death and being reassured about the adequacy of the investigation and the subsequent trial are necessary conditions for healing. They thus need better communication from the officials about the legal process.

¹⁵ Interview with police officer from Hudson Bay.

Trouble looking for someone who has gone missing in the South of the province

When a family realizes that a loved one has supposedly gone South and is now missing, one of the hardest things is the near impossibility of going about looking for her. The very high cost of airplane tickets as well as family and work responsibilities make it very hard to travel. Fortunately, many can count on help from friends or relatives who live in the city and are willing to help in the search. Communication with the police and investigators on the case is also complicated by distance and language. When asking the local police, the family will not necessarily get the information they are looking for because the KRPF is not in charge of the investigation and will not always get such information from other police forces. From the experience of a woman 20 years ago, there was no clear communication between the KRPF and the Montreal police about the search for her sister. However, a police officer from Hudson Bay said that now the police forces do communicate with each other and collaborate on missing person cases. He was not aware of any Inuk who had not been rapidly found since his assignment. He said that social media are usually employed to learn about the last whereabouts of missing persons.

A murderer in the family

The victim's family is not the only one feeling the pain. The murderer's family, too, is very much affected by the incident. The brother of one participant at the gathering had murdered a woman ten years ago. The participant still could not forgive him and had felt much guilt for the pain and suffering he had inflicted on the victim's family. She talked about the hardship of living with a murderer within her own family. Another family at the gathering had lost someone at the hands of a relative. This kind of situation is very painful and arduous to overcome. In addition to the grieving, there is the need to forgive the murderer, who is a family member. Forgiveness, seen as fundamental to the wellbeing of individuals and families, is particularly hard to achieve.

A family destroyed by pain and anger

When a loved one is lost through homicide, the whole family is affected, and everyone deals differently with the situation. For this reason, it is sometimes awkward to know how to support each other and to communicate. Some have much trouble going through the grieving process; they do not share their feelings, they do not talk about the loss, and they cannot even cry. Over the short and long term, such people are more at risk of developing health issues, not only sleeping and eating problems, but also addiction and aggressiveness. Some people bottle up their anger within themselves because they can neither accept the death nor forgive the culprit. Their anger grows worse, and they end up becoming violent. When the pain is expressed through violence and abuse, the trauma is more likely to be passed on to the next generation. For this reason, some relatives simply cut all links with other family members, thus breaking up the family.

Lack of therapy and the need to speak up

Generally, victim families did not immediately look for support after the loss of a loved one, not even bothering to think about it. Some felt alone or abandoned, not knowing whom to turn to. Many others nonetheless felt supported by relatives and friends. In hindsight, they recognized that they should have sought help, and they still need more support from professionals or counsellors to heal the whole family. Indeed, all participants reported a lack of resources in their community to support their families not only right after the death but also over the long term.¹⁶

¹⁶ There is actually a regional program of the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services that provides visits by health support workers to any community where such a death has occurred. However, it seems insufficient for a community to depend on this kind of external, temporary, and ad hoc help.

This lack of resources and therapy contributes to the silence over their trauma and suffering. As one family member pointed out, Inuit tend to keep their emotions to themselves, even with close relatives, and this is especially true for elders. According to her, a victim's family needs to speak up and be listened to, these needs being their most important ones, no matter how long ago they lost their loved one. Speaking up is important not only for them but also for the lost ones who have no voice of their own to ensure they are remembered and cherished. Families have to be given this opportunity in their communities, at a time and place where sharing is made possible. Regional and national events where victims and families are invited to testify are also an excellent occasion to engage in a healing process, even though it is very demanding for them to attend this kind of meeting and take the floor. Some may simply be unable to talk because they feel overwhelmed by memories of the past and by emotion. Nonetheless, with appropriate health support staff being available, they can take this one step forward.



The experiences of these families highlight two major aspects of life in Nunavik: the justice system in this isolated region, and the services and resources available for people suffering mentally from trauma, mourning, addiction, and abuse. These two aspects are intrinsically interlinked because both are needed to prevent crime and judicialization,¹⁷ to protect Nunavimmiut, to rehabilitate criminals and, finally, to heal suffering people. Obviously, these families have experienced some flaws of the justice system and a lack of local resources. We will now turn towards the functioning of the justice system and highlight both the experiences and needs of the families and the challenges faced by service providers.

17 "Judicialization" means a tendency to go to court to resolve disputes when other avenues are possible, such as mediation and alternative justice practices.

Experiences with and gaps in the justice system: How families and officials see them

When a relative goes missing or is murdered, this experience is closely related for families to their subsequent experiences with the justice system. As a result of their specific experiences, they do not see the justice system—the way it functions and its flaws—as it is seen by law-enforcement officials and service providers. With these differing concerns and points of view in mind, we will now provide a general overview of the issues and challenges facing the justice system in Nunavik. We will particularly address the work of police officers, who are more often than not the first and only ones to be in touch with family members. Probably the main take-home message from this inquiry is that the Nunavimmiut deeply misunderstand the justice system and have trouble communicating with law-enforcement officials. This misunderstanding contributes to the failure of a system that should adapt to Nunavik realities.

Background: officials and jurisdictions of the justice system

The police officers at the forefront

Although most Nunavimmiut acknowledge the importance of police services in their communities, the relationship between police officers and these communities is clearly strained (Laneuville 2015: 95-96). Interactions are too often marred by miscommunication, misunderstanding, and frustration. During the gathering, families made many complaints and requests aimed more often than not at the police officers directly, showing in many cases both ignorance among Inuit about the justice system and culture clash. Because police officers are the only law-enforcement officials who interact daily with Nunavimmiut and that other system stakeholders, such as attorneys and probation officers, are less known to them, they tend to consider the police responsible for everything that is justice-related. As the KRPF's Deputy Chief Pierre Bettez explained, while there is much dissatisfaction with police work, people should understand the differences in jurisdiction between police officers, Court officers, and correctional services.

In the same way, lack of knowledge about rules and laws may cause some misperception about the intentions behind police behaviours. Where police officers act according to legal procedures, some Nunavimmiut simply see disrespect and lack of humanity because they fail to understand police work. However, it is also true that prejudices influence the way some officers put the rules into practice.

Another factor: the resources, material, and equipment available to police in the course of enforcing the law. Obviously, as recently pointed out in a report by the Quebec Ombudsman, the necessary means are not always available to police in the North, who are thus less able to do their job adequately (Le Protecteur du citoyen 2016).

Sharing of jurisdictions between police forces, the courts, and correctional services

During the gathering, the Deputy Chief heard the families' experiences and issues with the justice system, taking time to answer all concerns and questions. He explained the rules and procedures used by police officers, hoping to help the families understand their mandate and obligations, and pointed out the problems faced daily by the police.

As we just mentioned, he also talked about the competence of other legal officials or authorities to answer questions from these families. He explained that the jurisdiction of the police, or their ability to make decisions, starts with assistance to the community and stops when criminal charges are made. As soon as there is an indictment, the police can record statements from community members, but the officials of the Court (crown attorney, lawyers, and judge) are the ones who control the legal process: choosing the hearing and trial dates, deciding on the charges and the witnesses, passing the sentence, and so on. Then, when the accused is sent to jail, the correctional services take over until the person is free and no longer has to comply with the terms of parole.

A tense relationship: challenges of the Nunavik police force

Families feel that police officers are disrespectful and insensitive

The families felt that police officers are judgmental and disrespectful. They observed that most officers come to the North with negative preconceived ideas about Inuit, and thus show racist behaviour that affects their ability to serve the community. As Lizzie Aloupa, Prevention Counsellor for the KRPF, mentioned, "They think that all Inuit are into the drinking, or drugging, or neglecting their children. [...] So right away they will look at us and treat us as if we aren't worth much." Consequently, they think that the police do not always take the opinions, statements, and concerns of Inuit seriously.

Two more examples: many people feel that police officers easily judge them by their appearance and clothing. However, among Inuit, the most respected people, such as great hunters, are not necessarily the best dressed. In addition, if someone seems very sad and is crying loudly, the police may think he or she is drunk and needs to sober up. Because Inuit express their feelings differently, *Qallunaat* do not always fully understand the way Inuit convey their pain. Inuit perceive this misunderstanding as a lack of respect. In cases of violent death in particular, they feel a lack of compassion and humanity from police officers.

This feeling of disrespect is likely the basis for all other perceptions and opinions that these families have about the police and the justice system.¹⁸ Being more open towards learning about Inuit culture would certainly make the police less negative and less judgmental and help lessen the culture clash.¹⁹

¹⁸ See also Laneuville (2015: 95-96) about feelings of racism in the police force.

¹⁹ Interview with police officer from Ungava Bay.

Families feel that police officers are inadequately trained

The feeling of being judged is amplified by the perception that police officers coming to Nunavik lack the appropriate skills and knowledge to work in the North. Most of them are very young and thus do not have the life and work experience they need to work with communities that face serious social issues. Furthermore, these communities have their own cultural and social peculiarities that are almost totally unknown to the officers when they start their jobs. According to participants, many police officers consequently show a lack of professionalism and maturity that contributes to a disrespectful attitude.

