



National Aboriginal Health Organization



CUSO Communities and the Impacts of Climate Change Winnipeg, Manitoba March 19 to 22, 2004

CUSO is a Canadian-based non-governmental organization. From March 19 to 22, 2004 CUSO hosted a major international conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba titled *Communities and the Impacts of Climate Change*. This event brought together over 180 people from across Canada and around the world. The purpose of the conference was to link community observations of climate change and science to community action in order to mitigate or adapt to climate change.

The Ajungginic Centre was pleased to partner with the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami in sponsoring Mary Denniston and Simon Kohlmeister, both from Labrador, to attend the conference. Denniston works for the Labrador Inuit Association in the Environment Department. She was able to learn about the effects of climate change on indigenous peoples from around the world and gained a greater knowledge of adaptation strategies she can implement in Labrador. Denniston expressed her gratitude to NAHO for enabling her to participate in this conference.

Kohlmeister is an elder from Labrador. He was able to share his experiences and observations of the changing environment he has gained from many decades spent on the land.

The participation of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO), specifically the Ajungginic Centre, at this event was key. Policy Analyst Mark Buell co-presented with the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Université Laval. This was an excellent venue to share the very serious impacts climate change is having in northern communities and to promote the work that NAHO, ITK and Université Laval are undertaking. The presentation was on the final day of the conference in a panel called *Climate Change Activities, Research, Actions and Solutions, by NGOs, community groups, representative organizations, and government departments*.

Contacts were made with a variety of organizations both within Canada and around the world. Some of the key organizations were the Assembly of First Nations, the World Health Organization and CUSO.

Prepared by Mark Buell

Although the content of many of the presentations was superficial at best, the conference was still a great opportunity to share the work of NAHO and network with organizations from around the world with an interest in climate change related impacts at the community level.

A report on the conference is expected soon.