

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Qikiqtaaluk Socio-Economic Monitoring Committee (SEMC, or ‘the committee’) gathered in Iqaluit for its annual meeting on July 20-21, 2016 to collectively monitor regional resource development activity and discuss any subsequent socio-economic changes in Qikiqtaaluk communities. Representatives from 10 hamlets were in attendance, in addition to representatives from the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation (BIMC or Baffinland), and the Government of Nunavut (GN).

The meeting began with a roundtable introduction and presentations from government agencies. The conversation touched on some of the different services and opportunities offered throughout the region with emphasis on education and training. The Nunavut Bureau of Statistics (NBS) then provided a high-level regional overview of the socio-economic environment with a presentation containing government-collected statistical data. This was followed by a community roundtable to gain further insight from community representatives on the local social, economic, and cultural environments in the region. The day concluded with an presentation from Baffinland that included activity updates on the Mary River project as well as a detailed review of the 2015 Mary River Socio-Economic Monitoring Program (SEMP). Baffinland shared data and information on employment and training, and discussed some the company’s expected plans moving forward to maximize Inuit participation at the Mary River mine. Baffinland also presented proposed changes to the Mary River SEMP for future reports that will enable the committee to better monitor potential impacts and benefits identified by the company in their final environmental impact statement (EIS).

On the second day of the meeting, participants discussed several monitoring requirements in the Mary River project certificate which require indicator data to monitor effectively and quantitatively. The experiences and opinions shared by community representatives will continue to be discussed at future SEMC meetings until indicators are developed. Further, the added perspectives from communities will contribute to analyses in the Mary River SEMP.

Common issues raised throughout the meeting were current Inuit employment, training, and retention levels. Community representatives would like to see these numbers increase from 2015 levels. Baffinland representatives outlined some of their strategies to achieve the Minimum Inuit Employment Goal that was recently negotiated with QIA. The committee will continue to monitor the implementation of these strategies over the next year and at the next Qikiqtaaluk SEMC meeting, tentatively scheduled for the first week of May 2017 in Arctic Bay.