Because of prejudice and insufficient knowledge and skills, many police officers fail to act appropriately with Nunavimmiut. It was mentioned many times during the gathering and interviews that, with an intention to consolidate their authority, they too easily assume an aggressive attitude and act violently.²⁰ Police intervention is particularly problematic in situations where someone is intoxicated or in crisis, and this is when injuries can be accidentally caused. Police officers should therefore be better trained and equipped to interact more smoothly with Inuit and limit unnecessary confrontations.

High staff turnover and lack of integration of officers into the communities also affect the quality of police services. From the families' point of view, not only does this turnover complicate follow-up of specific cases and clients, such as people under court-ordered terms of parole, but also the police fail to take enough time to learn about the community they work in. The families thought it important that the police meet regularly with elected members and other locals and take time to integrate into the community by taking part in activities. This would make for better cooperation and collaboration with the community.

Challenge of recruiting police staff

Although it is undeniably a challenge for the KRPF to hire and retain experienced, skilled officers in Nunavik, the police officers we spoke with confirmed that the situation has improved a lot during the last ten years, as has their relationship with the communities.²¹ First, the officers have better working and housing conditions. Second, the recruiting process has changed and has positively increased the average number of years an officer will serve in Nunavik. The KRPF hires only officers who have already gone through the National Police School in Nicolet and also conducts face-to-face pre-hiring interviews. Even though police officers are informed about Nunavik during information sessions in Nicolet before they get hired, they seem unprepared for life in the region.

Working as a police officer in Nunavik, whether you are Inuit or not, is extremely demanding. Work is rarely limited to official hours of duty, since the community permanently sees you as an officer and may solicit you at any time for various reasons. Moreover, because they regularly intervene in violent crisis situations where alcohol and, often, weapons are involved, officers endure a lot of stress and pressure that require good self-control. They are also subject to violence from intoxicated people, especially when the officer is a newcomer.²² Pierre Bettez, the KRPF's Deputy Chief, explained that officers are used to protecting themselves emotionally and mentally by developing an armour that can give the impression of having no emotions or sensitivity. This helps them keep a distance from the situation and stay sane. Because the work is very demanding, together with the geographic and social isolation and Northern living conditions, burnout is not so rare in the KRPF.

20 Interviews with Lizzie Aloupa and police officer from Ungava Bay.

21 Information provided by the Deputy Chief of the KRPF, and interview with police officer from Hudson Bay.

22 Interviews with police officer and social worker from Hudson Bay.

Because of these general working conditions, most officers who decide to work in Nunavik are mainly those with little or no work experience who can hardly find a position in the South. The majority of them are young, with no family to care for, the typical officer wanting to gain experience fast enough for a later, permanent position in the South. Some become rapidly disenchanted when they set foot in the community and may quit after only a few months. Even in the best scenarios, they rarely stay more than a few years, thus contributing to the high turnover and to the difficulty in building trust with the community.

To hold on to officers longer and to improve their relationship with the community, the KPRF has provided intercultural relationship awareness classes, but only a few times to a minority of the officers. Unfortunately, the training did not address Inuit culture and history specifically.²³ The KPRF says they need more funding and support from other organizations to create a more adapted training program and provide all officers with it.

According to the two police officers we interviewed, increasing the number of Inuit officers is also seen as a good way to improve law-enforcement services in Nunavik, and consequently the safety and wellbeing of the communities. At the moment we write this report, there are only two Inuit police officers in the whole of Nunavik. According to one of them, being an Inuk officer makes the work much easier. Communication is simpler, being in Inuktitut, and clearer information can be provided. Inuit officers have a more friendly approach, and people trust them more. They even get called in by other communities because people want to share their concerns and ask questions. However, hiring Inuit police officers is challenging for the KPRF because they have to go South for a few years to get educated at college and trained at Quebec's National Police School. Moreover, the demanding nature of the work, the negative image of the police, and the impact the position necessarily has on personal and social life contribute to the very limited interest that Inuit have in becoming police officers.

Questioning the quality of police services: from responding to requests to mistreatment

During the gathering, the families voiced different concerns and dissatisfactions about police services in their communities. These concerns are often made worse by a feeling of being mistreated because of racism. We will present many of them and try to understand them in light of what the officers think.

First, some participants complained about the long time they had to wait sometimes before a police response. They had to phone many times before getting a response, and once their call had been answered a long while could go by before the police would arrive. The police attribute their inability to respond immediately to the very high number of calls they receive at some times, such as on weekend nights. However, the police have a duty to act on all calls they get and to report them in a record book. The Deputy Chief said that the KPRF receives approximately 20,000 calls per year: 50% for crime and the other 50% being requests for assistance.

Second, some participants were concerned about the fact that many Inuit, especially elderly, have trouble understanding and communicating with the police because of the language difference. This can be very problematic when the police intervene in a crisis situation and people cannot understand

²³ Interview with police officer from Ungava Bay.

each other. When the elderly find themselves in an unsafe situation, many will not call the police directly. The language barriers thus prevent many from getting important information and services from police officers. According to the police, interpreters are regularly hired to communicate with the elderly or families. Each police station is indeed provided with a budget for this purpose. But how often interpreters are hired varies from one community to another; in small communities, they are harder to find. The tense relationship between the police and the community, together with the lack of understanding of the justice system by the Inuit, can contribute to the difficulty officers sometimes face in recruiting interpreters.²⁴ As the participants saw it, police officers are not making enough effort to overcome the language barrier.

Third, some participants shared worries about the safety and wellbeing of Inuit in Nunavik correctional facilities.²⁵ They told stories of mistreatment, such as water deprivation, sexual assault,²⁶ and disrespect of privacy, especially when a prisoner needs to use the toilet. For this reason, they would like more surveillance cameras in the facilities and closer monitoring of the police as they go about their work. Participants also questioned the policy of incarcerating people without giving them an opportunity to speak to anyone. Sometimes, even the officers will not say a word to the prisoner for some time.²⁷

When questioned about prison conditions, the police officers agreed that the number of cells is sometimes insufficient, especially in Puvirnituk when the itinerant court sits. They recognized that, sometimes, inmates might be deprived of water for a certain period of time due to problems with the water supply. Some police stations frequently run out of water because the water truck does not come often enough to fill the reservoir like everywhere else in the community. But some officers think that this situation is sometimes due to discrimination by truck drivers who may feel dissatisfied with the police. Others argue that the lack of police officers in the communities interferes with the quality of the service they are supposed to provide. The Deputy Chief mentioned that the police are sometimes looking for community members to perform the duty of prison guard. Very few people, however, are willing to do the job. He thinks the main reason is fear of being judged by the community or even fear of being exposed to reprisals for working with the police. As for the police isolating some inmates without speaking to them, the reason, as we will see later, is related to legal procedures in cases of suspicious death.

Fourth, in cases where they feel mistreated by the police, the families at the gathering thought they had no way to defend themselves. There is moreover a feeling that one is asking for trouble by badmouthing the police or talking back to them. Participants thought there should be an independent entity the Nunavimmiut can go to for protection and where they can assert their rights. They were evidently unaware that, officially, every police station has documentation and forms for use in lodging a complaint against a police officer, together with a free hotline number, in French and English, for legal assistance and information about one's rights. Lizzie Aloupa, Prevention Counsellor for the KRPF, also said that the KRG regional council members had informed the communities about the

24 Information provided by the Deputy Chief of the KRPF and during interviews with police officers from Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay.

25 Participants also expressed concerns about the safety and wellbeing of Inuit in correctional facilities in the South, particularly because of the racism they suffer.

26 For example, in 2014, the KRPF and the KRG were sued for gross negligence after a handcuffed Inuk woman was raped by an Inuk man in the back of a police cruiser (Rogers 2015a).

27 The Quebec Ombudsman's report has recently raised many issues about prison conditions in Nunavik. It notably mentions a serious lack of equipment and adequate facilities that jeopardizes respect for inmate rights and dignity. It specifies that the institutions responsible, the Quebec departments of Justice and Public Security, the KRPF, and the Kativik Regional Government, must move rapidly to rectify the situation (Le Protecteur du citoyen 2016).

complaint procedure, and that an Inuktitut form is available at every KRG local employment office so that no one has to go through a police station to report abuse. Clearly, this information needs to be conveyed more adequately.²⁸

Legal procedures and the place of families when a homicide happens

To understand why people misunderstand, are dissatisfied with, and have trouble adjusting to many criminal justice procedures in Nunavik, we will first look at the concerns of the families and then turn to the explanations and comments by police officers.

Families feel forgotten and disempowered

Inuit families feel forsaken and shunted aside during the processes of investigation and criminal justice.²⁹ On the one hand, they think they do not receive the information they should get from the police. They are not advised soon enough when a death occurs and, afterward, they are not informed about the whole legal process, including conviction and release.³⁰ On the other hand, they think they are inadequately involved and consulted during the investigation and sentencing. Some people feel they are not taken seriously when making statements to the police. A participant at the gathering even felt under pressure to keep silent after her son had been killed, thinking that speaking out would lead to police reprisals.

