

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP

REPORT

29 September, 2011

REPORT PURPOSE

This report summarizes the food security workshop held in Eastmain on April 6 and 7, 2011. It is one part of the research for a project titled *First Nations Food Security: Piloting the Promising Practices tool and understanding community perceptions of food security*. Dr. Noreen Willows from the University of Alberta is the lead investigator of the project. The university research is supported by the Cree Nation of Eastmain and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (Quebec). Within the region, this project is classified as a community consultation project. Funding was provided by the First Nation and Inuit Health of Health Canada and the Cree Health Board.

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to thank the people from the Maamuu Nakaahettau group who helped with scheduling and the contacting the community. Also, a special thanks to our on-the-ground community people, Priscilla Weapenicappo and George Diamond, who worked with us to contact participants, to organize the workshops, and to make introductions.

WHAT IS THE FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP?

- It is an *action-based* workshop
- It acknowledges that community members have knowledge about the food insecurity issues present in the community and have ideas of what changes are needed to tackle these issues
- It acknowledges that the community has many positive assets (i.e., building, spaces, knowledgeable people) that can be used and improved to enhance food security in the community
- It aims to develop a community-specific action plan to promote food security in the community

Through facilitated group discussions, community participants:

- Identify the coping strategies people in the community often use when there is not enough food in the house or money to buy food.
- Explore community strengths and challenges in providing services, programs, and resources to tackle the issue of food insecurity in their community and promote food security
- Identify and prioritize potential areas in the community environment that could promote food security
- Develop an action plan based on a list of identified and prioritized actions that could promote food security in the community

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP PROCES

DATE: April 6 and 7, 2011

PLACE: Band Office, Eastmain

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 12

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS: Staff members of MSDC, WEDC, CLSC, Recreation Centre

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Food Security Workshop was to bring together community members of the Cree Nation of Eastmain to identify the lived experiences of food insecurity in their community and create an Eastmain-specific action plan to improve the promotion of food security.

PROCESS:

Step 1: Participant work focused on answering the question, What do people do in your community when there is not enough food or money to buy food?

Part A: i) As a group, participants listed actions/coping strategies that people regularly use when they have food insecurity. The strategies were grouped into four categories: Dietary

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Change, Increase Short-Term Household Food Availability, Decrease Number of People to be Fed, Food Rationing Strategies.

Part B: i) As a group, participants ranked the actions/coping strategies in terms of severity or seriousness. That is, what level of hardship is a person experiencing or how unpleasant would it be for a person to use each action/coping strategy.

Step 2: Participant work focused on answering the question, What can be done in your community, school, and home to make sure that people have enough affordable and healthy food to eat?

Part A: i) In small groups, participants talked about and listed areas for potential actions in the community that would promote food security.

ii) Using a democratic process called dot-mocracy, the larger group decided which of the combined actions identified by the smaller groups were the top five priorities for the community.

Part B: i) Participants worked together to create a community action plan to achieve the top five priority actions.

OUTCOMES

MAIN RESULTS:

- The most often used actions/coping strategies for the community were identified and ranked in terms of the severity of the action (see Appendix A). An action like going to a feast to get food was considered not very serious. On the other hand, stealing to get food was considered very serious.
- A child health action plan was created that could help to reduce community food insecurity and lessen the likelihood that community members would have to resort to the coping strategies listed in Appendix A. Five key action statements were identified and programs to implement each action in the community were conceived.
- Eleven actions were brought forward from the small group discussions in step 2 to be narrowed down to the top five by the larger group. The larger group, using the dot-mocracy approach, identified the following actions as the top 5 to focus in their community to increase food security:
 1. Have a traditional food skills course (i.e., hunting, cleaning, cooking)
 2. Have Wellness Centre-based programs for children that focus on nutrition and addictions
 3. Have a school lunch program
 4. Have store displays of healthy foods (e.g., fruits) be more visible
 5. Have a budget/financial planning program (i.e., for individuals and families, include youth for early introduction)
- The programs designed for most of these 5 action statements are in appendix B

OTHER INFORMATION:

- Eleven actions were brought forward from the small group discussions in step 2 to be narrowed down to the top five by the larger group. The list below is the other 6 actions that did not make the top 5.
 1. Create a Meals-on-Wheels program
 2. Have a food voucher program for low-income families
 3. Have a food subsidy program for low-income families
 4. Have a grow-your-vegetables program (i.e., community garden/greenhouse)
 5. Improve water quality

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6. Have local leadership to meet business people (i.e., stores and restaurants) on food policy development (i.e., access to food and access to healthy foods)
- - The list of all ideas created by participants is found in appendix C, should someone want to consult the list to generate ideas on child health projects
 - From the list of all ideas created by participants, contained in appendix C, we noted the following:
 1. Half were focused on economic issues (i.e., budget training, subsidies, food cost, etc.)
 2. Most ideas involved the community at large (58%), with 25% focused on children and youth, and 16% focused on the family.
 3. 36% of ideas were education based, with 17% focused on nutritional education, 11% focused on food preparation and meal planning, and 8% focused on financial planning
 4. 8% of ideas had a traditional element (i.e., teaching traditional cooking, recipes, food prep., etc.)

