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NUNAVIK 2017

KANGIRSUK

COMMUNITY PORTRAIT

Results from the Community Component
of Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Health Survey



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RÉGIE RÉGIONALE DE LA NUNAVIK REGIONAL
SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES BOARD OF HEALTH
SOCIAUX DU NUNAVIK AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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This community portrait for Kangirsuk is a result of the Community Component of the *Qanuilirpitaa?* Health Survey, conducted in 2017 across the 14 communities of Nunavik.

The objectives of the Community Component were to:

- 1) **describe Inuit conceptions of health and well-being** as they relate to health determinants and community living;
- 2) better **understand** how **community conditions and resources contribute to the health** of people living there;
- 3) focus on the sources of **strength and resilience** in each community to describe how the community responds to challenges to health;
- 4) **measure and describe community health and wellbeing** across all 14 communities of Nunavik;
- 5) provide **information** to the **Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services and community representatives** who will work to develop action plans and interventions to respond to the needs identified in the Community Component.

To ensure cultural relevance and to get a full appreciation of the social and cultural context surrounding health, we developed a model of health and well-being that structured our data collection, analysis, and results. The **IQI model of health and eight themes** – elements shaping the health of communities and people – were developed through an exhaustive analysis of data collected through workshops, discussions, and in-depth interviews with Nunavimmiut from the 14 communities in Nunavik. The model was validated by leaders, community members, and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

The information presented in this community portrait is based on the analysis of 3 long interviews conducted with community leaders, and 21 short interviews with service providers (resources). Through these interviews, participants shared what they thought of their community, what they perceived as strengths and challenges in Kangirsuk, and improvements they would like to see for their community.

This portrait starts with a description of the IQI model of health and of the eight themes, or determinants, shaping the health and well-being of Nunavimmiut. Then for each theme, the following information is presented: organizations offering services or programs, main assets and strengths of the community, sociodemographic groups that are most or least served by programs and services (see: What about the People?), and what Kangiqsumiut would like to see improve in their community.

We want to thank all Kangiqsumiut for their participation and collaboration throughout the Community Component of the *Qanuilirpitaa?* 2017 Nunavik Health Survey.



THE IQI MODEL OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ilusirsusiarniq, Qanuinggiarniq and Inuuqatigiitsianiq are three key concepts of health and well-being. They build on the foundation of language and culture to make up the IQI model of health and well-being in Nunavik.

Ilusirsusiarniq concerns the body, in general. It is a condition of normal functioning without disease, pain, injury or sickness that impedes people from doing what they want and need to do. The concept carries the idea that health is the way the body is intended to develop and change over time. Ilusirsusiarniq is “the taking of intended form” progressing from birth to old age.

Qanuinggiarniq is a broad sense of “well-being” that encompasses feelings of being unworried, without pain, comfortable, free of emotional distress, and happiness. It is related to peace of mind, calmness, fulfilment, and being able to move forward and carry on with ease. A specific emphasis is placed on the importance of being with other people in emotionally warm and safe environments.

Inuuqatigiitsianiq refers to an ideal state of relations between people. Specifically, it is composed of the quality of interactions with people sharing the same place. Good relationships with family members, friends, neighbours, people in the community and beyond are a significant part of the definition of health.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Eight social determinants of health that support people to be healthy and well were identified. Each of them influences the others and all eight are linked together within the broader conceptual IQI model.

COMMUNITY consists of the social, physical, and built spaces of the municipalities of Nunavik. It encompasses three sub-themes: ways of living together, infrastructure and housing. *Ways of living together* refers to a range of relational issues like respect, altruism and social support; the role of elders and intergenerational knowledge transmission; and interactions like visiting, the place of non-Inuit and inclusion. Infrastructure concerns buildings, essential and municipal services, leisure, sports and recreation, and justice. Housing concerns accessibility, quality and appropriateness of dwellings, their structural characteristics, and sense of home.

