



INUINNAQTUN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2024

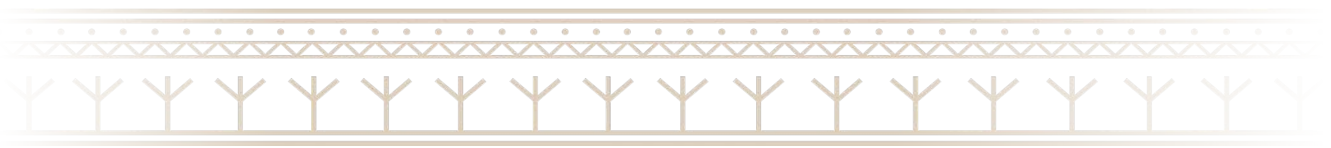


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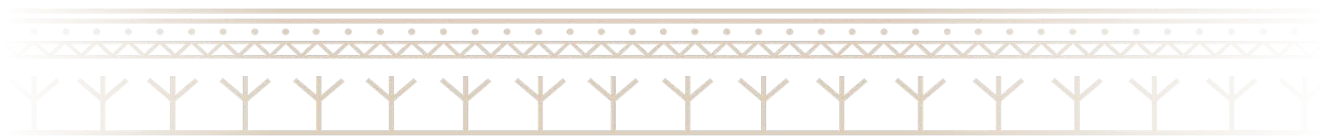
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Inuinnaqtun language—the foundation of Inuinnaqtun culture—has less than 500 fluent speakers remaining. By most estimates, it is a language that will be extinct in less than two generations. With decades of experience reconnecting generations, the Pitquhirmikkut Ilihautiniq / Kitikmeot Heritage Society has begun to lead Inuinnaqtun revitalization efforts across our region. Faced with this startling statistic, and the reality that our pool of Elders and linguists is shrinking rapidly, we instigated this Inuinnaqtun Language Development Plan to assess Inuinnaqtun's current state, help chart a path forward based on Inuinnaqtun's unique needs, set goals, objectives, identify gaps, and plan for the resources and tools needed to reach our revitalization goals.

Our approach to language development planning was inspired by the Sustainable Use Model (SUM) Approach, which is rooted in the perspective that communities must approach language revitalization with a focus on the preservation and transmission of their most crucial knowledge (Lewis and Simons 2016: 13).

Under the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS), a tool for assessing the vitality of languages, Inuinnaqtun falls under the category 8b (Dying), which is defined as:

8b Dying - The only fluent users (if any) are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission through the home; a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed. (SIL)

But we are optimistic. Through the language development planning process, the PI/KHS team was inspired by the example of the Hanaji and is committed to approaching language revitalization by taking responsibility for mentoring individual Inuinnaqtun, nurturing and guiding through all of the challenges of language learning. This understanding led the PI/KHS to a fundamentally new approach for our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan, and our single priority moving forward to support Inuinnaqtun Immersion.

Through this Plan, we have identified Critical Knowledge Areas, and domains that we will work to document, protect, and carry on. The PI/KHS has also settled on a suite of initiatives to support regional language acquisition, including immersion through language nest and mentor-apprentice approaches; the creation of a large library of multimedia immersion resources, formal Inuinnaqtun-grounded language classes, and the development of reference resources in the form of a dictionary and a community grammar. Language development activities will focus on key groups who already have significant knowledge of the language, and those who can learn quickly, including the next generation of Elders (through an Elders-in-Training Program), Silent or passive speakers, and children through early childhood education.

While Inuinnaqtun has official language status in Nunavut, the PI/KHS believes that this recognition should be supported with specific funding for Inuinnaqtun revitalization, and the

focus of Inuinnaqtun language experts employed by the government should be shifted towards community revitalization efforts.

As you read this document, we urge you to consider your role in Inuinnaqtun revitalization, and how we can work together as one for our future generations.

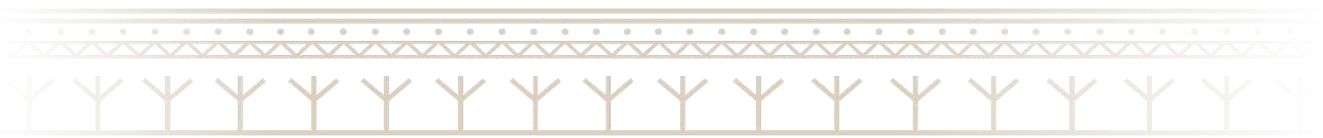
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Revitalization is a life long journey for many Inuinnaqtun individuals who have the passion to preserve and carry on their language. The fundamental keys to language and cultural preservation is to nurture and guide one's inuuhiq (namesake/ self-esteem), and the guidance of one's hanaji (one that moulds another person's physical/emotional and spiritual being) is very important from birth to adulthood.

Inuinnaqtun linguistic and cultural immersion is very important to strengthen an individual's inuuhiq (personal wellbeing) in order to thrive and maintain their language. We will preserve our language, through cultural programs and projects such as Inuinnaqtun language and cultural immersion (language nests), and through the development of a curriculum, a dictionary, and a grammar.



Emily Angulalik





OUR EXPERIENCE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS

A Mentor-Apprentice Program Pilot

The Pitquhirnikkut Ilihautiniq/Kitikmeot Heritage Society (PI/KHS) has moved toward a focus on Inuinnaqtun revitalization over the last five years. Our journey began with a research trip to Vancouver Island in September 2019. Our group included KHS staff and language specialists from Ulukhaktok, Kugluktuk and Gjoa Haven. We visited specialists at the University of Victoria's department of Indigenous Education and the First Peoples' Cultural Council. The First Peoples' Cultural Council is unique in Canada as it is a provincially supported organization that has several language revitalization programs. It provides training and funding to British Columbia First Nations for their revitalization programs. One of the key programs they were promoting at that time was the Mentor Apprentice Program approach (MAP) (Hinton 2002; First Peoples Cultural Council 2012). The group travelled to Port Alberni to meet a group using MAP under the leadership of Layla Chuutsqa Rorick, a Hesquiaht second language leader and PhD candidate at the University of Victoria, Master of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization (Rorick 2016). Chuutsqa provided a 3-day training to the group on the Mentor Apprentice Program.

Following the trip to Vancouver Island the PI/KHS continued to work with Layla Chuutsqa Rorick as a consultant. The PI/KHS developed a Mentor Apprentice Program, including a KHS MAP Handbook (PI/KHS), an online MAP Course (PI/KHS) and an initial group of mentors and apprentices. Chuutsqa provided several training sessions to KHS staff and the Mentors and Apprentices.

