Chaire de recherche sur les relations avec les sociétés inuit

Research Chair on Relations with Inuit Societies

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KATIVIK

Saimatsianiq Research Project

Workshop on Inuit Knowledge regarding Legal Practices

With Sapummijiit Victim Support Agents and Community Reintegration Officers in Nunavik

May 18-19, 2022, Kuujjuaq

Report

Written by Alice Miot-Bruneau and Marie-Ève Marchand, Research Chair on Relations with Inuit Societies

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Introduction

In this report, we present the results of a 2-day research workshop held in Kuujjuaq on May 18 and 19, 2022. The ten participants, all Inuit women, work in Nunavik either as Sapummijiit victim support agents (hereinafter called "Sapummijiit agents") or as community reintegration officers (hereinafter called "CROs"). There were two co-organizers: Suzy Watt Kauki, an Inuk assistant researcher doing undergrad studies in law and sociology at Carleton University, and Marie-Eve Marchand, a research professional at the Sentinel North Research Chair on Relations with Inuit Societies.

The workshop had three goals: 1) identify the needs and goals of Sapummijiit agents and CROs; 2) gain insight into their understanding of the justice system; and 3) enhance their strengths and knowledge by encouraging them to share this information with each other.

At the outset, the participants were asked for their written consent. They could waive confidentiality and have their name associated with their words in all publications based on the workshop. Some of them chose to keep their participation and comments confidential. A translator was present so that all participants could communicate freely in Inuktitut.

The workshop was part of a research project called *Saimatsianiq: Documenting, mobilizing, and promoting Inuit legal practices to preserve social harmony in Nunavik*. The project had been launched by the Sentinel North Research Chair on Relations with Inuit Societies (Caroline Hervé, Department of Anthropology, Université Laval). Funding came from Justice Canada through the Justice Partnership and Innovation Program (JPIP): "Revitalization of Indigenous Laws" (2021-2024). The workshop was made possible through the collaboration and support of the Legal, Socio-Judicial, & Municipal Management Department of the Kativik Regional Government.

Roles of Sapummijiit Agents and Community Reintegration Officers

Sapummijiit Agents

These agents help crime victims by accompanying them through the court process.[1] They work on behalf of Crime Victims Assistance Centres (CAVAC), a network of centres funded by the Quebec government and located throughout the province.

During the workshop, the Sapummijiit agents generally described their role as one of supporting victims and witnesses who have been summoned to court. First, victims and witnesses are informed about the court process and their part in it. They often do not understand why they have been summoned. They may think they will be judged, or they may be in denial of what

[1] KRG, 2021 (online at: https://www.krg.ca/en-CA/departments/legal/sapummijiit).

happened to them. They are then reassured and told they have been victimized and what this crime means in terms of justice. The agent helps fill out any documents the victim poorly understands, such as the Victim Impact Statement and the IVAC form (*Indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels*).

Second, the agent provides emotional support. Indeed, most victims have been traumatized or have gone through difficult times. It is thus with a heavy heart that they come to their agent. Because the court process makes them relive the trauma all over again when they testify and confront the offender, they are often reluctant to take part in the process. The agent tries to encourage them to take the stand and tries to make them feel that they are not alone in this process. Victims have trouble knowing whom to turn to. As the workshop participants emphasized, Sapummijiit agents are not social workers, nor have they been trained for that purpose. Yet they end up having to deal with their clients' emotions and traumas. That is why part of their role is to create a safe, receptive environment in which the victim can open up and start to heal.