FAMILY focuses primarily on kinship and affective relations between family members across generations, with an emphasis on youth. The sense of family belonging, with its particular attention to harmonious relations, calls directly upon the inuuqatigiitsianiq dimension of Inuit health. This determinant encompasses the extended family or ilagiit and Inuit-specific cultural customs, like the practice of customary adoption.

IDENTITY details the connection to culture, language, pride, cultural activities, history, childhood and adolescent experiences, as well as the influence of southern culture. Questions of identity, including perceptions of the strength and value of Inuit culture today are important aspects of the definition of community health and well-being.

FOOD is a necessity of life that carries important social, economic and knowledge dimensions. This determinant encompasses the knowledge and practices of harvesting and sharing, the quality and quantity of food available, food preferences, and the regulations that govern hunting. Likewise, food includes the many influences around the acquisition and consumption of store-bought foods. The harvesting of country food requires skills and knowledge. Who goes on the land, how, when, and where is linked to social and historical ties of families with different places in Nunavik. Sharing food and meals brings all foods into family and community practices.

LAND is practically and symbolically a fundamental determinant of individual and collective health, healing, and well-being in Nunavik. This determinant includes issues of accessibility for food gathering, travel between communities, healing, caring for the land and outdoor activities. Safety and security on the land are also important aspects and include search and rescue, practices and knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE is a prerequisite to effective action in the home, on the land or at work. As such, it is the first step leading to health, healing and well-being. This determinant incorporates aspects of leadership, governance, empowerment and inter-agency collaboration as well as skills development, schooling and administrative knowledge. Knowledge is inclusive of Inuit and Western or southern traditions.

SERVICES encompasses the many different aspects of community, regional and provincial resources that people access and which contribute to health. These include health-related services (mental, physical and community initiatives), as well as community-level institutions and actions that are sought out to address trauma and healing.

ECONOMY refers to the ways in which people make a living, either through the land-based and/or the market-based economy, and to local and regional development. It encompasses income, access to goods, cost of living, expertise, skill and funding.



COMMUNITY

Resources

- > Arena
- > Churches
- > Community center
- > Community wellness worker
- > Firefighters
- > FM radio
- > Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre
- > NV
- > Post office
- > Police station
- > Project coordinator
- > Recreational coordinator
- > Sautjuit school
- > Sewing shop
- > Student council
- > Swimming pool
- > Ungaluk program
- > Water station
- > Women's Auxiliary Group
- > Wood workshop
- > Youth House

Community strengths

Kangirsuk is perceived by many people as a welcoming and friendly community that is very unified. People are proud of the way that community members help one another and stick together.

Kangiqliumiut feel their community is very lively and busy. The recreational department, the Youth House, the school, the community wellness worker, and the Youth Committee are among the organizations that develop and provide activities and programs to counteract boredom and entertain people. Activities range from improvised board game nights to contests, Elders' Day celebrations, and the music festival. Community members really enjoy gatherings, and there is usually a high level of involvement in the community.

Inmates from the Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre are appreciated and welcomed in the community. They have opportunities to do volunteer work, such as shovelling snow for Elders. They are helpful members of the community.

Communication is very efficient in the community thanks to the community radio and Facebook. All information is communicated through these two mediums, including information about activities. The Internet has made people more aware of what is going on in other people's lives and helped them become more informed in general.

People feel it is very important to recognize Elders for their contributions to the community. Elders are always ready to get involved, help, or listen to someone. There have been several successful initiatives to bring youth and Elders together, to allow members of both generations to talk with each other and exchange thoughts about the culture and their lives.

The NV consistently works to improve its services in order to ensure that people are in good health and have things to do. It has improved the bus service over the years and delivers water and sewage services 7 days a week.

The fire department is considered efficient by community members. The fire chief goes on air to discuss prevention and talk about community safety. The firefighters also ensure that all houses have smoke detectors and teach children about fire safety by distributing pamphlets and colouring books.

Construction is efficient in the community. The village still needs some pieces of heavy equipment, but overall, has good equipment and is able to take on most repairs.

