APPENDIX A

REPORT TO FAMILY GROUP DECISION MAKING PROJECT
INCEPTION PHASE, NAIN, LABRADOR, JULY/NOVEMBER 1993

BY
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Background of Consultants:

Tony Williamson is Director of the Don Snowden Centre for Development Support Communications at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He has 30 years of experience in northern research and community development with aboriginal people in Alaska, Northern Canada and Greenland. He was founding Director of Memorial University's Labrador Institute of Northern Studies, and lived in coastal Labrador for 15 years, including two years in Nain. He has spent the last 8 years in International Development work, in participatory development projects employing the "Fogo Process" in south and southeast Asia.

Sharon Taylor is Assistant Professor at Memorial University's School of Social Work. She has been involved in gender and development and community based economic development in Newfoundland and Labrador for 20 years. She has been involved in International Development for the past 6 years, in southeast asia. She is Vice President of Canada World Youth and recently Chaired a Conference for South East Asian Ministers of Education on Women and Development. She is an associate of the Participatory Development Project of the East West Centre in Honolulu and was recently appointed to the Board of INHURED International in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Objectives of Inception Phase:

The consultants met with the project directors to determine the objectives of the inception phase which were augmented following community meetings in Nain. The objectives were:

- to strengthen the base of community work, already occurring in Nain, in the area of family violence.

- involve as many sectors in the community as possible in identifying the roots of family violence, its history in the community and in identifying existing strategies for change.

- to assist, where necessary, in identifying the vision and goals of community groups and families in preventing and healing family violence.
- to form a planning committee which would determine the viability of the Family Group Decision Making Project and to determine whether the project fits with existing community strategies to end family violence.

- to locate the project within existing structures of the community and to create culturally appropriate mechanisms for administering the project.

- to explore with the community at large and the planning committee ways to adapt the Family Group Decision Making model to the cultural context.

- to introduce participatory video as a catalyst in community analysis of family violence, to validate existing community strategies, to enhance the empowerment of women and to provide a vehicle for the dissemination of information about the Family Group Decision Making project.

**Participatory Video Methodology:**

- The *Fogo Process*, so called because it started on the island of Fogo, off the northeast coast of Newfoundland, in the late 1960's, was a joint effort between Memorial University of Newfoundland and the National Film Board of Canada. It involves the use of video (originally 16mm film) as a catalyst for change in social development. It is not the production of traditional documentaries or instructional material. It is a participatory process in which facilitators and community share in both the production and utilization of videos. Often change in attitudes and growth take place during this process. The video product itself is subordinate to the process. In the hands of a development worker, facilitator, or animater, the process is simply an innovative tool used in conjunction with other participatory and non formal methods of learning. In order to maintain trust and avoid manipulation, the people in the videos see themselves before anyone else and have the right to edit or delete any material they wish. They are the subjects and it is their perceptions which matter, not those of the facilitator or videographer. Ideally, the people do both the camera work and editing, but where this cannot be done, approval screenings and editing rights still prevail. It is also important in the process to allow people to reflect holistically on their lives; the strengths, joys, memories and celebrations, as well as on problems or specific issues. When sensitively adhered to, this process has provided a mirror which, through viewing of the videos and active discussion and analysis of them, assists in community building, self-confidence, consensus and conflict resolution. Experience has shown that it is particularly effective with people who are isolated or marginalized and who are not normally included in the decision making process.

**Activities:**

- Provided background on Nain relevant to the project and identified contacts for individuals and organizations.

- Consultation regarding the hiring of the project coordinator for Nain.
- Preliminary meetings with the project co-directors to advise on selection and purchase of video equipment.

- Briefing for project co-directors on origins and application of the Fogo Process.

- Thirty home visits to elders, leaders, women, youth, physically challenged and other community members to discuss the roots of family violence, to learn about existing community strategies and to introduce the project.

- Meetings with 15 community and Inuit regional organizations as well as government agencies and institutions to discuss current problems related to family violence, their responses to these problems, and to introduce the project. Some of the groups involved with family violence issues included:

  Child Welfare committee: Miriam Fox, Maggie Webb, David Harris, Sam Anderson, RCMP, Sid Dicker, 2 child welfare workers. The child welfare committee was instituted by DOSS [Department of Social Services] in consultation with community members. This committee advises on issues related to families, assist in making decisions with family members and staff from DOSS and LIHC. The committee is composed of community elders, DOSS staff, LIHC staff and includes members of the family experiencing problems. Committee members sign an oath of confidentiality.

  Alternative Measures Program: Members include Gail Hall, Sue Webb, Sara Webb, Michelle Kenny, Rosie Brown, Miriam Brown, Christine Baikie, representation from DOSS and the RCMP. This committee has been deemed successful within the community as the incidence of violent acts by young people appears to have diminished considerably over the last year.