> Whenever we have been victimized, it is difficult to know who to turn to. Those who have been victimized ask questions as to: "why I am here, what am I going to do." I always want them to understand that they are not alone, and that there are others. (Sapummijiit agent)

> Some victims ask themselves what they are there for. We let them understand why and how. "You've been put through something. You've been victimized. You've been put through difficult times by those who broke the law." They are able to understand better when we tell them. We tell them that they are not alone. We let them feel welcomed first, within a good environment. Sometimes, they went through some traumatizing events. Sometimes, they are nervous. We let them understand why they are at the courthouse. We let them understand about the person who broke the law, whether they were a witness or a victim. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

> Sometimes, I [say to myself]: "Maybe I am not doing enough. That is why that person doesn't want to testify." But when the person wants to testify, it is a good thing for us. Some of them blame themselves for having done this and that; it is what they say. But when they finally understand and they are able to testify, even if it is not something good to deal with, it is something that feels good. (Sapummijiit agent)

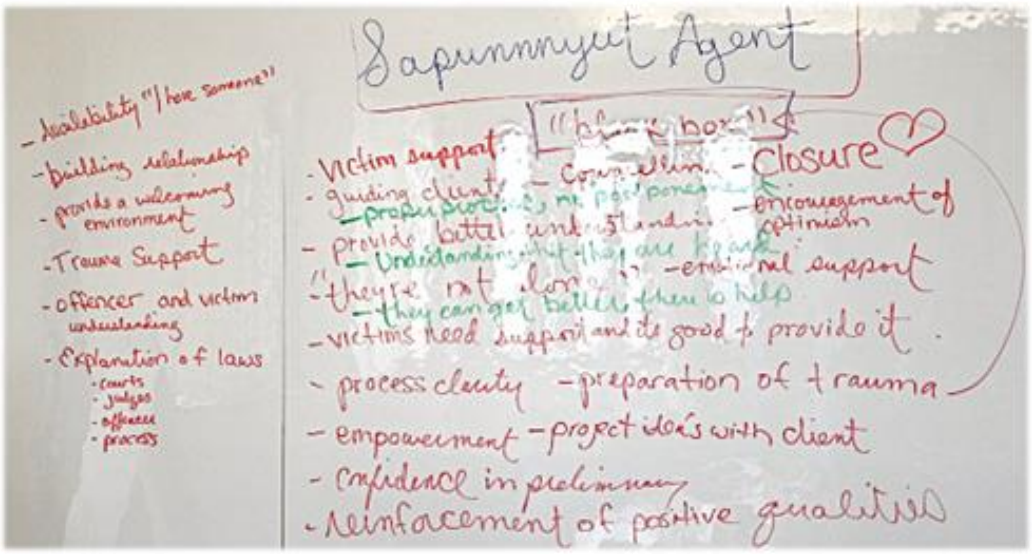
The Sapummijiit agent also accompanies the client down the emotional and psychological path that begins with the court process. One participant used the image of a "black box" to explain this path, an idea she had picked up at a training program in Quebec City. According to this metaphor, clients have a black box inside themselves that contains their experiences and traumas, what she called their "garbage." The court process and the meetings with the Sapummijiit agent help open the box: this is when the client opens up, testifies, and goes through the events again. The participants emphasized that the Sapummijiit agent has a duty to make sure that victims and witnesses, after taking the stand, will not leave the courthouse with that box wide open. Otherwise, they will be placed in a vulnerable situation and could harm themselves or others. "*We have to close them with their best*"—they must be reminded that they are not alone, that they have hobbies and other activities, and that they have family members to take care of. They

must also be given encouragement. Trusting relationships are key to the process, and the agent has to take time to explain the concept of confidentiality to the client to establish trust. If clients know that what they tell their agent will remain confidential, they will be more willing to open up.

> Whether it is a victim, a person who broke the law or a witness, I like to let them know that they are not alone. When they understand this, when they start to open up and are able to start talking, maybe let them cry at first. It is like they were in a difficult situation, and when they start to ease down, it is something I like. When there is someone to hear them and it stays confidential, they start to understand it. I like it. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

> Victims see themselves as something negative, someone who's seen in a negative way and has been abused and victimized. So, it is a good thing to try to change their mindset such as what to think. They tend to think: "I am not going to be able to face the person, to testify." We have to be tricky and try to change the way they are thinking. We tell them: "It is normal the way you are feeling, [because of] what you've gone through. No one is going to talk about it." (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

> When the victim understands about confidentiality, he or she starts to feel more confident, and it helps. (Sapummijiit agent)



When clients understand that they are not alone, when they understand that they can rely on their agent, and when they finally agree to open up and share their experiences, their agent feels a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

> It is really good to see someone who has been closed down, when they start testifying, to open up. They are going through a difficult time but when they find out that they have support and are able to receive help, they start to open up, some of them. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

In addition to providing support, the Sapummijiit agent must also ensure that the client shows up at the court when the time comes. The agent will contact the client by phone or local radio and use police assistance if he or she cannot be found. The agent will work with the police if the client needs emotional support or Inuktitut-to-English interpretation.

