Community-Led Food Assesment for Inuit Communities
Learning Guide

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Healthy food for all!

NiKigijavut
Hopedalimi
"Our Food in Hopedale"

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About this Learning Guide

This learning guide has been developed in recognition of a growing concern within Inuit communities about access to affordable, culturally appropriate, and nutritious foods. This learning guide is a resource for Inuit communities wanting to complete a community-led food assessment in their own communities. This learning guide is one of five that have been developed as part of a toolkit, which will assist communities in undertaking all types of community-led projects.

Other learning guides included as part of this toolkit are on the following topics:
- *Project Evaluation;*
- *Project Management;*
- *Community Facilitation; and*
- *Food Security and Community Health*

All of these learning guides are intended to be helpful resources that will provide community facilitators with the essential skills to successfully complete a community-led food assessment in their community.

This toolkit was developed through the *Engaging Communities: Achieving Healthier Weights Through Community Food Security in Remote Inuit Populations* project, led by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN) with funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada, and in partnership with Trent University and the Nunatsiavut Government. It is a direct result of the successful project that was completed by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador in Hopedale, Nunatsiavut entitled *NiKigijavut Hopedalimi: Our Food in Hopedale.*

The pages within the Community-Led Food Assessment Learning Guide will provide background information on food security and community-led food assessments, help you prepare to undertake your own community-led food assessment, and guide you through the step-by-step stages of a community-led food assessment. This guide will provide you with guidance to explore food security in your community in order to examine the issue of food availability and how to go about starting programs that offer safe, nutritious food to the community. We hope it will also offer ideas and ways to develop sustainable solutions for food security issues that affect communities across the north.

How this Learning Guide was developed

There are many resources already in existence on the topics of both food security, and community-led food assessments. However, when focusing on Inuit communities, it is extremely important to recognize the strength and meaning behind food and food sharing within Inuit cultures. It is also critical to recognize the unique perspectives and knowledge of Inuit, and acknowledge that local experiences and practices must be at the foundation of efforts to create solutions and make decisions that address food security.

This guide was developed and designed by Trent University, the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador, and an Inuit steering committee to provide a training resource that will support residents of Inuit communities in taking an active role in deciding how to approach food security.

About this Toolkit

This toolkit was developed through the review of existing materials and resources, as well

as through consultations with a working group comprised of representatives from Inuit regional and national organizations and not for profit organizations dedicated to issues of food security. The concept behind the production of this learning guide, specific to Inuit communities, reflect the commitment to develop community-specific, community-relevant and community-owned training and capacity building across the North. We would like to thank and recognize the team of the *NiKigijavut Hopedalimi* project, who were a critical resource in the construction of this toolkit.

Purpose of the toolkit and learning guide

The intention of the toolkit is to provide residents of Inuit communities with ideas, activities, methods, and tools to start approaching issues that affect their community.

This learning guide is specifically intended to provide Inuit communities with the resources and knowledge needed to successfully complete training with community members on how to plan, complete, and evaluate a community-led food assessment. There are a number of other Community Food Assessment guidebooks and resources that exist, which are listed in the additional resources section of this learning guide, and are a great source of information.

With the broad nature of the other four learning guides, the toolkit is also intended to provide ideas, resources, and tools for Inuit communities to start approaching any issues that are of concern in their community. The toolkit could be used to look at issues around food and food security, other health concerns, or social issues such as housing – the toolkit can apply to any issue that communities would like to learn about and develop actions for in their community.

Who is the toolkit and learning guide for?

We hope this toolkit will be used by community residents, volunteers, teachers, youth, health workers, and government workers … anyone with an interest in making a positive change to improve access to healthy, cultural food in their community! This specific learning guide is intended for anyone in your community who wishes to learn more about food issues and food security, and has an interest in taking on a community-led food assessment.

How do I use the toolkit?

The toolkit and each learning guide were designed and written to be as flexible as possible, so that they can be used in many different ways. You can choose one learning guide out of the toolkit to work with, or you can work with all of them at once.

Ideally, if there is a group of people in your community interested in food security and community-led food assessments, you will be able to work through the learning guides together. If someone is particularly familiar with food security issues, and they would like to be a facilitator for the group, they can lead a workshop using the learning guide as a manual and workbook, and help the group work through all the information and activities. Individuals can also use the guide as a personal learning tool – for instance, if someone joins the group after the assessment has started, they can easily read through the learning guide on their own to gain a background understanding of food security and community-led food assessments.

It is suggested that you work through the entire community-led food assessment learning guide, and complete the practice activities, before you begin a community-led food

assessment in your community. Working through the guide as a whole will give you a good perspective and understanding of the entire process of a community-led food assessment, and how all the steps relate to each other. Don't hesitate to bookmark or highlight important sections of the guide so that it can be used as a quick reference manual while you are conducting your assessment.

How is the toolkit organized?

The toolkit is organized into different Learning Guides and Activity Guides. There are 3 core learning guides that are applicable to any community project: The Project Management Learning Guide, the Community Facilitation Learning Guide, and the Project Evaluation Learning Guide. Two additional learning guides have been created specifically on the topics of Food Security and Community Health, and Community-Led Food Assessments. Each learning guide also has an accompanying activity guide where you can record all the work you do as you go through the guides.

How is this learning guide organized?

Each of the learning guides has a table of contents which follows the same format to make the guides easy to navigate, and so that you can easily refer to other guides as needed. The table of contents lists the different sections of the learning guide and can be used as a quick reference to find the sections that are most important to your community.

There are 4 sections in this guide:

Section 1 provides you with the basics about food security, the most important concept to understand when undertaking a community-led food assessment.

Section 2 introduces community-led food assessments, what they are, what they are designed to do, and why you might want to lead one in your community.

Section 3 leads you through all the steps that you will need to follow in order to complete a community-led food assessment. These steps are divided into 3 phases: the *planning* phase, the *assessment* phase, and the *wrap-up* phase.

Section 4 provides some additional resources that might help you in your assessment, and a list of additional references you can look at for more information on community-led food assessments.

Features to look for in the learning guide

The learning guides have been designed to make important information, activities, community examples and other key sections easily identifiable. The following colours and symbols are used to identify specific types of information or activities throughout the toolkit:

Glossary:

A glossary of important terms follows this section. These are terms that are important to know in order to gain a good understanding of community-led food assessments and are used throughout the learning guide. When a term can be found in the glossary, it is **red and bolded.**

Practice Activities:

Practice activities are highlighted in green boxes throughout the learning guides and can be used as a way to practice different activities included in conducting a community-led food assessment. You can also find these practice activities gathered in your Activity Guide, with space to try them out.

Community Examples:

Real examples from past community-led food assessments and food related initiatives in Inuit communities can be found in grey boxes, and will help you see what different parts of a community-led food assessments look like in practice.

Info Boxes:

In the blue boxes you will find extra information about some of the terms used, or about specific topics that are related to the community-led food assessment process.

Reflections and Activities:

This symbol is used to show sections of the learning guide where you will be asked to reflect on some of the information provided. When you see this symbol, you can go to your Activity Guide to find the reflection or activity, and a place to record your answers.

Where you should be by now:

Pink boxes at the end of each major phase of the community-led food assessment process will provide a checklist that you can reference to see if you have accomplished all the steps included in that particular phase, and a list of what you should be reporting to the community.

Glossary of Important Terms

Advisory Committee: An Advisory Committee for a **community-led food assessment** is a group of people who have a particular interest in **food security** in a community, a particular connection to the **food system**, or particular knowledge about food or the food system.   The Advisory Committee will not actually conduct the assessment; rather they are people who can give valuable advice to those who are conducting the assessment.

Assessment: An assessment is a process used to review and understand a situation, and guide decisions about that situation. A community-led assessment takes a community-driven approach to reviewing and understanding a situation or issue that has been identified as important by a community, with the goal of determining decisions to improve that situation or issue (e.g. The community-led food assessment in Hopedale identified 'access to healthy foods' as a major priority, and then developed a plan to expand the community freezer program and create a community gardening program).

Assessment Committee: The Assessment Committee is the group of individuals who work together to plan, conduct, and wrap-up the community-led food assessment. They are the group that will be doing most of the work, and will get advice from the **Advisory Committee.** The core team will sometimes break up into smaller groups (**sub-committees**) to work on specific issues.

Asset and Gap Analysis: An asset and gap analysis is a review of resources in a community to identify strengths that already exist and needs that will have to be filled to address a particular problem (e.g. Issue: **food security** in some households; Asset: community freezer for the storage and distribution of wild foods; Gap: lack of economically accessible (affordable), healthy, nutritious and desired foods in the store).

Baseline Information: Baseline information is information collected at the beginning of a study, or information that is already known before a study begins. This information is what you will use to compare the new information you collect to (e.g. If you wanted to implement a Youth Hunting Education Program in your community, to try and increase the number of youth that are involved in hunting, you would want to know how many youth were hunting BEFORE you created the program and how often they were hunting (this is the baseline information). Then you would want to know how many youth are hunting and how often they are hunting AFTER the program has been implemented. If you don't collect the baseline information, it will be difficult to evaluate the impact of the program, as you would only know what the new level of youth hunting activity was after the program and not what it was before).

Capacity: Generally, individual capacity refers to ability, capability, power, or aptitude of a particular individual. Community capacity is defined in a number of different ways. It can be seen as the ability of a community to organize itself to identify and solve its own problems by using community assets (e.g. residents, associations and institutions) to improve the quality of life for its members. It can also refer to the ability of individuals in a community to participate in collective actions for the benefit of the community. Individuals can take action on community issues as individuals as well as members of community groups, organizations, and networks. Individual and community capacity can be enhanced in many ways – through training on different topics, opportunities to develop and practice skills, education and awareness on different topics, or through the creation of links, partnerships and networks between people and organizations.

Community-Led Food Assessment (CLFA): A community-led food assessment (often referred to in this document as a CLFA or simply as an assessment) is a collaborative and community-driven process that reviews the current status of **food security** in order to develop community-appropriate solutions to improve access to healthy, culturally-appropriate food within a community. It is a critical analysis of a broad range of information about food, which means you will take an in-depth look at all of the things that affect food access in your community. The goal of a CLFA is to help guide decisions and find solutions to improve food security. It will identify local strengths and opportunities associated with the **food system** to develop an action plan to increase access to healthy foods in the community.

Country Foods: Country foods are also referred to as wild or traditional foods. These refer to any foods that have traditionally been part of the Inuit diet and that are fished, hunted, and gathered locally. This may include caribou, walrus, ringed seal, bearded seal, beluga whale, polar bear, berries, and many others.

Environmental Scan: An environmental scan is a process used in project planning and evaluation. The environmental scan is a key step in the CLFA process. The environmental scan in a CLFA thoroughly looks at the community to determine what the current situation is in terms of access to food. The environmental scan asks questions like: how expensive is food? can people afford healthy food? what is the health of the population? what types and how much **country food** is the community eating? It provides a complete picture of the community's **food system.**

Facilitator: Facilitators are individuals who have training, knowledge, interest, and experience with a particular topic. Facilitators work with organizations, individuals, communities, and other groups of people to make sure that everyone's voice and opinion is heard about a topic during a workshop, **focus group**, or other meeting.

Focus Group: A focus group is a research method used to gather information from more than one person at a time. It is usually organized to bring together a group of individuals to discuss a particular issue or project. The discussion is led by a **facilitator** who prompts the group with questions.

Food Security: Food security is a term used to describe whether a person or a group of people (a group can be a household, a community, a country) have access to food. A group is food secure when "all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food to maintain a healthy and active life[7]" Food security is discussed in more detail in Section 1.

Food Insecurity: Food insecurity is the opposite of food security. Many different tools have been developed to measure food insecurity, and they do so in different ways. Generally, it is said that food insecurity exists when one or many of the conditions for food security are not being met. Food insecurity can exist at different levels – it can be described as mild, severe, or somewhere in between.

Food System: The food system is everything involved in feeding a population. This includes growing, harvesting, processing, transporting, purchasing, consuming, and disposing of foods and food products.

Goal Setting: In terms of the **community-led food assessment**, this is referring to the **Assessment Committee** setting goals for the assessment with input and advice from the **Advisory Committee.** It is important for both of these groups to agree on the common goals

of the community-led food assessment. The main question here is: what are we hoping to gain for ourselves (our families, our friends, our neighbours) and for our community by conducting a community-led food assessment?

Indicator: Indicators are measurements that can be used to demonstrate the status of social, economic, and environmental conditions within a community[4]. Indicators are the pieces of information or data needed during an assessment to understand the overall situation in the community (e.g. the number of active hunters in a community could be one indicator of how much **country food** is available in a community).

Priority Setting: In terms of the **community-led food assessment**, this refers to deciding which **food security** priorities are the most important and are determined with the participation of the entire community.

Sub-Committee: A collection of people who work on a particular part of the project. A sub-committee might be made up of **Assessment Committee** members only, or Assessment Committee members and volunteers. A particular sub-committee might also interact with someone specific from the **Advisory Committee** (For instance, if a few members of the Assessment Committee decide to form a sub-committee that will work specifically on promotion and reporting for the assessment, they might find volunteers who are particularly interested in helping with this aspect, and they might ask for the advice of someone on the Advisory Committee that has experience with promotion and report writing).

Sustainability: Put most simply, sustainability means the ability of something to maintain itself or to keep going in the long-term. In relation to the **community-led food assessment**, when we talk about sustainable solutions, or sustainable programs, we mean programs that will be able to keep running even after the community-led food assessment is over (For instance, through the assessment, your committee runs a greenhouse, and the coordinator is paid to take care of it, to grow food, and to give that food to the community. This is a great solution that will help community members access healthy fruits and vegetables. However, what will happen to the greenhouse once the assessment is over and the coordinator is no longer paid to take care of it? Will someone else step in? If there is no long-term plan, then this might be a good short-term solution, but it is not a sustainable one).

PHASE 3:   **Wrapping-Up your Community-Led Food Assessment: How do I implement the action plan?**

SECTION 4   **RESOURCES**

INTRODUCTION TO FOOD SECURITY

In this section, you will become familiar with the concept of food security, and what food security means in the context of your community. You will learn about factors that affect food security, and be invited to reflect on whether or not food security is an issue in your community.

INTRODUCTION TO FOOD SECURITY

1.1 What does "food security" mean?

"Food Security" is a term that is being used more and more in research, in politics, and in the media to describe whether a specific group of people has consistent access tow enough healthy foods.

☑ Have you heard the term "food security" before? Where did you hear it? What definition of the term was being used?

There are many different definitions that are used, but most include the same key elements. For the purposes of this toolkit[6], and **community-led food assessments**, the following definition will be used: Food security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food to maintain a healthy and active life. What this means for Inuit communities is that a group is food secure when all people at all times have:

Enough food to eat: everyone has access to enough food to meet their daily nutritional requirements

Healthy and nutritious food: everyone has access to nutritious foods such as **country foods,** fruits, and vegetables, that meet their basic needs for an active and healthy lifestyle

Affordable food: everyone can afford to either purchase or harvest these foods, without resorting to emergency food programs (food banks, food basket programs, etc.)

Culturally appropriate and desired food: everyone has access to the types of foods they want to eat, and are able to obtain them in culturally appropriate ways (for instance, having access to wild/country/traditional foods through traditional food sharing networks)

Food insecurity is the opposite of food security, and exists when any of these conditions are not present for all members of a given group. Food insecurity can mean different things to different people. For one person it can mean not being

able to afford enough food. For another it might mean not having the knowledge and skills they need to prepare healthy meals for themselves or their family. For another it might mean being worried about whether or not there will be enough food to feed the community in the future due to increased shipping costs or changes in the environment. Whatever the definition, food insecurity is a serious issue and can become very stressful, worrisome, and unhealthy for individuals, families, and communities.

1.2 What does food security look like?

Too often, Inuit eat less **country foods**, and eat store food because store foods are more readily available, and occasionally because of preference. Ultimately, it would be ideal for Inuit to have access to good, nutritious food from both land and sea and from local stores to support a healthy community. But this is not always possible. When the challenges around accessing food are examined closely, the issues affecting **food insecurity** come to light and help you and your team to begin the process of a **community-led food assessment**.

Before you can start looking at challenges around **food security** though, it is important to know what you are working towards, what food security would look like in your community.

When asking yourself "what does food security look like?", you are trying to come up with the best possible scenario for food in your community. You are trying to envision the specific things that make a community food secure, that make a community healthy. Now that you know what food security means, take some time to reflect on what specific things you would see in your community to demonstrate that it is food secure.

Think about each element of food security, and what they look like.
- *Everyone having enough food to eat:* How much is enough? Where is the food coming from? How is everyone accessing food?
- *Everyone has access to healthy and nutritious food:* Which foods are these? How are people getting access to them?
- *Everyone can afford the food they need:* What food needs to be more affordable? How can food be made affordable for families who cannot currently afford it?
- *Everyone has access to culturally appropriate and desired food:* Which foods are these? How are people accessing them?

1.3 What factors affect food security?

There are many factors that can influence whether a community is food secure or food insecure. These factors can occur at the community level, and also at a much broader level. Some common factors that affect **food security** in Inuit communities include:

The cost of **country foods** and store bought foods

The cost of hunting and fishing

The availability of foods in the store

The cost of shipping food to northern communities

The nutritional value of store bought foods (whether foods are healthy or not)

Not knowing how to prepare or cook with store bought foods that are shipped from the south

Environmental contaminants affecting sources of country foods

Changes in climate and wildlife patterns

Access to food storage facilities (community freezer, personal or family freezer, etc.)