Overall, a family feels disempowered after losing a loved one because of the way the police take control over the situation. They think the police tend to follow the procedures too strictly without including the families and trying to accommodate. The participants were particularly concerned that the suspect's family is not allowed to talk to the suspect once he has been incarcerated. They think that the family should have visiting rights.

During the gathering, the participants requested that a community member be designated in all communities to announce the death to the family as soon as possible. They also wanted the police to take time to explain the situation and all of the procedures both to the victim's family and to the suspect's. During the investigation, they thought the police should question and listen to both families in order to take down what these people know about the suspect and the incident.

From the point of view of Inuit workers we interviewed, the communication problem during the arrest process and the investigation is real and not simply a perceived problem in the eyes of the families. Police officers are inadequately prepared and trained to take time to talk with families and provide them with clear information. Again, the language difference is an issue here, and impairs the ability of police officers to do their job, thus causing frustration among Inuit. The families also have their share of responsibility. As Inuit, they tend to remain silent, to avoid asking questions, and to wait for the police to come to them. This is particularly the case with elders. This silence is likely wrongly understood by the police as a sign of approval and an absence of questions.

28 The Quebec Ombudsman also mentioned that Inuit inmates have trouble filing complaints, because they are unaware of their rights and the resources available (Le Protecteur du citoyen 2016).

29 On the subject of missing or murdered Inuit, the report by ITK and TI also mentions that: "In addition to this trauma, the families have also dealt with systematic indifference and in some cases racism, when engaging with the criminal justice system and other government agencies" (ITK and TI 2016: 3).

30 During the national pre-inquiry session in Montreal, it was also mentioned that Inuit need to be informed about the autopsy procedure in order to understand why it is important. Without this information, some Inuit are offended by the idea that someone will dissect their relative's body.

Families misunderstand and are dissatisfied with investigations and convictions

The families made many criticisms of the way investigations and trials are conducted for murder and for other crimes. They did not understand why a judge cannot sentence some culprits because of lack of evidence while at the same time convicting innocent people. Families felt investigations are not carried out seriously enough. Some pointed out that the murder scene is not always properly secured, when it is in a house for instance, and some suspicious deaths are unjustly and too rapidly declared to be suicides or mere accidents. They thought investigations must be more regularly and thoroughly conducted, even when a death does not look suspect at first glance.³¹

The police should also try harder to find evidence and witnesses before a suspect is released. In some situations, the suspect must be held in custody longer, for the time it takes to investigate the crime properly. Sometimes, families thought a second trial is needed because evidence can come to light after the first trial when an intoxicated person confesses to a crime he has committed, for example. When evidence is lacking, families would like to have consideration given to second-hand witnesses and past behaviours of the suspect. Obviously, families must be further integrated into the process. Finally, participants said that the release of someone considered to be a murderer by the families makes the latter feel unsafe.

In cases of disappearance, Inuit many times expressed the feeling that the case of a missing Inuk, just like the case of any other missing Indigenous person, is not taken as seriously as the case of a missing non-Native Canadian. Police tend to assume that a missing Inuit woman is simply intoxicated, has run away on purpose, is not in danger, and will come back on her own. Because of this attitude, families feel that some cases remain unsolved and that investigations must be conducted more seriously using the media as much as possible.³²

The families particularly questioned the way investigations are carried out in situations where a police officer has killed someone during an altercation. They actually wondered whether a police officer can be charged and held liable for such an incident. Some families were very disappointed and shocked because they never got any apologies or compensation from the police and, for this reason, they harbour much resentment.

Finally, some participants could not understand and were dissatisfied with the too short period of time spent by murderers in correctional centres and the inconsistencies between different murder convictions. They did not understand why some murderers receive shorter sentences than do others, and why they are often released before they finish serving their time. They thought culprits should serve their full time, regardless of good behavior.³³ Here again, premature release of a murderer may make people feel unsafe in their community, a feeling justified by the high rate of repeat offences.

31 The ITK and TI report also mentions that: "participants spoke of cases where families and the community dispute the police and coroners' characterization of deaths as suicide or accidental" (ITK and TI 2016: 8).

32 Lack of serious investigation was also a complaint made by several participants during the national pre-inquiry session in Kuujuaq and in Montreal in March 2016. They attributed this lack of seriousness to stereotypes about Inuit.

33 According to the Quebec Ombudsman, "several correctional facility staff members say that Inuit are more likely to follow rules than most inmates. Inuit are generally well disciplined" (Le Protecteur du citoyen 2016: 36).

Role of the KRPF in arresting offenders and reluctance to press charges

It is important to stress that, when there is a criminal offence, the police rely on information from victims or eyewitnesses to arrest a suspect, to keep him locked up, and to prosecute. The KRPF states that people misunderstand or do not know both their responsibility to report crime and the kind of evidence that is eligible in Court, this sort of limitation making it harder to get a conviction. For instance, rumours and hearsay cannot be used to incriminate someone. Even an offender's confession to a community member cannot be used until a declaration is provided to the police. Furthermore, whatever information or statements the police gather, it is the crown attorney who decides what will be admissible evidence.

The police also say that many people refuse to press charges or decide to drop them before or during the trial, especially when the time comes for them to testify. For instance, a victim may say that he and the accused have forgiven each other and now want to turn a new leaf.³⁴ Officers think there is a strong reluctance to prosecute and get involved in a trial because the two parties have to live in close proximity to each other in small communities.³⁵ People have no wish to cause other people trouble. They fear retaliation or, in cases of domestic violence, are unwilling to lose the help of the main provider in the house by sending him to jail. The housing shortage, the slowness of the justice system, and the lack of trust in the police also discourage people from going to court. According to a social worker from Hudson Bay, when a victim of domestic violence calls the police, for instance, the intention is more to ensure immediate safety, by having the assailant locked up until he sobers up, than to lay any charges.

According to Lizzie Aloupa, KRPF Prevention Counsellor, the reluctance of many Inuit to report to the police, even when they have information about a crime and an investigation is going on *“is a big problem and [I think] it is why certain situations get out of control, because the person was not reported first of all.”*

Role of the Sûreté du Québec in homicide cases and the issue of communication

In cases of homicide or suspicious death, which specifically interest us here, investigations are carried out by the Sûreté du Québec (QC) and not the KRPF. Before the SQ takes over, KRPF officers will only arrest the people present at the scene and secure the scene. According to the Deputy Chief, they have trouble securing a house that has many occupants. They cannot close the entire house because the occupants have no access to alternate shelters, and so they usually limit the murder scene to one room. Then, KRPF officers must wait for the SQ before talking to the suspects and informing the family, in order to protect the evidence. This is why the officers remain silent and wait before acting right after a homicide.

When the SQ arrives, the family of the suspects is contacted to give them general information. According to the police officer we interviewed from Ungava Bay, communication with the family usually goes well and the police keep them posted about the legal process. Obviously, perceptions and experiences are not the same between the *Qallunaat* police officers and the Inuit families, who

34 The slowness of the legal process is somewhat in contradiction with the importance of forgiveness for Inuit. Both parties have time to forgive each other before the trial takes place and no longer wish to relive the memories of what happened (Laneuville 2015: 97).

35 As shown by an example brought up by a police officer from Hudson Bay, this is particularly difficult in cases where a witness is related to both the victim and the offender.

point to a lack of explanations from the police.³⁶ Also, the victim's family may get less consideration than the accused's family.

It is surely a very delicate task to tell the victim's family that they have lost their loved one, especially because of the tense relationship between the police and the community and the difference in culture and language. This is why the Deputy Chief recognized the importance of appointing local people to do this task and to let the police know who these people are. From what we learned during interviews, a church group is already designated in each community to announce a death, regardless of the cause, to the family and to provide support before and during the funeral. Police or medical staff usually inform the social services, who then contact the "Church people."³⁷ Lizzie Aloupa also stressed that in cases of violent death, such as suicide, where family members may be deeply affected and react emotionally and violently, especially if intoxicated, talking with them becomes hazardous. The police are thus sometimes asked to accompany the group while they make the announcement.

When a community member is injured or dies while a police officer is performing his duties, there is what is called an independent inquiry by another police force, usually the SQ. According to the police officer from Ungava Bay, community members are especially dissatisfied with this kind of inquiry because they are poorly informed. As for any criminal proceedings, as long as the crown attorney makes no formal accusation, no information can be disclosed at all. The process of an independent inquiry is longer and more complicated, and the SQ do not necessarily communicate with the families. The trouble SQ officers face when investigating in Nunavik is that they are even less knowledgeable and equipped than KRPF officers to intervene in a different culture and in Nunavik communities in particular.

