# Accessing Indigenous Foods in Urban Northwestern Ontario: Women's Stories of Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Resistance to Policy

by

Breanna Phillipps

A thesis

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfillment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Master of Science

in

Public Health and Health Systems

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2021

©Breanna Phillipps 2021

## Author's Declaration

This thesis consists of material all of which I authored or co-authored: see Statement of Contributions. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## Statement of Contributions

This thesis presents the work of Breanna Phillipps in direct collaboration with her thesis supervisor, Dr. Kelly Skinner, Dr. Barbara Parker (Lakehead University), and Tyna Taylor Legault. Equally, the work includes input from her committee members Dr. Hannah Neufeld and Dr. Warren Dodd. I, Breanna Phillipps, authored Chapters 1 (Introduction and Study Rationale), 2 (Methodology and Methods), and 5 (Conclusion) of this thesis under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Skinner. These chapters were not written for publication. Chapters 3 and 4 consist of two manuscripts written for publication. Co-authors contributed to the preparation of these manuscripts as described below. Dr. Kelly Skinner, Dr. Barbra Parker, and Dr. Kristin Burnett conceptualized this study in Northwestern Ontario as part of a broader SSHRC Insight Grant titled: *Culture, Resiliency, and Prosperity: Transitioning from Food Security to Food Sovereignty and the role of Relocation and Migration on Traditional and Market-based Food Consumption.* These researchers undertook multiple interviews from 2017-2019 that were included as data for this thesis. I participated in the remaining interviews in 2020 which completed our study sample.

**Chapter 3**

I conceptualized the paper and wrote multiple drafts with preliminary feedback from Dr. Kelly Skinner and Dr. Barbara Parker, then additional feedback from Dr. Hannah Neufeld and Dr. Warren Dodd. This thematic analysis investigating the impact of place and urbanicity on access to Indigenous foods was prepared for submission to the Canadian Association for Food Studies (Original Research Article). I shared a draft document with Indigenous study participants, including Tyna Legault Taylor, who provided feedback. Tyna, a Cree woman from Attawapiskat living in Thunder Bay who is currently enrolled in the MA Student in the Social Justices Studies

program at Lakehead University, reviewed the manuscript in detail and her comments are integrated into the current state of the paper.

**Chapter 4**

I conceptualized the paper and wrote multiple drafts with preliminary feedback from Dr. Kelly Skinner and Dr. Barbara Parker, with additional feedback from Dr. Hannah Neufeld and Dr. Warren Dodd. This Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis on the policy landscape and experiences of accessing wild food was prepared for submission to the International Indigenous Policy Journal (Research Article).

**Abstract**

**Background:** Indigenous populations living in urban northern Ontario have been repeatedly ignored in research regarding Indigenous Peoples food insecurity and food systems, despite the large proportion of Indigenous Peoples living in the region and the unique challenges of the urban northern food environment.

**Objectives:** The purpose of this thesis is to explore and better understand how Indigenous Peoples in the urban northwestern Ontario service hubs of Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay access Indigenous foods and the relationship of Indigenous food to their food security and Indigenous food sovereignty.

**Methods**: The methodology of this project is based upon on the principles of community-based participatory research, intersectional feminist theory, and the USAI Framework (utility, self-voicing, access, and inter-relationality). Data were collected in open-ended interviews with stakeholders from three groups across the two cities (1) Indigenous female community members (n=6), (2) non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations (n=6), and (3) policymakers (i.e. those related to wild food policy or its implementation)(n=6). Two analyses were conducted. First, a thematic analysis of interview data from Indigenous community members and non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations characterized the impact of place and urbanicity on accessing Indigenous foods in both urban northwestern Ontario cities. Second, an Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis framework was applied to analyze interview data from the entire sample which illuminated how the provincial and federal policy contexts have historically and continue to impact Indigenous women and their communities' experiences of accessing wild foods in urban northwestern Ontario.

**Results:** Both place and urbanicity are central to how Indigenous populations in these towns

harvest, share, and consume their Indigenous foods. On the community and individual levels, Indigenous Peoples in these towns are often in situations of food insecurity due to financial, geography, and policy barriers. Participants highlighted the abundance of ways that Indigenous food sovereignty is being expressed. Building food networks and sharing practices amongst friends, family, and broader communities (both inside and outside the city) was central to promoting access to Indigenous food for Indigenous Peoples in this study. Indigenous women pointed to colonial policies which make it impossible for most people to harvest in a self-determined way; thus, resistance is necessary.  We found that stakeholder groups defined the policy problem differently and brought different values to their place in the systems which impede or facilitate access to wild foods. There was an acknowledgment of the conflict of Western food safety and natural resource management principles with Indigenous rights and Indigenous food sovereignty in theory and application.

**Conclusion:** Implementation of food and natural resource policy is often unclear due to the tensions of government jurisdiction and the erasure of Indigenous Peoples' experiences within Canadian cities**.** This thesis reiterates that Indigenous-led and culturally safe collaborations between the Indigenous community and other organizations are critical to improving Indigenous food sovereignty in these urban settings. Illuminating the non-Indigenous actors' understandings of Indigenous Peoples' food security and sovereignty in urban settings is key as they hold power in colonial institutions.  There is a continued need for Indigenous distinctions-based and intersectional approaches in all policy at all levels – from the federal to the institutional.

**Acknowledgments**

Dr. Kelly Skinner, I am grateful for all the opportunities you afforded me throughout this process. Seeing your dedication to your research and the communities you work with continues to inspire me and teach me. Thank you for always welcoming my widespread interests and strong convictions which often meant supporting me when I bit off a bit more than I could chew.

Dr. Barbara Parker, I feel very lucky to have met and worked with you on this project. I value our conversations about the complexities of this work – and engaging in intersectional feminist community research as white settler women. Thank you for always providing thoughtful feedback and referring me to new and exciting literature.

Dr. Mylene Ratelle, the confidence you had in my abilities and your desire to work collaboratively together made a lasting impact on me as a new graduate student. Thank you for pushing me outside of my comfort zone and bringing me onto your projects. Your kindness and support were appreciated.

Dr. Hannah Neufeld and Dr. Warren Dodd, thank you for giving your time to be on my committee. I have great respect for the work you both do, and it has been a privilege to learn from you.

Dr. Audrey Giles, you have had an immense impact on my life since we met, and from afar you continued to root for me in every way possible. Thank you for reminding me to bring balance to my life while always knowing I am capable of great things.

Mom and Dad – I am grateful you have always been my #1 cheerleaders. Thank you for continually asking about the work I do and being so willing to learn. With COVID, I ended this journey back at home and although unexpected, I am glad we got to spend that time together.

Erin – you were there throughout this journey to pull me out of a funk and have some fun. I am

so happy we got to have our weekend adventures.

To the MSc ’18 cohort – especially the office buddies and the qualitative queens – we graduated during a pandemic! Much of our time was cut short – but I cherish it. I loved learning from each of you – and I cannot wait until a time we can be reunited again.

Jess, Tyna, and April, thank you for being so open to sharing your stories with me. You are all such inspirational women doing amazing work in your communities. The opportunity to collaborate with you is a privilege.

Various institutions provided financial support for this work. CIHR facilitated my studies via a Frederick Banting and Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarship. Much of my graduate work was supported through a SSHRC Insight Grant: *Culture, Resiliency, and Prosperity: Transitioning from Food Security to Food Sovereignty and the role of Relocation and Migration on Traditional and Market-based Food Consumption* (Principal Investigator: Dr. Kelly Skinner; Co-Investigators: Dr. Kristin Burnett, Dr. Barbara Parker, Dr. Jaime Cidro, and Dr. Hannah Neufeld). An Ontario Graduate Scholarship was provided by the Government of Ontario and the University of Waterloo. The University of Waterloo also supplied the UW Graduate Scholarship and the President’s Scholarship. Lastly, the Global Health Policy and Innovation Research Centre also delivered funding for this work.

## Land Acknowledgement and Positionality

To undertake this research project in a good way, I must recognize my positionality in the relationships I form, the communities I work within, and the broader context of the settler-colonial state of Canada. I desire to acknowledge the deep connections and Traditional Knowledges of Indigenous Peoples to their traditional Territories as well as the Indigenous Peoples who continue to live on and care for the lands of Turtle Island. I identify as a white cis-woman and settler of mixed European-Canadian descent, with Scottish, Norwegian, German, French, and British ancestry. I was born into a lower-middle-class family and spent most of my life growing up and working in Ottawa, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin nation. It was on this land in my university studies that I began to learn the history of Indigenous and settler relations in our country, the details of the colonial project, and the past and current systemic oppression and resiliency of Indigenous Peoples. Personally, as an Ontario resident, I struggle with the fact that the histories and current realities of many of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis populations in Ontario are unknown to the southern and urban non-Indigenous folk.

During most of my degree, I lived and worked on the traditional lands of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo was built on the Haldimand Tract, the land six miles on each side of the Grand River promised to the Six Nations Haudenosaunee people. This research took place on the traditional territories of the Anishnabee Nation Peoples in Treaty #3 territory and the traditional territories of the Chippewa of Fort William First Nation in the Robison-Superior Treaty Area. I have directly benefited from Indigenous land stewardship and dispossession by living each day on these lands and I aim to contribute to engagement with Indigenous Peoples to change systemic oppression and policies to a vision of equity and well-being for Indigenous Peoples on the land now called Canada.

As a feminist and social justice activist, my experiences lead me to pursue graduate studies in the realm of community-driven and action-oriented Indigenous health work. As a non-Indigenous scholar, it is key that my positionality is explicit to present a rigorous yet subjective analysis. I am an early career researcher who has been working on topics of Indigenous populations' well-being within Canada since 2015, pursuing graduate work in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay since 2018. I believe that settler Canadians have a collective responsibility to educate ourselves on the histories and lives of Indigenous Peoples and the impact of colonialism on past and current generations. I have a responsibility to act in a way that transfers power to Indigenous peoples by prioritizing Indigenous perspectives and aligning with the goals of Indigenous communities. To do so, I must maintain the understanding that our personal worldviews influence our own subjective truths; thus, I must continually reflect on my self-location and my outsider status. I bring to this work the values integral to community-based participatory action research and intersectional feminist inquiry, including ethical responsibility and reciprocity, a strengths-based approach, co-creation of knowledge, valuing of various knowledges and worldviews, acknowledging the complexity and fluidity of social locations, and a commitment to justice and reducing inequity. I continually seek to decolonize my thinking and research practices while bringing a critique of settler colonialism to the forefront of my work. As a White person, I am repeatedly working on interrogating my understanding of the culture of whiteness, which is a necessity to be effectively anti-racist in my actions. I believe White people must put in the emotional labour to dismantle systems of oppression.

In the final stages of this project, I can now look back at how much I have learned and how my ways of thinking have developed. It is now clearer than ever the direct and indirect ways that settler colonialism and anti-Indigenous structural and interpersonal racism continue to

maintain health inequities for Indigenous Peoples. In this case, through food systems and natural resource policy, and the application of these colonial structures in two northern Ontario towns. The Indigenous women who spoke with me and my co-researchers were so open in sharing stories of their childhoods and current realities. With kindness and humour, they were willing to spend time to be together over a tea or a meal and have conversations about difficult topics with me, a white settler from the south. The unwavering humility and strength of the Indigenous women who participated in this study cannot be understated. We also spoke with many non-Indigenous (and mostly white) people who interpret or abide by regulations impacting Indigenous Peoples' food sovereignty daily. In these white spaces, the pervasiveness of white supremacy, Western understandings of food and health, and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples were plain to see. As a white researcher who was developing a critical understanding of the implementation of colonial policy, I was also met with varied perspectives from other white folks – some critical and some not. I have come to grasp the top-down power inherent in policy - it is deep and has widespread impacts on the individual level. The cultures at workplaces either fostered or worked against the values and assumptions about Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous foods inherent in the policy. I also realized that my whiteness positioned me and my white co-researchers to have other white people express themselves more openly than had we been visibly non-white. As a white settler – I must continue to question how and why governments act (or not), who's priorities are included, and how it impacts people based on their social location. Through this research process, I desired to build relationships, act as a facilitator, and produce work that can be a small part of the complex process of the sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples that is needed within Canada.

**Table of Contents**

Author's Declaration ..... ii
Statement of Contributions ..... iii
Chapter 3 ..... iii
Chapter 4 ..... iv
Abstract ..... v
Acknowledgments ..... vii
Land Acknowledgement and Positionality ..... ix
List of Tables ..... xv
List of Figures ..... xvi
List of Abbreviations ..... xvii
Chapter 1: Introduction and Study Rationale ..... 1
Introduction ..... 1
Indigenous Peoples' Right to Food Security and Health ..... 1
Food Security and Indigenous Food Sovereignty ..... 3
Food Insecurity, Indigenous Food Systems, and Holistic Health ..... 9
Erosion and Resiliency of Indigenous Food Systems ..... 12
Food Insecurity and Accessing Indigenous Foods in Northern Ontario ..... 13
Urban Migration of Indigenous Peoples ..... 15
Food Challenges in the City ..... 16
Study Rationale ..... 20
Specific Aim of Thesis ..... 23
Overarching Research Questions ..... 23
Summary of Manuscripts and Contributions ..... 23
Chapter 2: Methodology and Methods ..... 26
Research Design and Theoretical Orientation ..... 26
Utility, Self-Voicing, Access, Inter-relationality Framework (USAI). ..... 27
Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR). ..... 27
Intersectional Feminist Inquiry. ..... 29
Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA). ..... 31
Application of the Methodology ..... 32
Study Setting ..... 34
Community Profile: Sioux Lookout, Ontario ..... 35
Community Profile: Thunder Bay, Ontario ..... 37

Sample and Recruitment Strategy ........ 40
Data Sources and Methods ........ 43
Reflexive Research Journal ........ 44
Open-ended Interviews ........ 45
Community Member Follow Up. ........ 47
Analysis Strategy ........ 47
Chapter 3: Interrogating Place and Urbanicity as Determinants of Access to Indigenous Foods: Stories from Northwestern Ontario Hubs ........ 50
Introduction ........ 50
Framing the Study. ........ 50
Setting: Urban Hubs of Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout. ........ 53
Methodology and Methods ........ 54
Sampling, Data Collection and Data Analysis. ........ 55
Results ........ 57
Colonial Dispossession and Access to Harvesting Territory. ........ 57
Disruptions and Cultivations of Traditional Knowledges and Indigenous Foodways. ........ 59
Implementation of and Resistance to Colonial Policy. ........ 61
Changing Environments and Sustainable Harvesting. ........ 64
Building Interpersonal Food Networks and Reciprocity. ........ 66
'Bridging the Disconnect': Increasing Traditional Food Knowledges and Practices in the City ........ 67
Discussion ........ 68
Conclusion ........ 74
Chapter 4: Using Intersectionality-Based-Policy Analysis to Understand Stakeholder Viewpoints and Settler-Colonial Narratives Impacting Access to Wild Foods for Urban Indigenous Women in Northwestern Ontario ........ 77
Introduction ........ 77
Theoretical Framework: Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis ........ 79
Methods ........ 80
Findings ........ 82
(1) How stakeholders define the policy problem of accessing wild food and food insecurity for Indigenous populations. ........ 82
(2) The current policy landscape in Ontario: how it constructs and maintains inequities of food insecurity and access to wild foods. ........ 86
(2b) Assumptions about Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous foods, and harvesting – how they underlie current food and natural resource policy. ........ 88

(3) Policy Gaps and Entry Points for Improvement ..... 98
Discussion ..... 104
Conclusions ..... 109
Chapter 5: Conclusion ..... 112
Summary of Main Findings ..... 112
References ..... 123
Appendices ..... 134
Appendix A ..... 134
Appendix B ..... 137
Appendix C ..... 140
Appendix D ..... 144

## List of Tables

Table 1: Characteristics of Study Sample……………………………………………………43

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Nishnawbe Aski Nation Communities in Ontario…………………………..…3

Figure 2: Adapted Socio-Ecological Model by Neufeld, Richmond, & The Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre(2020) ……………………………………………………...19

Figure 3: Map of Ontario Cities, including Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay………..................35

## List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| CBPR | Community Based Participatory Research |
| IPBA | Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis |
| MNR | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources |
| NAN | Nishnawbe Aski Nation |
| NWHU | Northwestern Health Unit |
| OMAFRA | Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs |
| RFDA | Regional Food Distribution Association of Thunder Bay |
| TBDHU | Thunder Bay District Health Unit |
| USAI | USAI Framework (utility, self-voicing, access, and inter-relationality) |

# Chapter 1: Introduction and Study Rationale

## Introduction

The overall purpose of this thesis was to better understand, document, and work towards improved access to Indigenous foods for Indigenous Peoples in the northwestern urban centers of Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay, Ontario. The methodology of the project was built around USAI principles (i.e. utility, self-voicing, access, inter-relationality), intersectional feminist inquiry, and community-based participatory research approaches. Qualitative data sources include stakeholder interviews and a reflexive research journal. Data was analyzed using an inductive thematic analysis process and the integration of an Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA). This collection of Indigenous women and other stakeholder's perceptions is beneficial for informing action at local and regional levels while aligning with the broader goals of social justice and Indigenous food sovereignty for Indigenous Peoples living in urban centers.