Community Reintegration Officers (CROs)

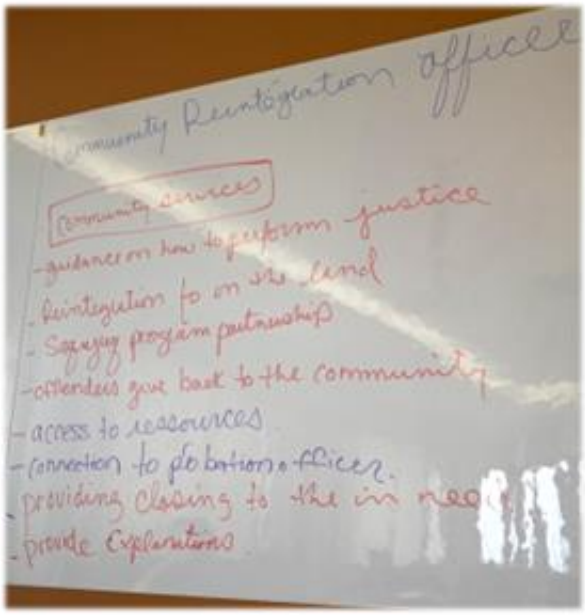
The CRO's mandate is to assist offenders on probation by helping them reintegrate into their communities and families.[2] The CROs at the workshop said that CROs work mostly with offenders who do community work. They tell them how to serve their sentences.

The CRO helps clients find opportunities to do community work with organizations. Such work is the most common form of community service recognized by the justice system. Because local organizations are generally reluctant to take on offenders, CROs have had to come up with alternatives. The main one is to ask the client to serve the community through a culture-oriented activity, such as hunting, fishing, or sewing, and share the catches or creations with needy community members. For such activities, the CRO sometimes gets support (logistics, materials, money, human resources, etc.) from a local justice committee or a community-specific program, such as the Saqijuq Project based in Puvirnituq. If no local group or program wishes to help, the CRO is alone in organizing and managing the activity.

> We work with people who have broken the law. We work with them concerning community work, with the conditions that they receive. They have to give back to the community: for example, if they take two fishes, they have to give one back to the community. (…) When there are no organizations willing to take my clients, I usually suggest they go hunting. I find it is more useful to the community, compared to them having jobs, basically just doing houses. (CRO)

> In Kuujjuaq, there is a sewing centre, and if they like to sew, they sew for the community and provide clothing to those in need. (Annie Saunders, CRO)

[2] KRG 2021 (online at: https://www.krg.ca/en-CA/departments/legal/community-reintegration-officers)



Like the Sapummijiit agent, the CRO has a duty to support clients emotionally and psychologically by encouraging them and helping them turn negative feelings of guilt into something positive, such as motivation. Sometimes, the CRO also has to explain the court process or the client's sentence. The conditions are explained step by step.

The CRO also does follow-up by contacting clients to see how they are doing and monitoring their progress. If a client fails to come to a scheduled meeting, the CRO has to report the no-show to the probation officer. The CRO will first try to discuss the situation with the client's defence lawyer to work out an arrangement. If the client fails to comply, the breach of the conditions is reported to the judge. The CRO thus needs to be in contact not only with the client but also with the lawyer and the probation officer. Good communication is therefore key.

> First thing we do is we check emails. Then we have to contact the person and explain to them the conditions that they received or the judgment that they got. Sometimes they don't want to come to the office, so I mostly talk to them over the phone. (CRO)

The CRO feels a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment when a file is closed, i.e., when the client has completed the community work hours and has accomplished all the necessary tasks.