Access to community support networks, including friends and family, for food sharing

Here is an example of how community level factors have a positive effect on food security in the Inuit community of Hopedale, Nunatsiavut:

1.4 Community Example:
Community Food Security in Hopedale, Nunatsiavut

Community food production in Hopedale consists primarily of harvesting wild foods, such as caribou, salmon, char, geese, duck, berries, and others. These wild foods play a significant role in the diets of residents. In addition to being an important source of nutrition in the community, wild food harvesting is an important part of culture in Hopedale and other communities along the Nunatsiavut coast. Wild/**country food** is harvested from the land, sea, lakes, rivers and air with Inuit skills and knowledge having a major role in this practice[5]. Passing on Inuit knowledge to youth is key to cultural preservation and tradition, including knowledge and practice around harvesting and using wild foods. Food sharing also plays an important role in wild/country/traditional food practices: 8 out of every 10 Inuit households share food with others in the community. This practice keeps family and community ties strong[5].

What factors affect food security in your community? Remember that some factors may affect food security negatively, while others might affect it positively (for example, the availability of foods in the store can be very good, or very poor).

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY-LED FOOD ASSESSMENTS

In this chapter, you will become familiar with community-led food assessments. You will discover what community food assessments are meant to do, when they are used, and be invited to reflect on the utility of leading a food assessment in your own community.

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY-LED FOOD ASSESSMENTS

Community-led food assessment = CLFA
Throughout this document, CLFA will be used for short, instead of writing out 'community-led food assessment'.

2.1 What is a community-led food assessment?

Assessment
⬇
Community-led assessment
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Community food assessment
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Community-led food assessment

To assess something means to evaluate, to make a judgment, to determine. An **assessment** is a process used to review and understand a situation, and guide decisions about that situation.

A community-led assessment is a critical analysis of information with the goal of guiding decisions on a situation that has been identified by a community as an important issue to address. It is conducted through an open and transparent process, so that everyone can participate in the process, and see how the assessment was completed and where the solutions came from.

A community food assessment is a critical analysis of a broad range of information about food in your community, with the goal of guiding decisions and finding solutions to improving **food security**.

A **community-led food assessment** is led by community members for the community.

Community-led food assessments are:

COLLABORATIVE: **people involved work together to make decisions and find solutions**
PARTICIPATORY: **all residents of the community have the opportunity to participate in the assessment, and**
COMMUNITY-OWNED: **information gathered and actions implemented from the assessment are shared and owned by the community**

By taking this approach, community-led food assessments recognize that Inuit communities have unique perspectives and solutions to bring to food security challenges faced by their own communities, and that solutions can come from everyone in the community, not only a few people. Community-led food assessments use local knowledge to develop a plan to increase access to healthy and desired foods in a way that is appropriate for that community.

The assessment is also important for collecting information on a range of issues about food in the community, also known as **food system** issues. Some issues that might be looked at include:

- *Where does the community's food come from?*
- *How do people get food?*
- *How do people make a living to afford food?*
- *What do people eat?*
- *What do people want to eat?*

A good assessment not only identifies the needs of a community, but also provides a thorough understanding of the food situation, the factors at play, and how they interact to affect food security. The assessment provides this understanding by involving significant community participation, and focusing on creating positive change[1].

Significant community participation:
The main principle of a community-led food assessment is that the participating community and its residents are more than simply consulted in the process; you become a partner in the development of a plan to address concerns that are raised by the community.

Focus on positive change:
The community-led food assessment approach reflects ways in which communities can work together to improve food security within their local regions. Assessments are completed in a collaborative way so that groups work together to complete long-term action oriented planning.

A well planned, well conducted, and well wrapped-up assessment will help to build a healthy and **sustainable** food system for your community[1].

A **community-led food assessment** is much more than an information-gathering process. It is an organizing and planning process that involves building relationships, deciding what is important, leading the community in a good direction, and developing skills among members of your community[1]. In the end, it is about making informed decisions that will improve **food security** in your community[2]. These processes can generate many benefits, such as more community involvement, increased collaboration on issues, a sense of community ownership of **food systems**, and increased community **capacity** to take action on local food issues.

Some of the benefits of a community-led food assessment are linked to participation in a process that:

Identifies issues and opportunities

Develops plans to solve or address them

Decides on an action

Does something to effect change

Ultimately, an assessment can lead to important changes in your community's food system. Some changes might include: better food access, increased financial opportunities, and improved public health[1]. It is also a way to create interactions between community elders and youth to help strengthen cultural ties and understanding of traditional knowledge.

Benefits of a community-led food assessment can include[2]:

Improved programming in the community for food issues

Positive change in local, regional, and provincial policies affecting food security

Increased awareness of local food security issues

Strong partnerships developed inside and outside the community

Increased community participation in food security programs and activities

Improved food skills in the community, including traditional food skills

*Strengthened **sustainability** in the community food system*

A community-led food assessment is directly supportive of developing a healthy community, where residents can earn a living, do the things they love to do, and can get the food they need. A healthy community is a place where people feel connected to each other and feel they are a part of the community. Healthy communities are a result of supportive actions and policies that consider social and health issues in all decisions. A community-led food assessment helps develop this kind of community[6].

☑ How do you define a healthy community?
How does food relate to this?

2.3   What are the key elements of a community-led food assessment?

A community-led food assessment[2]:

- *Examines a range of local food issues*

- *Involves a variety of different members including community, public sectors (such as governments and schools), and private sectors (such as businesses and institutions)*

- *Fosters the use of local knowledge*

- *Engages youth, adults, and elders in the process and allows people to take an active role in addressing and improving **food security** in their community*

- *Focuses on community strengths*

- *Identifies community needs*

- *Uses different ways to collect information that is appropriate for the*

community (e.g. surveys, discussions, questionnaires, local knowledge). See Community example 2.5 below

- *Is completed in a reasonable amount of time, but does take time (e.g. a short-term assessment might be completed in under a year and long-term one over a few years)*
- *Is based on a collaborative approach, with participants working as a team to make decisions and implement actions[1]*
- *Requires significant resources to plan and implement, including human, physical and financial resources.*

Conducting an assessment is a way to explore and understand the connections that food (country and store food) has with communities, in regards to quality of life, food security, equality, and other community values[1]. For instance, many Inuit communities value **country foods** and believe that country foods should be accessible to all community members when it is available. An assessment helps promote awareness about how to develop a food system that will reflect shared values and meet community goals and needs.

2.4 What are the outcomes of a community-led food assessment?

Community-led food assessments can:

- *Highlight the connections between various kinds of **food system** activities, such as hunting, processing, storage and distribution[1], to provide an understanding of how the food system works as a whole*
- *Highlight local resources that can be used to increase local food management and build up other community strengths[1]*
- *Link people, culture, and resources. Assessments focus on a geographically defined place, from a particular group of people, to a community, to a region, and help to connect people in the region to their resources*
- *Increase community awareness of issues related to **food security***
- *Identify the specific actions needed to make positive change related to food security in the community*
- *Develop recommendations and support for concrete actions to improve the food system and enhance community food security[1]*
- *Build skills and **capacity** within a community*
- *Provide the knowledge and coordination to implement sustainable solutions to improve food security in a community*

2.5 Community Example:
Happy Valley-Goose Bay Children's Community Garden

Through completing a **community-led food assessment** in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador in 2010 several new community programs were established, including a children's community garden program. The program included two components, seed starting with students at two schools in the community, and the establishment of a new community garden space dedicated to children.

About 150 students from the Grade 2 class at Peacock Elementary and the grade 4 class at Queen of Peace Middle School started and tended seedlings right in their classrooms until the plants were ready to be transplanted into the new Children's Community Garden for the summer months. Peacock Elementary received $1,000 from a community wellness grant to purchase seeds, soil, and a three tiered grow station capable of holding 750 seedlings.

The children grew lettuces, chives, lemon balm, mint, stevia, oregano, butterfly bushes (for a butterfly education program), ground cherries, strawberries, tomatoes, pumpkins, zucchini, potatoes, broccoli, beans and more. Flower seedlings were also started for a flower bed surrounding the vegetable garden. When the seedlings were ready the students from both schools were bussed to the garden over two days for planting.

During the summer months, the garden partnered with the town's Summer Recreational Program, and about 60 children in the program helped out by watering and composting the garden three times a week. Once a week, they would attend a workshop or special activity, including a butterfly education workshop, learning about lady bugs, composting, and learning to prepare healthy meals.

To learn more about the Happy Valley-Goose Bay Children's Community Garden, listen to a teleconference presentation by Jill Airhart, program coordinator from the Food Security Network NL website, here: http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/teleconferences.html

To watch a video highlighting Peacock Primary and the Children's Garden through the Our Greener Future Program of MMSB, visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKwnVT3VULU&lr=1

2.6 Practice Activity:
The Potential Benefits of a Community-Led Food Assessment

Brainstorm some benefits that you think could come out of conducting a community-led food assessment in your community.

- Why would your community want to do a **community-led food assessment**?
- What current issues in your community could be addressed through a community-led food assessment?
- What changes would you hope to see take place in your community?

When thinking about these questions, think about changes that will need to take place in other areas of the community to support positive changes in the **food system**. Consider how the following important areas of communities are related to improving **food security**:

- The education system
- The health situation in your community
- The economic situation
- Recreation in the community
- Cultural knowledge, skills and activities
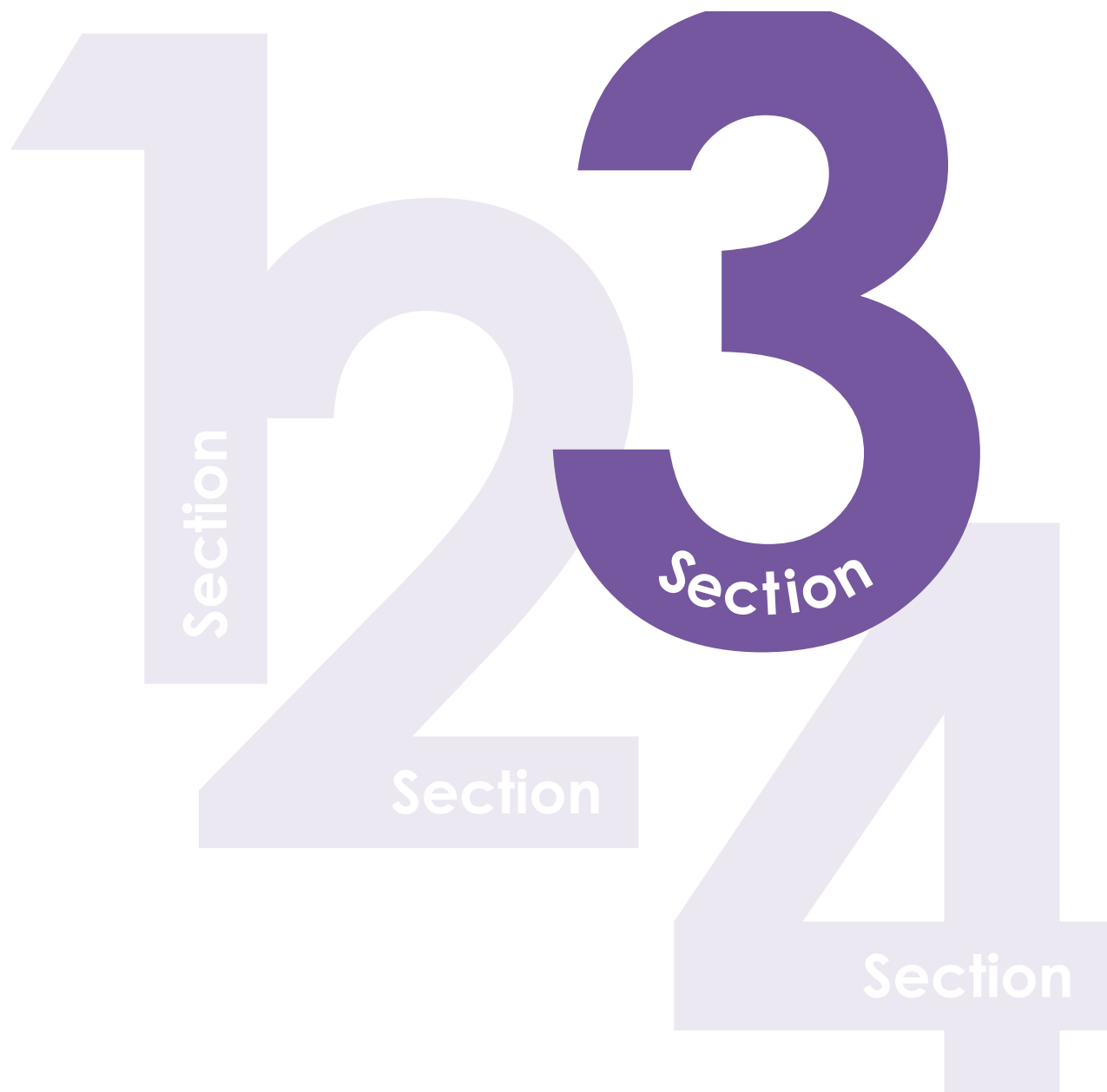
'HOW TO' GUIDE: CONDUCTING A CLFA IN YOUR COMMUNITY

This section takes you through the three phases involved in completing a community-led food assessment in your community. You will understand how to plan, conduct, and wrap-up a CLFA in your community, including putting together the committees that will do the work, engaging the community's participation, identifying the community's needs and ways to address those, and determining how you will evaluate the success of the actions.

'HOW TO' GUIDE: CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY-LED FOOD ASSESSMENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Now that you are familiar with the concept of **food security** and **community-led food assessments**, this section will guide you through the process of conducting a CLFA in your community. The process has been broken up into 3 phases:

Phase 1:	The planning phase (4 steps)
Phase 2:	The assessment phase (6 steps)
Phase 3:	The wrap-up phase (3 steps)

Each phase has a short series of steps to follow. Remember that each community-led food assessment will be unique to the community in which it takes place. This might mean that you feel you need to change or adapt some steps to fit your community better. This guide simply provides a general outline of an easy to follow method for leading an assessment.

PHASE 1: Planning for a Community-Led Food Assessment: What do I need to set up before beginning?

This section outlines the planning phase of a **community-led food assessment**. Community-led food assessments are not about borrowing the solutions of one community and bringing them to another, but rather are about members of a community discovering its own solutions to effect change. The success of a community-led food assessment depends greatly on the people involved. Much of the planning phase is about getting the right people together and preparing them to begin the community-led food assessment.

Community-led food assessments require many different groups of people. Assessments can start in many different ways, with a lot or even a little bit of community participation. One or several groups could take the lead and you can invite others to join later. For example, a group of organizations that has already worked together might decide to conduct an assessment. Or, an assessment

could begin with a small group of interested community members helping to decide what the focus should be[1]. All of these are valid approaches that can result in a successful assessment and action plan.

It is good to think about the different types of people you would want to be involved in a CLFA in your community. It is a good idea to try to include some of the following types of people, as well as any others important to your community, as they will have unique perspectives to bring to the process:

- *Youth*
- *Elders*
- *Single parents*
- *Hunters*
- *Community youth workers*
- *Town council members*
- *Teachers*
- *Health workers*

You will find as you continue through a community-led food assessment that you may need to form different committees and sub-committees as needed. It is important that you find a formula that works for you, your community, and your assessment. For the purpose of this guide, it focuses on 3 different types of committees that are important to consider when planning your assessment:

- **Assessment Committee** *(Core group of people from within the community who will meet regularly and do most of the work involved in the CLFA)*

- **Sub-Committees** *(Breakout groups that have a specific focus on a particular issue, or task)*

- **Advisory Committee** *(Group of people who will provide advice and guidance to the assessment committee)*

The steps that are generally included in the Planning Phase of a community-led food assessment include:

Step 1:	*Putting together an Assessment Committee*
Step 2:	*Putting together an Advisory Committee*
Step 3:	*Defining a purpose and scope for your assessment*
Step 4:	*Determining the nature of community involvement*

3.1 Practice Activity:
Who Should be Involved in Your CLFA?

Think about who from your community should be involved in the **community-led food assessment**. What skills, knowledge, and experiences would you like the participants from the community to offer? Make a list of **people** from your community that you think may be interested in being part of a CLFA in your community (e.g. community health worker or nurse, respected local hunter, science teacher, etc.).

Think about particular groups that should not be excluded from the CLFA (youth, elders, etc). Make a list of **groups** you want to make sure are included, and represented within the assessment.

Think about different **organizations** in your community that are involved in the **food system** directly or indirectly. Make a list of organizations that may be interested in participating in the CLFA (e.g. local community government, local stores, HTOs).

TIP

Keep this list handy. In the first parts of this section, you will be talking about all the different groups you need to form as part of your assessment, and you may find you want to add to this list!

3.2 Info Box:
Before You Get Started….Document, document, document!

Documenting – writing down, recording, keeping track of – the work that you are doing is a very important process to keep in mind right from the beginning. Most **community-led food assessments** result in a detailed community food report outlining all of the information about the assessment process, the findings, and the developed community food action plan. A little bit of effort in terms of keeping track of what is being done at each step will save you a lot of time when you are reporting at the end of your assessment.