Cross-Community Knowledge Transfer Projects

Over the last number of years, we have worked to build relationships with the other Inuinait communities through the sharing and exchange of knowledge:

- **Kiihimajuq Kammak Workshop, 2019:** In 2019, we brought Elders from Ulukhaktok to Cambridge Bay to teach local seamstresses the art of making kiihimajuq kammak (crimped sealskin boots).
- **Atikaluk Workshop, 2021:** This partnership also saw us send staff to Ulukhaktok in 2021 to learn the art of making atikaluk (drum dancing shoes) from Elders there.
- **Environmental Terminology Workshop, 2022:** In August 2022 we brought in Elders from Kugluktuk to work with Cambridge Bay Elders to record vocabulary describing the Inuinnaqtun environment. Land forms, fresh water, salt water, weather and other topics were discussed.
- **Inuinnaqtun Language Revitalization Summit, 2022:** In November 2022 we brought in Elders and Inuinnaqtun linguistics from Kugluktuk and Ulukhaktok to discuss Inuinnaqtun revitalization and how the communities can collaborate in the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun. The discussions held during this workshop have informed this Inuinnaqtun Development Plan.

- **Inuinnaqtun Curriculum Workshop, 2023:** In March 2023 language specialists from Ulukhaktok, Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay gather in Edmonton to further develop Inuinnaqtun curriculum for language learners and to generally discuss next steps in Inuinnaqtun revitalization.

Immersion in Context

The difficulties represented by the pandemic were certainly factors in the lack of traction that our MAP pilot project had with local Mentors and Apprentices in Cambridge Bay. However, it was determined that the formal MAP approach was not a good fit culturally, and an approach of using immersion in the context of traditional activities with Elders or language mentors has been more successful. This has influenced our programming and we are currently committed to using a language nest approach in our new Kuugalaaq Cultural Campus space, and providing many opportunities for cultural and linguistic immersion during traditional skills programs.

In 2021, our team took part in a week-long Inuinnaqtun Language Immersion training session by Tamalik & Associates to build capacity as we empower Silent Speakers, build language nests, embed immersion in all programming and activities, and develop the best possible revitalization resources and tools.

Inuinnaqtun Coffeehouses

In 2023, we started hosting Inuinnaqtun coffeehouses, which were designed to bring in community members on a drop-in basis, for coffee and sharing in a safe, Inuinnaqtun-only space.

Supporting Documentation and Resources

The PI/KHS has made significant progress in the creation of a suite of language revitalization resources. We have worked steadily on the development of Inuinnaqtun curricula, a dictionary app, and a community grammar of Inuinnaqtun. Our work on language resource development has been guided by a group of Inuinnaqtun language specialists from Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk and Ulukhaktok called Inikhaliuqatigiit (“the trail makers”) which was formed in 2021 to work on the development of language learning resources.

Inuinnaqtun / We Are Inuinnaqtun Podcast

Launched in 2021, Inuinnaqtun / We Are Inuinnaqtun is a podcast by Inuinnaqtun, about Inuinnaqtun life, experiences, and traditions, with conversations in Inuinnaqtun. This podcast is a crucial resource for recording and disseminating knowledge shared by podcast guests, but it also provides speakers and learners with examples of Inuinnaqtun in its most natural spoken form.

Online Learning Portal

In 2022, our team began to migrate all of our digital resources over to one single platform, available at www.inuinnaqtun.ca. At the beginning of the pandemic, we began to imagine one (digital) place that centralised Inuinnaqtun resources to make content most accessible to speakers and learners, wherever they lived. This online space for Inuinnaqtun language and culture resources is home to podcast episodes, language courses, video archives, an oral

heritage library, virtual exhibits, and other resources.

Inuinnaujunga Curriculum

Our work on curriculum development has been motivated by a lack of Inuinnaqtun language curricula developed with Inuinnaït in mind. The focus of existing curricula has tended to be the education of non-Inuit government workers. The Inikhaliuqatigiit decided to start fresh with an approach that focuses on teaching language to Inuinnaït in a way that is meaningful to them, supports their Inuinnaït identity, and focuses on cultural priorities. The program that came out of these discussions is called Inuinnaujunga (I am an Inuinnaq). Inuinnaujunga is organized around the most significant cultural priorities of names and namesakes, family and kinship, land and belonging. The group created an initial 10 lessons in 2021, and a further 10 lessons in 2022.

Inuinnaqtun Dictionary App

Another key resource for language revitalization is a comprehensive dictionary of Inuinnaqtun that includes sub-dialect variations, and is available in a form that is accessible to all. There has been significant work on Inuinnaqtun dictionaries in the past with the original Ronald Lowe Kangiryuarmit Inuinnaqtun Dictionary, and the updated version of that work by Emily Kudlak and Richard Compton (2018). In Cambridge Bay, Gwen Angulalik developed a dictionary with the support of Nunavut Arctic College (2012). These printed dictionaries are invaluable as references and for their preservation of the language but the need for a format that could continue to take in the results of terminology collection was necessary. Considering this need for a living dictionary that can constantly be updated, and the most popular means by which Inuinnaït access the internet (smartphone), the PI/KHS decided to move forward with the development of an Inuinnaqtun Dictionary App. The added value of an App is that it can work off-line so it can be accessed without using data or being in a cellular or WIFI network. The App was launched in the summer of 2024 with all the words contained in the Kangiryuarmit Inuinnaqtun Dictionary by Emily Kudlak and Richard Compton (Kudlak and Compton 2018). The Inuinnaqtun English Dictionary of Gwen Angulalik (Angulalik 2012) will be entered into the App as well as the words resulting from ongoing terminology collection work.

Community Grammar

A final addition to the suite of language resources and language documentation is a grammar of Inuinnaqtun. Ronald Lowe produced the Basic Kangiryuarmitutun Grammar in 1985. This is a highly technical linguistic study that is not accessible to the average learner. The PI/KHS has developed a partnership with Inuktitut linguist Richard Compton of the Université de Québec à Montréal to develop what is referred to as a Community Grammar of Inuinnaqtun. The intended user of a community grammar is a member of the Inuinnaït community. It is written to be accessible to Inuinnaït professionals and language learners alike. The content of a community grammar is focused on essential grammatical structures presented using examples from modern daily use of the language. The development of the community grammar is well underway. Several workshops have been held reviewing the material in the Ronald Lowe grammar and recording new examples of grammatical principles. A first draft of the community grammar is expected by the fall of 2024.

2024-2029 Strategic Plan

The increasing focus of the PI/KHS on language development was recently expressed on our new 2024-2029 Strategic Plan. The critical need to learn from our remaining experts has grown to such an extent that we have aligned the rest of our work behind the single strategic priority of Inuinnaqtun Immersion.

Our new mission is...

Working as one to revitalize intergenerational language and cultural transmission by developing programming and resources immersed in Inuinnaqtun values, beliefs, direction, and ways of knowing and being.

Our new vision is that...

Our future generations are nurtured and mentored to think and respond in their language, to be secure in their identity, and to live a balanced life according to the wisdom of our ancestors.

