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Title Food insecurity in Inuit Indigenous communities experiencing rapid climate change

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Theme -Theme 3: Observing in Support of Indigenous Food Security and Related Needs

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Abstract - text box

Debilitating climate change struck several Inuit Indigenous communities across Canada that were costly in terms of human life and infrastructure. Severe food insecurity like these are expected to happen more frequently, and be more widespread, under a rapidly changing climate. Inuit Indigenous communities are particularly vulnerable to food sovereignty, yet have limited capacity to mitigate them as compared to other parts of Canada. Strategic decisions need to be made about food insecurity management. The problem, however, is that the majority of attention to food insecurity management has focused on theoretical solutions – reactive, command and control strategies – versus more strategic approaches to food insecurity management that focus on enhancing community resiliency. Further, there are few participatory, strategic tools and frameworks available to support such important and timely policy development initiatives. The purpose of this research is to provide arctic Indigenous communities, particularly those communities in the Inuit self-governing region of Nunatsiavut, with new tools that can help them make strategic choices about food insecurity management that enhance their resiliency to food sovereignty.

This work is timely given that communities across Inuit Canada in particular are actively revising policy, reorganizing and learning from recent climate change in last 10 years. This research will: i) identify and evaluate alternative mitigation options to assist policy makers and communities in food insecurity mitigation policy development; ii) determine areas of consensus and dissent among stakeholders regarding optimal food insecurity mitigation options; and iii) provide a structured, transparent and participatory decision support tool to government and communities to guide future land use and watershed planning initiatives. Our work will also impact the scholarly community through advancing approaches to assessing, understanding and improving community resiliency by introducing a structured, quantitative framework for community engagement and decision making. We will also advance methodology and new areas of application for strategic environmental assessment.