> It feels very good when you see somebody accomplishing their task. (CRO)

> We like closing a file after community work is done, unless they have probation and in that case the file stays open. (CRO)

An Intermediary Position

At the workshop, the Sapummijiit agents and the CROs emphasized that they are both tasked with helping their clients connect to and access different resources. For example, Sapummijiit agents will refer a client to social services or different agencies if they feel that he or she is in danger or needs professional psychological support. Similarly, CROs will refer a client to an organization that agrees to take on him or her for community work. CROs are also responsible for passing on information about offenders to certain people in the justice system, such as lawyers and probation officers.

The workshop participants were also very aware that they each had a specific job. Even when the job description is the same, the reality of work may differ because of differences in community location or available resources. That reality is also shaped by one's life experiences, personality,

and beliefs, as well as by the need to adjust to each client. For example, a Sapummijiit agent said that a young person would not receive the same kind of help that an elder would.

> The way we work is different for all of us. Even though we hold the same position, we all have our own way of working. (CRO)

> We have different ways of healing. […] We have different beliefs. We follow what that person believes in, and that person can start to heal and open up. We are not giving them something that is too challenging for them. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

Challenges of Work

Sapummijiit Agents

Sapummijiit agents have to fill out a lot of paperwork, which is challenging because of the content and the time it takes. They feel that the forms they must fill out are difficult to understand and not always adapted to the reality of the North. Moreover, they lack sufficient time for paperwork, especially when the documents must be translated. For example, judges increasingly ask for Victim Impact Statements, often at the last minute. The IVAC form is likewise a challenge, as it takes a lot of time and effort to gather the relevant information. Nonetheless, the latest version of the IVAC form seems to be easier to fill out.

> We have difficulties to understand what the IVAC form means. I think it is more for the South. (Sapummijiit agent)

> I guess we could hire someone that would be there. Because us, as Sapummijiit, we do everything when we are in the office. Southerners, they have receptionists, they have social workers, [and] they have agents that go to the court. But we are there doing everything. It would help to have another person. (Sapummijiit agent)

Sapummijiit agents feel that child sexual abuse and murder cases are a real challenge. Such cases are the most difficult ones, along with those that involve people they personally know. Workshop participants mentioned the difficulties of working in a justice system where communities are small and where people appearing in court are often related to one another. Agents must sometimes work with relatives, be they victims, witnesses, or offenders. Such situations are "conflicts of interest."

> It is difficult when we have to deal with our family, when one of our family members has been victimized. (Sapummijiit agent)

When asked about how others perceive them and their role, the Sapummijiit agents said that some people are happy to see a familiar face in court—someone they know and can rely on. Other people perceive them negatively, thinking that they are the ones who will make the court decisions.

> They are so used to see me in the courthouse, they just say: "We feel better when you are coming, when we can see you, a familiar face." People like seeing me. (Sapummijiit agent)

> Some people look at us in a negative way. On the radio, someone said that this person did not receive compensation, and sometimes people think we have money to give them. Sometimes, they think that we are the ones that make decisions. (Sapummijiit agent)

> Someone told me that I was breaking up the relationship between a woman and her boyfriend. That is something negative, but some people are happy to be supported by us. They say: "I wouldn't know what to do if you guys did not work." Some of our clients tell us they wouldn't know what to do or where to go if we didn't exist. (Sapummijiit agent)

At the workshop, the Sapummijiit agents described the difficulty in dealing with someone who has gone through traumatic events and is carrying a lot of anger. They have no training in psychology or social work. Providing psychotherapy is not part of their job description; they are supposed to refer such cases to the appropriate human resources. Yet, as they see it, their job inevitably leads them to hearing what victims have to say and playing a part in the healing process. They thus experience some trouble navigating between the expectations of their job description, the expectations of their clients, and the resources available to them. As they hear a lot of harrowing stories, they must learn to separate their clients' lives and emotions from their own. Such skills are taught to social workers and psychologists, but Sapummijiit agents greatly need to learn them as well.