APPENDIX A

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

Common actions/coping strategies that people use when they are food insecure, ranked in terms of the severity of the action	
SCALE: 1=not very severe 2=somewhat severe 3=severe 4=very severe	
*Means that people do this for cultural reasons as well as when they are food insecure	
Rank	Coping Strategy
1	Cook/Bake something to sell
1	Rely on less preferred and less expensive foods (store bought and traditional)
1	*Dry traditional food for the future
1	Limit portion size at mealtimes
1	*Go to a feast/ceremony/community event and take food home
2	
2	Borrow food or money from a friend or relative
2	Make handicrafts to sell
2	Consume less of a variety of food
2	*Divide an animal among people; different pieces for different people (i.e., men get larger size)
2	*Gather wild food and berries; fish or hunt
3	
3	Purchase food on credit
3	Sell something/personal items
3	Adults eat less so that children can eat
3	*Send children to eat with neighbors or relatives
4	
4	Skip a loan payment or not pay bills
4	*Skip meals
4	Ask (not borrow) for food from friends and relatives
4	Steal
4	Casual work (to earn money so can buy food for the day)+

+This might have been considered severe because people have to ask other's if they can do odd jobs for them, making them feel uncomfortable or have a loss of dignity. In addition, it indicates that people are in urgent need of money to buy food so much so that they need payment at the end of the day.

Programs designs for the top actions to increase food security in the community

Have store displays of healthy foods (i.e., fruits) more visible

POTENTIAL CONTACT PERSON TO LEAD:

- Public Health Officer
- New Nutritionist coming to MSDC

-See the healthy food when you enter the store; don't have it at the back

-Stores: Northern, grocery store, Stacey's, pool hall, arena canteen, summer center, ice cream stand, take out

-Table idea at a band meeting

-Send letter to chief and council; cc businesses

-In draft letter

- oIdentify the problem

- oWhy we want the change

- oDeadline to have changes done

-Communication plan

- oRadio, paper

-Contact public health officer

-Was done in Chisasibi

- oCatherine Godin helped with this

- oMarked healthy foods with colored stickers; different colours for level of health; was used for diabetics

-Have fresh prepared healthy snacks to go – carrots and dip; fruit cups; sandwiches

-Also when a nutritionist is hired for the community; have them mark the foods that are healthy

-Secondary level: when visit stores the second time ask them to increase the cost of junk food and decrease the cost of healthy food

-----Other Comments from the Larger Group-----

-In grocery stores, mark food with color stickers indicating the health level of the food

-Have prepared small healthy meals available to buy as part of the display

-Have the nutritional information of food easily displayed

-Look to have stores lower price of healthy foods and raise price of junk foods

APPENDIX B

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

Have traditional food skills course (i.e., hunting, cleaning, and cooking)

POTENTIAL CONTACT PERSON TO LEAD:

- Juliet Weapenicappo, Activity Team Leader, Multi-Service Day Centre, as lead
- George Diamond would like to be part of a working group for this program
- Ricky Gilpin (Recreation and Cultural Department Coordinator) & Jamie (Culture Coordinator) should both be kept informed

-Traditional food is the best food for Cree people

-Form a working group

- oPartners: CTA, cultural center (Jamie), school (Cree School Board), Elder committee, youth council
- oFunding: Band admin, Niskamoon
- oPeople responsible: Jamie Moses, Gregory Mayappo (Niskamoon & councilor)

-Build a Cultural Village

- oCooking teepee/centre structures
- oLocation ??
 - Possible sites: pool area (near river bank); near MSDC area

-Possible instructors

- oElders – Daniel and Florence Moses
- oWillie and Edna Mayappo
- oGolden girls of Eastmain (Florrie, Kathleen, Marjorie)
- oRonnie & rosemary Moses
- oRoderick Moses
- oMarcel & Dorothy Gilpin Moses
- oTallemys
- oInitial instruction from other communities

-Building non-permanent structures – teepee/wigwam (community member TP – Gloria's)

-Food Source

- oCree Trapper Association (CTA)
- oAssign a harvesting task – hunters to 'donate', youth hunters, fisherman, female hunters

-Target groups:

- oYouth boys and girls
- oYoung mothers
- oInteresting/ed women/men
- oCree entity staff as a group
- oCooks/chefs
- oYoung hunters
- oBachelors/bachelorettes