Things to think about:

1   **What kind of information will you want to put in your final community food report?**

Think about the different pieces you want in the report, and write them down when that step is completed. How were the Committees created? What were their roles?

2   **Who will be responsible for documenting each different step?**

An easy way to make sure that documentation is taking place is to assign a specific person with the task of documenting each step. Assign someone to take minutes at the meetings; keep track of all the collected information; take photos at meetings and events, etc.

3   **Where will the documented information be kept?**

It is good to keep all the materials and documents related to the assessment in one central location. Will everything be saved on a computer or a server? Is there an office that the **Assessment Committee** can work out of?

4   **Pictures speak louder than words.**

Photos can add a lot to your presentations and reports. You will be happy to have photos of all the different steps of your assessment (meetings, interviews, outreach events) so that you can showcase all the great work that you and your team have done.

TIP   **Refer to the Project Management Handbook, Section 3.2.8 for more information and tips about documenting, and for a list of equipment that can be helpful when documenting a process like a CLFA.**

Step 1: Putting together an Assessment Committee

What is an Assessment Committee?

An **Assessment Committee** is a core team of interested, committed, and diverse individuals, who will be leading the process of the **community-led food assessment**. Organizing a core team is one of the most important aspects of the process. Your Assessment Committee will:

Determine the shape of the assessment and set initial goals

Decide who to involve in the process

Be responsible for carrying out the assessment and implementing any follow-up actions[1]

The Assessment Committee usually makes and carries out day-to-day decisions that follow from the broad goals they identified in the goal setting process (see step 2). **This group coordinates the planning process, gives shape to the final assessment design, records action items, brings questions to the Advisory Committee for advice and input, raises funds, and carries out the activities of the assessment[1].** This smaller group includes people who can commit significant time to the process and who have specific skills needed for the assessment (planning skills, interview skills, coordination skills).

Specific individuals will need to fill certain roles on the team for it to be successful. Often, a coordinator is chosen to lead the assessment and represent the team as a whole when needed. In some cases, where funding is available, this is a paid position that is filled by one or two individuals. A **facilitator** should be chosen to conduct **focus groups** with community members and lead the community meetings that will take place throughout the assessment (discussed in Phase 2).

Who should be on the Assessment Committee?

Participating in an assessment, especially as a member of the Assessment Committee, involves a significant commitment of time and energy. It is important to take the time to recruit a broad group of participants with diverse skills and expertise who are able to dedicate that time, and are able to commit to seeing the assessment through to the end.

It is highly encouraged that the Assessment Committee be comprised entirely of respected and engaged community members from your local community, however, some community-led food assessments have benefited from recruiting outside researchers or consultants to help with completing the stages of the assessment. If your community chooses to engage outside participants, it is important to ensure that the approach taken is appropriate for your community

and that the action plans developed reflect the interests and opinions heard from your community through the assessment.

If one or two individuals are being selected to be the lead coordinators of the assessment, it is important to choose someone who is respected and trusted by the rest of the team, as well as by the community.

Below are some criteria to consider when forming the Assessment Committee:

A. Commitment

The Assessment Committee is the group of people responsible for conducting the CLFA and seeing it through from formation to the development of concrete plans to improve **food security**. It is critical for the success of the assessment that the people on the Assessment Committee be committed and willing to dedicate the time needed to complete the assessment.

B. Community representation

Those who live and work in the community are critical to the assessment process. Seek out people who are involved in the community, respected as leaders, and have an investment in the outcomes of a food assessment[1]. These could include, but are not limited to, community representatives, community leader (mayor, AngajukKâk, etc.), or hamlet worker, church members, elders and youth, store managers, hunter and trapper representatives and teachers.

C. Availability

Consistent participation and follow-through are important for the continuity and success of the assessment process. Anyone who will be involved as an Assessment Committee member should understand the process, the timeline, and their role, and consider whether they can commit to participating for the duration of the assessment.

3.3 Practice Activity:
Who Do You Want on Your Assessment Committee?

Take out the list you created through Practice Activity 3.1.
Is there anyone else that should be added to the list?
Who on that list should be invited to be involved in the Assessment Committee?
On your Assessment Committee, do you have:

- Representatives from groups that may be affected by the assessment?
- People who will be involved in providing information for the assessment?
- Key community leaders who have decision-making authority or can influence decision-makers?

Why and how should you document the process?

As you are putting together your core Assessment Committee, it is a good idea to have someone take down minutes of all your meetings. Keep track of who was at the meetings, who was unable to attend the meetings, how decisions were made, and who was invited to be part of the Assessment Committee and why.

It is also a good idea to start putting together a list of important contacts for the assessment right from the beginning. As you start to put together your committees, it is likely that many people will show interest in being involved in different ways and parts of the assessment. If you start from the beginning to keep track of everyone who shows interest or volunteers, and what they would like to be involved in, it will be much easier to try and include everyone, and to find volunteers when you need them.

3.4 Info Box:
How to Take Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes are a written record of a meeting. It is very important to have these written records, as they will help your committee keep track of what decisions are made, how and why those decisions are made, and what actions need to be taken after each meeting.

Meeting minutes are a very useful tool to refer back to when writing reports, or when someone new joins the team and you want to update them on everything the committee has done so far.

How to take the minutes:

- It is important to designate one person before each meeting who will take the minutes
- This person can write information down with a pen and paper or can use a laptop to type them
- If all participants agree to be recorded, you can audio record your meeting and someone can listen to it later to write down the minutes. This option allows you to pause and rewind while you type up the minutes. But, this may not be the best option since not everyone likes being recorded, and it can take much longer this way (there is a higher chance that you will forget or won't have time to listen to the recording to write down the minutes, and it is much easier for someone wanting to look back at the meeting to look at a document then it is to listen to a recording).
- Meeting minutes should always be typed up into a standard format (see the example in Section 4.1.4). They should always be sent around to everyone who was present at the meeting, so that they can verify and make sure that everything in the minutes is accurate. They should also be sent to people who were absent from the meeting so that they are up to date and know what happened at the meeting. This should be done as soon as possible after the meeting.

There are a few key elements that should be recorded during each meeting:

- Name of the committee or organization
- Type of meeting
- Date and time of the meeting
- Location of the meeting
- Who is present
- Who is absent
- Decisions made at the meeting
- Actions that need to be taken and who is responsible for them (this should be highlighted in the minutes so that everyone takes special note of them).

Tips for taking meeting minutes:

- For big meetings, use a sign-in sheet to make sure you know who is present
- Don't write down too much detail, only the major discussion points
- Put the agenda at the top of your notes, and use the agenda as an outline for the minutes
- Highlight all the actions in bold, and make a list of them at the bottom of the minutes so that they can easily be found
- Use bullet points to make it quicker, they don't have to be typed in full sentences
- Review and edit them as soon as possible while they are still fresh in your memory

PHASE 1 | Step 2: Putting together an Advisory Committee

What is an Advisory Committee?

Once the **Assessment Committee** is formed, other key partners and individuals who might be able to provide guidance and support should be identified. These organizations and individuals can be approached to be part of an **Advisory Committee**.

An Advisory Committee is typically much larger than the Assessment Committee, and is created to help the Assessment Committee make decisions about the **community-led food assessment** and provide support for actions taken by the Assessment Committee. The Advisory Committee will not meet as often, and usually will not participate in the day to day activities of the assessment that need to be completed.

Once the Advisory Committee is selected and in place, it will:

- *Provide advice on the overall direction of the assessment*
- *Provide some assistance in carrying out the research*
- *Identify and help access resources*
- *Help to design action strategies based on the assessment findings[1]*

In some cases the Advisory Committee has the authority to make decisions on its own, and in others, it simply provides guidance and suggestions to the Assessment Committee so that they may make the most informed decisions. The relationship between the Advisory Committee and the Assessment Committee will need to be established based on the structure of the assessment and people involved in your community.

Advisory Committee members are usually linked to networks of formal or informal power and influence in the community, and should include community residents. The size of the Advisory Committee depends on the structure of the assessment, length of the process, resources available, and other considerations that are specific to your community.

The Advisory Committee needs enough members to achieve diverse representation, but should not be so large that it is hard to hold a meeting and be productive. Such a group might meet once a month or bi-monthly depending on the timeframe of the community-led food assessment[1].

Who should be on an Advisory Committee?

The goal of the Advisory Committee is to provide advice on key decisions that will help guide the community-led food assessment. It will be important that the Advisory Committee is formed to represent the community well, and to provide advice that will best support your community-led food assessment.

Advisory Committee participants can include representatives from local, regional, or provincial governments, local businesses, community health workers, not for profit organizations, and community-based organizations[1] (such as food banks, after school programs, school nutrition programs, community gardens, etc.), universities, and other interested individuals. Ideally, representatives should have both an individual and organizational interest in participating. This means that they are personally interested in seeing a successful community-led food assessment happen in their community, and that their organization values the assessment and will support it by permitting staff involvement and providing other resources.

Below are some criteria to consider when forming the Advisory Committee:

A. Community representation
Those who live and work in the community are critical to the assessment process. Seek out people who are involved in the community, respected as leaders, and have an investment in the outcomes of a food assessment[1]. These could include, but are not limited to, community health representatives, community leader (mayor, AngajukKâk, etc.), or hamlet worker, church members, elders and youth, store managers, hunter and trapper representatives and teachers.

B. Diversity
Representation from diverse groups (such as store owners, elders, and hunters) in the community helps make an assessment effective. By bringing in different perspectives it helps the group to think creatively and build support systems for follow-up purposes[1].

C. Expertise and experience

A broad range of knowledge and skills among participants will increase the group's resourcefulness and its ability to move forward. This expertise can include understanding of the community or food issues; skills in research; or background in community organizing, decision making, and program development. Having a good mix of skills in the team is important[1].

D. Availability

Consistent participation and follow-through are important for the continuity and success of the assessment process. Anyone who will be significantly involved should understand the process, the timeline, and their role, and consider whether they can commit to participating for the duration of the assessment. It is especially important to be respectful of the time of volunteers, and to consider their needs when scheduling meetings and assessment work[1].

Consider having the following groups of people involved as part of your Assessment and Advisory Committees:

Local Governments:
Local government officials will be familiar with current policies and programs that affect food and **food security** in the community, and will bring that valuable information to the table.

Regional and Provincial Governments:
Regional and provincial governments will also bring a good perspective, and information about the policies, programs and guidelines that exist at a regional and provincial level. Consider connecting with particular departments to be involved in the Advisory Committee, such as departments of Health, Education, Lands, and Natural Resources.

Local Businesses:
Local business owners will have unique perspectives. They may raise issues that no one else in the community has to deal with, or that others are not aware of. It is valuable to have them at the table so that they can contribute to the discussion of possible solutions.

Not for Profit Groups:
Not for profit groups can also bring valuable expertise to the table, as well as other resources. Look for groups that particularly have a mandate that relates to food, or other parts of the **food system** (health, education, economy).

Community Groups:
Representatives from community groups (such as youth groups, elders groups, new mothers groups, etc.) can bring unique perspectives. They will be able to bring forth the opinions and raise the concerns of groups that may otherwise be forgotten or omitted.

Universities:
Partnering with a trusted researcher at a university can be very beneficial, as universities often have access to a lot of resources such as funding and research expertise.

Remember:
The Assessment Committee will be the group of people representing the CLFA process in the community, and will be the group that other community members look to with questions and to become involved. The most important factor in a successful Assessment Committee is strong commitment from its members! Be sure you find a committed and consistent team who are dedicated to the CLFA.

3.5 Practice Activity:
Who Do You Want on Your Advisory Committee?

Take out your list from the Practice Activity 3.1.

Is there anyone you would like to add to the list?

Who on that list do you think should be invited to be part of the **Advisory Committee**?

On your Advisory Committee, do you have:
- Representatives from groups that may be affected by the assessment?
- People who will be involved in providing information for the assessment?
- Key community leaders who have decision-making authority or can influence decision-makers?
- Representatives from the community?

Why and how should you document the process?

It will be important, for reporting and for record keeping, to have clear documentation of how the Advisory Committee was formed, who was invited to participate, and what each organization is contributing.

Things like how often the committee will meet, how decisions will be made, who has final decision making authority (the Assessment Committee, the Advisory Committee, etc) should also be documented and distributed to all members of the committees, so that everyone's roles and responsibilities are clear right from the beginning.

PHASE 1 | Step 3: Defining a purpose and scope for your assessment

Before beginning the assessment, it is a good idea to have a meeting with your **Assessment Committee** and **Advisory Committee** to decide on the scope and the purpose of your **community-led food assessment**.

This step is to ensure there is a clear purpose for the assessment. There needs to be a reason why the assessment is being done and what will be achieved by conducting the assessment[2].

Purpose of the Community-Led Food Assessment – Why is it being done?

Everyone on the Assessment Committee and on the Advisory Committee should be invited to reflect on the purpose of conducting a community-led food assessment. To help with this reflection, you can lead a discussion with the committee members, and invite them to think and talk about the following questions:

1. *Why is the assessment being done?*
2. *What do you want to achieve with the assessment?*
3. *Will the assessment address specific groups? For instance, will there be a particular focus on infants? On youth? On young mothers? Or on the elderly?*
4. *Is the assessment going to be broad (looking at all aspects of the food system) or more focused (looking at only a few specific issues)?*
5. *Is the assessment collecting new information or creating **baseline information?***

If this is the first assessment of its kind taking place in your community, you might want to collect a broad base of information to capture all aspects of the **food system**, which can be used for future comparisons. If you already have access to a lot of baseline information about your community's food system, you might want to focus on a few key aspects of the food system to compare how things have changed and determine opportunities for further community action.

Committee goal setting

Once you have thought about and discussed these considerations, you can start to brainstorm specific goals and outcomes that you would like to see come out of the assessment.

Examples of goals might include:

- *More community **food security** programs*
- *More traditional skills training opportunities*
- *Greater access to wild/**country foods***
- *Educating youth about healthy eating*
- *Increased community **capacity** for food production*

These are only a few examples, and remember that goals might be very different between communities based on the specific needs of each community. The key question here is: "What are we hoping to gain for ourselves (our families, our friends, our neighbours) and our community by conducting a community-led food assessment?"

Try the following practice activity to help your team identify the most important goals.

3.6 Practice Activity:
Developing Your CLFA Goals

Think back to the reflection exercise in Section 1.2 that asked you to consider what **food security** looks like in your community. Use these reflections to start to engage Committee members in identifying broad goals for the CLFA.

Have each member of the **Assessment Committee** and **Advisory Committee** brainstorm a list of 5 long-term goals that they would like to achieve through the **community-led food assessment**. Consider the following questions, what does food security mean to you? What things need to be achieved in order to attain food security for everyone in your community?

Using the table below as a guide, create your own table to organize your goals. For each goal you identified, decide if it is high, medium, or low importance and then decide how difficult it would be to implement these goals.

TIP

You can use an exercise like this at the first core team meeting or for community member meetings, to help participants identify and present their goals.

Importance	Implementation		
	Easy	Medium	Hard
High			
Medium			
Low			

e.g. school programs, community freezers, cooking workshops

Now go back to this table and underline in red the top 3 goals you would like to see happen. By having everyone identify their top 3 goals, you can see which ones are the most important for your community. You may not be able to attain all the goals that are mentioned, but you can focus on the most important, or urgent ones.

Once everyone has identified their top goals, ask everyone to tell the group what their top 3 goals are. Write them on a chalkboard or flipchart so everyone can see them. Every time someone mentions a goal that is already up on the board, add a checkmark beside it. At the end of the exercise you will be able to see which goals are the most important to the group as a whole by looking at which were mentioned by the largest number of people.

As goals are reviewed, it is valuable to step back to see if other important goals

may need to be included. It is important to consider whether there are other members of the community who can help with these missing goals and who should be invited to participate on one of the committees . You can repeat this exercise with different groups of people to help you understand how different people in the community see food issues and how people prioritize their goals. This process can also be used later in the assessment process when you organize community meetings to identify community members' priorities (see Phase 1, Step 4 – Determining the nature of community involvement).

Scope of the assessment – How big will your CLFA be?

Community-led food assessments come in many shapes and sizes. Now that you have a prioritized list of goals, you should consider what the scope of your assessment will be. Defining the scope means deciding what will be and what won't be included in your community-led food assessment - deciding how big it will be. The following are a few questions that will help guide your Assessment Committee in defining the scope of your assessment:

1 – Is there a deadline by which the CLFA must be done?

If so, this may limit the size of the assessment you are able to conduct. If there is no set deadline, the Assessment Committee may want to decide on a target completion date.

2 – What is the overall budget for the assessment?

What funds are available? What other resources are available? The size of the overall budget may impact how big the assessment can be. InfoBox 3.7 introduces some information on the importance of budgeting in your assessment.

3 – What type of information will need to be collected? How much research will need to be done?

4 – How big is the community? How many people do you expect to be involved?

A fundamental principle of a community-led food assessment is community participation; therefore, the size of the community, and how many people will be participating, can impact how big the assessment is.

If your team can answer these questions, you should now have a pretty good idea of what the scope and primary goals of the assessment will be.