## Indigenous Peoples' Right to Food Security and Health

In Canada, despite the obligation to fulfill all human rights, including those of food and health (United Nations, 2007), an unacceptably large and disproportionate gap in the socio-economic and health conditions of Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous people exists as a result of colonization, colonialism, systemic racism, and discrimination (Reading & Wien, 2009) On February 24th, 2016, a health and public health emergency was declared by First Nations within the Sioux Lookout region and the full Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) territory in Northern Ontario (See Figure 1) after decades of perpetual crisis and health care inequities – including poor access to basic health services as well as proximal determinants of health such as clean drinking water (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020; Nishnawbe Aski Nation & Sioux Lookout

First Nations Health Authority, 2016; Perkel, 2016). On July 24th, 2017, the Charter of Relationship Principles: Governing Health System Transformation in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Territory, signed by the Government of Ontario, Government of Canada, and NAN on behalf of First Nations in their territory highlights the need for new approaches to address inequities in community level health and health services which respond to multitude of crises, including but not limited to, high rates of diabetes and suicides of Indigenous Peoples. The vision for health transformation presented and agreed upon by the signing parties includes focus on holistic models of health and wellness, and addressing population health and health determinants ("Charter of Relationship Principles for Nishnawbe Aski Nation Territory," 2017). One of the manifestations of the unjust conditions for Indigenous Peoples living in Canada and in northern Ontario is the social and public health problem of food insecurity. NAN has been working on tackling the problems of poor access to healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant foods since 2009, which is a main contributor to the public health crises many communities face to this day (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, n.d.-b). Food security challenges facing Indigenous Peoples and people in rural, remote, and Northern communities in Canada have been stressed in United Nations reports, academic work, and grey literature (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; De Schutter, 2012; Loring & Gerlach, 2015). However, despite extensive literature and condemnation by the United Nations, Indigenous Peoples' food insecurity as a public health and social justice concern has not been prioritized enough by those in power, such as policymakers and various levels of Government in Canada (Loring & Gerlach, 2015).

Source: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (n.d.-a)

*Figure 1: Map of Nishnawbe Aski Nation Communities in Ontario*

**Food Security and Indigenous Food Sovereignty**

Food security "exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2009, p. 8). The foundational pillars of food security include accessibility, availability, stability, and utilization; but the definition has broadened by some to include acceptability, adequacy, and/or

agency (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; FAO Agricultural and Development Economics Division, 2006), as well as culture (Power, 2008). The pillar of access is focused on adequate resource access to acquire a desired and nutritious diet. These resources are defined as “the set of all commodity bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic, and social arrangements of the community in which they live (including traditional rights such as access to common resources)" (FAO Agricultural and Development Economics Division, 2006, p. 1). In contrast, food insecurity is the present outcome and future risk of being unable to secure an adequate diet (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014). The most common conception of food security is the ‘anti-poverty’ perspective where food insecurity is caused by the inability to afford food (i.e. economic access) (Suschnigg, 2012). The direct influence of poverty on health via food security is clear; poverty determines which food environments one can shop in and what foods one can afford. The oligopolized market system in northern Ontario, the control of food economies is centralized and held by few actors, creating situations where healthy market foods are not sold, are poor quality, or inaccessible due to prohibitive costs (Leblanc & Burnett, 2017). In urban northern Ontario, such as Sioux Lookout, although facing higher than average food costs in Ontario and a lack of choices in food retailers, is not entitled to the Nutrition North Canada food subsidy program – which is critical to understanding economic pressures that residents with living in poverty face buying food and striving for food security at the household level (Barbara Parker, Burnett, Hay, & Skinner, 2018). In a recent study in Sioux Lookout, poverty was found to be a determining factor to access to market and harvested foods. Researchers suggested guaranteed annual income to solidify higher and more reliable incomes that will contribute to improving household food security in the city (Barbara Parker et al., 2018).

Solutions from this perspective include mitigation strategies to support the most vulnerable populations in the short term with policy change to support universal living income and affordable housing (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2009; Suschnigg, 2012). As food insecurity (typically measured at the household level) is strongly tied to low-income status, it is unsurprising that in Canada, Indigenous Peoples experience alarmingly high rates of household food insecurity and associated health conditions (Reading & Wien, 2009).

However, the classic food security definition is problematic because it tends to avoid the direct implication of systemic imbalances (i.e. political, social, economic systems) as well as the diversity of Indigenous food systems and cultural and social meanings of food (Leblanc & Burnett, 2017; Power, 2008). The current conception of food security which is heavily focused on an individual's purchasing power has also had the negative influence of limiting the focus on local, provincial, and national government's responsibilities while increasing power for international and transnational corporations; ultimately, this characterization places neoliberal market liberalization above the health of people (Fairbairn, 2010). Martin and Amos (2017) highlighted how the common understanding food security within a nutritionism framework (i.e. without contextual understanding of the food environment or connections between food, and environmental and human health) causes a focus on the failing of individual eating behaviours and considers many by-products of colonization as simply unavoidable facts of development without acknowledgement of the vast impacts of settler-colonialism on the food systems and lives of Indigenous Peoples.

Power (2008) argued for a concept of cultural food security to encompass the unique considerations of Indigenous Peoples in terms of their food practices (i.e. harvesting, sharing, and consumption of traditional foods). Further, her seminal work solidified the need to include

both traditional and market systems in food security conceptualizations, policy, and programs (Power, 2008). Ford (2009) investigated the contemporary Inuit food system in Igloolik, indicating that traditional and store food are produced, processed, distributed, and consumed in differing ways. Additionally, they found reliance on food systems to be a function of environmental and economic stress. Particularly, Inuit relied more heavily on store foods during times of environmental stress yet relied more on traditional food during times of economic stress (Ford, 2009). Thus, when examining food systems in Northern Ontario, it is necessary to view food security in terms of influences from both food systems within a historical and colonial awareness (Leblanc & Burnett, 2017).

The language and concept of Indigenous food sovereignty are new to policy and academic dialogue and is presented as the best way towards eliminating chronic food insecurity for Indigenous Peoples, yet has been central to the lived experiences of peoples in Indigenous communities who have developed food systems based on harvesting from land and waterways for an extensive time (Martens, Cidro, & Hart, 2016; Morrison, 2011). Despite little control over their systems and food choices when considering the broader socio-political and natural environments, individuals are often framed as responsible for their food insecurity (Martin, 2012). Food sovereignty takes broader influences into account, it guarantees the right "of peoples and nations to control their own food and agricultural systems, including their own markets, production modes, food cultures, and environments" (Desmarais, 2012, p. 362). Good food from a critical Indigenous perspective has been described as food systems that are just, healthy, and sustainable (Martin & Amos, 2017). In response to food insecurity in NAN, they have developed the following 6 pillars of community food self-determination: (1) traditional practices, (2) imported food, (3) local production, (4) nutrition practice, (5) planning, policy, and advocacy,

and (6) research/knowledge transfer (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, n.d.-c). Working towards Indigenous food sovereignty entails disrupting existing power structures to produce local and sustainable food systems and thus, is crucial in transforming the industrial food system to prioritize social and ecological justice (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; Leblanc & Burnett, 2017; Morrison, 2011). This concept prioritizes voices of the systematically marginalized and culturally diverse as well as environmental protection(Leblanc & Burnett, 2017).

In Canada, there has been an exclusion of Indigenous Peoples' voices in understanding their own food and dietary practices (Elliott, Jayatilaka, Brown, Varley, & Corbett, 2012; Martin, 2012). Kepkiewicz et al. (2015) highlighted that there is a need for current settler food movements to better critically engage with structural oppression relating to impacts of capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy. Food sovereignty reflects Indigenous worldviews and is particularly relevant for Indigenous populations in Canada who have a painful history of colonizers enforcing power in a racist and manipulating manner via governance of resources such as food (Martens et al., 2016). It is key to highlight that the Eurocentric worldview of domination over non-human beings and language of land management conflicts with Indigenous eco-philosophy based on the values of interdependency, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity (Martens et al., 2016; Morrison, 2011). Indigenous Peoples have worked in unison with the natural world to actively impact and form the current land and associated traditional food systems (Morrison, 2011). As such, supporting Indigenous food sovereignty is part of a cross-cultural understanding process prioritizing Indigenous knowledges, traditions, customs, and laws to inform action-oriented policy and community resiliency. In practice, this includes highlighting the connections between the broader goals of the sovereignty of food, land,

and every aspect of Indigenous lives. Equally, this process must include application of the lens of food justice, where relationships amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (and their associated institutions) are reconstructed and where colonial institutions honour Indigenous Nations and communities' right to govern their lands and food systems (Martens et al., 2016; Martin & Amos, 2017; Morrison, 2011).

Cidro, Adekunle, Peters, and Martens (2015) identified the following four pillars of Indigenous food sovereignty: the recognition that food is sacred, participation in food systems, self-determination, and supportive legislation and policy, and highlights that reconnection to land and through traditional practices is crucial. Thus, Indigenous food sovereignty is achieved by viewing food as a gift from the Creator which should not be disrupted by colonial laws, policies, or institutions, and can be enacted by practicing healthy and reciprocal relationships with the environment. This food action happens at all levels from individual to the region and is needed to provide food now and into the future (Morrison, 2011). Self-determination in this context supports dependence on Western food systems and creating situations where traditional foods allow for resiliency and food security despite external challenges (Morrison, 2011). Using the Indigenous food sovereignty framework is considered a way to work towards mutually beneficial laws, policies, and economies through adjustments in various sectors that support the environment, people, and overall health of both (Desmarais, 2012; Martin & Amos, 2017; Morrison, 2011). Indigenous food sovereignty presents the strategies Indigenous Peoples and communities are using to sustain traditional food practices that existed pre-contact and have continued despite colonial oppression in Canada. Settlers must understand that current sites for agricultural production are often sites where traditional harvesting and maintenance of land by Indigenous Peoples have existed for millennia (Morrison, 2011).

In sum, the relationship between food security and Indigenous food sovereignty has been discussed in various ways in the literature. In the context of my thesis, I will be conceptualizing food security as a shorter-term goal while aligning my work with the broader, long term aim and values of Indigenous food sovereignty. Achieving Indigenous food sovereignty is a complex challenge as it is a radical response and change in the discourse surrounding food, politics, and social relations, and involved the transfer of resources and power (Morrison, 2011). Thus, it is crucial to go beyond the concept of food security, as the Indigenous food sovereignty framework acknowledges the socio-political environment in which Indigenous food systems operate, including the ongoing impacts of the colonial project on them.

**Food Insecurity, Indigenous Food Systems, and Holistic Health**

The general trend of 'nutritional transition' from solely land-based to more heavily market-based diets of Indigenous Peoples in Canada has been a main public health concern and central to the health crisis many Indigenous populations are experiencing (Elliott et al., 2012; Martin, 2012). In general, this transition is linked to food insecurity for Indigenous populations, as they have become more reliant on costly market food and have decreased consumption of food from local and sustainable sources. To be put simply, foods that are harvested or farmed from the local environment or have strong cultural value are called 'traditional', 'country', 'Indigenous', or 'wild' foods. These terms refer to a similar concept, but the choice of term is largely dependent on the geographic area, population, and context. Literature may refer to any one of these terms. When I am discussing specific literature, I will use the term in their study. Otherwise, in my manuscripts I will mostly be using the terms 'Indigenous food', 'Indigenous food systems', and 'wild food' after discussions with co-authors and participants. Tyna Legault Taylor described that in her experiences, using the word traditional to describe Indigenous foods

can be controversial in that it may reiterate a false belief that Indigenous food systems are static as opposed to their dynamic reality. Further, that describing foods as traditional or not can be used to reflect on someone's Indigeneity (e.g. you did not cook this the 'traditional' way). However, I still refer to knowledges and food practices as traditional when they have been described in that manner. In policy, wild food is the term typically used to refer to foods harvested from the local environment or grown outside of the market system. Thus, in the policy analysis in Chapter 4, this term is used almost exclusively. Harvesting techniques for Indigenous foods include hunting, fishing, trapping, and cultivating and picking plants.

Tyna's perspective mirrors some research which recognizes the contested views on what constitutes traditional or Indigenous food in contemporary Indigenous diets. Luppens and Power (2018) explored the meaning of traditional food with Indigenous Peoples living in Terrace, BC. They found that fusion or hybrid foods made with post-contact ingredients may also be culturally significant; not just what is hunted, fished, gathered from the local environment. Foods that had strong cultural significance yet are outside the typical definition of traditional foods include bologna and chow mien, which are mixed with fish or seaweed. Those who view culture as dynamic considered these Indigenous-fusion foods as having strong cultural relevance; thus, there is a danger in dichotomization what is traditional or not as to discount the value of these foods in Indigenous Peoples well-being and self-determination (Luppens & Power, 2018).

As mentioned, the use of post-contact ingredients in contemporary diets has blurred the concept of Indigenous food on someone's plate; yet, there is still a distinction between traditional or Indigenous food and market food systems. As Kuhnlein and Receveur (1996) explain, a traditional food system, "includes the sociocultural meanings, acquisition/processing techniques, use, composition, and nutritional consequences for the people using the foods" (p. 418). These

foods form their own food system, with their unique attributes, and are separate from the market food system (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). The conception of Indigenous food in this project will is flexible to respond to the same dynamic and adaptable nature of Indigenous cultures that have been resilient for millennia.

Indigenous food provides holistic health (i.e. nutritional, emotional, spiritual, mental, and cultural) benefits and has been praised as a means of combatting food insecurity and a crucial part of Indigenous food sovereignty. Nutrition research supports traditional food consumption due to the general lower proportion of energy, fat, sodium, and carbohydrates, and higher nutrient density compared to market foods (Elliott et al., 2012; Martin, 2012; Pal, Haman, & Robidoux, 2013). The nutritional transition within Indigenous communities has coincided with increases in food insecurity and chronic, diet-related, diseases (i.e. obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease); yet communities who have maintained more traditional diets have experienced less prevalence of such non-communicable diseases (Martin, 2012). Food is related to physical health, but traditional food is inseparable from Indigenous Traditional Knowledges and cultural practices. Culture is an important dynamic determinant of Indigenous Peoples' health (Luppens & Power, 2018); and Martin (2012) encourages understandings of food for Indigenous Peoples through a cultural lens. Through these connections, Indigenous foods influence the maintenance of social, emotional, mental, and spiritual health (Elliott et al., 2012; Martin, 2012). Despite great diversity in Indigenous communities, common concepts related to food that are in opposition to the Western understanding of food include connection to the land, belonging to the community and ecosystem, sacred responsibility to the land, intergenerational knowledge sharing, and respect for all beings (i.e. human and non-human) (Martin, 2012). Thus, it is clear how decreased Indigenous food access and consumption have a direct influence on the

holistic health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples via nutritional and cultural losses (Martin, 2012).