> They said we are not psychologists. We are not social workers. We are the victim support agents. When they go through a very hard time, we explain to them there are social services, that I can make an appointment for you. Most of them have a hard time to go forward, so I offer if they want me to make an appointment with a social worker. (Sapummijiit agent)

Community Reintegration Officers (CROs)

CROs are tasked with following the client's progress by meeting that person once a month. This part of their job is challenging, as they have difficulty contacting their clients. They send letters and make phone calls, but not always with success. They are supposed to report any client who has not shown up for three consecutive appointments. At the workshop, the CROs spoke about their experiences with this type of situation and exchanged information with each other about the people they are supposed to contact. Some of their clients also fail to respect the sentencing conditions and the community work hours, and most of them go on to reoffend—this seems to be difficult for CROs to deal with.

> People usually go back and forth in the justice system. They usually come back. (Annie Saunders, CRO)

One CRO mentioned that even though CROs work mainly with the offender, they may also end up meeting the victim (at the court or in the community), and they have to show the victim that they do understand what he or she has gone through.

> The most difficult thing is when the person has been victimized by the person who lives with them. So we have to support these people, we need to build trust with them. It is a big challenge. We have to tell them we understand what they went through, what kind of criminal act happened to them, and it is difficult. (CRO)

A Variable Workload

Sapummijiit agents are given a lot of work when the court arrives in their community. They must contact the relevant people, inform them, and prepare them, and they have to look at the sentences, make phone calls, and send letters. The amount of work depends very much on how often the court comes to their community.

At the workshop, they said that it is very difficult for them to take on cases from a community other than their own, as it is hard to get in touch with people from another village.

Other challenges are due to the community's demographics. For example, because the court of Kuujjuaraapik administers justice to Cree and Inuit, some situations may be specific to one nation or the other.

How to Overcome the Challenges

The workshop participants were asked what they needed to become more effective agents. They pointed to a need for more training programs and resources in several areas: intervening with victims; dealing with their own mental health; preparing a poster that explains the court process; teaching non-Inuit court staff about northern realities and Inuit ways; hiring more human resources to help with paperwork; and encouraging local organizations to adopt a more welcoming attitude toward clients.

The participants asked for training programs on how to intervene with victims, specifically in the areas of counseling (how to behave with a victim, how to help a victim deal with the offender, etc.) and assistance for people who have experienced trauma. Discussion became focused on mental health and well-being. There were many references to a training program that took place several years ago in Quebec City and which made use of the "black box" metaphor, which one participant had found very useful. One Sapummijiit agent had initially been trained as a social worker and was using that training on a daily basis. The participants also asked to be trained to deal with sexual and domestic violence through a holistic approach.

> They need support to know what they are going to go through in court, what the process is. Yes, it is a challenge. We have to try and be ready to mentally and physically deal with this, even through body communication. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

> I received training as a social worker that helped me a lot to stay strong. My clients that I am supporting are hurt. They have been hurt by someone. It was difficult for me to let it go, to move on after 5 pm. Since I received the training, I am able to stand up because I received a training where I should be able not to take it too hard. It's not yours. You have to let them go after your work. And if I had not received this training, I don't think I would be able to continue with my work. (Sapummijiit agent)

The participants also felt it necessary to take care of their own mental health through debriefing and discussion with other team members. Indeed, they rarely had an opportunity to meet or speak together, as they worked in different communities. Sapummijiit agents usually work in pairs

in communities, while CROs work alone. The participants suggested that having a regular conference call would help, as well as discussion with colleagues to see how they do their jobs.

> When we deal with something alone it is difficult. We tend to burn out more. When you do debrief you are less exhausted, and you can go through this. It is part of healing. Our agents have gone through something heavy, and we have to go through healing ourselves because when it has something to do with trauma it is quite difficult. (Sapummijiit agent)

Because the participants had to explain the court process to their clients, they asked for the creation of a poster that would explain the court process from the day of the offender's arrest to the end of the trial. Such a poster already exists in Inuktitut, but there is a need for one in both English and Inuktitut.

They also stressed the need to teach non-Inuit court staff about the realities of the North and the Inuit ways of conflict resolution and healing. For example, the Crown should keep in mind that the victim is often victimized by a family member. The participants also thought that the Gladue Report should be better known and more often used in the court system. One participant saw a need for "facilitators" who would teach various justice-related departments and agencies to be more culturally sensitive.