Kuugalaaq: Our New Cultural Campus

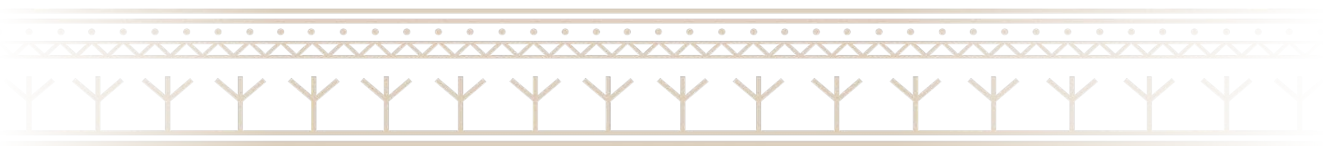
Over the last two years the PI/KHS has worked intensively on the design and construction of a new facility whose dedicated purpose is to be home to immersive programming intended to transmit Inuinnaqtun cultural knowledge. The facility has the appropriate interior and exterior spaces for a wide range of traditional activities representing the transmission of both women's and men's knowledge. Our all Inuinnaqtun board and Elders, and our staff have committed to operating Kuugalaaq as a language nest where Inuinnaqtun is paramount and English is kept to the absolute minimum. The concept of a cultural campus is that it will be a centre of transmission of Inuinnaqtun knowledge and skill using Inuinnaqtun pedagogy that favours immersion, observation and action.

Inikhaliuqatigiit Leaders Language Summit

In November 2022, we hosted a summit in Cambridge Bay, attended by members of Inikhaliuqatigiit, as well as other language representatives from the Inuinnaqtun-speaking communities, to discuss revitalization needs, challenges, and paths forward. While it is a huge undertaking to gather this group in one place, logistically due to the costs of travel and accommodation, it was a very important step in our revitalization efforts to have all of these voices in the same room to talk collaboratively.

Elders-in-Training Program

The current generation of Elders are the last to have been raised to adulthood on the land. In 2024, we began working to mentor the next generation of Elders into their roles as leaders, teachers, and knowledge holders. Our current Elders-in-Residence team is working to mentor a set of upcoming Elders, mentoring them one-on-one, and in a group setting. We envision this program growing each year, as we work to build capacity in our community, and within the cultural sector, to adequately support the human resources needed for Inuinnaqtun revitalization.



OUR APPROACH TO LANGUAGE PLANNING: Inspired by the Sustainable Use Model

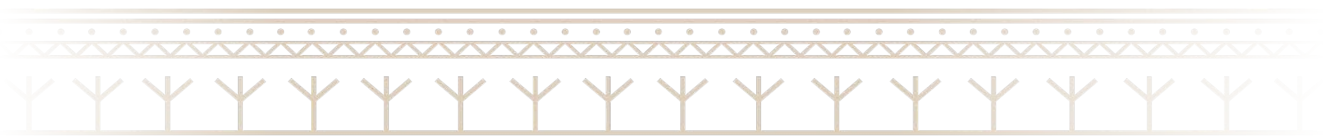
Our approach to language development planning is inspired by the Sustainable Use Model (SUM) Approach which is rooted in the perspective that communities must approach language revitalization with a focus on the preservation and transmission of their most crucial knowledge (Lewis and Simons 2016: 13). Language revitalization is therefore a question of knowledge management and a strategy for sustaining both identity and the most essential traditional knowledge so that they can be transmitted to the next generations (Lewis and Simons 2016: 13).

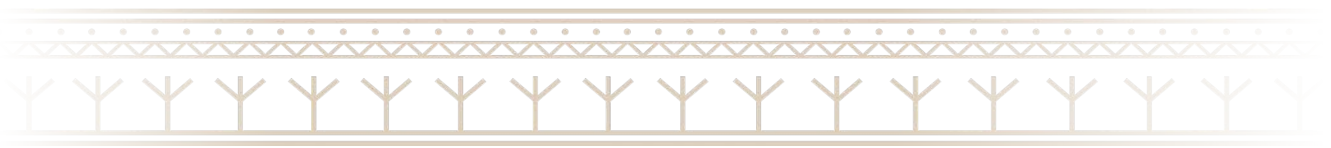
When the more dominant and prestigious world language takes over, and is used by an increasing percentage of the population for an increasing number of domains of knowledge the resulting language shift leads to eventual language loss and therefore knowledge loss.

In the situation of Inuinnaqtun that has a small population, and is overwhelmed by the dominant world language of English, what domains of language (what knowledge) is it sustainable to try to preserve and transmit, who will be our language carriers, and what are our priorities for programming to develop those speakers?

Inspired by the Sustainable Use Model we established the following goals for our language planning process:

1. Come to a consensus within the focus groups we meet about the state of the language in terms of intergenerational transmission through difficult and honest discussions.
2. Identify and prioritize the areas of Critical Inuinnaqtun Knowledge domains that need to continue to be (or return to be) transmitted to future generations in Inuinnaqtun. What are the top priority knowledge areas that are critical to our identity as Inuinnaqtun?
3. Come to a consensus within the focus groups we meet about realistic goals for language revitalization.
4. Plan language development activities (programming) that will target limited resources to the highest priority Critical Inuinnaqtun Knowledge areas, as well as the highest priority age/speaker groups (for example Silent Speakers).
5. Identify barriers to language development related to its legal status, the implementation of its legal status, and its prestige in the community.
6. Communicate the results of this process in a written Inuinnaqtun Language Development Plan.





THE CURRENT STATE OF INUINNAQTUN

According to Statistics Canada in 2021, 495 people consider Inuinnaqtun to be their mother tongue. 750 people speak the language. While the statistic stands that 84% of Inuit within the 51 communities that make up Inuit Nunangat speak Inuktitut (used to identify all Inuit languages collectively), the reality is quite different when you compare Inuktitut (spoken in eastern Nunavut) with Inuinnaqtun (spoken in western Nunavut in the Kitikmeot). Territorial status does not often differentiate between the stark difference in realities for the status of Inuktitut and the status of Inuinnaqtun. The 2021 Census recorded 40,320 speakers of Inuktitut (representing a +1.4% increase from the previous 2016 census) across Canada, as compared to 750 speakers of Inuinnaqtun (representing a -43.2% decline from the previous 2016 census).

For decades, Inuinnaqtun has been experiencing significant language shift, now with only the great-grandparents generation being unilingual Inuinnaqtun. The grand-parents' generation are bilingual or silent-speakers, and the parents are unilingual English and the children are unilingual English. There are a few individuals in the child-bearing (parent) generation who are speakers or silent speakers as they were raised by their grandparents through traditional adoption practices.

The reason for this language shift is that Inuinnaqtun is not being transmitted to children in the home. Crucial Inuinnaqtun knowledge is therefore not being transmitted to the next generations. In *Evolution of the language situation in Nunavut, 2001 - 2016*, Statistics Canada presents a portrait of Nunavut's language shift based on statistics from census reporting. This report identified that non-transmission of Inuktitut is the biggest factor affecting language vitality in Nunavut. While Inuit make up 85% of the territory's population, 1 in 4 Inuit did not list Inuktitut as their mother tongue in 2016, a figure that represents the territorial statistic, but is likely much worse in the Kitikmeot where we know language shift is occurring at a higher rate. These regional disparities were also noted by Statistics Canada. "Regardless of the indicator used, the vitality of Inuktitut still seems to be more fragile in the Kitikmeot region, and particularly in the communities of Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk."