**Erosion and Resiliency of Indigenous Food Systems**

Indigenous food systems have historically and continue to be actively eroded through colonization and government actions (e.g. impacts of assimilatory government policy, relocation to permanent settlements, environmental dispossession, residential school system, and introduction of the wage economy) (Cidro et al., 2015; Kumar, Furgal, Hutchinson, Roseborough, & Kootoo-Chiarello, 2019; Mason & Robidoux, 2017a). Since Indigenous food systems are strongly tied to resources and the local environment, environmental dispossession is a process with is critically obstructive to traditional food systems, food security, and sovereignty. Food insecurity can be understood as social determinant of health which is largely unmet in many Indigenous communities, and is directly tied to processes of environmental dispossession. Consumption of traditional foods is one of the most direct links between Indigenous Peoples and their environments. Environmental dispossession in practice can be experienced as decreased access to physical environments that can result in strains on social life in community and a shift away from traditional foods and economies (Richmond & Ross, 2009). Environmental dispossession is a lived experience for populations living away from traditional territories. By removing Indigenous Peoples from their traditional harvesting lands, government policies have limited access to those land, animal, and water resources to be harvested along with the cultural importance of being connected to such land (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017).

Nevertheless, traditional food systems have existed for millennia and Indigenous Peoples have resisted such forces to maintain their food systems (Mason & Robidoux, 2017b). Data from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey indicated there has been little variance in prevalence of harvesting

by First Nations adults (i.e. aged 15 and above) living off-reserve in Ontario since 2006. In 2017, 33% of First Nations adults living off-reserve had participated in hunting, fishing, or trapping within the last 12 months, in comparison to 37% of adults in 2006(Kumar et al., 2019). Today, there are many local initiatives to regain food security and Indigenous food sovereignty despite continued policy barriers (Mason & Robidoux, 2017a). Foci of this movement include prioritizing community involvement and local food production, family-centered education on food, re-establishing traditional practices and relationships with the land, and addressing challenges with imported foods (Mason & Robidoux, 2017a; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Healthy Roots is an example of a successful Haudenosaunee community-based initiative started in Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, the largest First Nations reserve in Canada. The program was based on the resurrection of traditional foodways by eating and learning to prepare local foods, which built community capacity, improved health indicators, and increased traditional food knowledge for Haudenosaunee Peoples who participated (de Souza et al., 2021; Gordon, Xavier, & Neufeld, 2018). This thesis explores the existing individual and community strengths which continue to facilitate the resurgence of Indigenous food systems in urban northwestern Ontario.

**Food Insecurity and Accessing Indigenous Foods in Northern Ontario**

To form solutions, it is key to grasp the origins of food insecurity and barriers to accessing Indigenous foods in northern Ontario. Firstly, it is unaffordable for most people to harvest Indigenous foods and/or buy nutritious market foods. A strong connection to the global system is demonstrated by reliance on increasingly expensive technologies and fuel (Loring & Gerlach, 2015). Hunting licensing fees add an additional economic barrier (Elliott et al., 2012). Moreover, the market system is often not sufficient alone to provide food security as

extraordinarily high prices for healthy and perishables foods exist in the oligopoly of Northern Canada (Burnett, Skinner, Hay, Leblanc, & Chambers, 2017; Haman, Fontaine-Bisson, Pilon, Lemarche, & Robidoux, 2017). Although, it is important to note that remote communities see significantly higher food prices than those with year-round road access. Additionally, there are concerns from Indigenous communities regarding food safety (i.e. contaminants and pathogens in subsistence foods) and the impacts of climatic and environmental change on land-based harvesting (i.e. hunting, fishing, gathering) (Loring & Gerlach, 2015). Climate change has disrupted harvesting activities by making travel more dangerous and restricting access to some traditional territories. Changes in the environment are impacting animals as well; caribou and moose populations are declining and there are changes in appearance and availability in fish populations (Kumar et al., 2019). Ford's (2009) research in Nunavut presented determinants of food security that encompassed the unique characteristics of Inuit food systems. Access to country food is impacted by government policy at the provincial/territorial, federal, and international levels, sharing in community, as well as cost and support of hunting and other land skills. Availability of country food is impacted similarly by government policy, as well as health and number of animals, wildlife stability and vulnerability, and animal migration patterns (Ford, 2009).

However, the most crucial drivers of food insecurity are social and structural access barriers, created through government policy that limits Indigenous Peoples' ability to adapt to other changes influencing their food systems (Loring & Gerlach, 2015). Most notably, is the disruption of intergenerational sustenance knowledge and food skills transfer resulting from a history of assimilatory agendas and government-imposed hunting and fishing regulations

limiting location and size of harvesting (Elliott et al., 2012). This thesis continues to document and investigate how barriers to Indigenous foods are experienced.

**Urban Migration of Indigenous Peoples**

Urban Indigenous populations, such as the participants of this project, have unique characteristics that must be acknowledged to promote their food security. Indigenous populations have been increasingly moving to urban centers; urban migration of Indigenous peoples has been supported through assimilatory government policies starting in the 19th century (Cidro et al., 2015). Aboriginal Peoples' Survey data suggests that in 2017 approximately 75% of First Nations Peoples in Canada lived in urban centers (i.e. population centers over 1000 people) (Kumar et al., 2019). Browne, McDonald, and Elliott (2009) cited key factors influencing First Nations people's urbanization as a lack of opportunities for education or employment in reserve or rural communities; the need to improve their socioeconomic status, living, and housing conditions; and the need to access health services. In cities, Indigenous Peoples face new challenges including legal limitations of the *Indian Act* and the climates of racism, marginalization, and poverty (Browne et al., 2009). High degrees of mobility are common as people maintain strong connections to home communities (i.e. rural or reserve) (Brown, Lengyel, Hanning, Friel, & Isaak, 2008). Additionally, Indigenous populations in urban centers are more likely to be culturally diverse in Indigenous identity and practices than on reserve or rural communities (Cidro et al., 2015). Challenges with reliable health data, defining populations without a geographic boundary, and patterns of mobility complicate how urban Indigenous Peoples' health is understood (Browne et al., 2009; Skinner, Pratley, & Burnett, 2016). Further, trends of research and governments to not identify Indigenous Peoples' within city contexts, and to prioritize the needs of people living on-reserve over off-reserve urban populations have the

profoundly negative impact of erasing the presence of Indigenous Peoples in a variety of urban places within the settler state, leading to a lack of understanding and action on the health inequities they face (Skinner et al., 2016).

**Food Challenges in the City**

Indigenous urban migration and mobile urban populations are poorly recognized in health and food literature (Browne et al., 2009; Skinner et al., 2016). Most food security research with Indigenous populations in Canada has been focused on reserve and in the Arctic, leaving key gaps in knowledge surrounding the provincial Norths and urban communities in the picture of Indigenous Peoples' food security (Elliott et al., 2012). This knowledge gap is concerning. Forced assimilation and urbanization hinder access to traditional food by fostering a loss of intergenerational knowledge transmission and disruption of community and family dynamics (Elliott et al., 2012). Equally, a unique food system, and varying degrees of social distance and disruption of food sharing networks, social and cultural exclusion from communities, and connection to land are facts of urban geography (Cidro et al., 2015; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017; Skinner et al., 2016). The distinct social structures and food systems in urban environments, along with the unique characteristics of Indigenous Populations in the city influence access to, and subsequent consumption of Indigenous foods (Skinner et al., 2016). A report completed by Ermine, Engler-Stringer, Farnese, and Abbott (2020) is a recent and important contribution to understanding of access to Indigenous foods in urban environments, which grew out of conversations across Canada on this topic. They reiterate the crucial point that Inuit, Métis, and Non-Status First Nations people are considered Status 'Indians' according to the Constitution thus have protected Indigenous rights. In practice, these groups do not have the same hunting and

fishing rights as Status Indians under the provincial wildlife laws applicable in off-reserve urban settings.

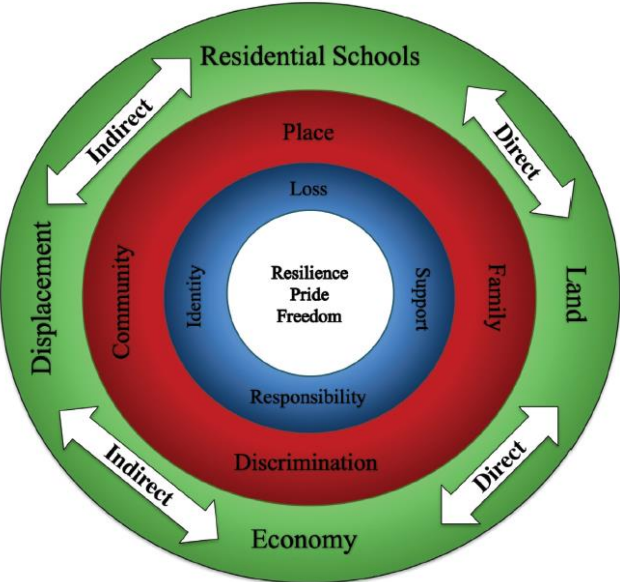
Diets change according to urban geography, level of remoteness, and tensions of blending urban and traditional lifestyles (Kerpan, Humbert, & Henry, 2015). Indigenous Peoples who migrate continue to maintain their values yet moving from reserve to urban areas has been shown to decrease access to traditional foods (Brown et al., 2008; Cidro et al., 2015). Specifically, in Canada, off-reserve First Nations people in rural areas (i.e. population of fewer than 1000 people) were found to be consistently more likely to harvest traditional foods than those in urban areas, with no significant difference from 2001 to 2017 (Kumar et al., 2019). Existing literature with urban Indigenous populations has highlighted barriers to food security and accessing traditional foods, including distance to and connections with their home community, higher cost of urban living, loss or lack of development of traditional food knowledge and skills, decreased access to traditional teachings, decreased food sharing, inability to purchase traditional foods in the market system, and a struggle to balance traditional lifestyle (e.g. food sharing and collectivism) with urban values (e.g. consumerism and individualism) and settings (Brown et al., 2008; Elliott et al., 2012; Kerpan et al., 2015; Skinner et al., 2016).

Specifically, Brown et al. (2008) highlight unique changes to the food environment of Indigenous Peoples moving from reserves to Winnipeg: meats coming from reserves, removal of physical exertion to get food, the convenience of fast-food outlets, lower cost of convenience store food, and decreased ability to cook in shared accommodations. Some positive aspects of urban living found in some studies include increased access to fruits and vegetables(Brown et al., 2008), and the positive impact of urban school programs on traditional food knowledge and consumption (Kerpan et al., 2015). Elliot and colleagues (2012) presented overlapping factors

accessing traditional food in Vancouver, including government policies, the physical environment, Traditional knowledge, family and community relationships, Aboriginal empowerment, and the effects of colonization and assimilation.

Additionally, Neufeld and Richmond (2017) distinguished experiences of Indigenous mothers in urban centers of London and nearby reserve communities in Southwestern Ontario. The urban mothers faced additional geographic challenges; they spoke of the necessity to travel to the reserve to have access to traditional foods and how some of their children growing up in urban communities have lost preference for traditional food. These women participated less in food sharing networks and experienced disruption in knowledge surrounding traditional foods and their preparation as a result of urbanization and experiences in their communities of residential schools and general assimilatory actions of the Canadian government. Yet, the mothers reiterated that despite these barriers these foods are part of their cultural practices and tied to their Indigenous identity (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Recently, Neufeld, Richmond, and The Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (2020) presented and adapted Socio-Ecological-Model (See Figure 2) which is useful to understand First Nation women's relationships with food and the connections with experiences of residential schools in the context of this study. Kerpan (2015) found that urban Indigenous youth valued the nutritional and cultural value of traditional foods, and desired to eat more of them. Elliot and colleagues (2012) present two figures: on factors limiting access to traditional foods and actions to increase access to traditional foods in the city. These figures encompass much of the existing concepts in the literature and were used by Bhawra (2013) to frame their food security work with off-reserve First Nations and Métis children in urban Southern Ontario. It is particularly valuable as the

circle figures present these factors at different levels (i.e. from high level to individual level) that provide points of entry to be contemplated for improving traditional food access in the city.




Source: Neufeld, Richmond, and The Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (2020, p. 8)

*Figure 2: Adapted Socio-Ecological Model by Neufeld, Richmond, & The Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (2020)*

The vast and complex food changes when moving to a city, need to be researched and documented further (Brown et al., 2008). Exploring the influence of the city environment on Indigenous food sovereignty in these under-researched places is recommended (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Cultural experiences around food changed in the city, and are manifested via deficiency of informal food sharing networks (Brown et al., 2008; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Using traditional foods as a vehicle for health improvements, healing from colonization, and Indigenous sovereignty is to encourage food sharing and cultural foods practices within urban contexts (Elliott et al., 2012; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Sharing is the main valued mechanism allowing for traditional foods to be consumed in the city and coping with food insecurity; thus, food sharing should be a focus in future research (Brown et al., 2008; Skinner et

al., 2016). Important to note, is the often-unexplored viewpoint of settler responsibilities in the discussion of urban Indigenous food sovereignty. The examination of Indigenous and settler relations in urban Canada is critical and must be further investigated (Kepkiewicz et al., 2015; Levkoe, Ray, & Mclaughlin, 2019). Collaborative and culturally appropriate approaches including various stakeholders (i.e. community members, facilitators, and policymakers) to policy and program development should be explored; opportunities to link social policy and programming should be strived for (Zurba, Islam, Smith, & Thompson, 2012).

Explicitly, there is a need for a more nuanced understanding of food security for Indigenous people who are in the fuzzy boundary between urban and rural, and thus are often excluded from consideration in both urban and on-reserve contexts (Browne et al., 2009; Skinner et al., 2016). Research needs to address the flow of food and people between urban, rural, and remote places to continue to describe the interconnected situations of food insecurity in urban and non-urban areas (Skinner et al., 2016). Particularly, in Northern Ontario, there can be a high degree of mobility necessary for Indigenous Peoples who must access services in urban areas, outside of their home communities. Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay are both major service centers in Northwestern Ontario.

**Study Rationale**

Specifically, my thesis uses two regional service hubs, Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay to investigate access to Indigenous foods in urban Northwestern Ontario. A sole study in the area of the community food environment and food insecurity was completed in Sioux Lookout in 2015 (Barbara Parker et al., 2018). This work revealed that 85% of participants were concerned about the cost of food and many people used emergency food programs. Eighty-eight percent of participants desired better access to wild food. A thematic analysis of community discussions

was presented in order of importance: the community food environment (i.e. food availability, quality, affordability, and access to food), Indigenous food knowledge (i.e. importance of land and wild foods), concerns about health, and the need for community-based programs, skills, and education. Due to limited market food options, and poor access to wild food for many, participants felt restricted in the autonomy of their diets (Barbara Parker et al., 2018). The initial work in Sioux Lookout highlights a community desire to increase access to Indigenous foods and presents relationships between food and health that are impacted by government policy, geographical location, and poverty. However, much more work can be done to better understand Indigenous food, food security, and Indigenous food sovereignty in the town. There is still a gap in understanding of the application of government policy and other institutional, structural, and systemic barriers on those seeking out Indigenous foods via land-based harvesting, food sharing, or through public institutions or organizations.