Role of the Court and misunderstanding of convictions

When people are accused of homicide and convicted, we note that many people either do not know or do not understand the sentences passed by a judge. Specifically, they do not understand the different degrees of conviction; that is to say, first-degree, second-degree, and third-degree murder. These degrees, which lead to different convictions in terms of prison time, are based on the degree of intention and planning behind the crime (whether the crime was planned or not, and intentional or not).³⁸ In addition, in the Canadian justice system, juveniles (people under age 18) cannot be sentenced to more than three years, and some culprits may also be acquitted for reasons of transient or ongoing mental illness.

The KRPF Deputy Chief and Lizzie Aloupa acknowledged that most Nunavimmiut are unfamiliar with the legal nuance of degrees of homicide, the result being misunderstanding and dissatisfaction with the convictions. One of the police officers we interviewed said that the crown attorney and a KRPF officer, accompanied by an interpreter, usually explain the sentence to the convicted person's family.³⁹ However, according to the Deputy Chief, telling them is often complicated by community members gossiping about these case. Here again, the victim's family is probably not treated with enough consideration by the police and the investigator.

36 Interviews with police officer from Ungava Bay, Lizzie Aloupa, and Phoebe Atagotaaluk.

37 Interviews with social worker and police officer from Hudson Bay.

38 For first-degree murder (premeditated murder), the sentence is 25 years; for second-degree murder (intentional but unplanned), it is between 15 and 25 years; and for third-degree murder (accidental, also called manslaughter), it is less than 15 years.

39 Interview with police officer from Hudson Bay.

Finally, people must understand that prison time is determined not only by the sentence but also by the policy of Correctional Service Canada (CSC) of often allowing release before the end of the sentence for good behavior and for a generally good attitude. Probation officers are then in charge of ensuring compliance with conditions of release, these conditions being formulated by the CSC.

A continuum of justice-related services for offenders, victims and families

The legal process we have just addressed concerns mostly governmental and legal representatives who deal with offenders with a view to protecting social order. We have seen little about how the victims and their families can be considered because the Canadian justice system is not made to care for the victims and their families and to take their rights into account, although the federal government, in 2015, recognized such rights with the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (Government of Canada 2016). Fortunately, there are non-judicial organizations that provide the victims and their families with services and support. These organizations, such as the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS), the KRG, and Makivik, attempt to fill gaps in the justice system by taking a more holistic and community-based approach and by providing alternatives that are better adjusted to the population and to regional realities. We find within them many Inuit whose roles are crucial to providing a continuum of justice-related services, including prevention, healing, and social reintegration. However, much remains to be done to make these services well known and to consolidate this justice continuum.

For example, there are the Sapummijiit Crime Victim Centres, based in Kuujuaq, Kuujuaapik, Inukjuak, and Salluit. These centres are under the responsibility of the KRG and provide victims of crime and their families with services. They especially support them when they have to go through legal procedures. Although the centres have been open for ten years in Nunavik, they were unfortunately unknown to most participants at the gathering.

There are also the three women's shelters, in Inukjuak, Salluit, and Kuujuaq, administered by the NRBHSS. They welcome women victims of violence and abuse and offer various kinds of support to help them break the cycle of violence. These centres are greatly appreciated and important to women. However, they are insufficient to meet the current needs of victims across Nunavik. Social workers have also been hired by the NRBHSS in each community to provide victims and families with support to prevent long-term impacts of trauma, but their abilities and resources are very limited. Moreover, like the police officers, they have trouble gaining the trust of the communities and making their work fully understood.

Of particular interest here is the alternative justice program of Makivik, which has put into place ten local justice committees across Nunavik. The goal is to offer, alongside and in collaboration with the justice system, a culturally relevant approach to crime that involves the Inuit and provides support mechanisms that compensate for the shortcomings of the current system. These committees work with offenders in the community instead of isolating them and shipping them off to jail, thus addressing the underlying causes of crime (Nunatsiaq News 2004; Rogers 2014). The committee members however need court approval to intervene with people facing criminal charges. Their basic approach is to make wrongdoers feel part of the community and important by encouraging them to help out others. Traditional knowledge and practices are used to reintegrate them into the community as a way to heal them and to prevent other crimes. Of course, elders play an important role on these committees.

The justice committee program has been successful thanks to the Protocol of Alternative Measures signed in 2002 by the committees and by the Crown. This protocol enables the crown attorney to refer minor crimes⁴⁰ committed by adults to a justice committee as a means of dealing with offenders without laying criminal charges. Many obstacles still keep the committees from playing a wider role in preventing crime and maintaining social harmony in Nunavik. The first one is funding, and the second is their visibility. Their mission and their role are still unclear to most people. Some are even unaware there is a justice committee in their community. For this reason, committee intervention outside legal procedures, what is called “social referral,” is still really rare. Finally, these committees are also limited in their work because Inuit are generally reluctant to reach out for help until they have really hit the bottom or have already entered the justice system.⁴¹



This chapter has been especially focused on the difference in perception and understanding between the families and the police officers about how they should relate to each other and how the justice system is supposed to work. There is evidently a culture clash that is hard to overcome, but it is essential for both parties to work together at reducing this culture clash and improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the communities. The next chapter will provide more thoughts on the situation with suggestions on how to move forward.

40 For instance, the term ‘minor crimes’ refers to crimes that do not involve any weapon, to simple assault, to theft of less than \$5,000, and to harassment. These are a large proportion of offences in Nunavik.

41 The Nunavik justice officer at Makivik, Lyne St-Louis, and the justice committee coordinator in Inukjuak, Phoebe Atagotaaluk, provided most of the information presented here about the justice committees.

Pinasuaqatigiinniq: “Working together for a common purpose”

Many issues relating to social harmony, justice, and cultural identity emerged from the families and the workers’ experiences and words. A sense of discontinuity is clearly felt between the communities on the one hand, and the law-enforcement officials and the justice system on the other. Yet all of them wish for more harmony and wellbeing, and less crime and social malaise. Why does this disconnect exist between the two parties, and how can we connect them? One answer is cooperation. By helping each other and by working together on a common goal, they will help build a better sense of community and improved social harmony.

Empowerment is also important to community wellbeing. When you feel a lack of control over your life, as an individual or a group, the resulting despair can lead to violence and destructive behaviour. This is especially so when the people you think have power over your life fail to understand your language and culture. Communities must develop and promote their own mechanisms, without necessarily rejecting the surrounding society in which they live, to ensure harmony and to resolve conflicts in a culturally and locally adapted way.

Although the issue of justice in Nunavik is very complex, and the solutions far from simple, we will propose four approaches in which cooperation and empowerment are central: 1) better information and awareness by Nunavimmiut about the justice system; 2) improvement in police officer skills and community approaches; 3) development of local resources to support families and victims; and 4) strengthening of local justice committees. Before we start discussing these approaches, we would like to return to the historical role and place of police officers in Nunavik communities. This role has been central to the issue at hand.

(Re) build relationships between Nunavimmiut and the police through cooperation

Colonialism and cultural continuity

The justice system starts with the police officers, and their work is key to the safety of communities. At the moment, they face many challenges in their work, and one of the most important challenges is the nature of their relationship with communities, which is characterized by a feeling of disrespect and distrust that undermines cooperative work. The police need to work with the community, and the community needs police support. For this, both parties require mutual respect and understanding. The difference in culture codes and language surely contributes to the trouble they have working together, but the history of the relationship must also be considered.

The current tension between the police and the Nunavimmiut must be understood against the backdrop of colonial history and the still ongoing paternalistic relationship between Inuit society and Canadian Western society, which later imposed its culture and social structures on Inuit society. Although public and legal services were established in the North at least partly with the goal of promoting Inuit wellbeing, they have also undermined traditional authority and leadership and contributed to depriving Inuit of their ability to cope with social issues and conflicts and to move forward as a society. Nevertheless, after decades of such history, Inuit culture and social structures

have persisted and still collide with Western institutions. This cultural and social system is essential to the wellbeing of the Inuit people and is key to their social continuity and harmony. It must thus be seen as the primary resource and means to restoring peace to Nunavik.

The ambivalent figure of the police officer: a source of authority and help

We want here to look at the way Inuit perceive police officers by taking the historical relationship into account. Preconceived ideas by *Qallunaat* about Indigenous people are well known and have been denounced, but we should also point out that Nunavimmiut too have prejudices. Because of colonial history especially the era of residential schools, , and some ongoing bad experiences, many Inuit still have trouble putting trust in any *Qallunaaq*. But, according to a social worker from Hudson Bay, today, conflicts are now more commonly due to personality issues. For instance, some policemen have trouble managing their position of authority and are very disrespectful, but they are not the majority. As Lizzie Aloupa pointed out, everyone must work towards overcoming anger and prejudice in order to build trust and to get everyone to cooperate in fighting crime.