The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) is a tool for assessing the vitality of languages. The current situation of Inuinnaqtun falls under the category 8b Dying on the EGIDS which is defined as:

8b Dying - The only fluent users (if any) are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission through the home; a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed. (SIL)

KIA LANGUAGE FRAMEWORK 2011

In 2011, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association recognized the significant language shift occurring across the region, and released a Language Framework (RT Associates 2011) that offered a number of key revitalization priorities for Inuinnaqtun (paraphrased below):

- 1) Creation of Language Promoters to promote the importance of teaching Inuinnaqtun to children, to provide support materials and resources, and to support individuals and organisations to access large pools of funding for language projects.
- 2) Creation of a multimedia network to increase resident exposure to spoken Inuinnaqtun in day-to-day life.
- 3) Increase the number of printed materials available in Inuinnaqtun.

Recommended Role of the PI/KHS

At the time, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association clearly identified the Kitikmeot Heritage Society as a valued partner supporting three major KIA language strengthening initiatives (RT Associates: 12). The following table identifies those initiatives and the what the PI/KHS has accomplished in those areas:

KIA Recommended Initiatives	PI/KHS Activity since 2011
Radio and performing arts theatre to increase exposure to oral use of the Inuit language in daily life.	The PI/KHS has: recorded hundreds of hours of Elder traditional knowledge interviews and podcast episodes (which have been shared on the local radio); created an Inuinnaqtun coffeehouse program; established an Elder-in-Residence Program at the May Hakongak Centre; and built the Kuugalaaq facility which will run traditional skills programming in a language-nest environment.
Language promoters in each community to promote the use of the Inuit language, requiring staffing positions.	The PI/KHS has hired an Executive Director who is a language and curriculum development specialist; has created full-time staff positions dedicated to language and culture revitalization, and; has initiated an Inuinnaqtun working group to support revitalization conversations, initiatives, and develop resources.
Publishing bilingual reading and visual materials.	The PI/KHS has a YouTube channel and has created a learning portal for Inuinnaqtun content. In 2024, we began construction of a new Oral History Library within the May Hakongak Centre, to provide anyone with free digital access to the PI/KHS' audio records.

Lessons from Other Jurisdictions

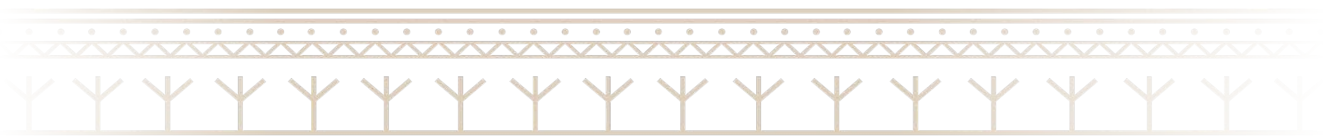
The Framework looks at eight other places where language revitalization is showing success. In the conclusion it is stated “What appears to be important is the focus on young families and youth, and relying on different means of strengthening language through: performing arts, promoting the value of bilingualism and wherever possible trying new opportunities (such as employment training, new parents, new computer applications) to language training.”

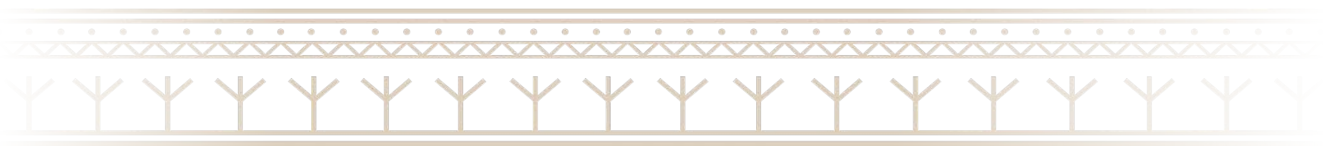
Recommended Focus of Long-Term Efforts

The framework estimates a long-term revitalization effort of 40 years, *if*:

- Schools (required by the Inuit Language Protection Act to provide full high school education in Inuit languages by 2019) succeeded;
- Homes (who could, with advice and support, declare themselves Inuit language speaking at any time) implement language strengthening; and
- Communities (including public and private workplaces) actively engage in language revitalization. (RT Associates 2011: 10)

The KIA’s Language Framework has been a source of reflection in the development of the PI/KHS’ Language Development Plan. It provides a thorough review of the legislation affecting Inuinnaqtun, the players involved, and the challenges we collectively face in revitalization. The PI/KHS will continue to follow developments in language development approaches at the Kitikmeot regional level as it focuses specifically on leading Inuinnaqtun revitalization in Cambridge Bay and building a collaboration with other Inuinnaqtun speaking communities.





HANAJI:

Taking responsibility for developing individuals through linguistic and cultural immersion

The Elders' Dream (September 2023 Consultation)

Younger generations being able to speak Inuinnaqtun – being taught in Inuinnaqtun. Younger generations knowing about their connection to their namesakes, who they were named after and how this makes them related to others. Knowing their family relations through names. They need to know the rituals related to the making of a child, the milestones in the life of a child, and the respectful treatment of wildlife. They need to know the rules for living a good life (maligautait).

- Elder Annie Atighioyak

Our current Elders were born on the land into the fullness of Inuinnaqtun culture. They were born into a society that included the concept of the Hanaji. The Hanaji is a person who welcomed the baby into the world and began their relationship of “making” the child who they will become through ritual and through words. The name (soul) of the child was their inheritance, and the Hanaji immediately started to work to encourage, enhance or discourage certain abilities and characteristics of the name. An individual would maintain a special relationship with their hanaji throughout their life, and that person among others would actively take the responsibility for making, guiding, teaching and mentoring the individual to become competent in Inuinnaqtun ways and be able to live well.

During our language development consultations, the Elder offered up the example of the role of the hanaji as a model for how we must move forward with language revitalization. The road has been difficult for Inuinnaqtun since coming in to settle in communities, including the intergenerational trauma of residential schools and other events. The result is at present there is a need to support people in their healing as part of reversing the language shift that has been part of their experience. As an organization, Elders, mentors and teachers we need to take responsibility for “making” our people. We need to play that role in supporting, guiding and mentoring them to be confident, well and competent Inuinnaqtun. The hanaji provides us with a model to guide and to express our approach going forward.

CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS FOR LANGUAGE USE

Inuinnaqtun is currently losing most domains of knowledge to English except in our oldest generations. So, one of the difficult questions we must ask ourselves is what are the priority knowledge domains that are most important to continue to be expressed in Inuinnaqtun. Our

consultations have provided us with direction on this question. We acknowledge the priority of the knowledge areas that are most important to the development of the individual into someone who knows who they are, their position in a web of social relations both through names and blood, where they come from, how to make a living on the land, and how to live well guided by traditional Inuinnait values and rules.

Names

Traditional Inuinnait naming practices involve the naming of a child after a relative who is deceased. A child shares in the soul of the name and can be expected to share many characteristics with the deceased name holder such as personality traits and skills. The named child has relationships with others who bear the name, as well as with people who are related to the original name bearer. The knowledge of one's traditional name and how names connect us to others is core to identity and an essential critical knowledge domain.