In Thunder Bay, there has been substantially more published work done surrounding building local and sustainable food systems, with various community partners. Of note, specifically is the work of the Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (established in 2008), a regional policy council, and the Indigenous Food Circle of Thunder Bay (established in 2016), which has improved the Indigenous representation in the food strategy and a goal of enhancing food sovereignty in the region (Levkoe et al., 2019). The Thunder Bay Food Charter was created to provide a food security framework for research, planning, policy, and programming in the region. Although Indigenous Peoples are not specifically mentioned, the charter cites the necessity to protect and encourage access to wild foods procured through hunting, fishing, and gathering as well as promotion of respect for traditional and cultural food history and diversity(Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy, n.d.).

The Indigenous Food Circle has completed work in 3 phases. Recently, the final report for phase two titled: *Understanding our Food Systems* was released. This project worked with 14 First Nations in Northwestern Ontario and partners in the city of Thunder Bay to support the rebuilding of food systems in the process of obtaining increased food sovereignty on reserve (Levkoe, Mclaughlin, Strutt, & Ng, 2019). These communities all have road access to Thunder Bay and are within Treaty 9 and Robinson Superior Treaty lands. Thunder Bay was continually described as the regional hub of these communities for access to services, including health care, education, and shopping for market foods. Some of the common challenges faced by communities included accessibility concerns of traditional and non-traditional food, and poor inter-departmental collaboration, amongst many others (Levkoe et al., 2019). However, while these First Nations are a part of the region served by the city center of Thunder Bay and valuable information regarding regional food security and Indigenous food sovereignty are provided, the focus of this project was not on the challenges of accessing Indigenous foods specifically within the city. The need for more regional collaboration and direction was concluded.

In June 2019 the Indigenous Food Circle began phase 3 with a community meeting where priority action areas were developed. Food access and advocacy were identified areas that encompass organizational and systemic barriers to accessing wild game and opportunities for collaboration. Further, there was mention of the need to think more about the distinctions of urban and public life when working towards food sovereignty. This thesis will build on the existing work in this region to support Indigenous food acquisition in Thunder Bay. Equally, as aforementioned, there is a lack of understanding of how rurality, urbanization, and migration influence food insecurity for Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and more specifically, access to Indigenous foods in these critical service hubs of Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay. Taking an

intersectional feminist and community-based participatory approach, this project identifies ways to support Indigenous food acquisition by building on existing community strengths and challenging prevailing barriers.

## Specific Aim of Thesis

The specific aim of this thesis is to explore and better understand how Indigenous Peoples in the urban northwestern Ontario service hubs of Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay access Indigenous foods and the relationship of Indigenous food to their food security and Indigenous food sovereignty.

### Overarching Research Questions

The research project was guided by the following questions:

1. How do stakeholders perceive opportunities for and barriers to accessing Indigenous food at various levels (i.e. personal, structural, policy)?
2. How do geographic place and urbanicity influence access to Indigenous foods and food security in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay?
3. What is currently being done, and how can better access to Indigenous food be supported in urban northwestern Ontario?

### Summary of Manuscripts and Contributions

The research described in this thesis is presented in two co-authored manuscripts (see Statement of Contribution). In chapter 3, I present a manuscript that uses a thematic analysis to answer the research question: *How do geographic place and urbanicity impact access to Indigenous foods and food security for urban Indigenous populations in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout?* This work is based on interview data from (1) Indigenous women who harvest, desire improved access to wild foods, or are part of food activism in the cities and (2) non-Indigenous

staff of community organizations who service Indigenous populations in the two northwestern Ontario regional service hubs. Seven themes were constructed which delve into how food environments, local ecosystems, socio-economic status, and colonial policy create challenges for Indigenous communities' access to their foods, in particular wild game, as a broader part of their cultural practices and contribution to a state of food security. This work highlights the successful community-driven responses to changing food economies and existing policies through their individual and community food practices.

In Chapter 4, I present an Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis of interviews based on data from an expanded sample with the two aforementioned stakeholder groups (i.e. Indigenous women and staff of Indigenous-serving organizations), as well as a policymakers group. This analysis responds to the following research questions: (1) *How is the policy 'problem' of accessing wild food and food insecurity for urban Indigenous populations defined by stakeholders? (2) How does the current policy landscape address, maintain, or create inequities between different Indigenous people or groups? (2b) What assumptions regarding Indigenous Peoples, their Indigenous foods, and harvesting practices underlie current policies that impact access to wild food for urban Indigenous populations? (3)Where are the policy gaps and are their interventions to improve the problem?* Overall, this thesis makes a positive contribution to the study of urban Indigenous food environments and Indigenous food sovereignty in Ontario and Canada. Throughout both manuscripts, we highlight the resurgence of Indigenous food sovereignty in these urban settings and challenge the false dichotomy of urban versus reserve communities. We uncover how overarching Canadian settler colonization and specific federal and provincial policies from the sectors of food, natural resources, and 'Indian policy' are

experienced by Indigenous Peoples living in Thunder Bay or Sioux Lookout – two significant northern hubs.

# Chapter 2: Methodology and Methods

## Research Design and Theoretical Orientation

Research continues to be a site of tension between Western interests and knowledge with those of Indigenous Peoples (Smith, 1999, 2012). There must be an acknowledgment of how academic research has been developed and thus influenced by imperial and colonial states (Smith, 1999). Further, how "the ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world's colonized peoples"(Smith, 1999, p. 1). Research and knowledge are neither acultural nor apolitical (Kovach, 2009). Thus, as a non-Indigenous researcher educated within a Western institution, the research I complete is highly political. In the spirit of authentic relationships and aims of decolonization, I believe it is crucial to align my research practices accordingly.

I completed this work from an intersectional feminist perspective, and the broader project aligns principles for conducting research with Indigenous populations, and community based participatory research principles. These approaches are responses to positivistic research epistemology; they broaden definitions and origins of knowledge. I have chosen to frame this thesis with these approaches as they highlight my positionality and have congruencies with Indigenous methodologies. Kovach (2009) highlights the shared aspects of feminist and participatory methodologies with Indigenous inquiry: showing process and content, relational nature of knowledge, valuing various worldviews, and equitable knowledge gathering. Further, feminist, community-based, and participatory approaches to research align in the areas of acknowledgment of multiple realities, the importance of research relationships and reflexivity, and the desire to disrupt power-laden social systems and empower participants with goals of

social justice. I have worked amongst a research team including community partners to design and implement this project.

**Utility, Self-Voicing, Access, Inter-relationality Framework (USAI).** This framework was created by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres. USAI includes the ethical principles of utility, self-voicing, access, and inter-relationality (OFIFC, 2016). Utility ensures that research is based on community priorities. Self-voicing prioritizes Indigenous authorship of research and knowledge. Access highlights the value of all local knowledge. Inter-relationality acknowledges the historical and geo-political nature of research and relationships. USAI allows for contextualized research procedures where various research alliances can be developed to produce community-driven, relevant, culturally appropriate, and ethical work with a direct objective to benefit urban Indigenous communities (OFIFC, 2016).

**Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR).** CBPR can be described as a broad term encompassing approaches with various names such as participatory action research, community-based research, and action-oriented research, (Jull, Giles, & Graham, 2017). This approach takes inspiration from social phenomenology, critical theory, and constructivism (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006). As such, multiple lived experiences and knowledges are valuable and there is transformative power through praxis (i.e. combining reflection and action) (Baum et al., 2006). Two main pillars of CBPR are ethical responsibility and reciprocity, which occurs through community empowerment, co-learning, capacity building, and equal partnerships (Blumental, Hopkins III, & Yancey, 2013). There are many additional principles of CBPR, including recognition of community as a unit of identity, a strengths-based approach, co-creation of knowledge, collaboration relationships amongst partners, and iterative processes (Blumental et al., 2013; Jull et al., 2017).

The motivation of this methodology stems from reducing inequity and injustice. It is unique in public health research because of the engagement with knowledge users and integration of knowledges typically devalued by Western academia (Jull et al., 2017). Importantly, CBPR embraces the notions that Indigenous communities are capable of reflection on their own lives, selection of research priorities, and have valuable and unique skills to enhance their community projects (Smith, 1999). The focus on process (i.e. methodology and method) in CBPR is extremely important when aiming for decolonizing research practices with Indigenous communities. The expectations of the process include being respectful, facilitating healing and learning, and be oriented towards contributing to self-determination (Smith, 1999). A decentralization of expertise aligns with the motivation of CBPR to emancipate participants and produce social change. Communities share control throughout the research process and the integration of knowledge and action produces mutual benefits to partners (Blumental et al., 2013).

CBPR fills the gap from research into meaningfully impacting real-world health problems such as food insecurity (Jull et al., 2017). The approach enhances the validity and authenticity of research as this unique perspective is one that encourages co-learning amongst researchers and community partners which is made possible through challenging typical hierarchal research dynamics (Hacker, 2017a). Results are more culturally sensitive and are rich interpretations particular to local realities, allowing for more fluidity in implementation and action based on results than non-participatory research (Blumental et al., 2013). CBPR has an overarching goal to combine knowledge and action, such as advocacy, policy development, strategic planning, service delivery, and/ or social systems change to improve community health and disrupt broader health disparities (Blumental et al., 2013; Jull et al., 2017; Minkler &

Blackwell, 2008). Through relationships with various stakeholders that are both knowledge producers and knowledge users, CBPR can influence policy changes on local and large scales (Jull et al., 2017). It has repeatedly been presented as an appropriate approach for research on Indigenous Peoples' health internationally due to the potentially decolonizing ability and tangible social change as an outcome (Baum et al., 2006). By using CBPR, we intend for this project to produce meaningful knowledge with collaboration from stakeholders and capacity building to contribute to improved Indigenous food acquisition and food security, as contributing to the existing food sovereignty movements in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay.

**Intersectional Feminist Inquiry.** In a gender dichotomized society, gender labels impact our lives. This thesis seeks to broaden gender-blind conceptualizations of health and food security which are typically constructed from middle-class white values and experiences. Feminist research is grounded in the empowerment of oppressed beings through a commitment to social justice and questioning of privilege and power in knowledge production and society. This perspective recognizes that truth is not universal in a hierarchal society; rather, truth is conceived as "partial, situated, subjective, power-imbued, and relational" (Hesse-Biber, Leavy, & Yaiser, 2004, p. 12). Androcentric research is incomplete and inaccurate if representing human experience without consideration of gender or integration of diverse women's voices. Olsen (2018) argues that while intersectionality is a Western concept, certain forms of intersectional thinking (i.e., ones that value interrelatedness and relationality) are epistemologically aligned with Indigenous ways of thinking. The dynamic concept breeds the necessary complexity of using analytical categories of gender, Indigeneity, class, and colonial histories needed to offer a multi-faceted and critical perspective that honours the diversities within and amongst Indigenous communities. As such, throughout this research process, we are

cognisant of differences and oppose the othering of women and all minorities, including Indigenous Peoples. Working within this paradigm accepts the influence of the value-laden person in the co-creation of context-specific knowledge. I believe it is important to acknowledge this intersectional feminist perspective in my work as the way I analyze data and the way the participants perceive the world is tied to our life experiences and intersections of our characteristics such as gender, race, and class as we exist within a colonized state. Additionally, I must recognize that as a white lower-middle-class woman of settler ancestry who has not lived in Thunder Bay or Sioux Lookout, my social location impacts the relationships I have entered and the stories shared with me.

Indigenous feminisms have exposed how patriarchal colonialism impacts Indigenous women's lives, including in the gendered experiences of food and foodwork. Thus, using intersectional and Indigenous feminist ways of thinking can illuminate how settler colonialism interacts with gendered forms of oppression that enact violence and destabilize Indigenous food sovereignty (Pictou, Robin, Parker, & Brady, In Press). Storytelling is a decolonial Indigenous feminist practice renewing women as knowledge keepers which along with an intersectional perspective can be used to situate food studies in proper historical context with investigates the continual trauma of settler colonialism on Indigenous women and girls and their lands which are deeply connected (Pictou et al., In Press). As a settler myself, I must combat dominant settler-colonial meanings of health, including positivistic quantified nutritional attributes of food and their physiological impacts that perpetuate a reductionist colonial view of food that often also infiltrates understandings of gender and race (Pictou et al., In Press).

Accordingly, including reflexive research and study designs enhance feminist objectivity by disclosing the researcher's own subject position to avoid reproduction social marginalization

(Harding, 1991; Hesse-Biber et al., 2004). Acknowledging positionality is key to understanding people's experiences based on the intersectionality of their characteristics. Significantly, research is conceptualized as a holistic process. The results of work are "situated knowledges" (Haraway, 1988) to benefit women and minorities, such as Indigenous Peoples in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay, and seek to disrupt the oppressive social systems currently impacting them (Hesse-Biber et al., 2004).

**Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA).** Public policy is both action and inaction from government officials and citizens regarding public problems. In essence, public policy discussions center on what governments "*ought or ought not*" to do about health issues. Policy reveals itself in vast ways: texts, discourses, symbols, practices that define and deliver values (O. Hankivsky et al., 2012). The intersectional policy framework applied in Chapter 4, pulls from feminist intersectional theory to improve existing approaches to incorporating equity into health policy. Specifically, this framework advances current Canadian best practices in the understanding policy implications of diverse groups (including sex and gender-based analyses and health equity or health impact assessments) by going further into the complexities of our social lives than which can be understood by gender inequity and social determinants of health theory alone. IBPA includes two parts: 8 guiding principles and 12 guiding questions. The principles include intersecting categories, multi-level analysis, power, reflexivity, time and space, diverse knowledges, social justice, and equity (O. Hankivsky et al., 2012).

Approaching equity in health through the theory of intersectionality allows for the complexity of understanding multi-level and dynamic social locations that shape life through their place in power structures (O. Hankivsky et al., 2012). The community participants of this

research were all Indigenous women whose experience of accessing Indigenous food is socially constructed according to their unique identities based around race and gender, but also Indigenous identity, geographic location, place, urbanicity, and ties to traditional lands and practices. IBPA allows for fluidity and fluctuations of identities to allow for a deeper and more contextual understanding of individual and group experiences and needs (O. Hankivsky et al., 2012). This framework has been applied to critically analyze policy arenas influencing the well-being of Indigenous Peoples within Canada (Clark, 2012; Fridkin, 2012; Prevost & Kilty, 2020). IBPA is part of a critical paradigm that demands the researcher to interrogate their ideological and political values through a descriptive question: *what knowledge, values, and experiences do you bring to this area of policy analysis?* (Fridkin, 2012). As a non-Indigenous scholar, it is key that my positionality is explicit to present a rigorous yet subjective analysis.

This approach is favoured to interrogate the connections between the context and processes of policy development; including how problems are defined and the underlying assumptions and ideologies that are solidified through policy implementation and contribute to health inequities (Fridkin, 2012). This framework creates an opportunity for an understanding of colonialism as it interacts with other systems of oppression, such as capitalism, sexism, classism, racism, amongst others.

**Application of the Methodology**

To summarize, some of the direct ways the principles of the methodology were applied will be discussed. First, each urban community was understood as a unit of identity**.** We sampled participants by city and acknowledged the uniqueness of both urban hubs. We also considered the connections of individuals in these communities to other distinct communities. We took a strengths-based approach and applied the concept of utility by analyzing systemic and

institutional barriers to Indigenous foods but also focusing on resistance to them. We emphasized community and individual level food practices as resurgence. There is an effort in showing process and content (i.e. methodology & method) and giving access to our Indigenous participants. We had to adapt to the COVID-19 reality by changing our previously planned methods of talking circles with Indigenous participants in both cities because we could not travel after interviews, but we hosted a follow up Zoom call with 3/6 Indigenous participants during the analysis of Chapter 3. The participants were given a draft analysis to read before the call. To start the call, an overview of the current state of the study was presented by the first author, including preliminary findings. We had an open discussion based on these questions which were sent in advance to participants: *Would you like your quotes attributed to your name? Would you like any other identifiers used? Do you feel your perspective was accurately represented? Do you find the results useful or relevant? How do you think results should be disseminated? Would you like to be involved further in the rest of this project?* Collaboration on this call impacted the choice for products of the study (e.g. scope of manuscripts), was a starting point for future involvement of Tyna as a co-author of Chapter 3, and continued reciprocal relations with some of our participants. We will be following a similar process with Chapter 4 before submitting the manuscript for publication.