Inuit have always perceived the police ambivalently because of the wide range of tasks the government has assigned them since they came to the region (Grant 2002). On the one hand, from the first RCMP station established in 1935 to replacement by the *Sûreté du Québec* in 1960, the police have had a mandate to maintain order, to administer justice, and to assert Canadian sovereignty over the region (Jaccoud 1995). The Nunavimmiut feared them because, among other things, of their mission to arrest and kill murderers and to shoot roaming dogs⁴² or their role in relocating Inuit to different regions of the Canadian Arctic (Tester and Kulchyski 1994). Back then, Inuit misunderstood police actions (Grant 2002: 224) and began to call police officers “*pulisialuk*,” which means “really bad police.” Any request from the police was perceived as being an order they had to comply with, even though Inuit have always considered free will to be vital to their individuality (Grant 2002: 236; Hervé 2015: 209-212). Inuit explain this feeling of fear and respect through the concept of *ilira*, which Rosemary Kuptana, the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, explains as follows:

Inuit use *ilira* to refer to a great fear or awe, such as the awe a strong father inspires in his children or the fear of the *Qallunaat* previously held by Inuit. This fear, or *ilira*, developed very early in our initial encounters with explorers, missionaries and traders. [...] *Qallunaat* could make the difference between success and disaster, sustenance or hunger, and Inuit responded to their desires and requests as if they were commands. In this cultural setting, a challenge to the authority of the *Qallunaat* or defiance of their requests was almost unthinkable. (Kuptana 1993: 5-7)

Lizzie Aloupa thought that many people are still afraid to go to the police to report crime because they used to be afraid of them in the past. On the other hand, the police soon became rescuers of missing and sick people and distributors of family allowances, thus gaining a positive image as being helpers. As a result, cooperative relationships have been established throughout the whole time the police have been dealing with the Inuit, the latter also helping the police by being hospitable and offering their hunting skills for instance (Hervé: 210-213).

42 The slaughter of sled dogs had a huge impact on Inuit physical and mental health (Lévesque 2008). Today, many women think that the malaise of Inuit men, which leads to abuse and violence, is largely due to these events (Laneville 2015: 73, 122).

Between their role of punishing and their role of assisting, the police are still viewed with ambivalence. Inuit see the police as a source of help, requesting assistance from them for various needs while, at the same time, distrusting them when it comes to crime and legal procedures.⁴³ Police are first approached, particularly by women, for protection against assailants and to intervene in crisis situations. But they are also approached for cigarettes, money, and transportation. Because they are considered to be richer than Nunavimmiut in terms of these resources, they are strongly criticized if they do not respond to these requests. In fact, like other *Qallunaat* workers, police officers are often accused by Inuit of not helping them “well” (Hervé: 66). This brings us to the issue of the difference between the *Qallunaat* definition of helping and the Inuit definition.

Social relationships are built within Nunavik communities through mutual aid, which structures power relationships and inequality. There are power relationships between, on the one hand, those people who own resources (including equipment, material, money, skills, and knowledge) and have an obligation to share with others, and, on the other hand, those people who are deprived of resources and rely on the first group of people for assistance when required. Of course, a person’s social position varies from one kind of resource to another. An individual can be at the same time deprived of one kind of resource and rich in another. People owning important resources are respected and constantly solicited to help others. They are given power, or leadership, by the people who agree to follow them (Hervé: 155-160).

In particular, people respect those who have physical and intellectual abilities and past experiences with hardship (ibid.: 81, 125, 134). A good leader should be able to help others properly by meeting their needs and by using speech wisely to provide good advice (ibid.: 144). Authority is accordingly attributed primarily to elders because of their experience and knowledge. Everyone nonetheless plays a role in a complex network of mutual help. Someone who is outside any helping relationship, for whatever reason, is someone with no social existence, an excluded person (ibid.: 175).

When police officers are accused by Inuit of not helping them “well,” this accusation means that they are not “well” integrated into the community, in other words in this network of mutual aid. Through their work and mandate, the police try to impose their authority and to maintain order without, most of the time, having gained respect from the community members who must affirm the position of the police as leaders. In fact, many characteristics of police officers are contrary to the Inuit definition of ‘leader.’ They are young (immature), they have little experience and knowledge valued by Inuit, and some have an attitude considered to be disrespectful. Thus, today, although police officers can be considered a source of help in certain situations, they are not automatically considered a source of legitimate authority that commands respect and trust, especially when it concerns social conflicts.

Police officers must thus be integrated into Nunavik communities both by making helping relationships possible and by reducing sources of tension. There is one significant way to improve Inuit-police relations through mutual understanding and respect, and this is to educate each group about the reality of the other group. Nunavimmiut must be well informed about the justice system, and the police must be trained to work properly with Nunavik communities.

43 According to the police officer from Hudson Bay, White people used to hold most of the good jobs in Nunavik, and this too has contributed to the negative image Inuit have of *Qallunaat*. He added, however, that this image is changing for the better with the younger generations. Unlike the elders, they do not have the same negative memories of the past and do not experience the same language barrier. Phoebe Atagotaaluk, the coordinator of Inukjuak Justice Committee, also noticed that, because of the past, there is much anger in elders towards White people and the government, and this anger contributes to their silence today.

Informing Inuit about the justice system and police work

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the rules and laws of the justice system was obvious among the participants at the gathering, the result being misunderstandings about police acts and Court decisions. Frustration, together with feelings of powerlessness, lack of control, and injustice, will of course result when you rely on an outsider-enforced system you poorly understand. Inuit thus require information on the justice system and police work at least to mitigate these feelings. More must be done not only to provide all Nunavimmiut on a regular basis with clear information in Inuktitut, but also to establish ongoing and effective communication with the families about specific cases and procedures. This communication should be part of a respectful and open relationship between the police and the communities.

According to Lizzie Aloupa, educating people would help to change the way they interact with the police for the better. Indeed, they would stop taking things personally and stop attributing bad intentions to police officers and would start thinking according to the law, thus putting themselves in a better position to cooperate. Knowing the laws will help to diminish anger among Inuit when an altercation involves the police, and Inuit will more readily listen to explanations, providing of course that the police themselves take time to explain and to listen.

As for reports of violence and abuse, better knowledge of the system will further encourage victims and witnesses to make statements to the police and to lay charges. Currently, victims of violence, women suffering from domestic violence for instance, are reluctant to report to the police, notably because they do not really know what such reporting implies and what procedure to follow (Laneuville 2015: 96-98).⁴⁴ Victims must be informed about their rights, as stated in the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights. These are the rights to 1) information, 2) protection, 3) participation in the process, 4) use of victim witness statements in sentencing and release, and 5) a complaint process (Government of Canada 2016).

Informing Nunavimmiut better would also help to reduce the number of people committing offences and entering the legal system. It was mentioned several times that many end up and get stuck in the system simply because they do not know the laws they are breaking. When interacting with the police, they do not know what they are going through and fail to realize the consequences of their actions and words. Some will simply answer “yes” to the officer’s questions, even when this answer means they agree to being charged.⁴⁵ Furthermore, during the trial, the accused may have trouble understanding the judge’s questions and answering properly, thus making his or her situation worse. This problem is due not only to lack of knowledge of the system, but also to a difference in language and in language codes. Some of the accused do not ask for translation services during the trial when they clearly need such services (Laneuville 2015: 98). Also, a question asked in the negative will be understood differently by Inuit and *Qallunaat*, as a social worker from Hudson Bay explained:

At the trial, I have seen many times Inuit being asked a question in the negative that they don’t understand. Like in juvenile courts, the youth don’t know what they are answering. [They don’t have] knowledge about that: the Inuit, when you ask them “Aren’t you hungry?” will answer “yes”, but this means “yes, I am not hungry.” So, at the Court, they shoot themselves in the foot. They don’t understand. (Social worker from Hudson Bay, July 2016 – Free translation)

⁴⁴ According to Pauktuutit, the process of completing victim statements is especially problematic, being long and traumatic. It would be more helpful to provide Inuit with personal services than to give them forms to fill out (Pauktuutit 2016: 12).

⁴⁵ Interview with police officer from Ungava Bay.

By better informing, preparing, and assisting people in their language, we will help them to face the justice system adequately, but efforts must also be made on the side of the judges and the lawyers, who should educate themselves about this language issue and make an effort to adapt to the people they serve. Canadian lawyers and judges should acquire appropriate cultural skills, including history and “skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.” Such training is moreover one of the recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRCC 2015: 215).

The KRPF says that they have been working for years to provide the public with information about the justice process and police work by using the local radio station and making presentations at regional conferences for instance, without having much impact. They cannot reach most people and get the message out. Informing the public requires continuous effort.

The KRPF is however not the only organization with a mandate to educate the public about the law. This role also belongs to the three levels of government, the Barreau du Québec, and Makivik. At the regional level, Makivik publishes articles about different aspects of the justice system in *Makivik Magazine*, which is delivered free of charge to all beneficiary households a few times a year, in addition to being always available on their website. But not everyone is willing and able to read and understand this kind of papers.