Kinship Relationships

How one is related to others in Inuinnait involves specialised vocabulary and is highly culturally specific. The development of knowledge of how Inuinnait kinship relations function is a critical knowledge domain for language use of a very high priority.

Values/Ethics/Maligait (rules for right-living)

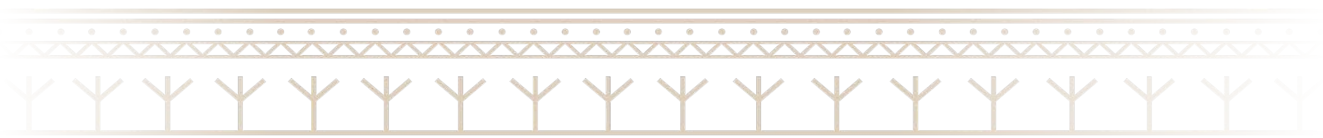
Culturally Inuinnait have lived according to a set of rules for how to live with others, animals, the land and the environment. Our Elders insist that these rules will continue to provide essential knowledge to current and future generations on how to live a good life. These rules can only be properly communicated and understood in Inuinnait and so form a high priority critical knowledge domain.

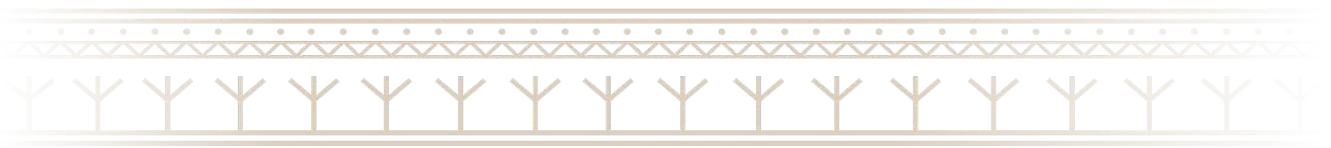
Land Connections

An individual has an ancestral connection to a specific geographical area or areas. It is essential for a person to understand through place names the areas to which they are connected and also to be able to understand vocabulary around land and water forms, including plants and animals, terrestrial and aquatic. Orientation of oneself on the landscape has very culturally specific vocabulary. This domain is very large and forms the heart of Inuinnait connection to land.

Traditional Skills

There are core traditional activities that are central to Inuinnait identity and as well as being essential to a person's ability to be competent. These activities and the skills involved in their practice include sewing of clothing, hunting, fishing, gathering and the travel, orientation and survival skills involved in many of these activities. Inuinnait is highly specialised around these activities and the full richness of these knowledge areas can only be expressed using Inuinnait.





LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Over the past years of experience, studying other indigenous initiatives and through consultations with Inuinait and academic experts the PI/KHS has settled on a comprehensive and evolving suite of initiatives to accomplish language acquisition. They are immersion through language nest and Mentor-Apprentice approaches; the creation of a large library of multimedia immersion resources, language classes, and the development of reference resources in the form of a dictionary and a community grammar.

Language Nest/Immersion

The most significant thrust of our program is learning through immersion in the language and culture using traditional Inuinait forms of mentoring and learning through observation. Programming at Kuugalaaq Cultural Campus will be focused on this approach on a daily basis and it will ensure that Critical Knowledge Domains are passed on.

Mentor-Apprentice Program

While we undertook significant research and training into the Mentor-Apprentice format that has worked so well in British Columbia, our initial pilot program suffered during the very first stages of the COVID-19 pandemic and early lockdowns. With the benefit of hindsight, we now see a better way forward is through a very similar approach. Instead of a pair (Mentor and Apprentice) dedicated to one-on-one immersion, we will foster a community-minded approach that supports immersion in group settings, with multiple “Mentors” (Elders, fluent speakers, knowledge holders) nurturing a group of “Apprentices” (learners).

Immersion Resources - YouTube Channel, Podcast, Oral History Library

We continue to grow our online library at www.inuinnaqtun.ca with targeted interviews, regular podcast episodes, and videos, but also by making existing recorded resources from the past available, from our collections, and well as other cultural institution collections. These kinds of resources are critical examples of natural language that allow learners to be immersed in the language during independent learning.

Language Courses

With the development of Inuinnaujunga in full swing, we will begin to give formal language classes based on the curriculum. We will work to support teachers in the other Inuinnaqtun-speaking communities to deliver in-person classes as well, to extend the reach of the curriculum beyond Cambridge Bay. Inikhaliuqatigiit will provide training opportunities in-community to ensure that instructors are fully equipped.

Resource Development - Dictionary and Grammar

We will complete the Community Grammar for Inuinnaqtun alongside Richard Compton at the Université de Quebec à Montreal and continue to build a living dictionary for the language. Richard Compton will go on to write a more elaborate formal grammar for Inuinnaqtun. Once complete, the Community Grammar will be made accessible both in print and digital formats.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

With our current generation of Elders are the last to have grown to adulthood on the land. They are therefore the most culturally and linguistically fluent among us. Going forward our limited language development resources must focus on key groups who already have significant knowledge of the language, and those who can learn quickly, with a goal to maximise the cultural and linguistic knowledge conserved. In this sense we will be creating language/knowledge carriers who keep alive our chances for future revitalization.

Elders-in-Training Program

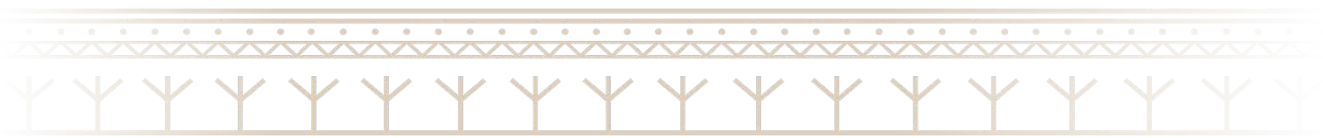
The current generation of Elders are the last to have been raised to adulthood on the land. It is crucial that we pour all of our efforts into recording their understanding of Critical Knowledge Domains, and in building up the next generation of Elders. Our team will work with local Elders and Knowledge Holders to renew traditional skills, support healing, strengthen the traditional economy, and empower the creation of cultural sector leaders, mentoring them into roles such as Elders, Knowledge Holders, Harvesters, Artists, Seamstresses, Toolmakers, and more. We are committed to working alongside other cultural organizations to build a robust Elders-in-Training Program that reinforces the importance of Elders in our communities, our region, and across the Territory, and adequately staffs the human resources needed for the years and decades ahead.