> The Crown is working with papers only. They are only doing paperwork all the time. They have never met the person. Especially when they don't know that the person has been victimized by a family member. So the Crown can understand in that way too. (Sapummijiit agent)

> We need facilitators: if they could train them or teach them and meet with other departments. It is a big need that I see. I think we need to talk about it, to the big organizations, it has to be done traditionally. Even though we won't be dealing with people with healing right away, we should be looking for people who could understand the person, so they can start the healing. It should be taken into action. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

One participant suggested that such help and resources would have limited impact, as the stakes were bigger and more systemic in nature. She suggested that the justice system was too strict to welcome meaningful change and reform.

> It is hard to say for me because as long as the justice system is going on, I don't think we can really do something. The Court system is not the way we are trained to do. We cannot follow with the way it is. We need the justice system to change. (Sapummijiit agent)

The Sapummijiit agents asked for more staff because they are having trouble finding the time and resources for paperwork. One of them recalled that a decision had been made a while ago that one or two agents would be specifically tasked with taking care of IVAC forms in order to allow the other agents to focus on other tasks. If no additional staff can be assigned, they would like to get training programs that could help them become better at filling out the forms, as well as

access to translated documents to help them do their work. They also mentioned that they could benefit from the help of colleagues in other communities. They were hopeful that such exchanges would resume with the end of the pandemic. They also suggested that more Sapummijiit agents could be assigned to murder and child abuse cases because such cases are difficult to handle alone.

> So, that would help out your colleagues when you travel to other communities, for example for a murder case or a sexual abuse case, when they are too close to the person. It is better if we let someone that they don't know as much go and help in that community. (Sapummijiit agent)

The CROs stressed that local Nunavik organizations should be more welcoming toward their clients, who have difficulty finding community work opportunities. Before the pandemic, those organizations had reportedly been sent a letter to promote community work contracts, apparently to no avail. Also, clients may benefit from community work in the form of hunting, fishing, and sewing. One CRO even found such activities to be more useful than the usual forms of community service.

Views on Justice in Nunavik

Issues Raised by the Criminal Justice System

The workshop participants said that their clients (victims and offenders) do not really understand the criminal justice system. Consequently, it is up to Sapummijiit agents and CROs to provide them with some explanation.

Postponement of cases is a major issue in Nunavik and was mentioned several times, as it seems to put justice on hold. It harms the people who participate in a trial because it delays closure and forces them to continue going about their lives with the trauma they have experienced. Conversely, those people, especially the victims, feel a big and positive change in their lives when a case is closed.

> Sometimes when the cases are not postponed again and again, I like it when the cases are dealt with right away. Because clients tend to be saddened. (Sapummijiit agent)

> Usually cases are postponed, and when the cases are finally dealt with and finished, we can see their face. It has become lighter. You become not as heavy as it was. […] When that person closes down, they have to speak about it to someone even a little bit and they start to open up and it feels good. These people are able to let out the things they are holding back inside themselves, and to pass over. But the person who has been victimized gives them a demon to deal with. Let's say they are given this thing, so both of them are trying to get rid of this demon, and it is not really good when the cases are postponed, and it is not really good for both. Whenever cases are postponed, it is very difficult for people to forgive each other. (Anna Kingalik, Sapummijiit agent)

> Cases with child sexual abuses are very difficult, having to deal with a child, especially when they have to testify. When it is over it feels good. But when the cases have been postponed,

> for those who were ready to testify, they were open, and then the case is postponed, and they have to go back again. It is a challenge. We have to close them again, to close the black box. (Sapummijiit agent)

The workshop participants talked about how difficult it is for Inuit to comprehend the justice system, and how it is not responsive to Inuit realities. One of them called the justice system "intimidating." This sense of alienation can have serious consequences for Inuit and communities alike. For example, victims have trouble accepting and understanding court decisions. The Sapummijiit agents talked about the concept of "reasonable doubt" and how it is received by the victims. It undermines the work done by the Sapummijiit agents, and their clients lose confidence in themselves and in the justice system. They no longer understand the point of having a trial, nor the reason for taking part in one. The agents themselves lose confidence in the system. The participants also emphasized that going through the court process may worsen a pre-existing trauma. Healing seems to be difficult in the criminal justice system as it now exists.