-Course Content

- oSafe food handling practices
 - Time animal/waterfowl is harvested

APPENDIX B

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

- oTraditional practices of using/utilizing the who new animal/waterfowl
 - Not waste
- oDifferent traditional cooking methods
 - Also including contemporary cooking methods
- oRecipes
- Networking with
 - oCSB Cree cultural Classes
 - oSewing group (Dinah)
 - oCultural dept. of Band Admin.
 - oElders group
- Schedule/timetables:
 - oBy season; spring, summer, fall, winter
 - oAnimal/waterfowl cycle
 - oSchool calendar
 - oSchool curriculum
 - oSeasonal activities
- Funding/Equipment contributions
 - oBusinesses
 - oCree entities & organizations
- Timeline
 - oASAP presentation to Jamie and Gregory
- Include Cree cultural day – Annie whekeechanWhiskeychan day
- Start by goose break

- Other Comments from the Larger Group-----
- Include Cree Culture Day (partner with the activities)
- Annie Whiskeychan Day
- Possibly start by Goose Break , 2011

APPENDIX B

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Have a budgeting/financial planning program

POTENTIAL CONTACT PERSON TO LEAD:

- Francine Moses (Social Services) and John Brown (Economic Development, Band Office)

-For families and individuals

-Include youth- early introduction

-Make priority lists

1. Change our way of thinking – old habits & routines...example bingo

- people who went to Sundance and vision quests; spiritual advisors at Sundances

- respect

- appreciate food more

-build small groups that we can share our“sharing circle”

- monopoly \$ penalties for falling into old habits; reward = grocery voucher

- 1 night a week

- create a buddy system

2. Better manage money

- ATM fees vs bank counters – using debit cards

- interest on credit cards

- how to share costs among family members –discuss how all working members of the family can contribute to bills

- instead of Put money aside – savings account

- Accounting people

- learn how to say NO

- small groups- consequences (e.g. Phone utilities, power cut off...how did we feel?)

-wills

-life insurance

3. Saving \$ for the future

- retirement, investments

- discuss- old age security; income security

- traveling, honeymoons...having FUN

-Classroom –school

-bring in an experienced financial advisor to train using excel

-Vice principal mentioned that it could be linked to a program that will teach kids budgeting skills

- people have just started to buy life insurance

- also need to learn about wills and estates; government takes high percentages for people who don't have wills

- calculated bingo \$7020 for a year

- tracking \$ is like going on a diet – do it on a daily basis – look at it daily; see where you can move things to spend money more wisely – Gas, junk food

- need to tell more success stories

APPENDIX B

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

School Lunch Program

POTENTIAL CONTACT PERSON TO LEAD:

- Marie Monique Villeneuve, Vice-Principal of school
- Present program to all community entities
 - oPropose to school council & committee – do it before Aug 2011
 - oBand council approval and involvement – Fall 2011
 - oMinistry of education & school board – Fall 2011
 - oFunding from Quebec gov., school board, band office, community
- Develop and implement the program
 - oOver 2 years; 2012-2013 school year
 - oCombine with breakfast club (2011-2012)
 - First year breakfast; second year lunch and breakfast
 - oOptional but offered to everyone
 - oMenu approved by a dietitian
 - oCharge for program (\$7-8) with subsidies for low income families
 - Pay month/week or daily options
 - oApproximately 120-125 students to participate
 - oMenu on a 6 day cycle
 - oLocation: Cree culture room – has a full kitchen
 - oRequire a team of 5-6 (non-teachers)
 - 3-4 supervisors
 - 2 to serve meal
 - oHave outside team to take care of program (cooks or catering and supervisors)
 - oSAT, school admin, lunch team and other institutes are responsible
 - SAT in charge of collecting \$ and helping with subsidy referrals
 - oInvolve teachers/educators (computers/PE/art) in activities and a homework period at lunch
- Help with attendance and being on time
- Improve learning conditions because of healthy meals
 - oProvide each student with healthy food and activities

-----Other Comments from the Larger Group-----

- Hyper kids; public health used to do sugar and fat displays; 1 Pepsi = 8tsp of sugar; 8tsp in chocolate bars
- Kanawake has a lunch program – activity is a walking session for kids
- Teacher out west who included a half hour of physical activity for kids to help them become interested in school
- Cree Health board nutritionists will be willing to help

APPENDIX B

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

Have Wellness Centre-based Programs for Children that Focus on Nutrition and Addictions

NOTE: The group did not tackle programing ideas for this action statement. However, we did talk with staff from the Wellness Centre to identify what programs already exist. The existing programs are listed below.