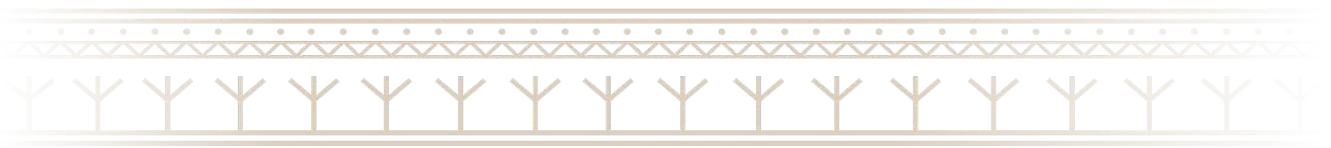
Silent Speakers

Silent speakers have a good understanding of their language, but do not speak it, for various reasons. We will prioritize Silent Speakers to support the reclamation of their speech.

Early Childhood Education/Young Parents

It is well documented that children pick up language easily, and that the easiest way to fluency is achieved most effectively and efficiently when young. It is our goal to support the youngest generations to become fluent speakers, including parents and caregivers of children immersed in Inuinnaqtun. We will undergo internal and external consultations to determine whether the PI/KHS has the capacity to develop an Inuinnaqtun Immersion Preschool. If consultations are positive, we will pilot a program, and upon annual review, scale the program up the following year.

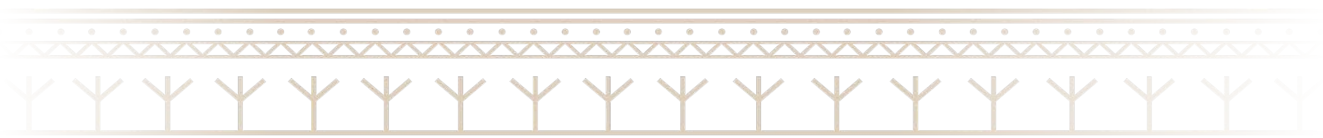




PRESTIGE DEVELOPMENT

The level of prestige of a language in a speech community refers to the value it is given by the members of that community. The prestige of a language is related to the social status and identity of its users, and the level of prestige of a language is also related to the type and number of Critical Knowledge domains where it is used. The relative prestige of Inuinnaqtun in Cambridge Bay must be understood in the context of Euro-Canadian colonisation and the power and status relationship inherent in the relationship between members of the two culture/language groups. The use of Inuinnaqtun was forbidden by the Euro-Canadian authorities who ran the residential school system. The power and status hierarchies in communities like Cambridge Bay favoured Euro-Canadian individuals and the use of English. Language shift since the time of settlement in the community and the residential-school era has been exponential with English taking up the majority of Critical Knowledge domains for Cambridge Bay Inuinnaqtun other than the very elderly. While the use of Inuinnaqtun is expressed as a priority by youth and young adults, in practice their daily choices are to use English.

Over the next five years it will be a priority for the PI/KHS to investigate ways that the prestige of Inuinnaqtun in Cambridge Bay can be enhanced. We will examine what examples there are from other threatened indigenous language groups, and consult Cambridge Bay youth and young adults specifically to try to find some solutions.



LEGAL STATUS

Official Language Status in Nunavut

Inuktitut has official language status in the Northwest Territories (through the NWT Official Languages Act) and in Nunavut (through the Official Languages Act and Inuit Language Protection Act).

Within the Inuit Language Protection Act (ILPA), Inuinnaqtun is given special mention:

In its application to Inuinnaqtun, this Act shall be interpreted and implemented in a manner that is consistent with the need to give priority to:

- (a) the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun; and
- (b) improved access to communication, services, instruction and Inuit Language programs in Inuinnaqtun, under sections 3 to 10, in the communities where Inuinnaqtun is indigenous.

These laws clearly affirm that Inuit in Nunavut have an inherent right to the use of Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun, in full equality with other official languages. The ILPA clearly identifies the roles of organizations, and the role of the Government of Nunavut, in protecting and promoting Inuit languages. Just as it relates to the education sector, in Section 8.1, the ILPA clearly outlines that “every parent whose child is enrolled in the education program in Nunavut, including a child for whom an individual student support plan exists or is being developed, has the right to have his or her child receive Inuit Language instruction.” It even elaborates that “The Government of Nunavut shall, in a manner that is consistent with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and bilingual education, (a) design and enable the education program to produce secondary school graduates fully proficient in the Inuit Language, in both its spoken and written forms.”

The report also outlines the duties of the Languages Commissioner for Nunavut, an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who is appointed for a four-year term to monitor, advise and advocate for language rights’ protection.

The Official Languages Act is a federal law that works to create equality between English and French throughout Canada, and Nunavut, but in the process relegates Inuktitut to a smaller role in comparison. While Inuktitut speakers make up the majority of Nunavut’s population, the federal government allocates more resources for the English and French speaking minority populations. (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, *National Inuit Positions on Federal Legislation in Relation to the Inuktitut Language*, 2017)

Federal Status

The *Indigenous Languages Act* received Royal Assent in 2019, and in theory it is a piece of legislation to support the efforts of Indigenous Peoples to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen Indigenous languages.

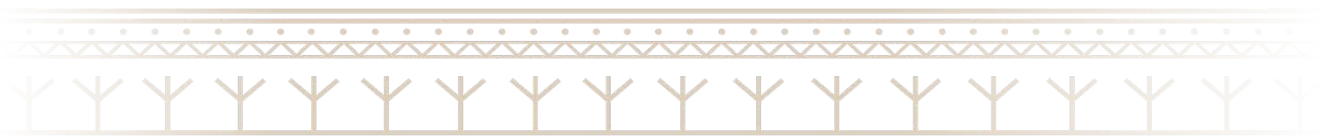
The Act seeks to:

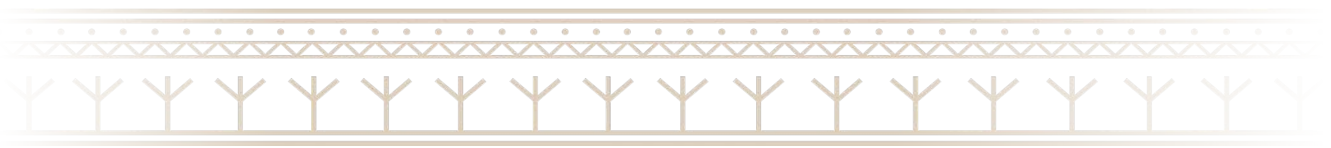
- 1) provide long-term sustainable funding for language revitalization,
- 2) establish an Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages,
- 3) instigate agreements with Indigenous governments, organizations, as well as provinces/territories to support language revitalization, and
- 4) outline the federal government's role in providing services in Indigenous languages.

Many groups widely criticised the Act for not clearly articulating any federal obligations to fund language revitalization that would extend the current opportunities. Current funding and support for Inuktitut flows to organizations like the PI/KHS through the Government of Nunavut as well as Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., via agreements with the federal government. This is funding that we apply for on an annual basis, and can be approved, denied, or partially funded, depending on available support for the year, and other factors.

Funding to Match Inuinnaqtun's Status?

While Inuinnaqtun is named in the Inuit Language Protection Act, the language does not have its own funding pool different from Inuktitut. Every fiscal year, organizations like the PI/KHS vie for funding from this general pool for Inuktitut promotion and protection. This is not to say that Inuinnaqtun deserves more funding than Inuktitut, but to say that due to the differing circumstances, it would be beneficial for Inuinnaqtun revitalization to have its own pool of funding.