COMMUNITY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + The recreational department provides activities for everyone.
- + There are a lot of activities for Elders, such as fishing trips, feasts, and gatherings, as well as transportation services.
- + The school provides many physical activities for students, and keeps the gym open during recess to encourage children to play.
- + Women are highly involved in the community and participate in activities often.
- Men do not participate as much in activities (with the exception of Elderly men).
- Youth lack knowledge about the justice system.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- To see less bullying and cyberbullying.
- A night guard to reduce violence and lower the burglary rate.
- A library and a building for community activities.
- More activities and initiatives for men, as well as an active men's association, in order to be able to reach out to men between the ages of 18 and 50.
- More education about the justice system.
- More communication between the students at school and the community.
- More community involvement from the youth.
- To have projects and activities geared toward combatting substance use problems.
- To have a fitness centre at the fire station.
- More heavy equipment.



FAMILY

Resources

- > [Amaartuavik Childcare Centre](#)
- > [Community wellness worker](#)
- > [Youth Protection](#)

Community strengths

Grandparents tend to be very involved in their grandchildren's upbringing. They like to share their knowledge and teach them cultural activities.

The Baby Book Program is a great resource, which mothers appreciate very much. The program is helping to revive the cultural way of raising children. Elders are invited to write about the child's grandparents' lifestyle and where they are from. New parents also get to discuss parenting and receive advice from Elders during the activity.

The community wellness worker provides various activities to support families, such as the Healthy Relationship Week. She gives talks on the FM radio to remind people of the importance of harmonious and respectful relationships. She also provides babysitting services to allow mothers to attend certain activities, such as the Mother's Day pampering day.

The Youth House and the daycare are appreciated by working parents. They are safe places for youth and children, where they have access to quality activities, food, and educational workshops. The Youth House also helps prevent youth from becoming bored and provides them with positive things to do.

The community welcomes social workers from out of town on a temporary basis to teach parenting skills. Parents who attended the workshop feel that it was useful for them.

FAMILY (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Many grandparents are very helpful and like to support their children in bringing up their grandchildren.
- + Most mothers know how to make clothes for their children and have the resources to sew for them.
- Some grandparents end up needing to step in to play the parent's role.
- Many people start a family when they are very young and there are no resources for them.
- Some women are scared to report an abusive relationship.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More talks more about family violence and sexual abuse in order to debunk taboos surrounding these issues.
- To find ways to prevent Elder abuse.
- More education about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
- More parenting skills workshops and other resources for parents, especially young parents.
- A women's shelter.
- Resources to help families who are struggling with substance use problems.



IDENTITY

Resources

- > Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre
- > Sautjuik school
- > Sewing committee
- > Sewing shop
- > Wood workshop
- > Youth House

Community strengths

Elders are role models in the community, especially for youth. They provide excellent guidance, happily teach cultural skills, and are involved as much as possible in school and community programs as well as activities geared toward sharing their knowledge and stories. There have been various initiatives organized by the Youth Committee and the community wellness worker to encourage youth and Elders to spend time together, and they are mostly successful. Elders are perceived as wise, resilient, knowledgeable, and resourceful people.

The sewing centre is active and provides various learning opportunities for women through the sewing committee and the community wellness worker. Women can get together and learn from each other and participate in larger-scale sewing projects. For many mothers, it is important to know how to make clothes for their children, and some women find that sewing is a positive activity that's easy to get hooked on.

Kangiqsumiut are very proud of their culture, values, and history. They feel especially empowered when they achieve something for the first time, such as sewing a parka or hunting a caribou. Being able to sew or hunt links them to their ancestors and makes them feel happy about keeping the culture alive. Youth like to learn about their history, and those who grew up close to their grandparents tend to have a robust knowledge of cultural skills.

Many people have good childhood memories of spending many months on the land. Most parents perpetuate this lifestyle during summertime by bringing their children on the land for shorter periods of time.

The wood workshop is a great resource for men and a good place for youth to learn about woodworking.