> The person is ready, is talking, has been talking about what they have been put through, and when they say that there is a 'reasonable doubt': why? I prepared with them, especially in murder and child sexual abuses. They are the ones stepping forward. It is something difficult for me, so I ask myself: "What am I going to do again, to support my client?" They ask themselves: "Why am I here, why am I talking about these things?" And they tend to go through the same thing again. (Sapummijiit agent)

> If they went through a recent incident—for example, an event happened over a month ago, and the person is traumatized—they will have to come through that event again by speaking, or by reading the statement by the police. It is traumatizing. They are crying, it hurts. When it is finally over, it feels really good. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

> It can be like a language or cultural barrier. Not only can it be traumatic for victims, but it also can be traumatic in the sense that they don't really know what system they are necessarily in. It is confusing for them, intimidating. (Sapummijiit agent)

The participants talked about how challenging it is when non-Inuit staff are unfamiliar with Inuit culture and try to apply behaviours, practices, and laws made by people from the South and for the South. For example, one participant talked about the attitude of some Crown attorneys who want first and foremost to win their cases, without being sensitive to the consequences for Inuit communities. Non-Inuit court staff can be insistent, and the clients feel rushed and pressured. Non-Inuit staff from the South do not take time to get to know people and fail to gain their respect. One participant, however, said there had recently been some changes: non-Inuit staff are now more open to the local culture and willing to respect the Inuit way of living and dealing with conflicts.

> The Crown, when they understand our job, they make our job easier. Sometimes some don't understand. Some are saying "as long as I win my case": they will do their best not to lose their case. I have seen that many times, and they are not thinking right sometimes. They tell the victims and witnesses that they have to talk, and it is like they threaten the person. It is not something good to see. Some Crown attorneys are not like that, but some of them are.

> While whenever the person is in acceptance, these things can go smoothly. (Sapummijiit agent)

> A couple of years ago, whenever people who have never been to the North would come, we would meet them. They would be told that they must pay their respect. A person we know used to meet them. But I am not sure it is being practised anymore. (Sapummijiit agent)

> The Crown or the people at the court even though they do their job within the justice system, I noticed that they try more nowadays to understand our traditional way of living and to make decisions more in our traditional way of life. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

The participants talked at length about the lack of resources, particularly appropriate resources. Be it psychological support for everyone or reintegration opportunities for offenders, resources are not always available. Moreover, they are not necessarily used, even when available, because they are usually based on southern models and not always adapted to community needs.

> The person who has been victimized needs support, but there is no support, especially in Inukjuak [where] people really don't want to go to the social services. There are other places and resources for them. (Anna Kingalik, Sapummijiit agent)

Toward an Inuit Model of Justice

When asked what justice means to them as Inuit, the workshop participants suggested some ways to administer justice better and build a safer community. Their suggestions may be applied both in daily practice and in community life.

The participants referred to Inuit traditions and the elders. The elders used to "discipline" community members and provide lessons and wisdom. Now that function is performed by the justice system.

> Back then, the elders used to discipline us. It has changed today, as we are disciplined by the court. (Anna Kingalik, Sapummijiit agent)

Being given a good foundation by one's family and community is very important according to the participants. This is what makes people good, strong, and able to stand on their two feet. Justice for Inuit seems to be about prevention, while the criminal justice system steps in only when prevention has failed, and a problem has already developed. The justice system cannot replace the necessary love, foundation, and guidance provided by the community.