3.7 Info Box:
Budgets, Money and Funding

Does the project already have money?
In some cases, you will be coming into a project that already has a project budget with some funding. In other cases, you will not have any funding at all, and may want to look for some. If no funding exists for the project, and there are no resources to find any, you may also want to design your CLFA on the assumption that there will not be any funding. Without any funding, you will be relying completely on volunteers, and donations of materials, resources, space, and people's time. This can be very challenging, but not impossible!

The importance of budgeting
Whether your project has a little bit of money, or a lot, it is very important to develop a budget. A budget is basically a very detailed plan about how you will spend the money, and how much of it you can spend on each task.

For more information about finding funding, and managing budgets, take a look at the Project Management learning guide that is part of this toolkit.

Setting a timeline

At this point, it might be useful for the team to put together an initial timeline for the assessment. In your timeline identify the following things:

- *A start date, and a target completion date*
- *Some key landmark dates with goals that you would like to have achieved by then (try setting specific goals for every month, or every couple of months, depending on the length of your assessment)*
- *Potential meeting dates for the Advisory Committee and Assessment Committee*

A timeline will help keep track of tasks in your assessment that should be completed, tasks that you should be working on at the present time, and tasks that are coming up. Remember that if you get delayed throughout your community-led food assessment to adjust your timeline as you go.

There are different ways to make timelines. InfoBox 3.8 details one way: The Gantt Chart.

3.8 Info Box:
Creating an Assessment Timeline Using a Gantt Chart

Gantt Charts are a useful tool to illustrate the timeline of your assessment. The example below shows a timeline for the tasks that need to be completed up to the end of Phase 2 of a CLFA. In this example, the various tasks are listed on the left, and the weeks are listed across the top. The horizontal grey bars indicate the number of weeks you will spend working on each task.

There are many different ways to format a Gantt Chart. Instead of using weeks to show when you will begin tasks, you can use days, or the actual dates that you want to start each task. You can be as detailed as you need with your task list, or just use the major steps. Generally, it is better to be as detailed as possible. Remember that some tasks will need to be completed before others can begin, and in other cases, certain tasks will overlap and take place at the same time as others. You will need to carefully and realistically think about when you will start each task, how long each task will take to complete, and how many tasks you can work on at a time.

Try making your own timeline using the different steps involved in planning (Phase 1), conducting (Phase 2), and wrapping up (Phase 3) an assessment. Section 4.1.5 in the Resources section provides more examples and information on making a Gantt Chart.

Week #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Planning														
Put together a team	█													
Initial core team meeting	█													
Research key community organizations and individuals		█												
Brainstorm Advisory Committee members		█												
Put together an Advisory Committee			█											
Hold initial meeting with committees			█											
Define purpose and scope				█										
Brainstorm committee goals				█										
Determine nature of community involvement				█										
Report to community		█	█	█	█									
Conducting														
Conduct environmental scan						█	█							
Conduct asset and gap analysis							█	█						
Organize community meetings								█						
Hold community priority setting meetings									█	█				
Finalize community priorities										█	█			
Recommendations for actions											█	█		
Develop action plans												█	█	
Report to community							█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Determining the nature and scope of committee members' roles

A community-led food assessment involves a great deal of group planning and decision-making. It is important to follow processes that the group understands and supports, and that allow the group to move forward efficiently. These will go a long way to helping ensure that the assessment meets its goals and builds capacity for further collaboration and action[1].

As your team is formed and begins to start planning the assessment, it will become clear that different people have different levels of enthusiasm and ability to focus on the details of planning and implementing the assessment. When discussing roles and the ability to commit time to the assessment, it is important to be aware of the possibility of **volunteer burnout**. Often in small communities, the same people will volunteer on many different projects and committees. This can sometimes mean that a lot of work is distributed between only a few people. When people begin to feel overwhelmed with all the tasks that are being asked of them, they can become stressed, tired, anxious, and unhappy. Volunteer burnout will often lead to volunteers quitting, if they get to the point where they are not happy doing the work because they are too overwhelmed.

Your community-led food assessment and its success will depend heavily on your volunteers being committed and excited about the project, so it is important to understand volunteer burnout and to take steps right from the beginning to avoid it happening in your committees. Here are some things you can do to avoid volunteer burnout:

- *Ask everyone on the committee how much time they have to commit to the project every week. Try not to give people more tasks than they want, or feel that they have time to take on.*

- *Make sure the work is well distributed between committee members and volunteers. If the same few people are always volunteering to take on tasks, suggest that maybe someone else can take a few things off their plate.*

- *Say **thank you**. Thank your volunteers regularly, and point out the contributions that they have made to the project. Make sure they know that the work they are doing is valued and important to the project.*

- *Take the time to chat. Take some time to ask the volunteers how things are going, and if anything can be done to make their job easier.*

- *Give volunteers time off. Volunteers, just like paid workers, need time off to take a break from work and to rest and recharge, especially if your project is very long (one or a few years). Let volunteers take breaks, for instance a week or two where they do not have to do anything related to the assessment.*

- *It is very important to keep track of the responsibilities that each volunteer has taken on so that everyone is aware of what others are doing. This will ensure that people are not taking on too much, or being asked to take on more than they can.*

Step 4: Determining the nature of community involvement

The most important part of a **community-led food assessment** is the community itself. Now that you have your **Assessment Committee** (the day to day workers) and your **Advisory Committee** (those who will help to guide the assessment and assist with key decisions), you will want to have a discussion about how and when you will be engaging the broader community.

Inuit community members play a valuable role not only in gathering and providing information, but also in shaping key decisions about the assessment activities and helping to implement these decisions. **Involving community partners from the start fosters trust, inclusiveness, and shared ownership of the process[1].**

Community members who might participate in an assessment include diverse residents: elders, youth, people involved in distribution and food sales, hunters, and others. They should include people of diverse ages, backgrounds, and income levels.

Community residents can be involved at different levels. Some may attend a **focus group** meeting or respond to a survey; others may serve on the Advisory Committee or volunteer part-time to do community outreach. Whenever possible, and if reflected in the community, it is valuable for you to work with a group of organizers who are multi-lingual, in order to reach out to various segments of the community effectively[1].

A range of methods to gather input and information from the community can be used throughout the assessment. These methods can vary depending on the nature of your community, and can include:

- *community meetings*
- *interviews*
- *surveys*
- *radio shows*
- *focus groups*
- *community flyers and mail-outs*

See Community Example 3.9 below for an example of the combination of methods used in the Hopedale community-led food assessment. The Assessment Committee should determine which methods are suitable for your community to gain a wide range of community input and involvement.

Conducting outreach at multiple sites and times is important to reach a broad range of community members. These sites might include workplaces, social service centers, community centers, youth centers, and churches[1]. It is also important to hold community meetings at different times of the day and week to allow people to attend as their schedules permit.

For example, community meetings are often held at key points throughout the planning and implementation process. **These meetings provide the Assessment Committee with an opportunity to gain broad community input into planning, to update the community on the progress of the assessment, and to report on the assessment findings after it is completed[1].** Such meetings can be a valuable way to gain community input into and participation in the assessment process. More importantly, they are central to building a broad base of community support for decision-makers and for actions resulting from the assessment. The success of these community meetings will depend greatly on the relationships and trust that have been developed between Assessment Committee members and community residents, and the extent to which the community has an opportunity to shape the process.

Barriers to community involvement

To effectively foster community participation, it is important to address possible barriers to participation. These range from practical issues such as needing child care in order to attend a meeting, to cultural and political issues such as not feeling part of the community or assessment group, or negative past experiences with organizers coming in to a community[1]. For example, when planning meetings you should consider the following:

❑	Is the time convenient for those who want to be involved? (Is there a time of year, time of the week, and time of the day that is more convenient for the various people involved)
❑	Is the location convenient and accessible for people? Will anyone need a ride?
❑	Is the site comfortable and welcoming for community members?
❑	Will interpreters be needed, and for what languages?
❑	Will participants need childcare?
❑	Will food be provided at meetings?
❑	Should people be getting paid for their services?

3.9 Community Example:
Conducting a CLFA in Hopedale, Nunatsiavut

The CLFA process is meant to be adapted based on the needs of each community, as well as the resources in each community. Depending on factors such as the size of the community, the resources available to hold meetings, people's availability, the community's previous experiences with research, and the time available to complete the CLFA, you may need to adjust the process and the organization of the different steps. This is one of the strengths of a **community-led food assessment**: the ability to adapt and adjust the process to fit with your community. The most important part of the CLFA process is that it be community-led and community-driven, involving the wider community in the process.

In some cases, you might want to combine certain steps and hold community meetings for multiple purposes. In Hopedale, the **Assessment Committee** decided to hold fewer community meetings and combine certain steps that will be discussed in Phase 2: Conducting Your Community-Led Food Assessment. This was the approach that worked best for the community in Hopedale.

As you read through Phase 2, you will see how the Assessment Committee in Hopedale organized their community meetings. You can also give some thought to how you might organize the various steps in your community.

The purpose of the *NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Project* was to perform a community-led food security assessment in the Labrador coastal community of Hopedale in order to ultimately develop community-based solutions to community **food security** challenges. The Assessment Committee identified the need to address food security issues such as increasing awareness of food security and improving access to healthy foods.

The community freezer in Hopedale is highlighted throughout the Community Examples in this Learning Guide as a way of following the process in Hopedale, but the freezer program was one of many priorities identified to improve food security.

3.10 Where You Should Be By Now:
End of Phase 1

At the end of the planning phase, some of the things that you should have include:

An **Assessment Committee** who will be driving the assessment.

An **Advisory Committee** of key members who can give guidance to the assessment process, and who are available to meet on a regular basis.

A list of prioritized goals that the team would like to see accomplished through the assessment.

A timeline for the project, with a start date, target completion date, and some key milestones to reach along the way.

A plan as to how the Assessment Committee will be involving the community in the assessment.

Clear documentation of all the meetings held so far, of the work being done, and all the contacts that are related to the **community-led food assessment**.

Reporting to the community

As the main principle of a community-led food assessment is community involvement, the Assessment Committee should be thinking about reporting its progress to the community throughout the assessment.

At the end of Phase 1, the Assessment Committee may want to consider doing some form of community outreach, to provide an update on what has been done so far and the next steps of the assessment.

Consider some of the following outreach ideas:

Hold a community open house and give a presentation

Arrange to be interviewed on the local radio

Send out an email newsletter

Make a poster to be posted on bulletin boards in stores, community centers, and other visible places

Create a community project Facebook page (or use other social media, such as Twitter)

Create a blog

Some of the things you will want to report:

Why you are doing a community-led food assessment, how the idea came about

Who is involved so far (Assessment Committee, Advisory Committee)

What you will be doing during the assessment (interviewing people, holding **focus groups**, etc.)

What the goals of the community-led food assessment are

When and how community members can get involved

Continuous reporting

When you begin your reporting, start thinking about how you will continue to interact with the community on a regular basis. Will you have an office that people can call to get information about the assessment? Can you provide regular updates on the radio (once a week, or once every two weeks)? Will you hold open houses on a regular basis? Will you have a blog, or an email list to send out a digital newsletter? Think about which way of reporting will work best for your community, and the people that you are trying to reach. If you let people know where they can find information, they will be able to look for it, and stay informed and engaged with the assessment.

PHASE 2: Conducting your Community-Led Food Assessment: What are the key steps?

Now that you have spent time planning and setting up your assessment and recruiting key people to be involved, it is time to move to Phase 2 – Conducting your **community-led food assessment**.

There are 6 key steps in a community-led food assessment, and reporting should be considered at every step of the way.

6 Key Steps of a CLFA

Step 1.	Environmental scan
Step 2.	Asset and gap analysis
Step 3.	Community priority setting
Step 4.	Recommendations for proposed actions
Step 5.	Action planning
Step 6.	Reporting

} COMMUNITY REPORTING

Before you begin the assessment, it is a good idea to become familiar with all the steps. This way, as you take on each step, you will understand the purpose of each step and how each task relates to all the other steps.

Once you are familiar with all the steps, it's time to get started!

Take some time to read through the 6 key steps of the CLFA. Are there any steps that are unclear? Are there any that you would like to find more information on? If so, take a look at the extra resources in Section 4. Remember that it will be easier to look for the information now than it will be when you and your team are in the middle of the assessment!

PHASE 2 | **Step 1: Environmental scan**

In this first step, the **Assessment Committee** will conduct an environmental scan to determine how factors (social, cultural, demographic, environmental, economic, the local **food system** and related food policies) contribute to **food security**. Completing the environmental scan will help you understand and describe the current status of food security in your community.

What is an environmental scan?

An **environmental scan** is a process of researching and gathering information. In this case, your team will want to gather all types of information related to the food system in your community, and more specifically related to the goals that you set out for the assessment. This is where the name of the process comes from – your team will be scanning the environment (your community, different organizations, people, government) to gather as much information as needed about all the factors affecting food and food security. The information will come from many different sources, and often pieces of information from different places will need to be brought together to paint a complete picture of food security in your community.

What type of information are you gathering?

The type of information that you are gathering will depend on the goals you discussed in the planning phase. It will also depend on the area of the food system you have decided to examine and the time line of the assessment – whether it is a short-term or long-term assessment. In Inuit communities, the range of topics to focus on could cover a lot of different food issues, or it could focus on one or two specific community concerns. Regardless of the topic that is chosen as the focus, some information will need to be gathered to help understand and then make decisions about that issue. As you begin your research, and have initial discussions with your team, other areas of information to explore may come to light.

Environmental scans will generally focus on collecting three types of information:

COLLECT EXISTING RESEARCH

The first thing to do is become familiar with any existing research on food security that has been conducted in your community. This will involve a review of any literature, materials, and publications that focus on food and food security in your community.

FOOD SERVICES INVENTORY

Create an inventory of existing services and resources related to food security (food banks, community freezers, meal programs, etc).

FOOD SECURITY INDICATORS

Other information may not be directly related to food or food security, but will be an **indicator** of some aspect of the food system. Aspects of the food system include the economic, social and environmental conditions related to food. You will need to identify a list of indicators that can be used to provide information about the food system in your community, and collect data on these indicators.

You will need to look in different places and probably use different methods to collect this information. Sometimes, research may have already been done on some of the information you need, and you will just need to find it. In other cases, the knowledge will be in the community, but it may not have been compiled yet in one place, and it will be your job during the environmental scan to bring it all together. More is provided below on how to collect the information you need.

What are indicators?

Indicators are pieces of information that help you understand the current status of a particular issue or condition, such as food security. Indicators may not necessarily directly relate to food security, but they can give you an idea of the status of something, such as the social, economic, or environmental conditions within a community. You can think of indicators as a window of information into the conditions you want to understand. Information or data about some important indicators related to the community food system will be the primary information needed during the environmental scan. For instance, information such as the unemployment rate, or the average salary being made in the community, might be an indicator to how many families are able to afford enough good food.

In addition to food-related topics, there should be some background information gathered on the community's population, economy, and resources[1]. There is

no one indicator that fits all assessments[4]; it is entirely dependent on the unique nature of the community that is conducting the assessment and the focus they have chosen.

3.11 Info Box:
Indicators Depend on the Focus of the Assessment

The goals of the assessment may require the team to gather information to evaluate the condition of specific aspects of the community food system, as well as information on larger scale factors that influence food security. For example, the committee goals might focus on understanding a community freezer program and identifying ways to expand the services of the program. This would involve collecting information about a small focused group of **indicators** that provide information on things such as the current use and access of the freezer. In addition, the **Assessment Committee** will also need broader information about the **food system** to understand how the freezer program fits within the overall issue of food security. Community-led food assessments can operate at different scales, and therefore you will also need indicators that provide information at different scales. It is important that your **environmental scan** provide a wide range of information about the community, but also focus on the goals identified by the Assessment Committee.

The following is a list of possible examples of indicators that could be measured during a **community-led food assessment**, and what the indicators might tell you (ie. why you would want to gather this information):

Indicator	What this indicator might tell you
Community and household demographics (how many people in the community, how many homes, how many homes are overcrowded, what is the age distribution of the community)	• *Indicator of the social and economic conditions in the community (for instance, how many people are in each household)*
Labor statistics (unemployment and under-employment, wage-levels, types of jobs)	• *Indicator of the ability to afford food*
Community food assets/resources (grocery stores, COOP, community freezers, Hunters and Trappers Organization programs, community gardens)	• *Indicator of how easy or difficult it is to access food*
Local employment and sales, in food retail, manufacture, and wholesale	• *Indicator of the economic system of food*

Indicator	What this indicator might telll you
Prices of food in the stores and from **country food** suppliers	• *Indicator of the ability to afford food, and the availability of food*
Food and nutrition resources and services	• *Indicator of access to education about food, and where that can be accessed*
Incidence of hunger and **food insecurity**	• *If this data is available, it is an indicator of how severe the issue is and what needs to be done to solve it*
Incidence of diet-related illnesses, and resulting mortality and costs	• *Indicator of the quality of food that is available*
Local policies related to food issues	• *Policies are indicators of access (who can access community freezers for instance), food issues that exist, and changes that might need to occur to improve food security in the community*

Determining which indicators you need to collect

Before beginning to collect information, make a list of all the questions that your team has, and then brainstorm the list of indicators you can collect that will help to answer those questions.

This list won't be final until after you have met with the community and identified the community's priorities for the assessment. You may find out that you need to ask additional questions and collect more information based on the outcome of community meetings. In addition, as you begin to collect information, you might come up with more indicators to answer your questions, and perhaps more questions that you would like answered. There are many aspects of food security your team could look at, so it is important to always go back to your list of goals, and make sure that the work you are doing is working towards those goals.