We acknowledged the relational nature of knowledge and applied holism by considering interviews as sited of co-construction of knowledge and mutually beneficial sharing. Further, data was analyzed in a holistic way; connecting experiences to larger social systems and analyzing the relationships of various actors. We valued various worldviews, realities, and types of knowledge, including Western and Indigenous knowledges, as well as practical knowledge and lived experience of various stakeholders. Last, we prioritized equitable knowledge gathering

and made an effort to promote self-voicing. We used open-ended interviews to favour storytelling as a decolonial practice and have collaborated one of the Indigenous participants as a co-author of Chapter 3.

**Study Setting**

This project occurred in both Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay (See Figure 3), Ontario due to the ongoing relationships in the cities and the communities' desire to continue research in the area of Indigenous food and food security for Indigenous Peoples. The unique context of each of these urban centers is acknowledged. Nevertheless, these places share common characteristics due to their geographic placement and their subsequent classification as resource centers for rural and remote First Nations communities across Northern Ontario. As a result, these cities have proportionately large Indigenous populations that often travel to and from reserve and are thriving with diverse Indigenous cultures in comparison to other Ontario cities. In both cities, community members and organizations are maintaining and strengthening Indigenous food systems despite the challenges of city life.

Source: Government of Canada (n.d.)

*Figure 3: Map of Ontario Cities including Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay*

**Community Profile: Sioux Lookout, Ontario.** The municipality of Sioux Lookout is in Northwestern Ontario, situated amongst the lakeshores of Pelican, Abram, and Lac Seul. It is approximately 350km Northwest of Thunder Bay (Lac Seul First Nations, 2019). Based on 2016 Census data, Sioux Lookout is a small population center with a population of 5,272 which is built on the traditional lands of the First Nations of the Anishnawbe people of Lac Seul First Nation who are a signatory of Treaty 3 in 1873 (Lac Seul First Nation, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2017a). Sioux Lookout is known as the 'Hub of the North' highlighting its critical importance as a health and essential service center for approximately 30,0000 people living in Northern Ontario. The town is accessed via the airport, highway 72, and the VIA rail station ("Sioux Lookout," 2019). Twenty-nine remote First Nation communities are connected to Sioux Lookout due to the need to travel to there for services(Barbara Parker et al., 2018). Health-care, social, human, education and government services are the largest employer and account for 68% of the industry in the town ("Sioux Lookout," 2019). The airport is crucial in facilitating travel to all

northwestern Ontario First Nations communities; there are scheduled flights on Bearskin Airlines, Perimeter Aviation, North Star Air, and Wasaya Airlines, and chartered flights by Skycare Air Ambulance, Bamaji Air, Superior Airways, Northern Skies and Thunder Air ("Air Services | Sioux Lookout Airport," n.d.).

Accordingly, a large percentage of the people living in Sioux Lookout are of Indigenous identity, and many Indigenous People spend time there while accessing services. In 2016, 37.6% of the population in Sioux Lookout identified as Indigenous, compared to just 2.8% of the Ontario population (Statistics Canada, 2018b). One thousand, nine hundred fifty-five individuals reported Indigenous ancestry, including the largest population groups included Ojibway (655), First Nations Ancestry not included elsewhere (515), Oji-Cree (275), Cree (230), and Métis (220). Data from 2015 indicated that Indigenous People in Sioux Lookout were earning less. The average total income for people of Aboriginal identity in 2015 was $35,720 in comparison to $53,456 for those of non-Indigenous identity. Further, people of Indigenous identity had an unemployment rate more than double of the non-Indigenous population (10.1% and 4.6% respectively) (Statistics Canada, 2018b).

One significant difference between the two cities is population size. Sioux Lookout, being much smaller in terms of population, has fewer options for programs surrounding access to food in the city. Three important institutions relevant to Indigenous well-being and food in Sioux Lookout are the Meno Ya Win Health Centre, the Out of the Cold Shelter, and the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre. The Meno Ya Win hospital serves 29 First Nation Communities North of Sioux Lookout, Lac Seul First Nation, Hudson, Pickle Lake, and Savant Lake. This center offers primary health care services, specialized services, a long-term care facility, and a day program for people who are experiencing homelessness. The hospital aids approximately 30 000

outpatients per year and there is an adjacent 100-bed building to house those traveling in for medical care (Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Centre, 2019). The hospital follows an integrated First Nations hospital-based service model called the Traditional Healing, Medicines, Foods and Supports Program. One of the components of this program is Miichim (Traditional Foods). Through Miichim, Meno Ya Win is the only hospital in Ontario that prepares and serves traditional foods to patients("Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre: Traditional Healing, Medicine, Foods and Supports Program," n.d.). The hospital can only do so through a clause specific to the hospital written into provincial food premise policy (i.e. Ontario Regulation 493.17, Section 38, Under the Health Promotion and Protection Act, R.S.O., 1990)(*O.Reg 493/17: Food Premises*, 2017). For those needing to access emergency services, Sioux Lookout is served by the Out of the Cold emergency shelter. A crucial part of their programming is daily meal service and runs the only food bank in the community 3 days a week ("Sioux Lookout Out of the Cold," n.d.). Lastly, the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre offers a wide variety of programs to support people of Indigenous identity. The center is a place for Indigenous Peoples to meet and get information regarding services in the center and the city. They offer a hot lunch program and organize Christmas hampers containing food (Northwestern Health Unit, n.d.-a).

**Community Profile: Thunder Bay, Ontario.** Thunder Bay, the largest city in Northwestern Ontario, is situated on the north shore of Lake Superior and surrounded by the Nor'Wester Mountain range ("About Us," 2018). Thunder Bay is built on the traditional lands of the Ojibway of Fort William First Nation, a signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850 (Fort William First Nation, n.d.). Thunder Bay is Northwestern Ontario's regional commercial, administrative, and medical service center, and many provincial departments have offices in the city. Equally, many Indigenous Peoples travel to and spend time in Thunder Bay visiting family

or friends, looking for work, and attending high school and post-secondary education (Levkoe et al., 2019). Air, rail, and shipping traffic enter Thunder Bay due to its placement along continental transport routes. Further, the Thunder Bay International Airport is amongst the busiest in Ontario ("Thunder Bay," 2019).

Based on 2016 Census data, the population of Thunder Bay is 121, 621 (Statistics Canada, 2017b). In that same year, 15,075 people, making up 12.7% of the population, identified as Indigenous (Statistics Canada, 2018b). Of those who reported Indigenous ancestry, the largest population groups were Cree (1,535), Ojibway (5,220), First Nations ancestry not included elsewhere (4, 890), and Métis (3,745). The average total income for people of Indigenous identity in 2015 was $32, 515 in comparison to $46, 631 for those of non-Indigenous identity. Similarly, to Sioux Lookout, people of Indigenous identity in Thunder Bay had unemployment rates more than twice that of the non-Indigenous population (15% and 6.9% respectively) (Statistics Canada, 2018b).

Settler occupation in Thunder Bay has impacted food sovereignty for the Anishnaabe people. Treaty rights which include guaranteed reserve lands, hunting and fishing rights, have not been upheld (Levkoe et al., 2019). The Thunder Bay District Region, which encompasses the city of Thunder Bay as well as a large portion of Northwestern Ontario, has over 40 partners including farmers, institutions, government, and food security organizations contributing to the Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy which implements a strategic plan based on the Thunder Bay Food Charter ("Food Strategy: About," 2019). Accordingly, there exist many community-based initiatives targeted at food access in the region and city, including community kitchens, community gardens, emergency food programs, and adult meal programs. A few of the key organizations and programming targeted at Indigenous Peoples will be mentioned ("Food

Strategy: About," 2019). The Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre, founded in 1964, was one of the first Friendship Centres in Ontario. They run food programs including the pre/postnatal program, the urban Aboriginal Healthy Lifestyles Program, the child nutrition program, and a community kitchen and garden ("History," n.d.; "Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay: A List of Food Programs and Services," 2016). Other Indigenous organizations providing urban food-related initiatives include Anishnawbe Mushkiki Aboriginal Health Access Centre which runs the Healthy Eating Active Living program ("Anishnawbe Mushkiki," n.d.) and the Ontario Native Women's Association which has a monthly community kitchen ("Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay: A List of Food Programs and Services," 2016). Although not specifically targeting Indigenous Peoples, both Lakehead University and Confederation College have food banks for their students. Further, nine organizations run emergency food services such as food banks and hampers ("Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay: A List of Food Programs and Services," 2016).

A most recent development in food programming in the city has occurred at the Shelter House Thunder Bay. This organization aims to provide short term resources to those in need of shelter, food, and clothing ("Shelter House Thunder Bay—About Us," n.d.). They have an emergency shelter, able to sleep 62 people, which includes meals for those staying. Equally, each day they serve hot lunch and dinner meals to the community and have a twenty-four-hour service window with sandwiches that can be accessed by community members. In 2016-2017, the shelter house served 222, 776 meals; on average 609 meals a day (2017). Beginning in the fall of 2019, the shelter holds a permanent permit from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) which allows them to accept uninspected wild game from hunters to be served through their programs ("Donated wild game added to Shelter House menu," 2019). This is a landmark decision.

Typically, uninspected wild came can only be provided at institutions through special event permits, which is resource-intensive for institutions that would like to Indigenous food regularly. As they are the only organization in the district to successfully obtain a permanent permit, this organization is a leader in promoting access to Indigenous foods in Thunder Bay.

However, community programming and services alone cannot solve food insecurity and support access to Indigenous foods as they do not address the systemic barriers such as income inequality and wild food policy. The Thunder Bay Food Strategy also suggests the benefits and untapped potential of integrating more wild-harvested foods to promote community food security ("Food Strategy: Food Access," 2016; Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy, 2016). Thus, there is a clear interest in continuing to collaborate across stakeholder groups to find Indigenous-led solutions to increasing Indigenous food in the city and improving food security.

**Sample and Recruitment Strategy**

Dr. Skinner and Dr. Parker have existing relationships with various stakeholders involved in food security and wild food policy in Northern Ontario, including individuals and organizations based in or serving Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout. Some of the current organizations where relationships with Dr. Skinner and Dr. Parker exist include the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, the TBDHU, the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre, and the Sioux Lookout Outside of the Cold Shelter. Equally, Dr. Skinner has contacts at the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA); both organizations have different responsibilities in terms of the acquisition of wild food. Dr. Parker has further established connections in Thunder Bay, such as at the Shelter House Thunder Bay and student Indigenous Food Sovereignty Group at Lakehead University.

The thesis sample (n=18) includes interviews with individuals from three stakeholder groups: Indigenous community members (n=6) (i.e. those who currently access Indigenous foods, desire to access more, or are part of food activism in the towns), non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations (n=6) (i.e. provide food related services the Indigenous population), and policymakers (n=6) (i.e. those who either create, interpret, or implement wild food policy). We interviewed individuals who worked at various institutions including public health units, community organizations, and provincial ministries. Individuals were selected for their experiences and roles in these organizations but did not speak on behalf of them. They are categorized into stakeholder group based on the way they described their role and their interactions with Indigenous populations in their roles. Note that individuals within the same organization could still be categorized as belonging to different stakeholder groups. We also acknowledge that individuals can shift between groups based on their complex identities and multiplicity of roles in these communities. To layer confidentiality outside of the Indigenous women's group, when quoting an individual we refer to them by stakeholder group and gender-ambiguous pseudonyms and pronouns. The Indigenous participants self-identified as women and some have chosen to be identified by their real names.

This project acknowledges the importance of considering Indigenous community members experts on Indigenous food sovereignty in their communities in which they live and champion the movement. Their experiential knowledge is place-based, coming from the perspective of local traditions and priorities (Martens et al., 2016). Table 1 shows the characteristics of the final sample and the date of the interviews. We met our aim of recruiting similar numbers of participants from each stakeholder group in both Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay. Details regarding their specific titles and place of work have been omitted from publication

to protect their confidentiality. However, the sample includes staff from both public health units in northwestern Ontario (i.e. TBDHU and Northwestern Health Unit [NWHU]), OMAFRA, Regional Food Distribution Association of Thunder Bay (RFDA), MNR, and shelters in both towns. Including these groups is purposeful. Indigenous community members' experiences are prioritized; however, to come to an understanding of policy and institutional level barriers as well as produce meaningful action-oriented outcomes, it is crucial to also engage with policy and institutional level stakeholders, as well as Indigenous-serving organizations.

Recruitment was lead by Dr. Parker and Dr. Skinner, along with recommendations by Dr. Kristin Burnett (Lakehead University), by speaking to known contacts in both cities and then proceeding with snowball sampling. This is a strategic approach to recruitment by asking key informants who else would be relevant to speak with on the subject area (Patton, 1990). The goal of selecting participants will be their ability to act as information-rich cases that will address the research questions (Patton, 1990). Any individual who decides to participate was given the Participant Information Letter and Consent Form (see “Appendix A”) to read and sign before the start of their interview.

Snowball sampling is particularly effective to purposively select participants when there are no obvious sources for locating the population of interest and when locating 'hidden populations' (Morgan, 2008). I would argue that the urban Indigenous populations in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay meet the aforementioned characteristics. We aimed to interview individuals who vary according to age and gender, place of residence, migratory pattern, etc. to encompass a range of experiences of accessing Indigenous food in urban northern Ontario. In terms of the other stakeholder groups, we leveraged existing relationships for interviews and

used snowball sampling to extend the list of informants. Additional stakeholders outside of the existing networks were invited to participate in the study via email.

Table 1

*Characteristics of Study Sample*[1]

| Pseudonym or Name | Stakeholder Group[2] | Residence | Indigenous Community[3] | Month/Year of Interview |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dakota | Indigenous community member | Sioux Lookout | | January 2018 |
| Reese | Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization | Sioux Lookout | | October 2017 |
| Peyton | Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization | Sioux Lookout | | September 2020 |
| Jennifer | Indigenous community member | Thunder Bay | Iqaluit | January 2018 |
| Aiden | Policymaker | Thunder Bay | | January 2018 |
| Brooke | Indigenous community member | Thunder Bay | | January 2018 |
| Cameron | Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization | Thunder Bay | | July 2019 February 2020[5] |
| Alex | Policymaker | Thunder Bay | | October 2017[6] |
| Riley | Policymaker | Thunder Bay | | |
| Eden | Policymaker | Thunder Bay | | |
| April Head | Indigenous community member | Thunder Bay | | February 2020 |
| Blake | Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization | Thunder Bay | | February 2020 |
| Stevie | Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization | Thunder Bay | | February 2020 |
| Jessica McLaughlin | Indigenous community member | Thunder Bay | Long Lake #58 First Nation | February 2020 |
| Tyna Legault Taylor | Indigenous community member | Thunder Bay | Attawapiskat First Nation | February 2020 |
| Emerson | Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization | Thunder Bay[4] | | February 2020 |
| Jayden | Policymaker | Thunder Bay[4] | | October 2017[6] |
| Taylor | Policymaker | Thunder Bay[4] | | |

1. Total n=18 , n=15 Thunder Bay, n=3 Sioux Lookout
2. n=6 Policymaker, n= 6 Indigenous community member, n=6 Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization
3. Some Indigenous participants also identified with Indigenous communities outside of Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout mentioned here.
4. Organization serves both cities or Ontario-wide policy is discussed, although interviewed in Thunder Bay.
5. This participant was interviewed twice.
6. Group Interview.