To reach out more easily to people, Makivik is currently developing a curriculum specifically for inmates and is also planning to produce and make available on the Internet an information video in Inuktitut about legal processes and services. Furthermore, by holding in the coming years local justice symposia with different service providers, professionals, and local stakeholders, Makivik’s initiative will surely help anchor legal processes and services locally and open up dialogue with the communities. Lyne St-Louis, Nunavik Justice Officer, explained that these biannual events will combine information, discussion, and recreational activities in order to break down the walls between people. This opportunity for better communication and collaboration will most probably help people learn more about the justice system.

Training the police to work with Nunavimmiut

According to Lizzie Aloupa, the KRPF Prevention Counsellor, the way the police currently work is not adapted to the communities because they are not trained to work in a different culture. For this reason, as recommended in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, training in Inuit history and culture and in how to work with Nunavik communities “*should be mandatory: as soon as they come up, [the police] need to have training. It will be helpful for each party, Inuit and the police*” (Lizzie Aloupa, July 2016). She is convinced that it will help improve relations with the communities while reducing officer turnover. Nunavik regional organizations should consequently pool their efforts to create, with Inuit participation, a training program adapted to Nunavik realities and ensure that all police officers receive it.⁴⁶ Officers would be trained in different aspects of Inuit social life, in communication skills and in community processes and practices.

⁴⁶ The police officer we interviewed from Ungava Bay mentioned that there had been an attempt in the past to implement a training program, but it was unsuccessful. It might have failed in part because the organization in charge did not get Inuit significantly involved to create a cultural component.

First, all police officers must know the community they work in and learn about Inuit traditions and values. This would help to develop a feeling of being part of the community and build trust.⁴⁷ Participation in community life and regular contact with local elected people, workers, organizations, and leading community members—such as justice committee members—should officially be part of police work and become a systematic practice. On this, one of the police officers from Hudson Bay acknowledged that effort must be made also to improve how each officer approaches the community. As a supervisor, he encourages officers to introduce themselves to the municipal council and to community members right upon arrival, and then weekly meet the mayor and participate in community events or activities. He thinks this really helps to improve communication and to answer questions about police work and legal procedures. By taking part in community activities and offering information and awareness sessions, as is sometimes done with schoolchildren, one will also help convey the message that the police are there to help.⁴⁸ Social activities, such as Inuit games and feasts, surely have a potential to lessen tensions and facilitate togetherness.⁴⁹

Second, police officers coming to work in Nunavik must learn to communicate regularly with the families and be taught to take time to explain all incidents and procedures, this being an integral part of their work.⁵⁰ According to Phoebe Atagotaaluk, Justice Committee Coordinator in Inukjuak, one of the best ways to communicate in the community is to go on the local radio station, but police barely use it as a means of communication. Lizzie Aloupa thought that the police do not communicate and explain procedures at the time of a death because they are trained to work in large communities where relationships are more impersonal and where one does not have to be close to people. In small Inuit communities, transparency and sensitivity are important. As we pointed out earlier about the case where the KRPF was responsible for a death, such communication would greatly help to lessen the stress endured by families and make them feel supported:

It would be really wonderful, like in a situation where they had to shoot the person because of the situation going on, or when someone dies during a fight, it is very important to them to meet with the family and to explain to them according to the laws, and the reasons why they did what they did, to explain step by step what happened according to the law. It would relieve the family members to know why their family member had to be shot. (Lizzie Aloupa, July 2016)

Third, *Qallunaat* police should pay attention to their temperament when working with Inuit and learn how to interact more adequately by observing Inuit and by respecting their ways of being and communicating. Lizzie Aloupa said that most police officers intervene far too aggressively, while Inuit officers are calmer:

If they work with the Inuit, they have to be calm like the Inuit. When they are overreacting and overaggressive, it aggravates the behaviour of the person they are dealing with. They really should take notice of how the Inuit are. The older [police officers] especially do a lot of observing before they say or do things, and do it calmly. (Lizzie Aloupa, July 2016)

47 Phoebe Atagotaaluk, Inukjuak Justice Committee Coordinator, mentioned that inviting Southern workers to on-land activities would be a very good way to build relations with the community.

48 According to Barbara Sevigny, counsellor at the Mamisarvik Treatment Center, it will also lessen some of the fear in police officers, a fear of certain community members that leads to an assertive attitude.

49 Friendly competition is probably one of the best ways to get rid of feelings of hostility and strengthen social cohesion in Nunavik communities (Hervé 2015: 137-142).

50 Interview with police officer from Ungava Bay.

The police officer from Hudson Bay acknowledged the importance of taking a respectful and non-confrontational approach in order to establish a good relationship and to prevent conflict with intoxicated people. He tried to teach new officers this approach as a way to counter prejudices by putting forward a positive image of the Inuit. The way police act and the attitude they adopt have naturally much impact on the way Inuit respond to them. Showing serenity, or some emotional control, can more easily foster the same in others, especially since the capacity to control one's emotions, and particularly anger, is for Inuit a sign of maturity that commands respect.⁵¹

Developing local resources, empowering communities and families

To fight crime and to promote social harmony in Nunavik, each locality should be empowered to address social problems and to support needy people as much as possible on its own. Obviously, it is unrealistic to make each of these villages completely independent in terms of providing a full range of services, but there is room to develop many capabilities and areas of expertise. This does not mean bringing more Southern workers to the North, but rather training and equipping local communities, recognizing Inuit skills, and improving general working conditions and benefits in order to retain experienced and skilled workers. In addition, everyone must work together and agree locally, with the support of regional organizations, on objectives and means to achieve them. This requires time and good communication.

Not only do services have to be strengthened, but also the whole community. A community's strength and wellbeing depend on its unity. As we have seen in Inuit societies, being part of the community means being part of helping relationships. This means sharing what we have with others while respecting their personal autonomy⁵² and acknowledging their intelligence (*isuma*⁵³). Given how rapidly the way of life has changed and how hard it is to reconcile traditional life and modern life in a society where trauma has undermined social relationships,⁵⁴ it is primordial that actions be guided as much as possible by Inuit knowledge, practices, and values considered to be relevant today to social harmony. Talking about trauma and teaching Inuit culture and history are likewise important to healing and to the wellbeing of new generations.

Therapy services and healing

Besides the concerns and issues around police work and the justice system, the families at the gathering clearly stated a need both for adequate health support from first responders during a crisis, such as murder, and for family therapy on a continuous basis in their community. To summarize the importance of delivering these services to Northern communities in order to foster family wellbeing and to prevent crime, let us quote from Pauktuutit's report on the January 2016 national pre-inquiry consultation:

51 See among other authors Briggs (1970).

52 Respecting personal autonomy—the ability to think for oneself—means respecting someone by not telling him or her what to do; in other words, it means noninterference (Briggs 2001).

53 "Isuma" refers to the sense of reason, or to the cognitive skills learned during childhood, and includes the knowledge and ability to behave in society adequately (Briggs 1970).

54 Saturviit's study report published in 2015 has some thoughts on this social fragmentation (Laneville 2015: 119-150).

Northern communities lack short-term counselling and longer-term, trauma-informed therapy to prevent further tragedies such as murder, suicide and extreme violence, and to support healing for all those affected. While not all victims of abuse and witnesses to violence go on to abuse others, breaking the pattern of multigenerational violence is seen as a key to healthier families and communities. Effective healing programs for women and men and for families are needed, and services should be provided in local dialects of the Inuit language. (Pauktuutit 2016: 14)

These services are thus important to keeping the loss of a loved one from jeopardizing the long-term health and wellbeing of family members, especially through lateral violence and a cycle of abuse.⁵⁵ Communities need to develop themselves locally, so that they no longer have to rely on external, sporadic, and temporary support and can provide everyone close to the victim with immediate and ongoing support, including the children and also the offender's family. This is particularly relevant considering that family members are usually scattered across many communities.

As Barbara Sevigny from Mamisarvik Treatment Centre pointed out, in order to provide adequate support right after a death and ongoing therapy services locally, it is first crucial to train therapists, or mental health workers, in all communities. As much as possible, they should be of Inuit origin and independent of other services—or neutral towards them. They should know Inuit history and be able to address the core trauma, instead of simply tagging people as traumatized individuals and only looking at symptoms. Therapists should be trained to teach coping techniques in order to help people deal daily with anxiety, trauma, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Furthermore, Inuit knowledge and practices should enrich healing practices through significant participation by elders.

Of course, you would not intervene immediately during a crisis in the same way as you would provide long-term therapy, and each therapist may develop personal methods and abilities. A first responder requires a clear action plan when intervening after a brutal death in order to provide a quick response. Actions may simply be visiting and listening to the people in shock and making sure they are safe. Participants at the gathering stressed that what most helps Inuit is compassion, hugs, and listening without judging and talking over their heads. Considering the state of shock of family members, Barbara Sevigny also added the need for support workers to “ground” them right after a death to make sure they stay connected with reality, and to make them aware of all resources available.