  Networking Committee: Chair: Richard Leo. The purpose of this committee is to provide continuity among the various community committees.

  Community Leaders Dialogue: Convened by the Town Council of Nain 1992, community leaders and youth have engaged in an ongoing forum to identify social problems and to develop strategies to resolve them.

  Inspiring Youth Committee: Chair: Sean Lyall. The purpose of this committee is to provide opportunities for youth to explore their own issues and to create alternate activities.

  Torngâsok Cultural Centre: Director: Gary Baikie. This centre has introduced an immersion program for youth and young adults to learn Inuktitut, Inuit life skills and traditional activities.

- Briefing sessions with the Planning Committee, the Nain Women's Group, the Elders and the project coordinator on the Fogo Process.
- Conducted video practice sessions with members of the Nain Women's Group, Single Mothers Group, high school and primary school students and with the coordinator for the project.

- Discussed the Project with the staff of the Okalakatiget Communications Society re assistance with equipment maintenance and teaching of camera operators in the project.

- Assisted the Nain Women's Group in conceptualizing and developing a video on women's ways of healing and sustaining community.

- Assisted grade six students in creating a video on the things they like about Nain and worked with grade twelve students to plan a video on the contributions of young people to the maintenance of community.

- Assisted the Single Mothers Group in developing a video on the life of a single mother in Nain.

- Video interview on the origin of the Nain Women's Group with its founding members.

Major Accomplishments:

- Assisted in the development of goals and objectives of the planning committee.

- Assisted the planning committee in locating the Family Group Decision Making Project within the Labrador Inuit Health Commission.

- Heightened the awareness within Nain of the objectives and procedures of the project.

- Assisted in forming the Single Mother's Group

- Assisted the planning committee in finding representation from diverse sectors within the community for the establishment of the project's advisory committee.

- Assisted the planning committee in an analysis of the appropriateness of the Family Group Decision Making Project for Nain.

- Developed activities which engaged diverse sectors of the community in discussions related to family violence and the Family Group Decision Making Project.

- Trained 20 persons in participatory video and assisted the initiation of 6 video productions related to exploring the sources of family violence through such topics as community history, women and youth contribution to community, issues of single parents and the historical role of women elders.

Community Concerns Related to the Project:
- Nain is composed of several "communities" which need to be recognized and represented throughout the project.

- Heavy demands on leadership in Nain. Many leaders have overlapping and exhausting responsibilities. A plethora of committees, already strains the resources of Nain. Community members suggested that the project recruit individuals who are not already overcommitted to existing committees.

- The limited resources which are available to families experiencing family violence are mostly from DOSS, and most of that budget is already designated for particular activities such as tutors, homemakers and family violence prevention. The DOSS budget is very limited and has little flexibility for contingencies.

- Professionals and community members indicated that they were tired of short term demonstration projects which ultimately provided resources to people from outside of the community and to the dominant culture. They indicated that Nain was frequently chosen as a site for short term projects and the people living there often had to live with the problems which such projects generate. There are many forms of betrayal indicated one concerned community member and Nain has had more than its share. In this context, both professionals and community residents emphasized the desire for the Family Group Decision Making Project to be long term and sustainable.

- Residents indicated that constructive problem solving is ongoing in the community. "People are working out of their strength", stated David Harris, the Head Elder of Nain. They are concerned about how Nain is perceived outside of the community and how it is presented by outsiders to the rest of the world. Some perceive that the media often escalates the problems of communities, and projects like this can focus attention on the problems that a community have in order to obtain funding. The media often ignores the strengths.

- Many of the professionals and community members were concerned about the lack of resources available to the project for resourcing the family plans. They noted that they were afraid that the project could set up another cycle of servicing clients. For example, clients could be referred to the Family Group Decision Making Project by the Department of Social Services, and the family plan would identify counselling services from DOSS, which would result in families ending up back at Social Services.

- The initial lack of funds available for translation purposes created concern about the commitment of the project to being culturally appropriate.

Summary:

Although residents of Nain expressed concern about sufficient human and financial resources and the sustainability of the Family Group Decision Making Project, those members of the community who were sufficiently informed about the project, endorsed it and collaborated fully with the consultants in meeting the objectives outlined above. Cautious hope was expressed that the project
would contribute to the communities efforts to deal with the issue of family violence. The introduction of participatory video to facilitate self-analysis and problem solving, quickly engaged the participation of individuals and groups, who displayed creativity and enthusiasm in their initial attempts to use video in interviews and group discussions.

**Recommendations:**

We recommend a return visit by the consultants before the end of year one, to provide further assistance in the use of participatory video and in the self-evaluation process of the planning and advisory committees.