

Qikiqtaaluk

Socio-Economic Monitoring Committee



Looking across to Bylot Island from Pond Inlet - photo by Deatra Walsh

Spring 2015 Executive Summary

Ninth Qikiqtaaluk SEMC Meeting
and
Qikiqtaaluk Socio-Economic Monitoring

Pond Inlet, Nunavut: April 21-22, 2015

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Executive Summary

The Qikiqtaaluk Socio-Economic Monitoring Committee (SEMC or the ‘Committee’) met in Pond Inlet on April 21-22, 2015 to discuss regional impacts of major resource development projects. The meeting was very well attended by hamlets with at least one representative from each of the 13 communities in the Qikiqtaaluk region. The meeting also included officials from the Government of Nunavut (GN), Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation (BIMC or ‘Baffinland’), as well as a group of community researchers from Pond Inlet who plan to undertake their own socio-economic monitoring project.

The Qikiqtaaluk SEMC first heard updates from the GN and AANDC regarding socio-economic monitoring efforts as well as different programs and financial support available to Nunavummiut. The Committee then heard from the Pond Inlet community researchers who explained the goals of their monitoring project and what they hope to achieve in the coming years. A long discussion followed regarding the importance of community-led monitoring projects while many community representatives expressed their support for this group and project in Pond Inlet. The first day concluded with a presentation from the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics followed by a community roundtable discussion where each community representative shared a brief narrative of the socio-economic changes felt in their home communities.

The second day featured a presentation from Baffinland with updates on the Mary River Project (the ‘Project’), benefits and impacts from the Project, and the company’s socio-economic monitoring efforts. A lengthy discussion ensued as community representatives took the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns that have been observed in their communities. Many agree that Baffinland’s employment and training opportunities are great for individuals to develop personal and professional skills. However, some hamlet representatives are concerned with the barriers that are keeping more Nunavummiut from gaining employment such as point of hire communities, computer/internet access and literacy, and education preparedness.

The day concluded with presentations from the Department of Education and the Department of Family Services. This served as a nice follow-up to the Baffinland discussion as the information discussed by the two departments could contribute to alleviating some of the mentioned barriers to employment. The Committee spent much time discussing the employment opportunities with Baffinland and pointed out the high number of Baffinland employees from Arctic Bay. Hamlet representatives hope to see those high numbers replicated in more communities and talked about the benefits that would bring. There is a strong interest to learn more about how Arctic Bay has handled the impacts from the old Nanisivik Mine and continues to take advantage of current mining opportunities at Mary River. As such, the Committee voted to hold the next Qikiqtaaluk SEMC meeting in Arctic Bay, tentatively scheduled for April, 2016.