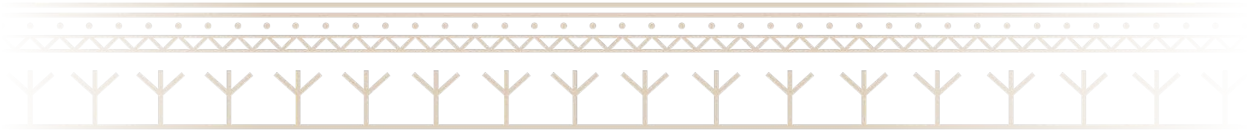




GOALS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	END GOAL
Immersion Programming	Host programs that transmit cultural knowledge, guided by the PI/KHS' number 1 strategic priority of Inuinnaqtun Immersion. Through daily programming at Kuugalaaq Cultural Campus, and scheduled workshops, strengthen Inuinnaqtun use in Critical Knowledge Domains.					Kuugalaaq is a safe space for our community to reconnect to our culture.
Elders-in-Training Program	Pilot program with 2-3 trainees	Review of pilot program, and additional trainees added based on number of Elders-in-Residence	Ideally one trainee for each Elder-in-Residence, with an increase in Elders-in-Residence if funding allows	Continue program with trainee cohort	Continue program with trainee cohort	Trainee cohort becomes Elders-in-Residence. Additional cohorts added every year, and are able to support needs for Elders by other local organizations. PI/KHS is able to support regional cultural centres to adopt EIT model for their own communities.
Silent Speaker Program	Identify silent speakers in Cambridge Bay. Hold an information session to build trust and get buy-in. Identify strategies to support them and put into action.	Host weekly Silent Speaker sessions, based on strategies identified by committee.	Study ways in which PI/KHS can support Silent Speaker Programs in other communities.	Support Silent Speaker Programs across Inuinnaqtun-speaking communities.		Silent Speaker Program is well-established.
Immersion Preschool	Undergo internal and external consultations to assess PI/KHS readiness	If consultations are positive, launch pilot program with 3-5 children	After pilot, assess needs for full-scale program space; launch full-scale program (10 children?)	Continue full-scale program, and increase participation if staffing and space allows		PI/KHS role in immersion preschool is clear and initiated.
Inuinnaujunga Curriculum (In-Person Lessons)	Host in-person lessons for Beginner Level.	Continue to host lessons for both Beginner and Intermediate Level lessons annually.	Continue to host lessons for Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced Level lessons annually. PI/KHS team to support teachers in other communities to deliver Inuinnaujunga in-person.			Alongside immersion, Inuinnaujunga is the primary mode for Inuinnaqtun learning. Inuinnaujunga is taught in-person in multiple communities.

Inuinnaujunga Curriculum Development	Work with Inikhaliuqatigiit on Intermediate Level lessons. Layout Beginner Level lessons in book format.	Review work on Intermediate Level lessons, and begin work on Advanced Level lessons. Layout Intermediate Level lessons in book format.	Review work on Advanced Level lessons. Layout Advanced Level lessons in book format.	Assess whether there is interest in making Inuinnaujunga available digitally via www.inuinnaqtun.ca .	Inuinnaujunga is robust, and provides a strong framework for teaching and learning the language.
Inuinnaqtun Dictionary App	Hold bi-monthly word collection meetings with multi-community committee.	Evaluate domains of language that require more data collection, and Elders across communities who have knowledge of them. Work with Elders and speakers to record terminology.		Inuinnaqtun Dictionary App is robust, used on a daily basis both in the field by linguists, and as a source for learners.	
Community Grammar	Hold monthly online meetings and one to two yearly in person meetings with Grammar working group.	Review draft of Community Grammar and provide input.	Finalize Community Grammar and make publicly available in both digital and print formats.		Community Grammar provides a clear structure for use of the language. It is published in print and digital formats.
Inuinnaqtun Prestige Enhancement	Establish youth committee to consult on Inuinnaqtun prestige enhancement. Youth committee to provide action steps and necessary budget for language promotion in coming years.	Secure funding to carry out goals of youth committee. Target youth in specific programming.		Younger generations are increasingly engaged in PI/KHS programming.	
Inuinnaqtun Legal Status and Implementation	Lobby municipal, territorial and federal governments and regional and Nunavut land claim organizations to see enforcement and implementation of current status, and to see appropriate levels of funding vis-a-vis status.			Inuinnaqtun is uniquely identified territorially, with dedicated funding. Governments prioritize revitalization of Inuinnaqtun, and work to shift the existing Inuinnaqtun human resources towards those efforts. Measures are implemented that increase the visibility and use of Inuinnaqtun in our communities.	



THREATS TO THE PLAN

Human Resources

With any effort to revitalise an endangered language, the biggest threat is the lack of human resources, or speakers, to nurture, teach, and reawaken the language. While Inuinnaqtun's protection is enshrined in the Inuit Language Protection Act, the low number of speakers means that its' protections cannot truly be upheld because there are not enough speakers to properly staff all services in communities and provide a true Inuinnaqtun presence everywhere. In an effort to circumvent this threat, we need to leverage the knowledge and skill set of every speaker in the community.

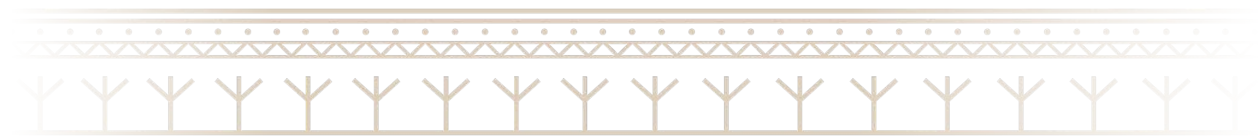
However, that is easier said than done. The PI/KHS is a charity, heavily reliant on project-based funding, and just cannot compete with high-paying government jobs and benefits (such as for housing allowance which makes living in Nunavut much easier for those who can obtain that benefit). Our talented linguists are also in high demand for translation services to fulfil the mandate of the Inuit Language Protection Act, and they often support revitalization work in their spare time--as a result the profession faces high rates of burnout because they cannot do it all.

Prestige

As mentioned above, a lack of language "prestige" among the younger generations is a major obstacle to Inuinnaqtun revitalization. Significant effort must be spent engaging youth through a committee, to support PI/KHS initiatives, and engage their peers in speaking Inuinnaqtun.

Language Shaming / Creating a Culture of Positive Reinforcement

Language can be divisive, often dividing those who do and those who don't speak Inuinnaqtun fluently. Language shaming happens and includes all of the interactions that deride, disparage or demean particular ways of using language, and they can be both subtle and overt. From chastising learners for mispronunciations, to embarrassing someone for not knowing their mother tongue, to making someone feel 'not Inuk enough' for not being a fluent speaker—this lateral violence and discrimination must be addressed in order for revitalization to be successful in the long-term. Inikhaliuqatigiit will look at how they as respected community language leaders can create a movement to end language shaming by educating community members and Elders, creating awareness campaigns and inspiring new approaches to uplift and support learners. Current language development activities will also be healing activities that are targeted at the sources of lateral violence, and building up the Inuinnaq through Inuinnaqtun-language, values, ethics, traditions, etc. We will work to turn our community of fluent speakers into champions for those who are in the process of reclaiming Inuinnaqtun and create a strong culture of positive reinforcement.