There are Three Main Sections to Programing for Children:

1. Brighter Futures
 - Wellness summer camp
 - Health promotion through radio, posters, Facebook, video
2. Building Healthy Communities
 - Children's group workshop
 - Teen wellness
 - Care for the caregivers
3. Head Start
 - Home visits
 - Mom's time off
 - Music therapy
 - Mom's cubby (everything for the baby)
 - Christmas hampers
 - School readiness

Other Programing:

- After court care/probation
- First Response Program
- First Aid teaching
- Healing Department (healing weeks, sweats, Cree traditional aspect of work)

APPENDIX C

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

Small Group Ideas 1 (participants split into small groups of approximately 5 people each)
 The totals represent all individual scores from this group added up together. The higher the score the more important the idea was for the group as a whole. That is, the more important the idea was to the group in answering the question, What can be done in your community, school, and home to make sure that people have enough affordable and healthy food to eat? The last column ranks the group's total scores from highest to lowest priority.

LISTED ACTIONS (Brainstorming session, pre-scoring)	TOTAL	TOP 5 ACTIONS (based on top 5 highest scores)	ORDER (highest to lowest score)
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What is or is not available in the community?			
Water quality is poor, sometimes not good for cooking	35		17
Fresh produce is bad and rotten (not appetizing)	54		9
Grow own vegetables in a community garden, greenhouses	65	Grow own vegetables in a community garden, greenhouses	3
School and Band to provide meals (breakfast and lunch)	36		16
Introduce healthy food brands	56		8
Stores to sell healthy foods at lower cost and charge higher prices for junk food	61	Stores to sell healthy foods at lower cost and charge higher prices for junk food	5
ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What are the financial factors in the community?			
Awareness of cost of addictions	54		9
Cost of living survey (to live in Eastmain)	45		13
Budgeting and financial planning (individual and family, introduce to youth early in their life)	60	Budgeting and financial planning (individual and family, introduce to youth early in their life)	6
Food subsidy for low-income	62	Food subsidy for low-income	4
Food coupon system	43		14
POLICY ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What are the rules in the community?			
Local leadership to meet business people (stores and restaurants) on food policy development	68	Local leadership to meet business people (stores and restaurants) on food policy development	2
Young mothers to be encouraged to breastfeed their babies (to save money for other foods)	52		10
No competition on transportation of foods (KEPA has monopoly)	38		15
SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What are the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, values, and practices in the community?			
Role Models (success stories, stories of lessons learned)	47		12
Store displays of healthy foods (fruit) be more visible	73	Store displays of healthy foods (fruit) be more visible	1
Make a traditional camp (to show traditional food preparation, cooking, storage, recipes, and have children visit/eat here regularly)	54		9
Teach people on nutritional values of food/fresh food, especially canned foods (also teach this to students, youth, elders)	58		7

APPENDIX C

EASTMAIN FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP REPORT

Youth cooking courses (Healthy community kitchens)	54		9
Healthier meal planning for families (include budgeting)	49		11

Small Group Ideas 2 (participants split into small groups of approximately 5 people each)

The totals represent all individual scores from this group added up together. The higher the score the more important the idea was for the group as a whole. That is, the more important the idea was to the group in answering the question, What can be done in your community, school, and home to make sure that people have enough affordable and healthy food to eat? The last column ranks the group's total scores from highest to lowest priority.

LISTED ACTIONS (Brainstorming session, pre-scoring)	TOTAL	TOP 5 ACTIONS (based on top 5 highest scores)	ORDER (highest to lowest score)
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What is or is not available in the community?			
Develop a school lunch program	60	School Lunch Program	3
Develop a food bank	50		7
Develop Wellness Centre programs for children focused on nutrition, addictions, etc.	59	Develop Wellness Centre programs for children focused on nutrition, addictions, etc.	4
Develop meals-on-wheels	64	Develop meals-on-wheels	2
Develop a milk program	36		13
Develop a breastfeeding program	42		11
Gardening (community and school)	15		14
ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What are the financial factors in the community?			
Community fridge and freezer (people can also purchase foods at a fair price, traditional food donations from hunters to elderly)	45		10
Food Vouchers for low-income families (with proof of income)	54	Food Vouchers for low-income families (with proof of income)	5
Budgeting course	37		12
Promote the employee Savings Bond purchasing	42		11
Develop an addictions after-care program	51		6
POLICY ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What are the rules in the community?			
Band to employ automatic rent deduction	36		13
SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT TYPE: What are the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, values, and practices in the community?			
Nutrition training for cooks (daycare, MSDC, school, restaurants)	47		8
Provide cooking/nutrition class for community members	46		9
Traditional food skills (hunting, cleaning, eating, cooking)	77	Traditional food skills (hunting, cleaning, eating, cooking)	1