IDENTITY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Many youth are as comfortable hunting on the land as they are working behind a computer.
- + Men and women have various opportunities to practice cultural skills.
- Inuktitut is fading in the community and some youth do not have a strong knowledge of their mother tongue.
- There is a clash between the generations.
- Some youth do not engage a lot with Inuit culture and prefer to stay in the community instead of going on the land.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More storytelling about Inuit history to youth.
- More Inuktitut lessons over the radio to counteract the growing influence of English in the community.
- For the community to continue its efforts to keep cultural knowledge alive and strong.



FOOD

Resources

- > Community centre
- > Community freezer
- > Community wellness worker
- > Coop store
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Northern store
- > Sautjuit school
- > Youth House

Community strengths

Feasts are organized regularly in the community and are perceived as happy gatherings. The community wellness worker organizes a feast every two months with a different theme, and there is a feast after every community meeting or big event.

Many different berries grow around the community and it is very easy for Kangiqsumiut to go berry picking. It is an activity that families enjoy a great deal. When day trips are organized for the community, most women want to go berry picking with their children.

There are also many fishing and hunting opportunities around the community. Kangirsuk has famous fishing spots that are close to the village and it is also very easy to harvest mussels. Being able to fish, harvest seafood, and pick berries close to the community makes it easier for Elders when they have physical disabilities.

People harvest very actively during summertime. Most organizations do less work in the summer because people are seal hunting or going berry picking. Summer is a great time to harvest and hunt.

The community has various initiatives to feed people who struggle to make ends meet. The Hunter Support Program distributes food to Elders and single mothers and leaves the leftovers in the community freezer. This program is deemed helpful for feeding families. The school has a breakfast program to feed students and can also provide food to hungry students during the day.

Country food is very popular in the community, but people are open to trying new healthy recipes too. For example, sushi has become a food of choice in Kangirsuk. People meet to have sushi parties, but mostly to enjoy each other's company. People like to visit friends to eat and have fun. Food facilitates social cohesion, as it provides a reason to be together and strengthen ties with others.

FOOD (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Students have access to food at school and can learn how to cook at the Youth House.
- + Elders and mothers have access to country food during wintertime.
- Some people would like to have better access to country food from the Hunter Support Program but are not on the priority list.
- The Hunter Support Program is closed during summertime, and some people who do not have hunters in their family may struggle to access country food.
- People with addiction problems struggle to feed themselves and their families.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- To have a community kitchen program again.
- Food baskets and a soup kitchen.
- A larger budget for the breakfast program in order to be able to provide snacks as well.
- More resources for organizing feasts.
- A coordinator to teach young mothers how to cook healthy meals and budget their grocery shopping.
- Better collaboration with the Coop to improve nutrition in the community.



LAND

Resources

- > [Community wellness worker](#)
- > [Hunter Support Program](#)
- > [Junior Rangers program](#)
- > [Landholding Corporation](#)
- > [Makitaulik Inuit Community Residential Centre](#)
- > [NV](#)
- > [Project coordinator](#)
- > [Sautjuit school](#)
- > [Swimming pool](#)
- > [Ungaluk program](#)

Community strengths

There are hunting and fishing activities organized in the community for those who cannot go on the land, such as Elders, single parents, or parents without a means of transportation. People go on day trips with the community boat and are accompanied by a guide. Food is also provided. Many families have a strong desire to go on the land and these kinds of opportunities are very much appreciated.

Many people as well as various organizations, such as the Makitaulik Inuit Community Residential Centre and the Ungaluk program, use the land as a healing tool. Going on the land is very meaningful to Kangiqsumiut. They feel the air is better and that they can breathe more easily and forget about their problems. Camping and fishing are considered important activities for people's well-being.

Most youth really like to go on the land, even if some tend to prefer a more southern lifestyle. The school organizes outings every month and leads the Young Caribou project to promote a healthy lifestyle. The Individualized Pathways for Learning (IPL) students do carpentry and go out on the land as part of the program. The youth summer camp and the Junior Rangers program serve as additional opportunities for youth to learn about Arctic survival and are highly appreciated.

The Landholding Corporation works hard to ensure that the land is safe and protected and to keep the environment pure and unpolluted. It also works to make sure that non-Inuit have their hunting and fishing permits in order to protect the wildlife.