It is easy to get carried away in searching for information, and collecting much more information than you need. It is important to always think about what you will do with the information before you spend a lot of time, effort, and money to obtain it.

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Here are some examples of questions and indicators you might want to look at:

Questions	Examples of indicators to collect
What are some background characteristics of the population of our community?	• *# of single parent families* • *% of seniors in the total population* • *birth rate* • *number of children and adults per household*
What is the economic status of our community? Can community members afford the food they need?	• *unemployment rate* • *average number of people per household* • *average household annual income* • *average percentage of household income spent on food* • *cost of healthy food* • *costs associated with country foods (hunting and/or buying)*
How is country food distributed in our community? How is it accessed by different people in the community? How is store food distributed and accessed?	• *# of community food programs (community freezer, food bank)* • *identification of local food resources (grocery and convenience stores)* • *# of charitable food donations made in community annually* • *environmental factors affecting country food availability* • *# of hunters in the community* • *# of hunters per household or family*
What is the health status of our community? What are the main issues around health?	• *rates of obesity* • *# of deaths/year from dietary illness* • *annual prevalence of low birth weight of babies born* • *rates of diabetes*
What social and cultural norms exist around food in our community? How do these impact the foods people eat?	• *awareness of and attitudes towards healthy eating* • *food buying habits of population* • *availability of wild foods* • *food preferences* • *factors affecting food choices* • *availability of education around food*

3.12 Practice Activity:
Determining Which Indicators You Need to Collect

Here is a sample list of goals that can be developed to guide a **community-led food assessment**. List some of the **indicators** that might be helpful to know with regards to these outcomes (an example is listed for each). You can look at the indicators listed above for some ideas. Add other goals that your **Assessment Committee** came up with and brainstorm some indicators that could help you learn about the situation around those goals.

Committee Goals	Key Indicators
Implement Food Security Programs (e.g. household freezers for storage)	• *e.g. number of households with freezers or number of community freezers already present*
Food Security Education (e.g. raise awareness about wild foods and their value)	• *e.g. percentage of youth knowledgeable about hunting traditional food*
Continued Monitoring of Food Security (e.g. monitoring program for wild food safety)	• *e.g. collect baseline data*

How do you find information about indicators?

Now that you have a list of indicators that you would like to research, your team needs to begin thinking about where it will get the information it needs to complete the environmental scan. There are many different methods that can be used to collect information. It is usually a good idea to use several different methods to ensure that you are getting different types of information and collecting it from different sources and different points of view. For instance, reports will often give you numbers and statistics (quantitative information), while interviews will give you fuller stories (qualitative information) about the food security situation in your community. Also, if your only source of information is from written research reports, this would present only one perspective – that of researchers – and not necessarily the perspectives of everyone in the community.

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There are two general ways to complete the environmental scan and gather information on the three areas outlined above:

1. *Existing Information*

    Existing information is information that has already been collected by someone else, for another purpose. Examples of this are:
    - *Data from the census*
    - *Information collected during the Inuit Health Survey*
    - *Information from your community government*
    - *Reports, publications, and information from other research projects done in your community*

2. *New Information*

    Once the team has gathered and collected all the existing information that it can find (reports, data, public records, research projects, etc.), you might find that there are still some questions that need to be answered.

    In this case, you may have to collect new or original information by doing your own research (surveying community members, holding **focus groups**, etc).

Existing Information

Environmental scans begin by gathering existing information, because this is information that is easy to gather from existing reports and documents. Some places where you might find this existing data include:

- *Regional and community governments: They can be a good place to start. They may have already published information relating to the food system, food security, or community demographics (population, economic status, family sizes, education).*
- *Local health authorities: Your local health authorities may also have access to various information and statistics that will be useful in your assessment.*
- *Local food-related organizations: Organizations such as the food bank, the community freezer, community wellness programs, youth centers, HTOs, etc, may all have reports on the various food programs they run. These reports will give you valuable information, e.g. how many people access these programs.*
- *Reports from research projects that have taken place in your community or region*
- *Census data or other population data*

- *Inuit Health Survey Reports*
- *Websites: The internet can be a great source of information, and can allow you to collect information quickly and usually for free. However, it can also be very difficult to know whether information from the internet is reliable (who the author is, how the information was collected, whether it is true). See InfoBox 3.13 and Practice Activity 3.14 below for more about finding quality information.*

New Information

Once you have gathered as much information as possible from existing sources, your team will want to evaluate which questions still have not been answered and which of the three types of information mentioned above are not yet complete, and choose appropriate methods to collect that information. Some methods you can use to find these answers include:

- *Focus groups*
- *One on one interviews*
- *Paper surveys*
- *In person surveys*
- *Radio call in shows*
- *Observations or measurements*
- *Other creative methods*

These are some of the research methods you can use to collect the information for your community-led food assessment. It is important that you choose methods that are appropriate for your community and feasible for your assessment.

For example, residents within the community may not be interested in filling out surveys and would be more receptive to one on one interviews, but the organizing group may not have the **capacity** to complete many one on one interviews, so you may choose to organize group interviews. The process should reflect what members of your community are most comfortable participating in. For a look at how research methods were chosen for research in Hopedale, see Community Example 3.15 and Community Example 3.16 below.

Remember, the environmental scan is not intended to be an entire research project. Even though you may need to collect new information to complete this step of the assessment, remember that you need to keep this step within a manageable timeframe. You may want to hold a focus group or interview some key community members who have been involved in food issues, but this step should not take over the whole CLFA process. Review the existing information you collected from your review of previous food research and your food resources and services inventory as sources of information about your indicators. Before

conducting any new research, be sure you have thoroughly reviewed all the existing information you collected for the other parts of the environmental scan.

3.13 Info Box:
Assessing the Quality of an Information Source

Access to information is becoming easier and easier, especially with the use of the internet. However, not all sources of information are good sources of information. Some information that you find can be out of date, biased, or not based on fact. When conducting your **environmental scan**, ask these questions about the information you find to help determine if you should use it or not:

1. Is the information relevant to your community? Is it relevant to the goals of   your assessment?
2. When was the information published? If it was a long time ago, the information may not be accurate for your community anymore.
3. What is the source of this information? Is that source usually seen as reliable? Has the source been reliable in the past? Can you trust the source to be honest about information and be consistently accurate?
4. Does the information seem subjective (does it present only one point of view) or objective (is it presented as facts without one particular point of view)?
5. What was the original purpose of the publication or report? Was it promoting or representing a certain cause that would make it biased? (For instance, is it written a certain way to try and convince the readers of a certain point of view? Does it seem overly positive or negative about a certain topic? If so, it might be biased and not reflect the reality of the situation accurately.)

After you review the data and these questions, you may have to re-evaluate whether you will continue to use particular sources. What additional questions might help when assessing a source?

3.14 Practice Activity:
Finding Quality Information

Practice checking the quality of data when reviewing information collected for a community assessment. Go on the internet and perform a search of a topic related to **food security**. Choose one of the links, and ask yourself the series of questions discussed above about the website that you found.

Once you have your answers, decide if you think this information is of good quality, and whether or not you would use it in your assessment. Discuss your answers with the group – tell them about the information you found, whether or not you would use it, and why or why not.

The following is an example of indicators of food security that were measured in a research project investigating the use of wild foods in Hopedale[5].

3.15 Community Example:
Wild Food Research in Hopedale

In 2006 the Nunatsiavut Government partnered with researchers from Memorial University and the University of Saskatchewan to document the noncommercial use of wild foods by Inuit residents in communities along the north coast of Labrador. The overall objective was to design a survey to provide information about subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering in the Nunatsiavut settlement region, as well as conduct household surveys that would:

- Document household demographic information
- Record household involvement in the use, harvest, and sharing of fish and wildlife over a 1-year period (2006-2007)
- Determine the edible food weight and dollar equivalents for the amount of wild foods harvested over a 1year period
- Estimate the time allocation that households devote to harvesting wild foods
- Identify trends in wildlife populations based on local knowledge

The surveys were designed to gather information on the harvest, use, and distribution of wild foods by Nunatsiavut households. Community researchers, including Susan Nochasak and Darren Winters in Hopedale, administered surveys through face-to-face interviews with community residents. The surveys addressed subsistence uses of Atlantic salmon, char, caribou, waterfowl, and eggs. In total, 114 out of 135 Hopedale households were surveyed, an 84% coverage of the community.

The above example describes **the way that the information was collected** (interviews) and **what indicators were targeted** when the surveys were conducted (household information, harvesting time, etc).

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| **Step 2: Asset and gap analysis**

In the second step, the **Assessment Committee** will review the information collected through the **environmental scan**, to better understand the strengths and opportunities that exist in your community around **food security**.

What is the purpose of an asset and gap analysis?

The main goal of Step 2 is to bring to light what **assets** (strengths to support food security) exist in the community and to identify where there might be **gaps** (needs that have to be filled, or resources that are missing) in the supports needed to improve food security in the community.

To be able to identify assets and gaps, the Assessment Committee will have to:

A) Review and analyze all the information that was collected in Step 1, the Environmental Scan

- *Re-read all the documentation, and pull out the important findings.*

- *Discuss with the other team members what you see as the most important findings, and what your impressions are.*

- *The goal here is also to identify existing knowledge and information sources in the community related to food security.*

- *By going through all the information you collected, you should be able to answer the questions that you came up with when setting your goals for the assessment (see Phase 1, Step 3).*

- *Ask yourself, with this information, do you now understand the food security situation in your community?*

B) Identify and map current services that are offered in the community, with input from key informants from within those services

- *Putting together a list of all the services that exist in your community around food and food security is an important piece of the assessment puzzle.*

- *The inventory of food related services and resources you created with the Environmental Scan will be helpful in this step.*

- *However, this list may not be enough. You may also want to hold interviews or **focus groups** with the key people involved with these services: community service providers, administrators, community leaders, program directors, employees and volunteers.*

- *By speaking with these people, you will know not only which programs exist, but also the strengths and needs of the different programs.*

C) Engage community members in helping to identify assets and gaps

- *It is crucial to involve community members in this step, as they will have important insight and opinions on where the strengths and the needs in the services are for them.*
- *A good way to do this is to hold community forums or meetings, where community members can identify the strengths that they see, and the gaps that they see with the current services and structures.*
- *The more people you engage, the more complete a picture you will get.*

The **Advisory Committee** should also be involved in the **asset and gap analysis**. They will have valuable input for your analysis, and in identifying strengths and needs in the community.

This step is important in the process of a **community-led food assessment** because it looks specifically at community programs that are doing well and recognizes their success, and also is critical of the missing services that the community needs. This will allow your assessment team to understand the processes that are, and are not, occurring within their community around food security.

3.16 Community Example:
How Assets and Gaps Were Identified in Hopedale

Hopedale Community-Led Food Assessment – Steps 1 & 2:

*In Hopedale, the **Assessment Committee** felt that it was more appropriate and effective for the community to combine certain steps and hold fewer community meetings. They held community meetings with different groups. Each meeting achieved Step 1: Environmental scan, Step 2: Asset and gap analysis, and Step 3: Community priority setting, in one meeting. This example discusses the **environmental scan** and the **asset and gap analysis**.*

During the first Community Assessment Committee meeting a brainstorming session was held to create an inventory of all the past and present community **food security** related programs, projects, organizations, and businesses in Hopedale. This inventory was used as the basis of a community food security analysis in Hopedale and includes: a community freezer program, teen youth support program, meal programs, community fairs, retailers, and pre-natal programs among others.

The Assessment Committee also identified key participants and approaches to gather input from the community to inform the *NiKigijavut Hopedalimi ("Our Food in Hopedale") Project*. The committee felt that surveys were not an effective method of gathering information from the community as Hopedale is over surveyed and the results are not often presented back. Four alternative methods were used to engage the community in the asset and gap analysis and **priority setting** process:

- group consultations
- informal discussions
- one-on-one interviews
- local radio

Through this approach, a wide range of participants were included in the dialogue.

These methods engaged participants in a review of the inventory to identify any programs that were missing on the list, as well as ways that current programs could be expanded. Beyond this, participants also discussed what other programs could benefit the community which initiated priority setting.

The community freezer was identified as an asset in the community, as well as a potential opportunity to improve food security, and became one of the main focuses of the project's actions.

See Community Example 3.18 to learn how Hopedale completed the community priority setting step...

3.17 Practice Activity:
Asset and Gap Analysis Examples

Use the following table to identify the assets and gaps present in your community. Brainstorm with the group what programs exist in the community, what is working well, and where there are opportunities for new or expanded programs.

Some examples have been listed in the chart below. If these examples are appropriate for your community, move each of them into either the asset or gap column.

Discuss why you have chosen to group the examples like you did.

Topic	Examples	Assets in the Community	Gaps in the Community
Short-Term Relief Strategies for Food Security – getting food to people who need it immediately	• food banks • food sharing networks • school meal programming (e.g. Breakfast Program)		
Training and Education Related to Food Security – helping to build food skills or build community capacity for food security	• training / camps for community hunting skills • community garden awareness and training workshops • healthy food education programming • cooking classes		
Long Term Strategies for Food Security	• food policies (schools and community) • public awareness campaigns and outreach		

PHASE 2 | **Step 3: Community priority setting**

This step involves presenting all the results from the **environmental scan** and the **asset and gap analysis** to the community, and asking community members to help the **Assessment Committee** identify the top priorities that should be the focus to improve food security in the community. This is the first step in developing concrete actions.

The Assessment Committee, **Advisory Committee**, and the community all need to have an understanding of what a priority means, including the scale of a priority (how big is a single priority, how specific should a priority be, and what sort of time frame would a single priority operate by?). Think of a priority as a single outcome that is achievable and has a clear way to measure its success. For example, a priority might be to establish a community freezer. That is something clear and concrete that can be measured and achieved – you will know it has been achieved when the freezer is operating. Priorities should be achievable through the implementation of a new program, product, organization, or other similar output from a set of actions. Be careful not to set priorities that are too large – each priority you achieve is a step towards your ultimate goal of improving **food security** in your community, so think of them as pieces of the larger puzzle, not the puzzle itself.

Things to keep in mind when engaging the community to set priorities

- *It is important to present all your findings clearly, so that community members have all the information when they begin to think about what priorities are most important.*
- *Consider doing this at a large community meeting, or an open-house. Make sure you are set up to do a presentation, and to engage people in a discussion.*
- *Consider having food to attract a large group of people. Think carefully about the food you want to serve as you will be discussing issues such as access to wild foods and healthy store foods!*
- *Make sure that the Assessment Committee and the Advisory Committee have agreed on a process for **priority setting** from the start (see the examples below from Hopedale and Happy Valley-Goose Bay where everyone involved picked their top 3 priorities).*
- *Make sure that community leaders and key decision-makers are also involved. This is important because this process begins to involve community leaders who will be able to influence decision-making and policy implementation in the community once the **community-led food assessment** is complete[2].*
- *Consider having the priority setting session led by someone impartial (someone who is not involved in the assessment). If this is not possible, or is not appropriate, make sure someone who is trusted and respected by the community is leading the session. You want community members to be able to speak openly about their priorities.*

Community engagement in priority setting

This step is carried out by various members of the community who will come into the assessment process with a wide range of interests and expectations.

Therefore, it is very important that you clarify participants' goals and interests, identify shared goals, and develop clear agreement on the assessment goals and decision-making processes[1].

It is critical to ensure that the focus of the assessment is addressing the needs of the community[2]. You want the community members who are participating in the priority setting to feel that there is trust, inclusiveness, and shared ownership of both the assessment and the results that directly impact the community[2]. This is why it is important to engage the community from the beginning of the process, right from the planning stages. When people are brought into a project at the end, they may not feel connected to the project, or like they have much to offer in setting priorities.

It is very important to create an environment in which personal and organizational/government interests can be openly discussed. This can be a very difficult task, dealing with many people with different personalities, objectives and emotions. For a more in-depth discussion on this topic, please refer to the Community Facilitation Learning Guide.

How do I know which priorities are most important?

The Assessment Committee will need to decide what process they will use to help rank all the priorities. Below are examples of the processes used in Hopedale and Happy Valley-Goose Bay:

3.18 Community Example:
How the Community was Engaged in Priority Setting in Hopedale

...Hopedale Community-Led Food Assessment – Step 3:

Community Example 3.16 described how Hopedale completed the environmental scan and asset and gap analysis. The Assessment Committee also chose to identify community priorities in the same set of community meetings. Here is how they completed this process.

The Objective: to identify key community **food security** priorities in Hopedale, Nunatsiavut

The Process: group consultations were held with the community food program coordinator and organizers, Nunatsiavut Government representatives, and the Hopedale Inuit Community Government. Two informal discussions were held with Elders from the community in conjunction with the Seniors Meal Program sponsored by the Nunatsiavut Government Department of Health and Social Development. To reach a larger proportion of the community, one on one interviews were held with hunters, low-income and working class residents, Elders, and a local retailer. The local

radio station was used to engage the community further in the discussion and promote the project. Two call-in shows were hosted during this process; the first was to identify and decide on a project name, and the second was to allow members of the community to identify their community food security priorities[5].