## Data Sources and Methods

To align with the overall research methodology, these procedures of the project were flexible and have been continually adapted and developed with community partners. We aimed

for collaboration and active participation in whatever means is desired by community members with the understanding that community members are working within existing community resources and there is an additional burden of responsibility of participating actively in the project(Smith, 1999). This became particularly relevant as the COVID-19 pandemic began amid data collection – and thus leaving no further options for myself or Dr. Skinner to travel to the study locations. As a result, a policy analysis was added to the project to supplement the existing thematic analysis from interview data.

This thesis used qualitative methods of reflexive journaling, and open-ended in-depth interviews (both in-person and through Zoom) to answer the research questions. Follow up discussions were held with some of the Indigenous participants during the iterative analysis and writing process. Foundations of qualitative inquiry include the social construction of reality, the acknowledgment and investigation of relationships amongst participants and researchers, the importance of contextualized information, and the need for reflexivity (Kovach, 2009). The epistemological assumption of subjectivity and the relational dimension of qualitative work align with Indigenous methodologies that are strongly focused on relationships (Kovach, 2009). Qualitative methods allow for the voicing of individuals and their experiences that are key to the research process and outcomes (Jackson, Saran, Johnson, & Morris, 2013). The objectives of the overall study are both explorative and action-oriented. The unstructured nature of the data collected in opened ended interviews allowed for participants to highlight what is relevant to themselves and their broader community. Thus, the study conclusions are grounded in personal, in-depth experiences.

**Reflexive Research Journal.** To be accountable to the reflexive nature of my methodology based on intersectional feminist inquiry, I kept a research journal which I contributed to after

interviews and throughout the analysis process. Disclosing my own positionality throughout the research is key to decreasing the reproduction of social marginalization for the participants. Kovach (2009) stated journaling is a form of personal preparation, evidence of process and content in research endeavor, and can be used as a meaning-making tool. I have chronicled my thoughts, allowing myself to engage with the contemplation of my outsider status and white settler identity throughout the project. This self-location is key to recognize who I am in relation to those I am working with and the knowledge we have produced together. Such reflection and collaboration are necessary to further social justice action (Kovach, 2009). I returned to this in between rounds of coding to review past thoughts and capture current analytic understanding of the topics in this work. Also, as I wrote my thesis document I was able to return to the journal to better understand how my thinking has changed over time and how that impacts the work I produce as a result of this thesis. Just as other white settlers who participated in this work are at various levels of understanding of Indigenous Peoples' food insecurity and expressions of Indigenous food sovereignty, so am I. This reflection allowed me to continually situate myself in my writing.

**Open-ended Interviews.** Interviews completed by Dr. Skinner, and her colleagues Dr. Parker and Dr. Burnett contributed to the data for this thesis. Additional semi-structured interviews have been completed with members of each stakeholder group (i.e. community members, policymakers, and members of Indigenous and community organizations) in both Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay by myself, Dr. Skinner, and Dr. Parker. Interviews occurred in various formats where 1-3 researchers were present with 1-3 participants in any given interviews which ranged from 1-3 hours. Open-ended interviews were used to foster the co-creation of knowledge through stories shared by the all-female group of Indigenous community members.

The interview is a social interaction, relationship, and opportunity for co-learning (Jackson et al., 2013; Patton, 2014). Interviewing allows us to gain another person's perspective; to understand the thoughts, feelings, and meanings of the participant (Patton, 2014). In participatory work, lived and practical knowledge, which can be gained from interviews, is prioritized (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Knowledge should be gathered from inside the community; these stakeholder interviews allow for an in-depth exploration of the living knowledge of accessing Indigenous foods for those living in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay. Equally, the practical knowledge of stakeholders facilitates their involvement in solutions. Integrating perspectives from multiple stakeholders that influence access to Indigenous foods serves the goal of participatory work to lead to transformative action (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Results are locally relevant and collaboratively developed, making them more likely to be implemented.

These interviews are pragmatic in objectives. Pragmatic interviewing is a key tenant of action-oriented work (Patton, 2014). Interview guides were used to establish common areas of questioning relevant to the research questions but they were not followed strictly (Patton, 2014). There is an interview guide for Indigenous participants that includes questions in the area of interviewee characteristics, Indigenous food, food programming, and actions to move forward (see "Appendix B). There is also a supplemental guide with questions about wild food policy, including questions on the policies and the roles of stakeholders in the procurement, processing, and serving of wild foods in the city and within organizations (see "Appendix C"). This document was used as a question pool for participants working in community organizations or those involved in policy creation, interpretation, and implementation. Thus, interview questions were specific to the stakeholder's position in the landscape of Indigenous food access and wild food policy. However, we strived to have a flowing conversation with mostly open-ended

questions. A conversational style is important to strengthen research relationships and encourage the relevance of questions to the participant (Patton, 2014). At the end of the interviews, participants received a feedback letter (see "Appendix D"). These interviews had tangible goals and were arenas for collaborative co-construction of knowledge to work towards action-oriented solutions. The goal of such interviews was to understand the real-world implications and solutions to accessing Indigenous food in a local and regional context.

**Community Member Follow Up.** Built into our process, was bringing a preliminary draft of the analysis to a sub-group of the Indigenous study participants. We had a Zoom call in mid-December 2020 with three participants, as well as Dr. Skinner, Dr. Parker, and me. Participants were sent a draft paper in advance, a summary of the work to date was presented and was followed by an informal discussion. The discussion was open-ended but was prompted by the following questions: *Do you feel your perspective was accurately represented (in particular, in the quotes used)? Do you find the results useful or relevant? Do you have any ideas about how the results should be disseminated?* Bringing the data back to the communities and engaging in discussions around outcomes of the research is key in maintaining accountability and increasing the likelihood of meaningful change from the work. Based on the feedback given, the first manuscript was edited. In February 2021, I held an additional Zoom call with Tyna where we further discussed terminology in the manuscripts, including the use of traditional vs Indigenous vs wild foods. A similar process is underway regarding the second manuscript.

## Analysis Strategy

**Thematic Analysis.** Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were analyzed according to the Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012). Essentially, thematic analysis involves identifying, organizing, and making meaning across a

data set to answer a project's research questions. Focusing analysis specifically on answering the community-driven questions produced valuable information that is action-oriented. There are many forms of thematic analysis, as this method can be adapted to suit a project's theoretical orientation. This form of analysis is flexible and accessible which is valuable in a CBPR project and allows for the option of including other partners in data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012). Community member input is critical for assigning context and meaning to the data, as well as inciting community action from the final product (Hacker, 2017b). Including multiple perspectives in the analysis may be more time and resource-intensive, yet it enriches the action-oriented nature of the results (Hacker, 2017b). As such, thematic analysis created the opportunity for community partners to be integrated; as the iterative process permitted me to complete a preliminary analysis that was refined with the input of others. Making the effort to include the Indigenous community members in analysis was a demonstration of the focus on process and relationships.

Thematic analysis includes six phases as follows: familiarizing yourself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Choosing an inductive approach to thematic analysis means that coding in this project focused on what is in the data as opposed to pre-determined concepts applied to it (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Data-driven coding was purposeful to highlight the experiences of participants. Codes were both descriptive and interpretive, to respond to the exploratory and action-oriented research aims. Understanding participants' realities and the broader context of the food system was key to the objectives. The entire data analysis process as iterative, which granted the time and space for community member perspectives to be integrated until the final report and publication of work. Data from

the follow up calls and reflexive journaling was be used as tools in the meaning-making process of developing the results of the thematic analysis.

***Chapter 3.*** To write chapter 3, each interview was coded in two rounds by the first author: a descriptive round and then an interpretive round. Descriptive codes were used to stay as close to the words of participants as possible. Then, the first author used their perspective to interpret how these experiences informed the following research question: *How do geographic place and urbanicity impact access to Indigenous foods and food security for urban Indigenous populations in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout?* Preliminary themes were formed based on these two rounds of coding and revised repeatedly.

***Chapter 4.*** To write Chapter 4, through the iterative process of thematic analysis, the theoretical framework of intersectional policy analysis was introduced retrospectively in the second round of interpretive coding to address the following research questions (adapted from IBPA Framework's list) (O. Hankivsky et al., 2012) : *(1) How is the policy 'problem' of accessing wild food and food insecurity for urban Indigenous populations defined by stakeholders? (2) How does the current policy landscape address, maintain, or create inequities between different Indigenous people or groups? (2b) What assumptions regarding Indigenous Peoples, their Indigenous foods, and harvesting practices underlie current policies that impact access to wild food for urban Indigenous populations? (3) Where are the policy gaps and are their interventions to improve the problem?*

## Chapter 3: Interrogating Place and Urbanicity as Determinants of Access to Indigenous Foods: Stories from Northwestern Ontario Hubs

### Introduction

The social and public health crisis of food insecurity is one of the manifestations of colonialism and unjust conditions for Indigenous Peoples living within Canada and is heavily documented in rural, remote, and Northern communities (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; De Schutter, 2012; Loring & Gerlach, 2015; Martin & Amos, 2017).The phenomenon differs according to urbanicity, and the resources in each geographical region also impact adaptation strategies (Tam, Findlay, & Kohen, 2014). Indigenous food systems[1], through connection to cultural practices and Indigenous knowledge, contribute to physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health and are commonly cited as a response outside of the market food system to combat food insecurity (Elliott et al., 2012; Leblanc & Burnett, 2017; Martin, 2012; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Indigenous food systems have historically and continue to be actively eroded through settler colonization and government actions (e.g. impacts of assimilatory government policy, relocation to permanent settlements, environmental dispossession, residential school system, and introduction of the wage economy) (Cidro et al., 2015; Kumar et al., 2019; Leblanc & Burnett, 2017; Martin, 2012; Mason & Robidoux, 2017a; Richmond & Ross, 2009)

**Framing the Study.** Living in cities and away from territories can significantly influence eating patterns for Indigenous Peoples. Moving from reserves to the city can change diets in the

[1] Traditional food is a term frequently used in literature (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; Elliott et al., 2012; Martin, 2012; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). In a recent edited collection on Indigenous Food Systems within lands now called Canada, some authors used exclusively Indigenous or traditional food systems, where as some authors used the concepts somewhat interchangeably (*Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations*, 2020). In interviews in both cities, foods were described as traditional, Indigenous, or wild. However, based on discussions with Tyna Legault Taylor, a participant and co-author of this paper, Indigenous will be used to describe food systems as opposed to traditional. For some people, 'traditional' can imply a static view of Indigenous food practices and cultures. Thus, discussions of what counts as 'traditional food' can be divisive and contested. 'Wild' food or meat, is conceptualized as a specific subset within Indigenous foods.

following ways: reduction in access and use of wild meats, hunting and gathering activities, and the cultural value of sharing which can instigate health problems and the deterioration of Indigenous food systems (Brown et al., 2008). There is a need to combat the erasure of Indigenous Peoples' experiences in cities and to conduct additional research outside of the far North and remote areas to investigate food security, Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS), and how access to Indigenous knowledges and skills can impact Indigenous food systems (Neufeld, 2020; Barbara Parker et al., 2018; Skinner et al., 2016). Women and gender-diverse people are central to the resurgence of Indigenous land and water-based food practices and the building of sustainable livelihood economies (Corntassel, 2012; Pictou et al., In Press).

Constructions of place include the social interactions, habits, and social meanings humans give to land, space, and territory (Gieryn, 2000; McDowell, 1999). In particular, geographical and sociological perspectives rely on the idea that spaces and places are active forces that impact how humans behave individually and in systems, and humans transform the spaces and places they inhabit. Land is a fundamental determinant of Indigenous Peoples' health that is distinct from a social determinants of health perspective (de Leeuw, 2018; Richmond, 2018). This connection to the land is reflected through Indigenous identities and communities (de Leeuw, 2018; Ray et al., 2019). Specifically, these socio-physical features form unique and inherently local Indigenous food systems (Pawlowska-Mainville, 2020). As Kuhnlein and Receveur (1996) explain, a traditional (Indigenous) food system, "includes the sociocultural meanings, acquisition /processing techniques, use, composition, and nutritional consequences for the people using the foods" (p. 418). These distinctive systems are influenced by historical context and reflect geography and seasonality (Pawlowska-Mainville, 2020). Indigenous food

systems are a function of the symbiotic relationship amongst Indigenous Peoples, their cultures, and the lands and waters (Ray et al., 2019).

In this project, food security is conceptualized within an IFS framework. The language and concept of IFS is relatively new to policy and academic dialogue, and distinguishes itself from the concept of food sovereignty due to a focus on decolonization and self-determination, including co-management of resources (Martin & Amos, 2017). Recently, IFS has been presented as the most promising way towards eliminating chronic food insecurity for Indigenous Peoples (Martens et al., 2016; Morrison, 2011). Morrison (2011) identified the following four pillars of IFS: a recognition that food is sacred, participation in food systems, self-determination, and supportive legislation and policy. Many Indigenous peoples are living in urban environments that engage with traditional knowledges and Indigenous food systems in unique ways, yet very little research has explored these relationships (Cidro et al., 2015; Elliott et al., 2012; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017; Ray et al., 2019; Robin & Cidro, 2020). According to 2017 Aboriginal Peoples' Survey data, approximately 75% of the First Nations population in Canada lives in urban centers (i.e. population centers over 1000 people) (Kumar et al., 2019).[2] In Ontario, at least 72% of Indigenous Peoples live in urban areas (Our Health Counts Toronto, 2018).

This study examines the rural-urban linkages using a place-based investigation of Indigenous food systems in the urban north of Ontario. We ask the research question: *how do geographic place and urbanicity impact access to Indigenous foods and food security for urban Indigenous populations in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout?* We use a strengths-based perspective[3] to document challenges and successful community-driven responses to changing

---

[2] We acknowledge that national surveys have historically underrepresented the Indigenous populations in cities which is problematic in improving health inequities facing the population (Our Health Counts, 2018).
[3] By identifying existing strengths in community, such as relationships or resources, a strengths-based perspective avoids the perpetuation of deficit discourse and supports processes that lead to community-driven health

food economies and existing policies to strive for IFS in these important hub cities.

**Setting: Urban Hubs of Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout.** Thunder Bay, the largest city in Northwestern Ontario, is built on the traditional lands of the Ojibway of Fort William First Nation, a signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850 (Fort William First Nation, n.d.). Situated on the north shore of Lake Superior, Thunder Bay is Northwestern Ontario's regional commercial, administrative, and medical service center, and many provincial departments have offices in the city. Based on the 2016 Census data, the population of Thunder Bay was 121, 621 with 12.7% identifying as Indigenous (Statistics Canada, 2017b, 2018b). Of those who reported Indigenous ancestry, the largest population groups were Cree, Ojibway, First Nations ancestry, and Métis (Statistics Canada, 2018b). In 2020, the Our Health Counts study reported that the adult Indigenous population in Thunder Bay is estimated to be between 23,080-42,641 with 98% identifying as First Nations. This count is approximately 2-4 times greater than the adult population recorded by the 2016 Census (Anishnawbe Mushkiki, 2020b)[4]. In Thunder Bay, there is a need for improved comprehension of rules and regulations regarding wild food in public and urban spaces to advance IFS despite the existence of organizational and systemic barriers to accessing wild game for Indigenous Peoples (McLaughlin, Levkoe, & Strutt, 2019).