RESOURCING THE PLAN

The PI/KHS has the track record and capacity to carry out the necessary programming in Cambridge Bay to revitalize Inuinnaqtun. We have developed, and are continuing to develop the resources, have brought together the experts, and have delivered hands-on immersion-based programming for almost 30 years.

We need long-term sustainable funding for Inuinnaqtun revitalization.

However, we rely on annual project-based grants that we apply for every fiscal year. This is not sustainable for long-term revitalization, given that funding priorities change with new governments, and that organisations face competition for project-based grants. In order for the PI/KHS to adequately staff and finance Inuinnaqtun revitalization based on the goals of our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan, and of this 2024 Inuinnaqtun Language Development Plan, we are seeking a reliable funding pool set aside specifically for Inuinnaqtun that is substantial and reflects the true costs needed for a community-based revitalization effort. The Inuit Language Protection Act specifies that “in its application to Inuinnaqtun, this Act shall be interpreted and implemented in a manner that is consistent with the need to give priority to the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun.” We are asking that priority be given to the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun through a dedicated pool of funding.

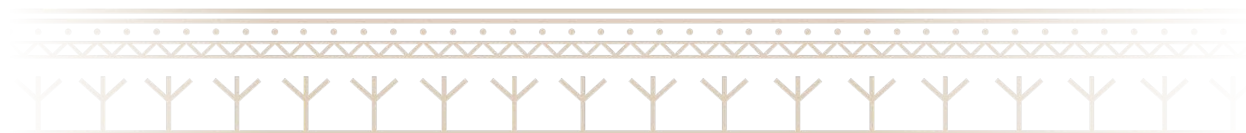
We need support for salaried Language Revitalization Specialists in language-based organisations.

Like the KIA mentioned in the 2011 Language Framework, we need to support positions in the community that act as a “Language Promoter”. We need to direct the expertise of our speakers towards revitalization efforts, and deep community engagement. Their full-time attention and job security is critical.

We need the Government of Nunavut to deliver on its mandate outlined in the Inuit Language Protection Act, section 8 and in the Education Act, revised 2020.

In 2022, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. [filed a s.15 Charter claim against the Government of Nunavut](#) on language discrimination in Nunavut’s schools. Despite the right of parents to have children educated in Inuit languages detailed in the Inuit Language Protection Act, the reality is that children in Nunavut receive the majority of the education in English. When the GN passed the Education Act in 2008, it committed to ensure Inuktitut is the primary language of instruction by 2019-2020. That time has come and gone without fulfilling this legal obligation. The 2020 Revised Education Act references that “major implementation challenges have prevented the department from meeting this goal for Grades 4-12, such as the need to significantly increase Inuktitut-teaching capacity and develop standardised Inuktitut vocabulary for use in curriculum and resources for programs of study. To provide enough time for the full implementation of bilingual education, the revised Education Act introduces a phased implementation schedule for Grades 4 to 12, ending in 2039.”

Aluki Kotierk, President of NTI, says that “to deliver an education system in Inuktitut, we need Inuit educators, investment in training programs, and to encourage youth to consider a career



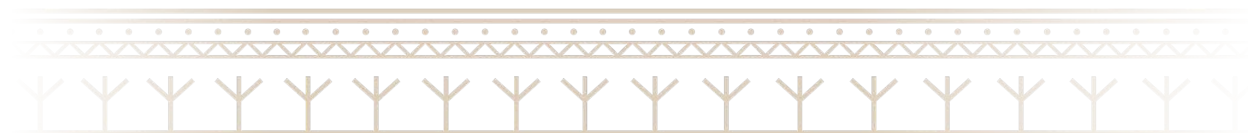
path in education. It also requires better support for Inuit educators already in the profession. We need a curriculum delivered in Inuktitut, based in Inuit knowledge.”

We need a community effort.

The 2011 KIA Language Framework identified that broad-scale revitalization cannot happen unless it is a joint effort between our schools, communities, workplaces, and in the home. We need to administer programs that support parents and young families in the reclamation of Inuinnaqtun. We need to provide preschool, primary and secondary school instruction in Inuinnaqtun. We need to speak Inuinnaqtun in our workplaces, at the grocery store, at the post office, when we’re greeting our friends and neighbours. We need to work with every generation to uncover how the PI/KHS could best support their unique language journeys. And, we need to support the creation of the next generation of Elders, Knowledge Holders, Artists, Seamstresses, Toolmakers, Harvesters, and more, who will contribute to a vibrant Inuinnaqtun-centred economy in which speaking Inuinnaqtun comes most naturally.

CONCLUSION

We are currently at great risk of losing significant generational knowledge and language fluency. This Language Development Plan has uncovered a lot of what we already know, which is that Inuinnaqtun is not being transmitted to the next generations, and most language fluency lies within our oldest generations. The PI/KHS will prioritise immersion-based learning, as well as the development of formal language training resources and language documentation resources. Language development activities must prioritise conserving as much of the language as possible in the next generation of language carriers, and building the most complete resources possible for future learners. Activities will focus on critical knowledge areas that strengthen the learner’s Inuinnaqtun identity. Intergenerational trauma represents a significant challenge for individual learners, and to language development efforts. The PI/KHS has been working to integrate paths to healing within our immersion programs, to support individuals. Throughout this document we have referenced the Hanaji, which will lead our efforts and approach going forward. As an organization, we will take responsibility for “making” our people. The PI/KHS will play the role of the Hanaji, supporting our people, guiding them to be confident, well, and competent Inuinnaqtun. The PI/KHS 2024-2029 vision is that “our future generations are nurtured and mentored to think and respond in their language, to be secure in their identity, and to live a balanced life according to the wisdom of our ancestors.” We commit to following the path laid out in this Plan so that this vision can ring true.



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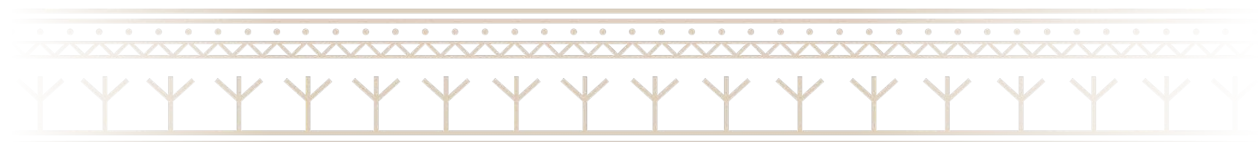
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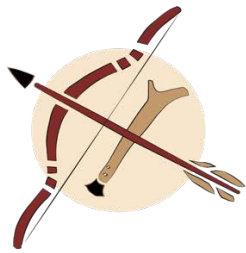
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2024**