The Outcome (Priorities): at the end of each consultation, participants were asked to identify their top three community food security priorities in Hopedale. The assessment team kept track of how many times different priorities were mentioned by different people. Throughout the **priority setting** process, the following key themes arose:

- Employment
- Passing on traditional knowledge and language
- Funding

At every community consultation participants expressed interest in having the Community Freezer Program expanded so that more traditional wild foods could be available to the community. The community suggested that a number of aspects of the freezer could be expanded such as freezer space, variety of food, and eligibility of the program.

Next came developing recommendations for proposed actions. See Community Example 3.20 for a description of how this step was completed in Hopedale…

3.19 Community Example:
How the Community was Engaged in Priority Setting in Happy Valley–Goose Bay

A priority setting meeting was held with major stakeholders including government representatives, Aboriginal government representatives, food bank workers, dietitians, health promotion workers, health care officials, women's centre representatives, poverty reduction workers, farmers, and the **food security** coordinators. These people were all personally invited by e-mail with an explanation of what the meeting was about.

Two other group consultations took place with the community at large and were advertised by the online community calendar, newspaper and radio.

Below is a summary of the process as described by one of the facilitators:

"We started the group consultations with a fun, warm up exercise where participants were able to share a personal story about food memories from childhood. We also provided several delicious snacks that were made from locally produced foods and found that taking care to create a friendly environment really helped to animate the discussion.

The power point presentation was then shown with the results of the **environmental scan** and **asset and gap analysis**.

A discussion followed that included the use of a chart that encapsulated an inventory of past and present food security programs organized into three levels and clearly identified assets and gaps in the local system.

After some very insightful discussion which included many perspectives, the participants were asked to vote on the top three priorities they thought needed to be worked on to improve the local **food system**. The voting was done through a "dotmocracy" process. Typed priorities were placed on the walls and participants simply placed a star beside their choices.

A report of the meeting was typed up and sent out to all of the participants after the results were compiled. A newspaper article and a radio interview also disseminated the results of the group consultations."

In Hopedale, the key priorities became evident through many different conversations (interviews, **focus groups**, radio shows, etc). If you have less time for your assessment, you may achieve this in one large meeting. Ask all the participants to brainstorm different things that might be priorities for increasing food security in your community. A way to engage people actively is to ask them to write their ideas down on pages, and stick them to the wall. If you end up with a very large number of priorities, group similar priorities together. Create a new list that groups priorities and narrows down the number of different priorities. Post this new list on the wall, so it is easily visible. Then ask each participant to identify their top 3 priorities that they find the most important. They can identify them by placing a checkmark, or a sticker, beside the priority. At the end of this process you will be able to list all the priorities in order of importance.

You can also refer to the activity that you used to identify the Assessment Committee and Advisory Committee goals to engage community members in brainstorming and narrowing down a list of priorities. See box "3.6 Practice Activity: Developing Your CLFA Goals".

Documenting the priority setting process

Make sure that you document the community meeting very well by taking photos and recording minutes. Although your assessment might not end up addressing all the priorities that come up, it will be good to include the full list of priorities identified by the community in your reporting. You will also want to include in the report how the team came up with that list.

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| **Step 4: Recommendations for proposed actions**

Step 4 marks the end of the researching part of the assessment. Now it is time to take all the information gathered, and turn it into a list of actions to improve **food security** in your community.

Turning the list of priorities into a plan

The following are some tips on how to take all this information from the **environmental scan**, the **asset and gap analysis**, and the community **priority setting** and turn it into actions:

Narrow down the list

Although your committees and the community may have come up with a long list of important priorities, your first task in this step will be to narrow it down to a shorter list of recommendations for action. For instance, in Hopedale, there were a number of different priorities identified. There would have been too many individual priorities to address all of them, so they were ranked and grouped to a more manageable number. In the end, the committee narrowed them down to 4 main overarching themes that addressed several priorities.

Engage the Advisory Committee

It is a good idea to organize an **Advisory Committee** action planning meeting to discuss the top priorities that were identified by the community. As your Advisory Committee should include community leaders, government and organization representatives, and decision-makers, they will have insight into what recommendations are realistic and will be able to be implemented. The **Assessment Committee** will then need to decide how many priorities you think you can address in a realistic action plan, and what these priorities will be.

Be specific

Your recommendations should be specific enough to use in the development of a clear action plan. From your recommendations, you are going to want to be able to identify outcomes that you hope to achieve, as well as what would indicate success in achieving the goals.

Be realistic

It will be important to be aware of time, resources, and skills needed to achieve a specific goal. It is important to be realistic about what recommendations can actually be achieved within your timeframe and budget. Otherwise, you might end up with a great list of recommendations, and a great action plan, but no ability to actually put these into action.

Remember the purpose of your CLFA...

Ask yourself if each recommendation fits within your original assessment goals. The key question is: "What are we hoping to gain for ourselves and our community by conducting a **community-led food assessment**?"

...But be ready to adapt

If some of the top priorities or recommendations from the community or Advisory Committee differ from the goals that were initially identified by the assessment committee for the community-led food assessment, it will be important to consider whether or not it is appropriate to incorporate these interests into the assessment goals[1], and into the action plan.

Reporting to the community

Once the Assessment Committee has finalized its list of recommendations for action, you should present these recommendations to the community and the Advisory Committee.

The recommendations should be officially presented to organizations and groups within the community who can have a direct impact on food security, and who may be able to assist in implementing them. These are groups such as: the local government, the local health authority, and organizations running food programs.

The recommendations should be presented to the community at large, to keep interested community members engaged, and to request their input for the next step: the Action Plan. Consider making this community meeting entertaining, by coordinating it with a community workshop on a topic that interests the community. Through the Hopedale community-led food assessment, the community showed a keen interest in gardening. In light of this, the Assessment Committee in Hopedale decided to organize a gardening workshop, where they would also present back the findings from the community-led food assessment. Through this, they were able to share the priorities list with the community, and receive some valuable feedback, as shown in the example below.

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3.20 Community Example:
Priority Setting in Hopedale

...Hopedale Community-Led Food Assessment – Step 4:

Community Examples 3.16 and 3.18 outlined the process used in Hopedale to complete Steps 1, 2 & 3 of the CLFA. This example describes how the Assessment Committee took the priorities identified by the community and developed a set of recommendations for action.

A community meeting was held to present the priorities developed by the **Assessment Committee** back to the community and receive community input into the next stage – action planning. An Action Plan was developed to begin to implement steps to achieve the priorities identified by the community. In Hopedale, the action plan was presented by four goals that addressed the various priorities. These are:

1. Increased Access to Traditional Foods;
2. Increased Access to Fresh Produce;
3. Increased Understanding and Use of Tradition Knowledge, Skills, and Language;
4. Increased Food Education and Awareness.

The expansion of the community freezer program was targeted as the first priority to take action on, and a number of short term, intermediate, and long term outcomes were identified for the program. The Action Plan for the community freezer focused on an increase in storage space, an increase in the variety of traditional foods available, better promotion of the program, and increased participation.

See Community Example 3.21 for an example of an action plan developed in Hopedale as part of the Community-Led Food Assessment – Step 5...

PHASE 2 | **Step 5: Action planning**

Now that the research phase of the assessment is complete, the information collected has been analyzed, and concrete recommendations have been presented to and approved by the community, it is time to start planning for action.

Designing an Action Plan

In Step 5, the **Assessment Committee** will design a community Action Plan, which will guide the community in putting the assessment recommendations into action, and having a positive impact on the community's **food security**.

This step is very important to complete before you start taking action, because a community Action Plan combines all the information collected during the **environmental scan**, **asset and gap analysis**, community **priority setting**, and the community meetings and workshops into a concrete plan of action to achieve the community's priorities.

Actions need to meet three criteria in order for them to be effective. They should:
- *be achievable,*
- *be sustainable/long-term, and*
- *create a positive change in the community[4].*

You will develop one action plan for each priority that was identified by the community. This step will help your team identify, in detail, the most important actions that need to take place for each priority that was identified. You might have any number of actions that need to be taken to achieve a given priority, so the action plan allows you to add as many as needed, in as much detail as you feel is needed. For instance, there might be many more actions that need to be taken to set up a network of community gardens, and fewer actions required to set up a community youth group.

Your action plan details how each action (e.g., putting together a working group, producing a document, establishing a set of contacts) will take place, including:
- *the specific community priority being addressed with the individual Action Plan (Priority)*
- *the broader goals of the **community-led food assessment** that were identified by the Assessment Committee at the beginning of the process that this priority will work towards achieving (Committee Goals)*
- *what you need to make it successful (Inputs and Resources),*
- *who will assume the different responsibilities (Responsibility),*
- *the time it should take to complete it (Timeline)*
- *what needs to be produced from each action (Outputs), and*
- *broader short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that will be achieved through the full implementation and success of the priority. These will often be less concrete outcomes, but are deeper changes you would like to see in the community (Priority Outcomes).*

Taking all the actions that you list in the action plan should achieve the community priority you started with. You will also identify the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that you will achieve through each priority, once all of the actions have been implemented.

Achieving these priorities will help you achieve the overall goals of the CLFA. It is

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during this stage of the assessment that you will determine and describe a plan to address food issues in the community[4].

This planning process should consider actions/solutions that address short-term concerns, the amount of training required, and how heavily a community system (such as a freezer program) would need to be redesigned. Plans should be realistic in the context of the community. Plans should also detail the desired outcomes of the action and how to go about recording and reporting if the action was a success. In the next section of the guide, you will find an action plan template, with each section described. In your Activity Guide you will find a blank template that you can work with to practice creating an action plan.

For instance, one of the key priorities that your assessment recommends be addressed might be: "Expanding the community freezer program in the community". This is a very important priority, but does not necessarily indicate how to go about this. Creating a table like this one will help you to transform this priority into task oriented actions (see below the table for descriptions of what to include in each section):

Priority:					
Committee Goals:					
ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	INPUTS AND RESORCES	TIMEFRAME	OUTPUTS	PRIORITY OUTCOMES
Action 1:					Short Term:
Action 2:					
Action 3:					Intermediate:
Action 4:					
Action 5:					Long Term:

How to fill out the Action Plan template

Priority: Which priority from the priority setting step is being addressed? Priorities were identified in Step 3, "community priority setting", and finalized in Step 4, "recommendations for proposed action", of Phase 2. In the 'Priority' section of the action plan, list the priority that this action plan is for. Remember, you will have one action plan per priority addressed.

Committee Goals: Refer back to the goals that the Assessment Committee set out in Step 3, "defining a purpose and scope for your assessment", of Phase 1. In the 'Committee Goals' section, write down which goals will be addressed when this priority is achieved.

Have any new goals been identified as you carried out the community-led food assessment? Does this priority address them? If so, indicate them here.

ACTIONS column: In this column make a list of all the actions that need to be done in order to achieve the priority. What are the key steps that need to be taken in order to address this priority? Often this starts with research, meetings and consultations, and moves on to more concrete actions. For example, if the priority is expanding the community freezer, you might need to hold a planning meeting with all interested people and organizations (Action 1), raise money (Action 2), buy equipment (Action 3), develop policies and programs (Action 4), and then implement the expanding program (Action 5). You can also be much more detailed with your actions (for example describing the steps needed to take to raise money), and you can add as many rows to the table that you need to fill in all the actions.

RESPONSIBILITY column: For each action, clearly identify in this column which people, groups, or organizations will be responsible for accomplishing the particular action.

INPUTS AND RESOURCES column: Use this column to indicate which resources will be needed to achieve this priority. Inputs can be people, groups, and organizations that will need to be involved. They also include material resources such as space, equipment, and funding. List all the resources that you can think of for each action.

TIMEFRAME column: In this column, identify how much time you expect each action will need to be completed. You can also include estimated completion dates that you would like to aim for.
Remember that this is just a guide, and you can always update the timeframe as you implement the action, if things start moving faster or slower than expected.

OUTPUTS column: What are the deliverables of the actions? What specific things will come out of each action? These can be reports, partnerships formed, promotion achieved, new policies created, or resources purchased or built.

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PRIORITY OUTCOMES column: This column refers to the priority as a whole (and not specifically to the different actions). What are the outcomes of all of these actions and the priority as a whole? What are the positive benefits that will come out of the actions? Outcomes could include increased community awareness on an issue, or increased participation in a program. They can often be more broad, and less concrete than Outputs. The outcomes relate to the community-led food assessment goals.

It is helpful to divide these into Short-term, Intermediate, and Long-term outcomes.

> **An important note about outcomes**
> The outcomes you use in your Action Plan will be the basis for creating your evaluation plan in Phase 3. These outcomes are what will help guide you to evaluate whether or not the priorities and goals of the CLFA have been achieved.

The template in this section is meant to be a helpful tool to assist in planning the work that you will be carrying out to achieve the assessment outcomes. Feel free to modify the template as you see fit, so that it is as useful as possible for you and the others who will be reading and using it.

For a good example of a completed Action Plan that was designed a bit differently, see the Community Example below (3.21 Community Example: Hopedale Action Plan). You can find the rest of the action plans for this CLFA in the report from the *NiKigijavut Hopedalimi: Our Food in Hopedale project*. For this project, they created five Action Plans, one for each overall goal of their assessment.

3.21 Community Example:
Hopedale Action Plan

The following is an example of an action plan that was developed from the *NiKigijavut Hopedalimi* CLFA project. Their Assessment Committee organized the action plan a bit differently, including one Action Plan for each overall goal of their assessment.

Goal #2a: Increased Access to Fresh Produce – Community Gardening

Priority Addressed	Inputs	Key Activities	Output	Outcomes
Priority #1: Community Gardening	Community Champions NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Project Steering Committee Food Security Network NL Hopedale Inuit Community Government (HICG) NG Department of Land and Natural Resources Local and OKalagatiget Radio & Promotion Conservation Corps Green Team and/or Summer Students Funding	Meet with HICG to determine what is required to start gardens/greenhouses in Hopedale (ie. Are there any permits required?) Meet with HICG and NG Dept. of Health and Social Development to determine which organization will be the project lead Hold a community meeting to identify community champions and discuss what supports are required to get people gardening. Research requirements and cost of developing "Get Started Gardening" toolkits Fundraise locally and submit applications for funding to initiate Gardening Program in the community Recruit Green Team or summer students to support gardens, including building garden kits, collecting soil, etc. Host a series of educational gardening workshops on topics identified by community (composting, building raised beds and cold frames, etc.), Use local and OKalagatiget Radio, posters, Facebook to promote these discussions and the new program	Regulations of establishing a garden in Hopedale determined and documented. Lead organization identified for gardening program. Community champions identified, community identification of required supports recorded. Design and cost of Garden Kits Developed. Funding secured for gardening program Green Team or Summer Students established Community engaged in educational sessions about gardening Increased media attention to gardening program	**Short Term:** Increased participation of HICG and Department of Health and Social Development in Garden Program development Increased community engagement in program design and development **Intermediate:** New Gardening Kits developed and distributed through community Increased promotion of Gardening Program **Long Term:** Increased number of people gardening in Hopedale Increased gardening knowledge in Community **Future Goals:** Community Garden established to nurture education and awareness around growing and consuming fresh fruit and vegetables

3.22 Practice Activity:
Create an Action Plan

As a group, come up with a priority that might be something that could be implemented in your community. It could be the creation of a community freezer, development of a community garden, creation of a intergenerational harvest program, establishment of a school garden or compost program, anything you think may be appropriate in your community.
For this given priority, brainstorm all the different steps that would need to be taken in order to achieve it. Now practice filling out the Action Plan template in your Activity Guide on your own or in pairs, as though you were going to implement it in your community.

Once you are finished, come together as a group and share what you included in each category. Did you miss any steps that other people thought of? Did you all agree on the timeframe for different actions? Were different outcomes identified by different groups?

How did you find this template to work with? Is there anything you would change about it?

Priority:

Committee Goals:

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	INPUTS AND RESORCES	TIMEFRAME	OUTPUTS	PRIORITY OUTCOMES
Action 1:					**Short Term:**
Action 2:					
Action 3:					**Intermediate:**
Action 4:					**Long Term:**
Action 5:					

Getting input on your Action Plans

At this stage, it can be helpful to get community input on activities that have been identified and planned for. Consider presenting the Action Plan to key people who participated through the community-led food assessment, the Advisory Committee, and potential partners required for implementing the Action Plan. When you review the Action Plan with community members, ask them to reflect on some of the following questions: do they believe these activities will be effective? Will these activities create positive change in the community? Are there any other activities they would like to see prioritized?

PHASE 2 | **Step 6: Reporting**

Congratulations! Your team has accomplished an incredible amount of work in completing a **community-led food assessment** in your community. It is important to report the results of all that great work.

This step outlines the reporting that needs to take place once the Action Plan has been developed and approved by members of the **Advisory Committee** and **Assessment Committee**. There are two important parts of reporting following a community-led food assessment:

A written report

Community outreach reporting

These steps are important because the next phase of the assessment will be putting the priorities into action, and there will need to be a strategy on implementing the Action Plan. Next steps will include detailing who is responsible for the implementation of certain steps, and how they will take place, so it is important to keep the momentum and excitement of the assessment going.

The written report

The written report provides an overview of the community-led food assessment, outlining why it was completed, the process that was used, the information that was collected, and the action and evaluation plans that were developed. This report will serve as a useful tool for sharing the findings from the community-led food assessment with all individuals, organizations, and groups that participated in the assessment. It will also act as a foundation for potential grant proposals or fundraising activities to support the implementation of the Action Plan.

