

Executive Summary, 2017 Qikiqtaaluk SEMC Meeting

The Qikiqtaaluk Socio-Economic Monitoring Committee (QikSEMC or 'the Committee') met in Arctic Bay for its annual meeting on July 5th and 6th, 2017 to collectively monitor and discuss resource development activity in the region. Discussion on socio-economic changes observed in Qikiqtaaluk communities took place as well. Representatives from the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation (BIMC), Government of Nunavut (GN) and 10 Qikiqtaaluk communities were in attendance.

Following introductions, a roundtable was held where communities voiced concerns and project-related benefits they have observed. A common theme observed during the roundtable was the need for community freezers in almost every community that was in attendance. Public housing was also identified as an issue in multiple Qikiqtaaluk communities, as is the need for infrastructure to provide spaces for daycares, hotels, and community halls. The communities expressed their appreciation for employment opportunities made available by the BIMC Mary River Project. Despite this, they did note some employment-related issues leading to high employee turnover rates and/or reluctance to apply for work. Employment-related issues discussed at the roundtable include:

- lack of daycare in home communities
- 12-hour days being too long for inexperienced employees
- racism on site
- Too many days of work with no time off.

The Committee proceeded with a GN roundtable, which included the Department of Health and the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Department of Health's presentation focused largely on the community profiles the department has been putting together, along with the goals of GN departmental collaboration to better the lives of Nunavummiut. NBS's presentation focused largely on trends in identified Valued Socio-Economic Components (VSECs) from pre-Project to present day. The NBS used a new visual approach to present VSEC trend data and committee members were able to easily discern variations in VSEC(s) over time. It was made apparent that there are many factors contributing to these identified data trends, and that it can be difficult to relate these trends specifically to a mining project (e.g. Mary River). NBS's explanation of identified data trends proved that data collection is important to monitor the well-being of Nunavut and to give insight into the importance of the qualitative data collected at the SEMCs.

Day one concluded with BIMC presenting on the 2016 Mary River Socio-Economic Monitoring Program (SEMP) as well as updates on the Phase 2 project proposal. BIMC also discussed the development of pre-employment training initiatives to achieve their Inuit employment goals as predicted in the FEIS and agreements made in the Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement. Conversations that took place revolved around the topics of:

- Financial literacy and assistance training;

- Rotational shift issues with young parents;
- Work readiness programs taking place in other regions;
- Training for mechanics and other positions;
- Communities outside of the LSA looking for employment; and
- The need to recruit and keep Inuit staff.

Leading up to the second day of the meeting, the GN created a document which allowed for all committee members to see and rate the Project-specific VSECs. BIMC has a total of twelve (12) VSECs to monitor in the Mary River SEMP.

During the second day, the Committee discussed and rated identified VSECs; rating of VSECs was based off of 'order of importance', both to each individual VSEC and to their home community. Although there was no consensus on which VSEC is considered the most important, there was informative discussion on how the communities interpret these VSECs, and what impacts and benefits have been noticed. A variety of topics were covered, but some were discussed more than others, including:

- Mental health in communities,
- The need for programs and initiatives to support mental health and well-being;
- Education and training in the communities and at the mine site;
- Cultural and recreational program needs on-site
- Childcare in communities.

Moving forward, the Committee intends to monitor the implementation of employment strategies to ensure as many Inuit are finding employment at the mine. The Committee discussed the importance of all organizations including Regional Inuit Associations, GN, INAC, and BIMC to work together to address and mitigate impacts, issues, and concerns in the region. The 2018 QikSEMC is tentatively scheduled for July 2018 in Sanikiluaq.