The municipality of Sioux Lookout is located approximately 350km northwest of Thunder Bay with road access (Barbara Parker et al., 2018). Based on the 2016 Census data,

---

improvements (Israel et al., 2008). Highlighting the continual resistance of Indigenous Peoples to state oppression should be the goal of public health practitioners and policy-makers, as opposed to the frequent complicity of the field in paternalistically monitoring and lecturing Indigenous Peoples about their behaviours while simultaneously ignoring their role and the role of policy in Indigenous oppression (Askew et al., 2020).

[4] This study, similar to the sister study in Toronto, used respondent driven sampling to report an adult Indigenous population in an Ontario city which is 2-4x larger than the number recorded in the most recent Census (2016). This work also found that only 15% of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay completed the 2016 Census (Anishnawbe Mushkiki, 2020b). Thus, the respondent driven sampling methodology in the Our Health Counts study has repeatedly captured a much larger sample than the Census (although consideration for population growth during the time period will have also contributed to this discrepancy).

Sioux Lookout is a small population center with a population of 5,272. Sioux Lookout is built on the traditional lands of the Anishnawbe people[5], specifically, the Ojibwe of Lac Seul First Nation, the signatory of Treaty 3 in 1873 (Lac Seul First Nation, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2017a). The town is known as the 'Hub of the North' highlighting its critical importance as a health and essential service center for approximately 30,000 people living in the far north of Ontario. Twenty-nine remote First Nation communities are connected to Sioux Lookout and travel there for services (Municipality of Sioux Lookout, 2014). In 2016, 37.6% of the population in Sioux Lookout identified as Indigenous. The largest population groups who reported Indigenous ancestry included Ojibway, First Nations Ancestry, Oji-Cree, Cree, and Métis (Statistics Canada, 2018a).

## Methodology and Methods

We designed and completed this work by centering intersectional feminist inquiry in community-based participatory action research (CBPR) (Crenshaw, 1989; Etmanski, Dawson, & Hall, 2014; O. Hankivsky, Cormier, & De Merich, 2009; B. Parker, Brady, Power, & Belya, 2019). As well, we considered the USAI framework[6] in our approach (OFIFC, 2016). We applied the two main pillars of CBPR in our research process, ethical responsibility and reciprocity, along with additional principles of the recognition of community as a unit of identity, a strength-based approach, and co-learning amongst participants and researchers (Blumental et al., 2013; Jull et al., 2017). Kovach (2009) highlights the shared aspects of feminist and participatory methodologies with Indigenous inquiry, which position knowledge as relational and

[5] Anishinaabe is a broad cultural and linguistic group which includes the Ojibwe, Chippewa, Odawa, Potawatomi, Algonquin, Saulteaux, Nipissing and Mississauga Peoples. The Anishinabek Nation is the oldest political organization in Ontario representing 39 First Nations across the province (Union of Ontario Indians, 2020).
[6] The USAI framework (USAI) was developed by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and includes the principles of utility, self-voicing, access, and inter-relationality (OFIFC, 2016).

value multiple worldviews. This approach acknowledges the importance of research relationships and reflexivity, and the desire to disrupt power-laden social systems for social and food justice. As feminist researchers of whom three are non-Indigenous, it was important to us to center the voices of Indigenous women in our analysis. Our intersectional CBPR approach enhances the validity and trustworthiness of research and it encourages co-learning amongst researchers and community members by challenging typical hierarchal research dynamics (e.g. division between participants and co-authors) (Hacker, 2017a). The research questions informing this study stem from past conversations with partners in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay. The existing and enduring strong relationships amongst researchers and these communities were central to the completion of the work and continued relationships provide focus for areas for future action.

**Sampling, Data Collection and Data Analysis.** Data were collected in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout as part of a larger community-based participatory project which spans across Ontario and Manitoba.[7] We obtained ethics clearance from the University of Waterloo Research Ethics committee. From 2017-2020, we interviewed 12 participants: 6 Indigenous community members – all women (i.e. those who currently access Indigenous foods, who desire to access more, or are food activists)[8] and 6 non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving community organizations (i.e. those who provide food services to the Indigenous population) (See Table 1). Participants were recruited through existing working relationships with two investigators. From there, snowball sampling was used to build a sample of information-rich cases specifically

[7] This project is titled *Culture, Resiliency, and Prosperity: Transitioning from Food Security to Food Sovereignty and the role of Relocation and Migration on Traditional and Market-based Food Consumption*

[8] Throughout this work, both pseudonyms and real names are used. To respect the agency of Indigenous women and attempt to avoid pan-Indigenizing (i.e. making generalizations) where possible, names and details of some Indigenous women are used at their request.

selected for their ability to contribute to answering the research questions (Patton, 1990). New potential participants were contacted via email to offer participation in the study. Interviews occurred in various formats where 1-3 researchers were present with 1-3 participants in any given interview. Participants gave verbal or written consent and interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed before analysis. Interview guides varied according to the stakeholder group. Open-ended, in-depth interviews were used to foster the co-creation of knowledge through stories shared by all participants. Storytelling approaches can contribute to decolonizing research as they provide a culturally nuanced, relationship-oriented, and place-based way of knowing to support the understanding of complex social and health phenomena (Rieger et al., 2020). We aimed to decentralize Western perspectives and value experiential knowledge of Indigenous participants that stems from local traditions and priorities (Martens et al., 2016). Thus, our analysis highlights the lived experiences and knowledges of Indigenous women, which promotes their agency in determining the solutions to food insecurity in their communities.

The analysis that follows takes up thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012), which involves identifying, organizing, and making meaning across a data set to answer a project's research questions. The flexibility, accessibility, and iterative nature of the method are valuable to the participation of and dissemination within the communities as part of CBPR. We selected an inductive thematic analysis with data-driven coding to purposefully highlight the experiences of participants in their own words. Each interview was coded in two rounds by the first author: a descriptive round and then an interpretive round. Descriptive codes were used to stay as close to the words of participants as possible. Then, the first author used their perspective to interpret how these experiences informed the research question. Preliminary themes were formed based on these two rounds of coding and revised repeatedly. In this iterative process, additional authors

and other Indigenous participants were sent results for review through a zoom call as a form of member checking[9]. With input from the team, the seven themes were constructed and are presented below.

## Results

**Colonial Dispossession and Access to Harvesting Territory.** A central theme was how participants felt their connectedness to land was severed through colonial practices which continued to impact food access. Participants talked about access to and use of their harvesting territory. They explained that due to colonial processes of land management and Indian policy, access to lands is dependent on your individual status, treaty rights, and geographic proximity to traditional harvesting lands or waters (or lack thereof). Participants highlighted that connections to communities outside of the city (including reserve, other cities, or more rural areas) are critical to understanding the flow of Indigenous foods in urban northwestern Ontario. Multiple Indigenous women, including April, Tyna, and Jennifer described mobility of people and flows of food to and from urban centers due to urban populations not having access to lands for harvest.

For example, Jennifer spoke repeatedly about the need for herself and other Inuit in Thunder Bay to travel long distances or have food sent by plane or train because their Indigenous foods are not available to harvest in the region in which they reside. She said:

> I've met a couple other Inuit here. But they have the same problem of trying to get food. And my friend, she's from Iqaluit as well […] we keep talking about how if one of us is

[9] Three of 6 of the Indigenous participants were given a draft analysis to read before the call. An overview of the current state of the study was presented by the first author, including preliminary findings. We asked the participants: *Do you feel your perspective was accurately represented? Do you find the results useful or relevant? How do you think results should be disseminated? Would you like to be involved further in the rest of this project?* Collaboration on this call impacted the choice for products of the study and was a starting point for future involvement of Tyna as a co-author.

going to go to Ottawa any time soon so that we can order seal meat or fish or caribou. For reading week, do I want to save my money and stay here, or do I go to Ottawa and see some Inuit and maybe get some food? Some time with family, or do I stay and live off the salmon fish from Maltese[10]? – Jennifer, Inuit community member, Thunder Bay

The geographic distance from her traditional harvesting lands has led to a significant change in diet despite her desire to continue to consume her Inuit foods. Indigenous foods provide a connection to land, and being away from lands on which to enact food practices is unto itself, disruptive.

For First Nations peoples who are within traveling distance to their treaty or traditional lands, they can exercise their rights to harvest. Yet Brooke and Dakota expressed that conservation officers frequently misunderstood their rights. Further, to continue to have access to those lands they are often in conflict with conservation officers who debate and disrespect them in the bush. Specifically, they spoke about the arbitrary and government-imposed boundaries for treaty lands. Brooke describes this continuous point of contention that leads to long and heated disputes where conservation officers hold the power to penalize harvesters under their interpretation of Ontario's natural resources laws. She explained:

> They try to pull people over like they're the police. I'm not even kidding. Like, the audacity? Is this really happening right now? […] A couple of my friends got caught in between two Treaty areas — and this is where the argument of traditional and Treaty came in. But he didn't realize my friend was a lawyer, so he continued to argue with my friend, argue and argue, and took this man — at least six hours, my friend was telling me

[10] Maltese is the name of a locally owned independent grocery store in Thunder Bay.

> — to finally give up. So those are the type of interactions that we have. And this was just last year. All the time. – Brooke, Indigenous community member, Thunder Bay

When harvesters are charged with offenses under Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 41*, 2020), they can fight the allegations yet there are financial and logistical barriers as they would have to take time off and travel to Thunder Bay for court. These enforced restrictions force participants to discuss land in terms of colonial boundaries. This reality is frustrating and hinders their ability to practice harvesting, which is deeply tied to their cultural identities and food security.

**Disruptions and Cultivations of Traditional Knowledges and Indigenous Foodways.** All of the Indigenous women in this study were highly skilled in various aspects of harvesting, cooking, and preparation of Indigenous foods (in particular wild game and fish) including hunting, fishing, butchering, smoking, drying, and canning. They frequently spoke of their skills developed through intergenerational knowledge within their extended families and home communities despite the everlasting impacts of traumatic events such as the sixties scoop and residential schools' forced relocations. Yet, the women reiterated the deep loss at the broad community level of traditional procurement and cooking techniques. Participants spoke about how this trend towards urbanization and subsequent disruption from land-based activities impacts the intergenerational transmission of food-related knowledge sharing.

Although harvesting and Indigenous food practices can exist in the urban setting, Tyna mentioned it is not as common and occurs in specific formal programs in comparison to reserve or home communities. She commented:

> In Thunder Bay I would say I guess different organizations have their own little events that they have, you know what I mean? They all have their own, I'm not sure what

> they're all doing, but I think up north though it's just they do it without even knowing it's the food that they eat, they do it without 'hey, we're having this' but in an urban setting it seems harder. – Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

Indigenous participants listed various reasons for why they currently reside in an urban center, including personal or family healthcare needs or historical dislocation from family on reserve or in home communities. Our participants acknowledged the loss of and return to historical land-based foods and practices in the face of colonial control. Multiple Indigenous participants maintain mobility to home communities of First Nation reserves in northern Ontario and Inuit communities in Nunavut. Dakota spoke about the need to continually harvest in traditional areas and defend any charges from conservation officers in court:

> But the thing is, we need people to keep pushing those, because the attempt there is to try and erode those rights. Because if you have enough case law, at the end of the day, that's all that really counts in this justice system. So, you keep on, if people keep on fighting — because MNR [the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources] always loses. If someone shows up to court to contest the ticket, it is always thrown out. – Dakota, Indigenous community member, Sioux Lookout

Continually re-establishing traditional practices and traditional territory through the legal system is necessary to uphold the precedent-based constitutional and treaty rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Jennifer directly ties the lack of harvesting in urban areas to government intervention and colonial policy disrupting families and dispossessing them from their lands: "It's because our world was fragmented, right?" In the city, access to Indigenous foods can be greatly increased

with a harvester in the home. Building interpersonal food networks for sharing Indigenous or store foods is particularly tricky and time-consuming in the urban environment. However, participants also said that simply increasing the sharing of Indigenous food will not be sufficient as the holistic process from harvesting to consumption is valuable for cultural continuity. Tyna notes:

> In Thunder Bay I would say various Indigenous organizations have their own events that share Indigenous foods, not sure what they're all doing, but I think up north or in home communities, eating Indigenous foods or taking part in cultural food practices are done more frequently. –Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

For Tyna, the value of spending time on land and each distinct part of harvesting was critically attached to traditional knowledges and histories which were additionally valuable beyond solely consuming Indigenous food.

**Implementation of and Resistance to Colonial Policy.** There are practical implications of trying to serve wild game dishes off-reserve which can be frustrating to Indigenous-serving organizations who wish to provide culturally appropriate environments for their clients. Overwhelmingly, the perspectives of our Indigenous participants and other Indigenous-serving organization staff that serve Indigenous populations in Thunder Bay is that the health inspection team, through their implementation of provincial food policy, is a major barrier to serving wild game in various organizations or institutions. Brooke elaborates:

> So, they create barriers everywhere, and also, if we were to serve this to people, we have to put a giant sign up and have people sign waivers. We don't do that[…]— you want to

> sue us, go ahead. It's ridiculous. It's like apologizing for being brown. *Get lost!* Those people are nuts. – Brooke, Indigenous community member, Thunder Bay

The participants in Thunder Bay also expressed that in other urban contexts and previously in Thunder Bay, the issue of wild foods being served in community organizations was not problematized but in recent years tensions around the subject have risen. Yet, we heard stories of organizations in Sioux Lookout serving wild game with less strict supervision by the Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU). This is in stark contrast to Thunder Bay, where Cameron, a non-Indigenous staff person of an Indigenous-serving organization, spoke of the challenges and resource intensity needed to adhere to provincial food regulations when serving wild game at their organization. Further, they felt that before the permanent Wild Game Application process[11] there was a clear lack of support for finding solutions outside of the status quo, a single-day event permit, at the health unit.

Procedures for the single-day event permit vary by health unit as health inspectors are tasked with the implementation of provincial regulations (i.e. the Health Protections and Promotion Act- Food Premise Regulations) which can be interpreted in a multitude of ways (*O.Reg 493/17: Food Premises*, 2017). Multiple Indigenous participants and staff of Indigenous-serving organizations pointed to the fact that the requirements of the health unit directly discouraged Indigenous Peoples from cooking wild foods to serve others. Cameron recounts:

> So every year an Elder comes and does this fall feast at [Indigenous-serving organization] and as far as I know she had been doing traditional feasts prior to me getting there. However, when she came to me I was like well, there's this –all this paperwork that I've

[11] In 2019, the Shelter House in Thunder Bay became the first organization to have a permanent wild game license approved in the TBDHU. To our knowledge, this is the only health unit using this type of licensing scheme which allows for wild game to be integrated into typical food premise inspections as opposed to the need to apply for a permit for each day that wild game is served.

> been told by the health unit that I have to do with you. And she was like well, that's a huge hassle I'd almost rather not do it. I'll just do a beef stew. *Like, that's ridiculous*.– Cameron, Non-Indigenous Staff of Indigenous-serving organization, Thunder Bay

Moreover, due to legal restrictions of the Fishing and Wildlife Conservation Act, organizations desiring to serve wild game must have it donated by an Indigenous person. Indigenous harvesters cannot legally be paid when sharing wild food with community organizations. Jessica considers the issues with colonial governments controlling the ability for Indigenous Peoples to pay for wild game to support the associated costs with harvesting:

> Well it's also based on donation right, so like if you're thinking about a sustainable livelihood for a hunter or gatherer there's no livelihood in that other than the reciprocity around sharing with community. – Jessica McLaughlin, Anishnaabe, Long Lake #58 First Nation, Thunder Bay

It is crucial to underscore that the same food policy barriers do not exist on-reserve since Ontario provincial food regulations, specifically, the food premises regulation 493/17 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act are not applicable (*O.Reg 493/17: Food Premises*, 2017). Moreover, Brooke told us that she values reciprocity and does not expect payment when she shares Indigenous foods.