Once the crisis and funerals have passed, there is still strong and lasting pain. Even if the death occurred years ago, therapy may be needed to help people cope with troubles they have been carrying for so long. Here are the words from a family member who stresses how much people need to speak up about their pain and their lost ones:

I would have liked to go to healing. We didn't have anything provided for help with all the trauma and drama. We never had anything to help us. I am the only person in the whole family who speaks up. [...] It gets very hard for the people who start to speak about their loved one who has been murdered, because we have never got to speak about it. We've never had a public place to go speak about it. [...] That is why we need a healing centre, a healing place where people can

⁵⁵ Lateral violence is when someone abuses his or her own people in ways similar to the way he or she has been abused. For a specific definition of Aboriginal lateral violence, visit: <https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2011-Aboriginal-Lateral-Violence.pdf>.

talk about their trauma. It is a trauma when you lose a loved one. [...] Murder is very painful because it caught someone's life just like that. We don't even get to say "goodbye". (Family member from Hudson Bay, August 2016)

Healing must bring people around to speaking up and listening to others. Group healing methods include sharing circles, journeys on the land, gatherings, and teaching healthy relationships and control of emotions.⁵⁶ Meeting with the murderer was also mentioned as being key to forgiveness and to overcoming the pain caused by the loss of someone.

Finally, to ensure the effectiveness of the first responders' plan and therapy services, all services and workers in the community must work together and agree on collaborative action and complementary roles. As we discussed with regard to police officers, not only must service providers know each other, but they must also build a relationship with the community by organizing activities, by playing games, and by communicating information.

For this, according to Barbara Sevigny, it would be very beneficial to hold community engagement sessions on healthy living and health services. At these sessions, information must be thoroughly provided not only about the resources available, but also to explain trauma and the symptoms of trauma (PTSD), lateral violence, a safety plan, and self-care. By developing a social relationship with the community, it will become easier to hold on to workers. A therapist's job is surely as demanding as police work. Therapists can be afraid at times to help others because they have their own traumas, especially if they have not adequately dealt with such traumas before. To help recruit and retain Inuit therapists, we should provide them with access to therapy and to counselling services at all times—for instance, by providing a 24-hour toll-free number.

Besides human resources, infrastructures are also a significant issue in Nunavik due to the high cost of building, heating, and maintaining them. Nevertheless, adequate services to victims and to families require a space where such people can feel safe, welcome, and not judged, and where they can speak out and express their feelings. This neutral space for counselling, healing, and teaching could serve many purposes, as a temporary shelter, as a place for family activities, or as a location for group discussion. Building a family house in each community has been proposed before to fulfil these kinds of needs. The use and success of the few existing family houses in Nunavik should then be studied and promoted in other villages.

Strengthen local justice committees and communities

At the intersection between the justice system and health support work, there are local justice committees that have a twofold mandate both to work in the field of justice and to provide counselling services, especially to wrongdoers. The committee members are undoubtedly major Inuit stakeholders in Nunavik justice today and, as local leaders and guides, their role in the communities deserves to be further developed. To do so, they need to gain visibility and strength in all Nunavik communities.

56 There are plenty of successful programs in Inuit communities across Canada that may be used to inspire local and regional programs in Nunavik. "Programs such as Ilisaqsvik in Clyde River, Tukisigiarvik in Iqaluit, Pulaarvik in Rankin Inlet and TI's Mamisarvik in Ottawa, [...] as examples of community based organizations running programs that successfully merged the best practices of non-Inuit treatment and care models with Inuit methods" (ITK and TI 2016: 8).

Money is surely required, but so are involvement and collaboration by committees, communities, services, and the justice system. As Lyne St-Louis, Nunavik justice officer at Makivik, pointed out, the different services (social services, police, the DYP, legal services, etc.) must first know each other before they can refer people to each other adequately and make the justice continuum effective. Therefore, the communities can be made aware of the role of justice committees, if the latter also take time to tell the communities about their mandate.

The committees could also have their role extended to fill the gap between the police and the Court on the one hand and the communities on the other. They could act as a bridge, or liaison, between the system and Inuit, by providing information about laws and procedures, information that Inuit can easily understand. They could also work with the police to keep the families of victims and offenders informed about the legal process, and to ensure that arrested people, even before any criminal charges are laid, understand what is happening to them.

Justice committees, and the positive outcomes their approach has had on clients, must also be promoted and extended to the whole community. As Phoebe Atagotaaluk, the Justice Committee Coordinator in Inukjuak, pointed out, the Inukjuak committee is making wrongdoers understand and recognize who they are, making them feel important in their communities, being no longer different or alone, and giving them hope. But we need not wait for crime- or alcohol-related problems to work with people. This kind of intervention goes well beyond the justice system and criminals. All Inuit need to where they come from in order to understand why they are who they are today, and why so much anger and so many social problems exist around them. They have to hear their family history and know what trauma their relatives have gone through:

They have a reason why they are angry. It is not about the justice system; it is about the person who has been hurt and not understanding where he is coming from. In the community, they don't really talk about what has been going on with their issues in the past. [...] We need more community activities. It doesn't have to be because you need help because of alcohol and drugs, it is more like taking back the people in the community, the elders, get together, have a feast, respect each other. [...] We have to start opening up to what we went through, so the younger generations will understand why they keep going to jail, or smoking or drinking, why the traditions go. (Phoebe Atagotaaluk, November 2016)

Accordingly, the whole community must get together, talk about the past, have traditional activities, and start to help each other again. And everyone in the community, whether *Qallunaat* or Inuit, must take responsibility. This means working together for a brighter future and healthier communities by using traditions and by building pride in one's identity.

Conclusion: Justice for Nunavik

This report has obviously gone well beyond the issue of missing or murdered Inuit. It has briefly touched on many aspects of living conditions in Nunavik that favour an endless cycle of violence, such as the housing shortage and the high rate of alcohol abuse. It has pointed to the social fragmentation of Inuit societies due to colonial history and to a rapidly changing way of life, where trauma and ruptured family ties have jeopardized the capacity of Inuit to pass on positive life models and to support each other (Laneuville 2015: 119-150).

It has also brought us to the issues of social regulation and governance. Social regulation serves social harmony through, notably, effective mechanisms for conflict resolution. It cannot be operated from outside; it has to be rooted in the society because the mechanisms must be intelligible to the community and embodied by community members. As suggested by the notions of cosmopolitics (Beck 2004; Laugrand 2014) and legal pluralism (Grammond 2010; Otis 2012), Canadian mechanisms, or laws, have been only partly appropriated and understood by Indigenous people, who continue to have their own social structures and institutions that should be recognized and valued.

It is thus important to view crime and justice holistically by considering the historical, social, cultural, and political aspects and by refocusing on positive goals, such as healthy and strong communities. Above all, we must acknowledge the importance of communication, collaboration, and trust between one another, in order to work together for a common purpose.

Back to the Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut

On the issue of MMN, two specific points have emerged from our inquiry. First, reports of missing persons and crime are often either delayed or lacking. Second, families of victims and families of offenders feel more often than not abandoned and helpless when caught up in the criminal justice process and when seeking mental health support. This feeling fosters serious long-term personal, family and social problems.

The justice system does not always report or deal with crimes because people are not fully aware of the system and distrust its representatives and the outcomes of its procedures. The procedures are very slow and demanding for complainants, and incarceration seems to do little to rehabilitate criminals and prevent crimes. As for missing persons in particular, according to Lizzie Aloupa, who works as Prevention Counsellor for the KRPF, Nunavimmiut should be more aware of any departing relatives and file a report if too much time has gone by since they last heard from him or her. It would also be beneficial to raise awareness among Inuit about what to do when someone goes missing and about how to work with the media and the police.⁵⁷ As mentioned during the pre-inquiry consultation in Montreal, families of Inuit lost in Montreal should in particular be helped in searching for their loved ones, by providing flight tickets for instance, and in getting information about the investigation.

57 "A Toolkit to Assist Families of Missing Persons and Persons at Risk" was created by the organization Ka Ni Kanichihk, in Winnipeg. The toolkit, which could be adapted to Nunavimmiut, was presented to Nunavik Families in Inukjuak. It is available on their website: <http://www.kanikanichihk.ca/?page%20id=761>.

For any of the numerous families of murdered Inuit, after many years of struggle, the event that put an end to their loved one's life remains greatly misunderstood, and sometimes a mystery, because they feel they never got clear information from the investigator and the police. This has contributed to their anger, their feeling of injustice, and their pain. In addition, they have never expressed their feelings about their loss. As a consequence, mourning is difficult. When this trauma is compounded with other untreated drama, such as a brother's suicide or sexual abuse, as is really often the situation, distress and abuse are likely to take place within the family.

In addressing the issue of missing or murdered Nunavimmiut, the priorities are to improve the criminal justice system, by offering alternative practices among other things, and to enhance counselling and therapy services. These priorities underlie the six recommendations that conclude this report. Before concluding, we should go back to discussing Nunavik's cycle of violence and then move on to the notion of legal pluralism.