The written report can also be helpful in the future if the Assessment Committee or another group would like to create Action Plans for additional priorities or

recommendations identified by the community that were not addressed in this initial CLFA. This type of report can also be a great resource for other communities who want to complete a CLFA.

The report will include a variety of components. There is a lot of information that you can include, and you want it to be detailed enough to give a good picture of the entire assessment. However, with that much information, you will need to make sure it is clearly organized and easy to read. Here are important sections to include:

Introduction: why the community-led food assessment was done and the goals.

Background: information on the community specifics and the types of assets that were present within the community and the gaps that needed to be filled[3].

Process: detailed breakdown of the timeline, the areas assessed, the **indicators** that were collected, and who the committees were composed of and why.

Results[3]: this section presents the information collected through the CLFA and should follow the steps taken throughout the process, including the **environmental scan**, the **asset and gap analysis**, the **priority setting** process, and how **food security** is expected to change because of the assessment. It should also include the final Action Plans and evaluation (See Phase 3 for more information on evaluation).

Conclusion: discuss future recommendations to help combat food security issues in your community[3].

This is a general guide – individual communities are encouraged to add any sections to their report that are representative of their assessment. This is the main reason why documentation has been an important process throughout the community-led food assessment. If good documentation takes place throughout the entire assessment process, bringing all the information together for the report will be very easy.

Community outreach reporting

Other than writing a written report, it is important to do other types of outreach in the community to raise awareness about food security and the Action Plans that have been created. Some ideas to help spread the word far and wide about the assessment are:

Go on the local radio to speak about the project

Create a one page fact sheet that summarizes the results

Hold a community meeting

Plan a community feast

Although some of these activities are done on a large scale, they can be adapted to fit community needs. After the initial report of the community-led food assessment is complete, you may use some of these ideas to help community members learn about food security issues as well as to highlight future community goals.

3.23 Where You Should Be by Now:
End of Phase 2

At this point you have now completed a **community-led food assessment** in your community. In Phase 2 you have gone through the process of researching and learning about **food security** in your community, including its resources and needs, engaging community members in identifying the priorities important to them, and developing a set of plans to address those priorities.

By now, you should have:

A well documented **environmental scan**

An **asset and gap analysis**, with community assets and gaps recorded

A full report detailing everything that took place in the assessment process

A list of community priorities and the **Assessment Committee**'s recommendations

A set of action plans for implementing the recommendations

Approval from the community, and excitement about creating positive change to improve food security in your community!

Reporting to the community

Be sure to report back to the community where you are at this point in the assessment. You have just finished a number of important steps that have involved significant input from community members, so it is crucial that you maintain that interest and investment form the community. You have identified the community's top priorities for addressing **food insecurity**, and it may take some time before the action plans are implemented and change occurs. During this time, it is important for community members to know what is happening and how they can continue to be involved and updated.

You should have an idea by now about some of the most effective ways to communicate with the community, so use those methods to maintain communication between the Assessment Committee and the community.

PHASE 3: Wrapping-Up your Community-Led Food Assesment: How do I implement the Action Plan?

The third phase of the CLFA takes place after all the assessing is complete. This phase revolves around implementing, or putting into action, each of (or some of) the Action Plans that were developed. In this implementation phase, there are 4 steps:

Step 1:	*Planning for evaluation*
Step 2:	*Implementing recommendations*
Step 3:	*Evaluating*
Step 4:	*Reporting*

PHASE 3 | Step 1: Planning for evaluation

For a complete guide on project evaluation, please see the Project Evaluation Learning Guide that is part of this toolkit. The following section provides one example of how you can plan for evaluation for the outcomes of your CLFA.

You have now arrived at one of the most exciting parts of the CLFA process. You have a list of actions in your Action Plan, and are ready to start implementing them. You are ready to make positive changes in the community to improve **food security**. But how will you know when you are successful? How will you measure whether or not you are having a positive impact on food security? This is where evaluation comes in, and the importance of planning for evaluation before you start implementing.

Creating an evaluation framework

An evaluation framework describes how your project activities will lead to the outcomes you hope to see, and how you will know when you have achieved success with respect to your desired outcomes.

The evaluation framework begins with the action plans that were developed to address the priorities identified in the community-led food assessment (Phase 2 – Step 5). To develop an evaluation framework, start with the outcomes that you identified for the priority in each Action Plan. For each outcome, you will need to come up with a list of **indicators** of success.

Indicators of success are things that you can record so you know when you have

achieved success and your desired outcomes. Indicators often have a number or value attached to them to help make it clear when success has been achieved. For example, for the objective to have increased participation at a community garden, an indicator could be 10 new community gardeners participating in the next growing season.

The last component of the framework is the evaluation method that will be used to evaluate whether or not the outcomes have been achieved. Evaluation methods show how you will collect the information for your indicators. There are a number of different methods for evaluation. It is most important that you choose methods that are appropriate for your community and feasible for your team. For example, residents within the community may not be interested in filling out surveys and would be more receptive to one-on-one interviews, but the organizing group may not have the **capacity** to complete many one-on-one interviews, so instead group interviews are selected.

Some evaluation methods include: surveys, on-on-one interviews, group interviews or **focus groups**, observation, journaling, photovoice, digital storytelling. For a detailed description of these research methods, see Section 4.

The following is an example evaluation framework from the Hopedale CLFA:

3.24 Community Example:
Excerpt from the Hopedale Evaluation Framework

Goal #2a: Increased Access to Fresh Produce – Community Gardening

Outcomes	Key Indicators	Evaluation Methods
Short Term: Increased participation of HICG and Department of Health and Social Development in Garden Program development Increased community engagement in program design and development	At least 2 meetings with identified lead organization focused on the Garden Program Development At least 5 community members present at meetings	Detailed project activity reports maintained, including minutes, meeting participant lists, participant feedback, and action items.
Intermediate: New Gardening Kits developed and distributed through community Increased promotion of Gardening Program	At least 10 kits developed and distributed among the community At least 3 radio spots, 10 new people on the Facebook group, and 5 posters created.	Detailed records of kit development, participant list, media attention, and Facebook group activity.
Long Term: Increased number of people gardening in Hopedale Increased gardening knowledge in Community	At least 7 people gardening in Hopedale Participants description of their involvement in gardening program – what they are growing, what is working, what is not, etc.	Detailed record of follow up with participants that received gardening kits to determine who is still gardening, what they have learned, what is working, what is not.
Future Goals: Have a central Community Garden Space to nurture education and awareness around growing and consuming fresh fruit and vegetables	Community Garden built in or near Hopedale, workshops hosted at garden site for education	

3.25 Practice Activity:
Create an Evaluation Framework

Refer back to the Action Pan you created in Practice Activity 3.22. Take the final list of Outcomes that you identified as a group, and copy them into the outcomes column of this Evaluation Framework template in your Activity Guide. Now, on your own or in pairs, try to identify **indicators** for all the outcomes, and the ways in which you would evaluate them.

Once you are finished, come together as a group and share what you included in each category. Did other groups identify different indicators than you did? Did you agree on the best methods to evaluate these indicators?

How did you find this template to work with? Is there anything you would change about it?

PRIORITY OUTCOMES	KEY INDICATORS	EVALUATION METHODS
Priority being evaluated:		
Goals this priority is hoping to address:		
Short Term:		
Intermediate:		
Long Term:		

PHASE 3 | Step 2: Implementing recommendations

Once the Action Plan is finalized and there is a clear framework for evaluating the success of the actions that will be taken, it is time to begin implementing. The process of implementation does take time, but it is an important process to ensure that all the effort of a community-led food assessment is used in a beneficial way. Here are a few things to keep in mind during the implementation phase:

- *Budget: Do any of the activities require funding? If so, where is this funding coming from?*

- *People: Have key people or organizations been identified to be responsible for the various activities?*

- *Evaluation: Is someone taking the lead on on-going evaluation during the implementation of the activities?*

- *Promotion: Make sure you are spreading the word about the activities taking place, to engage community members. If your activities are not reaching the community, they will have a hard time producing a positive impact on **food security**!*

- *Include everyone: When preparing any community activity, think about who will be directly affected by the changes that are to be implemented. Make sure that you are making activities accessible to everyone who should be benefitting from them (ultimately, to everyone in the community!).*

PHASE 3 | Step 3: Evaluating

Evaluation of the activities that are taking place is important to determine if the goals of the CLFA are being met, and ultimately, if **food security** in your community is improving.

Use the Evaluation Framework that you developed in Step 1 of this phase to conduct regular check-ins on the progress of each activity. Are you on track to meet your goals? What is working well? What is not working well?

This type of ongoing evaluation will help you see if the activities taking place are effective, or if they need to be modified. It will also show you if there is a need for further assessment activity. If need be, the team can begin the assessment process again if new questions arise that were not answered by the original assessment. You can also repeat certain steps of the assessment process, for example to identify additional priorities with the community. For example, once you begin to implement activities, you may find that you need to expand the **environmental**

scan and collect new information that you didn't know you needed at the time. Or, you might only need to go back to the information you already collected and look at it differently to find new answers.

As this is a community-driven process, it is important to continue with ongoing reporting to the community – even during the implementation phase.

By now, the **Assessment Committee** should have a good idea of which method was best to get information out to the community (Was it a radio show? An email newsletter? Another method?). Whichever method works best, use it often so that community members are kept updated about the activities taking place in the community.

Continue to document your activities!

As activities are put into action, and you evaluate changes, make sure that these are being documented so that you will be able to create a report that demonstrates the impact of the work that is being done.

3.26 Where you should be by now:
End of Phase 3, end of the assessment!

You have now completed a **community-led food assessment**. Throughout the process, you have generated a great deal of information, made new contacts and formed important community connections, identified a list of community priorities, and developed these into a set of action plans to achieve a range of outcomes that will improve your community's **food security**.

By the end of Phase 3, you will have come to an important part of the assessment process – implementing the actions and preparing to evaluate their success. At this point in the process, you should have:

A strong understanding of the importance of evaluation

A set of evaluation frameworks, one for each action plan that you developed

A list of **indicators** that you will use to evaluate the success of each action

Decided on the best methods to use for each evaluation framework, based on the methods that you think will work best in your community

An idea about how you will implement the Action Plans you developed in Phase 2

A plan to begin evaluating your actions once you start to implement them

A plan to report results of the Action Plans and evaluations to the community

Reporting to the community

It is very important at this point that you continue to report back to the community. Now that the community has been involved in setting priorities and has become invested in the process, it is important that this momentum is maintained and that the community sees action taking place.

You will have been communicating with the community throughout the process, so you will likely have a set of communication methods and networks developed by this point. Be sure you report the action and evaluation plans to the community. Implementing actions and then evaluating their success will require ongoing community involvement, so be sure to explain to the community how you will evaluate the success of the Action Plans.

Here are some of the things you will want to report:

Let the community know who will take responsibility for the different parts of each Action Plan and how people can be contacted (in case anyone has ideas, or questions about specific parts of the assessment or implementation of the Action Plans)

Send out another newsletter telling people what, when and where they can expect to see the first stages of the implementation of the Action Plans

Be sure to tell people the implementation for action timelines – it is important that you let people know actions will take time, but not to let people lose interest

Explain the evaluation process in an accessible way that makes it clear what the evaluation is trying to understand, when it will take place, and how people can become involved

Document!

It is still imperative that you document the process. When actions start to take place, and new people come on board, everyone needs to be able to find information easily and be on the same page. So you need to be sure to document where you are in the Action Plans and how evaluation will take place. This will also be important if there is any turnover in who is responsible for certain tasks, so that everyone knows the schedule and how the different actions fit into the history of the whole CLFA.

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RESOURCES
In this section of the learning guide, you will find extra resources that may help you throughout the process of your CLFA.

RESOURCES

4.1 Helpful checklists and tables

4.1.1 Key Phases of a Community-Led Food Assesment

Phase	Step	Possible Methods
1 **Planning for your CLFA**	**Step 1** Putting together an Assessment Committee	
	Step 2 Putting together an Advisory Committee	
	Step 3 Defining a purpose and scope for your assessment	
	Step 4 Determining the nature of community involvement	
2 **Conducting your CLFA**	**Step 1** Environmental scan	• conduct literature sources • review existing health reports on your community region • review census data to get an idea of the population profile • survey individuals and groups • conduct interviews and focus group sessions with key stakeholders
	Step 2 Asset and gap analysis	• review all data from environmental scan • conduct focus groups • engage the community through community meetings, public forum, etc
	Step 3 Community priority setting	• hold public workshops, community consultations, and community engagement at local schools
	Step 4 Recommendations for proposed actions	• ensure that program plans show clear goals and actions are linked to desired change in community
	Step 5 Action planning	
	Step 6 Reporting	

Phase	Step	Possible Methods
3 **Wrapping up your CLFA**	**Step 1** Planning for evaluation	
	Step 2 Implementing recommendations	
	Step 3 Evaluating	
	Step 4 Reporting	

4.1.2 Basic Steps of an Assessment (Adapted from Pothukuchi et al. (2002))

This table provides an overview of the steps typically involved in conducting a community-led food assessment. Depending on the community and content, some steps may not be required or may take place in a different order. Have you completed all these steps?

Basic Steps of An Assessment	
Get some background knowledge on Community Food Assessments	• *read reports from previous assessments and related resources* • *talk to people who have conducted assessments and learn about their experience*
Recruit Participants for Assessment Team	• *identify a group of key stakeholders and organize a first meeting* • *determine the groups' interest in conducting an assessment* • *indentify and recruit other participants representing diverse interests and skills*
Determine Assessment Purposes and Goals	• *dentify participants goals and interests* • *clarify and prioritize initial goals of assessment* • *revisit and refine goals late as needed*
Develop a Planning and Decision Making Process	• *clarify who will make decisions and how* • *clarify the roles of participants, defining various levels of representation* • *develop a plan for meaningful community participation*
Define the Community	• *define geographic boundaries for the assessment* • *decide whether to focus on specific population groups*
Identify Funds and Other Resources	• *develop overall budget* • *secure grants or other funding* • *identify in kind resources and project sponsor* • *recruit and train staff and volunteers as needed*
Plan and Conduct Research	• *develop assessment questions and indicators* • *identify existing data and information needed* • *determine appropriate research methods* • *collect data from existing and original sources* • *process and analyze data* • *summarize assessment findings*
Present and distribute Assessment Findings	• *identify the assessment audience and an appropriate way to reach them* • *compile assessment findings into a report and/or working document* • *distribute findings through materials, meetings, and outreach*
Evaluate and Celebrate Success	• *review assessment process and outcomes* • *thank and honor participants* • *implement follow-up actions* • *develop goals and action plans based on assessment results* • *make available additional resources and participants if needed*

4.1.3 Checklist for Community Involvement in Community Food Assessments

This checklist provides some different things to think about when you are engaging the community in your CLFA. (Adapted from the BC Food Assessment Guide (2008))

❑	Identify the communities to be involved on a geographical basis, by target group or by common interest.
❑	If a food policy council exits in the community or region, this group should be involved in the process.
❑	Identify key community leaders and decision makers. This may require one-on-one outreach to facilitate their involvement. Engage the help of trusted colleagues. Establish a relationship with the media, where appropriate, to assist with raising awareness and communicating with the community. Ensure you have key messages prepared.
❑	Select a number of key community leaders and decision makers to be involved on the Assessment Committee.
❑	Reach out to relevant groups and organizations in the community and region, engage them in dialogue and determine how they wish to be involved in the process.
❑	Raise awareness and provide information to the general community about the community food assessment process being undertaken.
❑	Hold focus group sessions and public meetings early in the process to understand community members' issues and interests, and to identify assets and gaps related to the assessment.
❑	Ensure community representatives are informed about research evidence and the data available. This is more than just providing information. This requires two-way communication between the community and the assessment team throughout the process.
❑	Engage community members in a public forum to address priority setting. This will be a more informed session given the ongoing community involvement from the earliest stages.