> Our grandparents, they made a foundation for us. The foundation was strong. Whenever someone has not been given a good foundation, they tend to go back to court over and over again. So, we've been given a good foundation by our elders. […] But those who are not able to be disciplined, especially the ones who have no parents, when they are disciplined by others, they are able to stand up by themselves. Those who have been through the court system, or those who don't have parents, sometimes they don't have anywhere to go. They have to go through the court system sometimes. I think just by telling them, maybe just to hug them, because traditionally it is something that I see that we need to do to someone, give them a hug. Making people equal, equality. (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

One participant defined justice as about being heard, something that the criminal justice system does not always deliver according to her. The victim's wishes do not seem to be considered. She gave the example of domestic violence, and the tendency of the system to separate the couple instead of reconciling them. In a specific case where the victim did not want to be separated from her boyfriend, who had physically assaulted her, the lawyers went against her wishes and asked for a prison sentence. The participants wished that relationships would be repaired in what they called a traditional way, without automatically separating families and couples, through healing centres and traditional activities (especially on the land). Sometimes, however, the victim does want to be separated from the offender.

> So, I think as an Inuk, as an Indigenous person, justice is about being heard. It is about your needs being met. (Sapummijiit agent)

> Some victims say they just want this person to be incarcerated now: "I would like to separate from him. I just like for him to stay in jail." (Trina Qumaluk-Fournier, Sapummijiit agent)

For the participants, the meaning of justice was very much associated with the land. They advocated having more alternative sentences that would allow the offender to heal on the land. They mentioned different programs, and the role of justice committees in providing such alternatives. For example, the Kuujjuarapik Justice Committee takes offenders out on the land for hunting. There are also sewing activities. Some CROs have already begun to promote activities on the land, as much for the client's benefit as for the community's. They see it as a legitimate way to heal the offender and also to give back to the community. The offender is reintegrated as much into the community as into the land.

> When they go to court, instead of being sent to jail for years, they could go on the land in their cabin, from there they would start healing. It would be better if we could have other resources. Instead of going three years without seeing your children. Once you made a mistake and you hurt the partner, they try to separate the couple. I wish there were other possibilities instead of being sentenced. (Anna Kingalik, Sapummijiit agent)

Love and respect also play a big part in how the participants see justice in the community, and in what they expect from interactions within the justice system. They emphasized the importance of welcoming the client warmly, and hugging him or her. They considered it important to ensure that the client's needs are taken care of, regardless of whether that person committed a crime or was victimized. Those values are key to their vision of justice and are what they embody in their practice. The participants thus put lots of effort into building trusting relationships with their clients. A good relationship seems to contribute to the way the client sees justice.

> Saying "hi" means a lot to them, even if they are accused. I can't just pass by them when I am walking in the court room, even though I work with the victims. Don't look at them like they are accused. That means a million to them when they are in the courthouse. (Sapummijiit agent)

> For example, having a trusting relationship is the first thing. If they get used to you, then you are going to be able to work better with this person. […] The way I see my tradition is to go

> right down to the point. Not pretend that you don't know, and the victim knows right away, and I start to work with them right here and there. It is how I do it. When we meet with my client again, I don't tell them we will discuss it when we come back. I tell them that I realize right away what they are going through. That's how I work. (Sapummijiit agent)

Conclusion

During the workshop, the participants shared how they perceived their role as Sapummijiit agents and CROs. They also spoke about the challenges they face in their daily practice, and called for more resources and more training in order to strengthen their capabilities and to help build safer communities through their jobs. They shared their experiences and their views of the criminal justice system in Nunavik. Overall, they shared how they use their personal and cultural resources in their work and how they help build bridges between the criminal justice system and the Inuit conception of justice in Nunavik.

The participants said they really enjoyed the activity. They appreciated being able to meet and discuss justice together. They said they had learned a lot and were eager to learn more, especially from one another. They were motivated to participate in training programs and workshops by the progress they saw at such meetings. One of them wrote that the activities were a "grounding": they were reminded about the importance of their role as Inuit in a Western justice system. They would have appreciated having more discussion about CROs. Because the latter were fewer in number, most of the discussion was about Sapummijiit agents. The participants appreciated the interpretation services, as it was important to them to speak in their own language if they so wished.

> I could speak in Inuktitut freely without having to speak in English because I feel like I could express myself better in Inuktitut. (anonymous)

> Getting together [and] discussing about the justice system is what I liked the most. (anonymous)

> I'd like to have more exercises and to communicate more with my colleagues. (anonymous)

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