A lot of people are able to afford a vehicle to go hunting and also have a cabin. Going on the land is considered a very enjoyable activity to do with relatives and friends. Many Kangiqsumiut go on the land all year long every time they can and spend their weekends on the land with their children and elderly parents.

LAND (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth have multiple opportunities to go on the land.
- + People without a means of transportation can go on the land through local programs.
- Most people have opportunities to go on the land, but some do not have hunting equipment.
- People are not used to going camping for long periods anymore.
- Some people who struggle with addiction aren't able to go on the land.
- Boys and young men who do not have a father or grandfather struggle to learn cultural skills or go on the land frequently.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More guides in order to be able to increase day trip opportunities.
- Initiatives to allow anyone who wants to practice cultural activities on the land to be able to do so.
- Fewer black flies!



KNOWLEDGE

Resources

- > Community wellness worker
- > Firefighters
- > First responders
- > Landholding Corporation
- > Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre
- > NV
- > Sautjuit school
- > Student council
- > Sewing shop
- > Sewing committee
- > Ungaluk program
- > Youth House

Community strengths

There are many leaders in the community, including both youth and adults. Many empowered youth have a desire to improve things and be helpful to the community. Decisions-makers know the community very well and are strongly connected to it. They tend to be open to advice and different opinions. Some leaders do not have a lot of education, but they have important experience.

People feel that one of the greatest strengths of the community is the collaboration that takes place between organizations. Everyone is connected and there is a lot of teamwork to achieve projects and develop various initiatives.

The school team tries very hard to adapt their methods to the students and gives an Inuk flair to whatever they do. Many staff members have been in the community for a long time and have considerable experience dealing with various issues. They have regular meetings to see what can be done differently to help the students and organize friendly competitions to increase participation, kindness, and pride. The team is very devoted and pushes the students to do better. Graduation rates are improving.

The student council helps improve leadership skills and confidence. It also helps the students develop communication skills and become less shy. They feel they can achieve great things because they are part of the decision-making process. It gives them a sense of pride to have a voice and be able to help their fellow schoolmates.

The FM radio is an important tool for governance. The community organizes a full day of discussions, four times a year, to gather opinions and complaints from everyone. It allows them to make better choices for the well-being of the village.

Inmates from the Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre learn social skills and job skills, which decreases their risk of going back to jail.

Firefighters and first responders train regularly to keep their skills up to date. They also organize trainings to attract youth and invite them to be volunteers. They are seen as role models for children.

KNOWLEDGE *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Some young mothers are able to go back to school and graduate.
- + People seek advice from Elders about how to improve the community.
- + Youth tend to teach computer and technology skills to their parents, while parents teach cultural skills to their children.
- There are various training and educational opportunities for people, but most of them are outside the community.
- It can be arduous for leaders to implement bylaws and to find a balance between the law and Inuit ways of life.
- Some students struggle to graduate with a strong knowledge of Inuktitut and French.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- To have more training opportunities for leaders to support them in their jobs.
- To see more youth getting involved and for them to understand that education is important.
- Better attendance in school.
- To have primary school students involved in the student council.
- To see parents be more involved in their children's education.
- A better and stronger system to teach French and Inuktitut.



ECONOMY

Resources

- > Bank services
- > Community wellness worker
- > Coop Hotel
- > Coop store
- > Gas station
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Landholding Corporation
- > Landholding hotel
- > Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre
- > Northern store
- > Project coordinator
- > Sautjuit school

Community strengths

The Coop and the Northern store are important economic tools for the community. They provide jobs for many people, including part-time and summer jobs for students, as well as work experience for inmates from the Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre. They also donate to community meetings and events. All of the Coop's profits go back to the community, which helps people financially.

The Landholding Corporation is another great economic asset. It provides jobs, including part-time jobs, and all profits from land leases and rentals go back to the community through funding and donations. Both the Landholding Corporation and the NV have expressed a strong desire to co-create a new community initiative with the goal of increasing economic development and creating jobs.