Back to Nunavik's cycle of violence: the housing shortage and criminalization of victims

Nunavik's cycle of violence, particularly domestic violence, is evidently what leads to missing and murdered people. It is thus essential to speak about the victims of domestic violence and about the factors that keep the cycle going. Beyond the many limits of the justice system and the clear need for more health support resources, a crucial factor is contributing to the cycle of violence and thus, as we shall see, to criminalization. This factor is beyond the control of the justice system and service providers. It is the acute housing shortage.

To put an end to abuse, a victim has to leave her home, often with her children, with nowhere to stay over the long term because all other houses are already crowded and getting a new house takes a long time.⁵⁸ Regardless of whether a victim lays charges against the spouse who has assaulted her, or whether this assailant is found guilty and imprisoned, the outcome of the legal process is more often than not the return of the couple to live together under the same roof because there is simply no other option. Victims are thus very apprehensive of the release of their abuser because they fear retaliation and getting more seriously injured.⁵⁹ The abuser often merely goes back and forth between home and jail, and the abusive situation never really changes over the years.

According to the Nunavik Justice Officer at Makivik, Lyne St-Louis, the housing situation is as problematic for crime victims as it is for offenders, who will reoffend when they get back from jail because they always get back into the same context where they committed the crime. For both the safety of victims and the rehabilitation of abusers, transition houses for ex-convicts, be they men or women, would greatly help to reduce the scope for repeat offences. Nevertheless, even when the victim and the offender no longer live in the same house, their close proximity to each other in small Northern communities is also an obstacle to any efforts to turn a page and start a new life. Victims and abusers

58 The social worker we interviewed from Hudson Bay also mentioned legal problems when both spouses have their name on the lease agreement and one of them does not want to break the agreement. About the housing situation in Nunavik, see Laneuville (2015: 9-28), a paper presented by Saturviit during the 2016 edition of the Inuit Studies Congress (available at: <https://vimeo.com/187989000>), and a paper to be soon published in *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* (Hervé and Laneuville, to come).

59 Interview with social worker from Hudson Bay. See also Pauktuutit's report (Pauktuutit 2016: 13).

will continue to see each other every day, despite no-contact orders if there are any. And sometimes, the abuser succeeds in convincing his victim to come back to him. And so the cycle starts anew.⁶⁰

When a victim has been enduring the cycle of violence for so long that she cannot stand it anymore, there is a high risk of her slowly becoming an assailant, and she becomes one more criminalized individual (Laneville 2015: 66). Lyne St-Louis has noticed this sort of situation:

There are women who reach for a knife because they cannot take it anymore, but they were victims. They press charges for a long time and then they get incarcerated. Some are under conditions that prohibit them from drinking. They get beaten up one night and they are arrested because they broke their conditions. They call for help and they are the ones who end up in jail. They can't trust the system. (Lyne St-Louis, October 2016 - Free translation)

In short, to prevent Inuit from getting criminalized, getting murdered, and going missing, increased availability of housing must be a priority, and victims must receive appropriate support in order to stop the cycle of violence and to heal their wounds of abuse.

To conclude, it is important to stress that many other victims of domestic violence manage to break the cycle of violence and can be considered survivors.⁶¹ In some cases, and at some times, the victim really feared for her life, but nonetheless survived and found the courage to go for help and change her life. Such women are now positive models for their communities. One example is Jeannie Sappa, from Umiujaq, who published a letter in November 2015, describing her struggle and efforts to put an end to an abusive relationship and get a new home (Rogers 2016).

Legal pluralism: acknowledging valuable Inuit practices

Legal pluralism refers to a situation where more than one justice system co-exists within the same society. The traditional laws of Aboriginal people have persisted in the modern world and continue to work, most of the time informally, alongside the dominant system. With recognition of such pluralism comes the need to open up to these traditional laws and make room for them because they are relevant to modern social issues (Grammond 2010; Oosten and Laugrand 2002; Otis 2012).

There is however much trouble—or resistance to—recognizing and integrating Indigenous customary laws into the current justice system. One obstacle is that they cannot easily be recorded and translated into an objective, fixed set of laws and rules, as Canadian laws have been. Traditional Inuit laws, for instance, refer more to subjective, relational, contextual, and flexible knowledge, practices, principles, and values. Moreover, these rules, whose purpose is to maintain harmony and ensure community safety, are not limited to the social (or human) sphere. They incorporate all of the surroundings—animals, spirits, and nature. For this reason, we cannot consider the Inuit traditional way of dealing with conflicts and wrongdoings without taking this perspective into account (Oosten and Laugrand 2002).

60 Interview with police officer from Hudson Bay.

61 Saturviit produced a DVD in 2015 titled "Breaking the Silence." It provides examples of such survivors.

Obviously, not all traditional practices can simply be revived. But the ones that have proven their value in solving modern problems should be. We have seen some of these practices and principles while speaking about local justice committees. For instance, everyone is held to be responsible for the wellbeing of the community as a whole. Local leaders also have a role in asserting their authority by counselling wrongdoers and by encouraging confession.⁶² From this perspective, correction, reconciliation, and reintegration are more valued than punishment, imprisonment, and isolation, which negatively affect the community and individuals and should be considered only a last resort. Indeed, for most offences, Nunavimmiut see incarceration as an inadequate response and point out that it has sadly become a way of life for too many. This is why land programs should be developed as an alternative (Oosten and Laugrand 2002).

Thus, to address social issues better and to improve Nunavik's justice system, we strongly feel that Inuit traditional knowledge and practices must be brought back into use and taken seriously by governments and law-enforcement officials. They should be integrated into Canadian institutions and assigned areas of authority that are complementary to those of the Courts. This could be an effective way to adapt a maladjusted system and empower communities, to the benefit of all. Indeed, for the federal government, it might be the most effective solution to the lacklustre, and also costly, social situation of much of the Indigenous population. Of course, the justice committee program and the Protocol for Alternative Measures, which allow the referral of some criminals to a justice committee with the intent of not laying criminal charges, are surely an initial positive step towards full recognition of traditional laws.

Other reports have previously supported the idea of legal pluralism in Canada, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Parnasimautik Consultation reports (KRG et al.: 2014). The commissioners of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, among many other things, called on the "governments to provide sufficient and stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal offenders" (TRCC 2015: 220). It even called on the governments to commit to recognition and implementation of the Aboriginal justice system (ibid.: 228).

Many other recommendations are made in the Parnasimautik Consultation Report, the reports of the Working Group on Justice in Nunavik (KRG *et al.* 2014: 84-93), Pauktuutit's report on the national pre-inquiry consultation (Pauktuutit 2016), and the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRCC 2015). These recommendations are consistent with the ones we now want to make in the conclusion to this report. These recommendations summarize the main issues we have discussed here.

62 "Collective confession was a key element in any healing process and the sharing of experiences is thought to be crucial to maintain harmony and peace within the community." (Oosten and Laugrand 2002: 33). It was also used to preserve the wellbeing of the soul, the mind, and the body because Inuit believe that keeping wrongdoings to oneself causes sickness and even affects future generations (ibid.: 34).

63 For discussions about the traditional methods of social control and interaction with the Western justice system, see Hervé (2015), Raising 1994, Rouland (1979), and Steenhoven (1962).

Recommendations

In light of this regional inquiry into Missing or Murdered Nunavimmiut, Saturviit urges that regional and local organizations and governments mobilize and work together to act on the following recommendations:

- 1) **Developing activities and tools to inform the Nunavimmiut regularly and adequately about the justice system**, including criminal justice procedures, the roles of different officials and employees of the justice system, the rights of victims, and all related services. Activities and tools may take the form of information meetings, discussions and sharing sessions between the community and service providers, radio shows, and information videos and booklets in Inuktitut.
- 2) **Implementing a cultural training program and providing it to all police officers and justice officials** in Nunavik. The program must provide information about Inuit history, culture, and society in addition to teaching skills for intercultural relationships and community approach. The police officers must learn the importance of communicating—listening and speaking—adequately and regularly with families affected by legal procedures, and take time to ensure they understand the procedures.
- 3) **Developing local first-responder plans** to provide the families of victims and suspects with immediate support in cases of brutal death. For this purpose, Inuit health support workers must be trained and equipped locally.
- 4) **Developing local therapy services** in each community that will offer families and individuals support on a continuous basis. Inuit and non-Inuit therapists must be trained and equipped to deal with mental and addiction issues and to address core trauma. Elders must especially be involved. A specific space, such as a family house, should be devoted to sharing and healing.
- 5) **Enhancing funding, capacity, and visibility of local justice committees** in all communities. The role and work of such committees must be developed both inside and outside the justice system, as an alternative to the legal process. The committees have the potential to become greater local stakeholders in efforts to prevent crime, to mediate, to rehabilitate, to heal, and to liaise between the justice system and the families. Justice committees and the whole community must continue to work on the underlying causes of crime and on fostering awareness about trauma and family history in order to promote healing, pride, and social harmony.
- 6) **Improving the housing situation as soon as possible** in Nunavik, including building more units that meet family needs, reviewing the housing policy to improve housing accessibility for people in crisis situations, and building emergency shelters and transition houses for offenders, victims, and anyone returning from therapy.

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