4.1.4 How to Take Minutes – Template

Below is a template you can use to take minutes at your committee and community meetings. It is important to document certain details from your meetings, so this template should help you record the things you will need to be able to refer back to throughout the CLFA process. Two important things to remember:

1. *Make sure the meeting notes are easy to follow, and send them to everyone on the committee after the meeting*

2. *Make sure to clearly indicate any actions that need to be taken after the meeting, and who was selected to take care of them*

Name of Organization

Date: _____
Time: _____
Location: _____

Present:
_____
_____

Absent:
_____
_____

Agenda:

      Agenda item 1
      Agenda item 2
      Agenda item 3
      Agenda item 4

Minutes:

      Agenda item 1:
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

      Agenda item 2:
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

Priority Actions identified in the meeting:

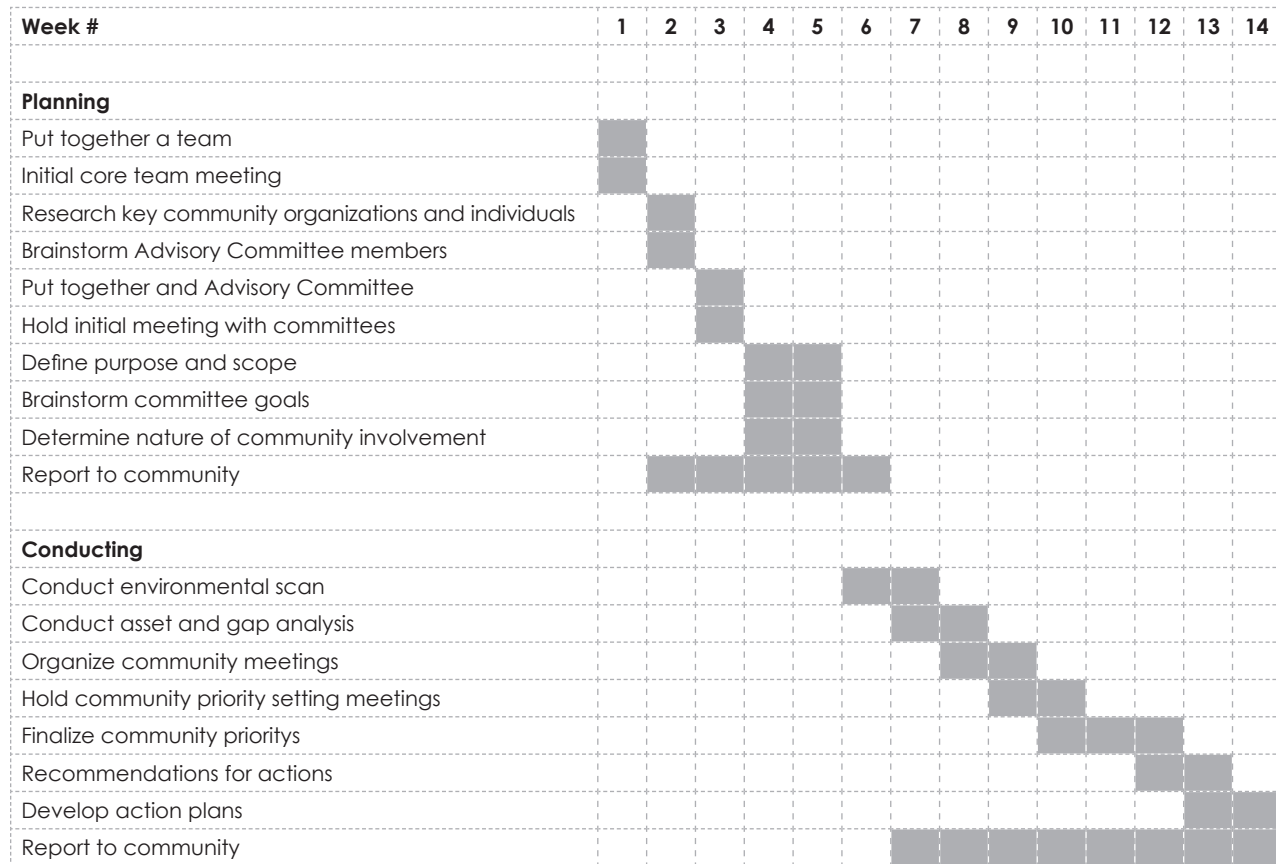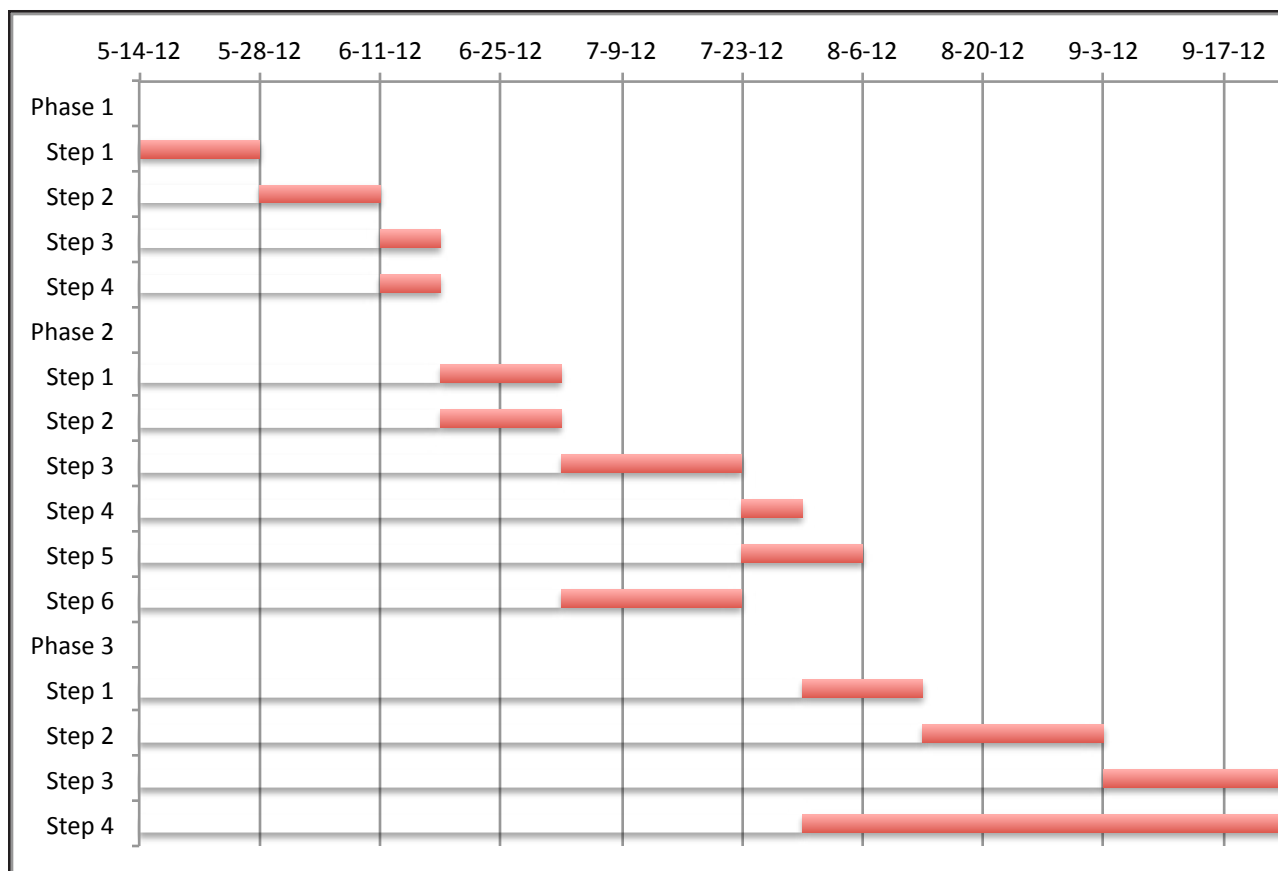| Action	Person who will take on action
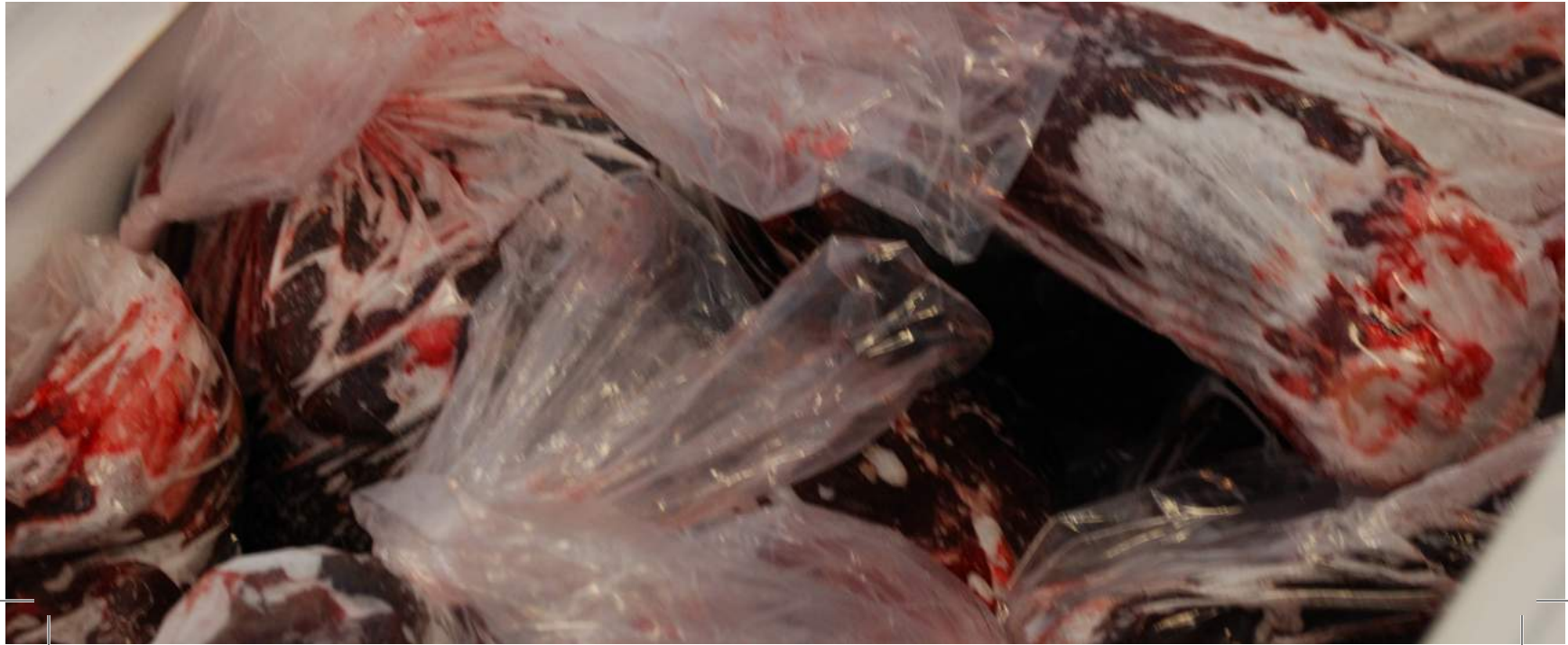
4.1.5 How to develop an assessment timeline – Gantt Chart

The 3.8 InfoBox in Phase 1 - Step 3 provides an introduction to creating a timeline for your assessment using a Gantt Chart. A simple example was shown in the InfoBox, but there are different ways to create a Gantt Chart – and you can always adapt it for your own community.

Here are two examples of Gantt Charts, both created with Microsoft Excel:

Week #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Planning														
Put together a team	■													
Initial core team meeting	■													
Research key community organizations and individuals		■												
Brainstorm Advisory Committee members		■												
Put together and Advisory Committee			■											
Hold initial meeting with committees			■											
Define purpose and scope				■	■									
Brainstorm committee goals				■	■									
Determine nature of community involvement				■	■									
Report to community		■	■	■	■	■								
Conducting														
Conduct environmental scan						■	■							
Conduct asset and gap analysis							■	■						
Organize community meetings								■	■					
Hold community priority setting meetings									■	■				
Finalize community prioritys										■	■			
Recommendations for actions											■	■		
Develop action plans												■	■	■
Report to community							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

	5-14-12	5-28-12	6-11-12	6-25-12	7-9-12	7-23-12	8-6-12	8-20-12	9-3-12	9-17-12
Phase 1										
Step 1	▬▬									
Step 2		▬▬								
Step 3			▬							
Step 4			▬							
Phase 2										
Step 1				▬▬						
Step 2				▬▬						
Step 3					▬▬					
Step 4						▬				
Step 5						▬▬				
Step 6					▬▬					
Phase 3										
Step 1							▬▬			
Step 2								▬▬		
Step 3									▬▬	
Step 4							▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬			

You can also make your timeline using a sheet of chart paper and draw the horizontal bars with a marker to show how long each task will take. There are advantages and disadvantages to using computers and paper to create a Gantt Chart timeline. When using paper and markers, it is easy to shade or colour over top of the bars to show how much you have completed each task. For example, if you think a task is half complete, you can use a highlighter to colour half of that bar, and fill it in completely when the task is complete.

In the example above, the time is listed in weeks across the top. Depending on the overall time you have to complete the CLFA, it might make more sense to use days, or to identify actual dates that each task will start, such as in the example below.

There are resources on the internet showing how to make different varieties of Gantt Charts, so feel free to look around to find a format and style that works well with your assessment. Below are some links to get started.

YouTube videos showing how to make a Gantt Chart in Microsoft Excel:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34jQsN8tF2Y

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Cv_RHWs7cM&feature=fvst

Instructions from Microsoft on making a Gantt Chart with Excel:
http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/excel-help/present-your-data-in-a-gantt-chart-in-excel-HA010238253.aspx

http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/excel-help/create-a-gantt-chart-in-excel-HA001034605.aspx

4.2   Research and evaluation methods

Surveys

Strengths: *Consistency, easy to interpret*

Limitations: *Little flexibility in response and opportunity for in-depth feedback*

One-on-One interviews

Strengths: *People can raise their own issues, speak in their own words, speak in confidence, good for in-depth feedback*

Limitations: *Time-consuming, fewer people can be interviewed than surveyed*

Group interviews

Strengths: *Interaction encourages sharing and elaboration, more people can be interviewed at a time*

Limitations: *Some people may speak more than others, skilled* **facilitator** *required, scheduling can be difficult*

Observation

Strengths: *See program first hand, allows for rich and in-depth description*

Limitations: *Can be time consuming, potentially intrusive*

Some more in-depth evaluation which evaluates through the 'eyes' of participants include:

Journaling – *requests participants to keep journals of experience*

Photovoice – *requests participants to take photos of their experience*

Digital Storytelling – *short videos that allow participants to share their stories*

NiKigijavut Hopedalimi Report "Our Food in Hopedale"– Final. (2010). Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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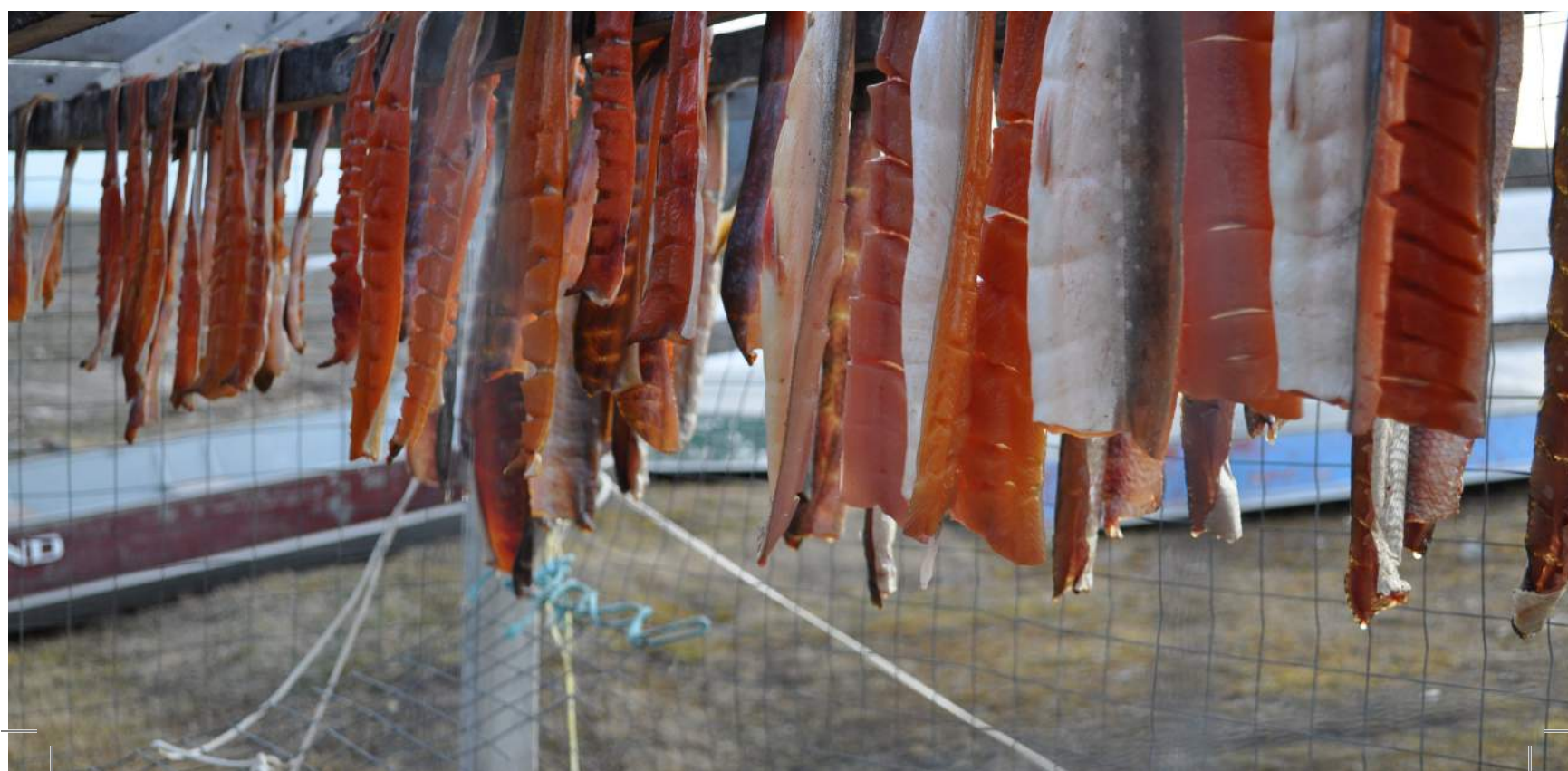
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Food Security Network of Newfoundland & Labrador

Healthy food for all!

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