Southern construction workers rent heavy equipment when they come to town, which provides a good income to the community. They also train Inuit employees on how to operate heavy equipment and provide them with seasonal jobs. Overall, there are many temporary jobs in the community related to big projects.

The NV employees are perceived as a devoted team, who want the community to function well. They provide quality services.

Youth are very active in the community when it comes to fundraising. Students from the IPL program do various activities, such as cooking and selling meals or selling Christmas decorations, to raise money for educational trips. The Youth Committee also does a lot of fundraising in order to be able to provide a variety of activities to the community.

The firefighters and first responders team work well together and are very supportive of one another. This helps cultivate a positive working environment.

Service providers feel there are many funding opportunities for programs and activities in the community.

ECONOMY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Unemployed people are hired to be guides for community outings or are hired by the Hunter Support Program to go hunt.
- + Youth have various opportunities to gain work experience in the community.
- + There is an annual shopping spree for single parents in order to give them a little bit of help.
- Many employees have personal problems that affect their social relationships and work. They struggle to do their jobs, and this slows down community development.
- Some youth would rather stay with their parents than get a house and a job.
- Budgeting can be challenging for families because of the high cost of living.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- A larger budget for organizing community outings.
- More professional workers to support the community.
- Better working environments in some places.
- Improved punctuality and reliability in some organizations.
- Better support and resources for employees with personal problems and trauma.
- More substitutes for employees.
- More money for Elders.
- Initiatives aimed at teaching youth a sense of responsibility.
- A non-profit organization to create jobs and stimulate the local economy.



SERVICES

Resources

- > Churches
- > CLSC
- > Community nurse
- > Community wellness worker
- > Dentist
- > First responders
- > Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre
- > Medical doctor
- > Sautjuit school
- > Social services
- > Ungaluk program
- > Youth Protection

Community strengths

There are many community health initiatives to motivate people to take care of their health. They vary from weight-loss contests to pampering activities for Mother's Day, radio talks about the impacts of smoking, and suicide prevention with children and youth. The community wellness worker has been in her position for many years and is very active. Along with the community health nurse, they try to inform people about the various health problems in the community (e.g. head lice) and to destigmatize taboo subjects, such as sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases.

Healing, grieving, and trauma workshops have been organized one to two times per year since the traumatic plane crash of 2015, which impacted the community heavily. The workshops were originally for first responders, who were deeply traumatized by the event, but are now open to anyone who wants to overcome personal issues.

People are acknowledging more and more that suicide is a serious matter and are talking more about it. The FM radio is used to do suicide prevention. There are also prayer circles involving Elders that are held to prevent suicide. Spirituality is an effective coping tool for many people.

First responders collaborate well with the nursing station as well as with police officers when there is a major emergency. They do regular briefing sessions to overcome emotional issues and receive strong support from relatives and friends.

The Makitautik Inuit Community Residential Centre offers anger management therapy, drug and alcohol therapy, and traditional healing to inmates. It aims to give them efficient tools to be healthier and better equipped to thrive once they are released.

People are happy with the physical health care they receive at the nursing station.

SERVICES *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Women participate a lot in the various community health initiatives and in churches.
- + The number of youth going to church has increased since a church began doing Youth nights.
- + Students have access to psychological services to support them and can get free tampons and condoms.
- Men tend not to talk about their emotions or issues or reach out for help.
- Some people are ashamed to ask the social workers for help or mistrust the workers because of the high turn-over.
- The healing workshops are attended almost exclusively by Elders because most people are not ready to face their issues.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- To find ways to foster trust in non-Inuit health workers.
- More health-related education and empowerment.
- More stability within social services and the Youth Protection.
- A greater connection between the community wellness worker, the daycare, and the Youth House.
- A second community wellness worker in order to be able to do more prevention work.
- More mental health resources and talks about mental health over the radio.
- A wellness centre for counselling.
- Initiatives aimed at stopping bootlegging and developing a treatment centre.
- A street worker to intervene with men.
- More non-religious health services.
- More intergenerational trauma workshops to encourage people to seek help.