In these cities, Indigenous Peoples continue to resist colonial food and wildlife management policy by practicing cultural food activities, including harvesting and sharing wild foods with their communities in urban centres, reserves, and northern communities. They do so by financially supporting the labour of Indigenous harvesters and cooks, serving their Indigenous foods at their own discretion, building information networks, sharing food knowledges, and enacting their rights to hunt on their traditional lands. Both non-Indigenous organizations and

Indigenous harvesters also resist the implementation of provincial food policy during the process of donating game to organizations. For instance, harvesters actively refused to provide detailed information about traditional hunting areas.

**Changing Environments and Sustainable Harvesting.** Human intervention is impacting the physical environments (including land, water, plants, and animals) from which Indigenous food is harvested in northwestern Ontario in vast ways. The routes mentioned by Indigenous participants include warming waters due to climate change, recreational land use disrupting ecosystems, resource extraction poisoning animals, and government conservation efforts negatively impacting the land and animals which reside near the city or are harvested by urban populations. Specifically, the participants mentioned diseased game such as deer, moose, and rabbits, and inedible berries. Brooke expands:

> I think that the amount of people in the city, and the people that are involved in outdoor lifestyles have made an impact. You see often now animals are almost domesticated, which is dangerous. And then you have animals coming into the city, and then they go back to the bush and they're just, tainted animals, because they've been eating garbage, right? And then from there you have a lot of diseased animals — it just starts a chain of a mess, right?– Brooke, Indigenous community member, Thunder Bay

While certain Indigenous foods are available within or just outside city limits in both locations in this study, the harvesters underlined that the quality and animal health of those food sources are not adequate for human consumption. Thus, harvesters must travel further, putting increasing resources into harvesting for game, fish, or plants. Dakota explains:

> People have to go further and further to get their berries. When I was growing up, I lived in an urban town, an urban setting, and I would just hop on my bicycle with my berry pail

> and take off on my bike. Even though I was eight years old I could peddle to where I could go berry picking, and get a pail, and come home. You can't do that anymore. […] All of the berry patches within a five-mile radius, ten-mile radius for *sure*, of Sioux Lookout have been recently sprayed and are not able to be picked from. – Dakota, Indigenous community member, Sioux Lookout

Importantly, Indigenous participants highlighted the need for sustainable harvesting practices when talking about increasing access to Indigenous foods. Concerns about over-harvesting in the capitalist, resource extracting, and unsustainable economy were repeated. Respect for natural law, centering Traditional Ecological Knowledge in conservation methods, and sustainable harvesting to support those with a cultural value of wild game, will ensure that it is not turned into a commodity like other industrialized and unsustainable meats.

**Financial Resources: 'Harvesting Traditional Foods is Becoming a Rich Person's Thing'.** Our participants spoke of the following direct costs incurred in harvesting: transportation (e.g. vehicle and gas), equipment (e.g. firearms and ammunition), registration for licenses and courses, and butchering costs. Indirectly, there is also the time taken away from the labour market and associated loss of potential earnings. Dakota uses the example of gasoline prices to highlight this point:

> Traditional foods are becoming something of a luxury that only rich people can afford to get, a lot of times. Unless the hunters or gatherers are being subsidized, and that's just to help get gas. Like, gas here is $1.30. Gas in the communities is usually two and a half times what our cost is. So, you're close to three dollars a litre for gas, well, how are you supposed to go out and check your snares for that? How do you take your grandchildren

out into the bush if you can't — if that day on the lake is going to cost you fifty bucks? – Dakota, Indigenous community member, Sioux Lookout

Harvesting requires a significant amount of financial resources due to a variety of costs. Thus, those with more financial privileges are most likely to be able to afford to harvest regularly. A Staff member of an Indigenous shelter in Sioux Lookout also underlined that many of their Indigenous clients with complex medical and social needs cannot afford daily necessities as social assistance is inadequate and there is a shortage of affordable housing. Game or fish served in hot meals at the shelter is one avenue of potential access for them.

**Building Interpersonal Food Networks and Reciprocity.** While having an active harvester in the home is the best way to ensure regular access to wild game, the participants mentioned that interpersonal food sharing networks are central for those who cannot harvest themselves. Food sharing is a cultural practice that is part of kinship relationships and strengthening of community. All Indigenous participants in this study specifically called the practice 'trading' or 'sharing'.

For our participants, these relationships span within and outside of the city, often including home communities in First Nations reserves or other large urban centers, such as Ottawa. Food sharing was described as less common in urban as opposed to rural or remote spaces. Our participants described how it is more complicated to build these networks in urban areas than in home communities. April illustrated how in urban and contemporary settings alternate strategies for food sharing are developed:

> That's just it. You need – you know, there's different ways of doing things now and it's all social media. So, like, say they did have Indigenous food 911, you know, really – […]

> Because you've got to find those trappers and hunters, a local food source. – April Head, Indigenous community member, Thunder Bay

We found that social media is used as a tool to curate food networks in urban northwestern Ontario. On Facebook individuals will ask for or offer Indigenous foods (e.g. wild game, fish, or bannock) to be sold, shared, or traded with others. This pathway for access can be essential to those who do not have personal off-line connections to local harvesters. Brooke speaks of her sharing practices:

> I share with everyone in my community. Usually, if I shoot a moose, half of it goes to an organization that I govern, and then one-quarter will go to myself and my family, and the other quarter I usually distribute within my community. And that's not limited to only Indigenous people. – Brooke, Indigenous community member, Thunder Bay

Often the Indigenous participants will trade wild game for home-made meals or baked goods to maintain reciprocal relations. Dakota frequently preserves wild game in unique ways (e.g. canning, drying, smoking) and then exchanges it reciprocally with those in Sioux Lookout and reserve communities.

Dakota stated she had to make a conscious effort to build these networks when she first relocated to an urban area. The networks women described were notably distinct in contrast to reserve or remote home communities where sharing Indigenous foods was practiced increasingly consistently across broader family and community connections.

**'Bridging the Disconnect': Increasing Traditional Food Knowledges and Practices in the City.** Expanding opportunities for teachings of harvesting, preparing, and cooking Indigenous foods is a sustainable and self-sufficient means of advancing access. Returning to the land as a source of learning and healing through food practices was the enactment of IFS for

multiple of our participants. Tyna explains the value of the entire process from harvesting to consumption:

> Those values, those beliefs are connected with how we harvest for our food and when we don't have that there's a big disconnect and it's not just accessing those, but what we learn in the process of accessing those foods. Not just eating the food right here. […] Whether it's patience, whether it's to take only what we need, a sense of community through storytelling through the process of accessing those, that's really at the heart of it you know. And getting those knowledges and sense of community and just being able to talk and laugh and stumble and fall. It's all part of our journey, but if you just have that moose right in front of you there's an element missing. At Shelter House, sure you're getting that moose meat, but we need more than that. - Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

To combat de-skilling as mentioned by our participants, intergenerational connections through land and water based activities are encouraged to promote the sharing of food knowledges. Learning and practicing traditional food knowledges brings about feelings of pride and identity for participants.

## Discussion

Aspects of these findings align with research in the Canadian far north, on reserve, and southern urban studies relating to food security and accessing Indigenous foods (Cidro et al., 2015; Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; Loring & Gerlach, 2015; Neufeld & Richmond, 2017; Skinner et al., 2016). Climate change will increase food insecurity and food inequities globally. In the far north, changing physical environments, climate change, industrial development, availability of healthy game, adapting to sustainably harvest, and the financial

resources, traditional knowledge, and skills needed to procure and consume Indigenous foods are repeated issues (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; Loring & Gerlach, 2015; Settee, 2020). Environmental degradation has a disproportionate impact on Indigenous Peoples lands and food systems and hinders their ability to practice IFS (Settee, 2020).

This work reiterates that urban environments within Canada present spaces of a unique blending of traditional practices and modern lifestyles for Indigenous Peoples. We aimed to contribute to the call for discussions of whether and how Indigenous Peoples are able to connect (or re-connect) to traditional roots in Westernized society through IFS (Martin & Amos, 2017). In Winnipeg, Indigenous peoples who had moved from reserve to the city reported eating much less wild meat because of how laborious it was to acquire in the city and is only secured through relationships with home communities (Brown et al., 2008). In inner-city Saskatoon, Indigenous hunters and gatherers contribute as producers to alternative food networks which are outside of the industrial food supply chain (Kouris, Engler-Stringer, Thomson, & Wood, 2020). Food sharing may be less common (Tam et al., 2014), but urban schools are an opportunity to increase access to Indigenous food practices through land-based programs which also strengthen Indigenous culture and identity, and cultivate relationships (Kerpan et al., 2015; Robin & Cidro, 2020). However, the importance of both place and geographic characteristics of the ecosystems and land in urban northwestern Ontario, and the unique cultural groups of Indigenous populations make their food systems struggles and triumphs distinct.

Our participants have challenged the false conception of an urban versus rural dichotomy in terms of food practices. Rather, these harvesters were mobile, and access was more dependent on the distance to land or water from which one can harvest through Treaty or Indigenous Rights. There are 46 treaty agreements in Ontario and hunters with federally recognized Indian

Status are only legally entitled to hunt on territory in which their band is a benefactor under their treaty agreement (Judge, Skinner, & Spring, 2020; Ministry of Indigenous Affairs, 2020). Under provincial hunting regulation, when on another territory one would need to apply for an outdoors card and hunting license, or request written permission (i.e. Shipman Letter in reference to R. v. Shipman et al., 2007) from the local Chief to have permission to do inter-treaty harvesting. These findings align with the work of Skinner et al. (2016) which highlights that investigating urban Indigenous food security involves consideration of urban, rural, on-reserve, and remote environments. For some Indigenous women in our study, the tension of applying provincial legislation in urban settings and offers of payment for wild meat was contradictory to their values related to sharing Indigenous foods. An Indigenous worldview that sees the collective management of resources and sharing of land-based resources (including foods) can be contrary to 'capitalist possessive individualism' where gifts from the Creator should be shared as opposed to bought (Pawlowska-Mainville, 2020).

Competency in hunting and angling precedes financial barriers to harvesting as expertise takes time with knowledge holders and practice to be developed (Pal et al., 2013). Our participants reiterated that intergenerational connections are encouraged to promote the sharing of food knowledges in urban settings (Cidro et al., 2015; Barbara Parker et al., 2018; Robin & Cidro, 2020; Skinner et al., 2016). The significance of passing on cultural knowledges of how food harvesting, sharing, and preparation are tied to Indigenous Peoples' relationships with their environment, spirituality, and others has been reported in previous research (Cidro et al., 2015). Further, the theme of 'bridging the disconnect' aligns closely with Cidro, Martens, and Guilbault's (2016) findings, the importance of 'practicing culture in the city', to support Indigenous identities in urban contexts. Previous work in Sioux Lookout underlined that access

to wild game  was a significant community concern (Barbara Parker et al., 2018). The Indigenous women in our study suggested cultural activities, hunting camps, and on-the-land activities to promote the natural intergenerational knowledge transfer and spiritual connection that occurs by spending time in community on the land. Currently, in Thunder Bay advocacy at the university and local organizations are working towards building areas for experiential learning opportunities within city limits. Indigenous Peoples adapting intergenerational knowledge translation to urban environments should be celebrated as a counternarrative to sole focus on systemic barriers (Kouris, Engler-Stringer, Thomson, & Wood, 2020).

The authors align with previous demands for the understandings of land for First Nations Peoples to move from positivist beliefs of land as simply space and to the dialogue of dispossession from land as a root cause of health crises and disruptions in Indigenous spiritualities (Richmond, 2018; Richmond et al., 2021). While the significance of land is not lost in urban settings, it is both the spiritual impacts of disconnection from traditional lands inherent in urban living and the distance, resources, and policy hoops required to access lands to harvest traditionally that impede food security for Indigenous Peoples in urban settings. Characteristics of the northwestern urban environment explored in this work underline that local food procurement and sharing is indeed made increasingly challenging for reasons of environmental dispossession, and physical and social distances from home communities, as also reported in the southwestern region of the province (Neufeld, 2020).

There is a necessity for creativity in urban settings to build food networks which is recently being highlighted in literature (Cidro et al., 2015; Kouris et al., 2020). We found that sharing and reciprocal systems may look different in the city, but residents are actively building and strengthening them. It is the use of tools such as social media, individual mobility, and

connections to remote and reserve communities that foster Indigenous food sharing in the urban spaces of Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout. In research completed in the Southwestern Ontario area of London and the surrounding communities, Indigenous women were also cautious about the safety of foods harvested in local environments. Further, the need for urban residents to travel to home communities to access wild game and other ingredients in Indigenous foods was a similar financial and geographical access barrier (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). This work presents a case for comparable experiences in northwestern urban settings. Thus, both the urban-rural and urban-reserve linkages between Indigenous Peoples, their cultures, and their Indigenous foods have been emphasized.

Colonial governance and policy structures are a major obstacle to food security for Indigenous Peoples in the North American North, as they deteriorate Indigenous Peoples' ability to adapt to their changing environments to sustain sustenance (Loring & Gerlach, 2015). As declared previously and reiterated in this study, many factors are currently outside of the control of Indigenous harvesters, such as a general lack of Indigenous control over environmental management, environmental pollutants, climate change, deforestation, and overfishing (Elliott et al., 2012). Our study informs increased understandings of policy barriers specifically in the urban context, which is relatively unexplored in literature, outside of recent work by Ermine et al. (2020). Their work in Saskatchewan equally found that provincial laws and the Canadian legal system are a significant barrier to accessing Indigenous food in urban settings. Provincial hunting and fishing laws such as hunting seasons and game limits, and limiting of off-season hunting to reserves have been created in direct violations of treaties and are a trademark of the land dispossession inherent in the settler-colonial project in Canada (Burnett, Hay, & Chambers, 2016; Ray et al., 2019). Through this project, it is also clear that resistance to colonial food and

hunting policy is a critical part of successfully accessing wild game in the city. Corntassel (2012) notes that settler colonial institutions are continually 'shapeshifting' to push towards agendas of co-optation and assimilation and that "as a refutation to a resource extraction-based economy, Indigenous peoples practice and honour their sustainable relationships" (p. 96).

While Indigenous foods were the subject of this work, they must be considered in conjunction with market foods when discussing implications for food security and urban IFS. As re-iterated in multiple studies in urban Ontario, poverty the key proximal determinate in food security, as financial resources impact access to foods in the Indigenous and market systems (Barbara Parker et al., 2018; Richmond et al., 2021). Recent work indicates that 89% of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay fell below the before-tax Low-Income Cut-Off in comparison to 17% of Ontario adults (Anishnawbe Mushkiki, 2020b). Equally, the study found that 1 in 3 Indigenous adults with pre-diabetes or diabetes are food insecure, and 1 in 4 Indigenous adults without diabetes are food insecure in Thunder Bay (Anishnawbe Mushkiki, 2020a). Thus, the fact that the procurement of Indigenous foods is often more expensive than buying market foods must be considered if using increased access to Indigenous foods as a path to improved health and well-being or an expression of IFS. However, increasing traditional knowledge and skills can lead to the rebuilding of local economies to a point where this strong reliance on the global industrial market food system can be lifted if desired. Self-determination in food choice from either system paired with supportive legislation and policy are pillars of IFS which encouragement from settler-colonial institutions can improve. In this study, we found that the urban off-reserve environment layers on additional legislative barriers and institutional policy challenges which, in theory, hinder expression of IFS but nevertheless Indigenous women

continue their harvesting practices and assert their rights to harvest and consume their wild game.

## Conclusion

Through this work, Indigenous participants demonstrated how urbanicity and place influence the ways in which they harvest, share, and consume their Indigenous foods in the northwestern Ontario urban hubs of Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout. Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations highlighted their pathways to serving wild game in public institutions. The stories of the resiliency of the Indigenous food systems and ongoing food practices of Indigenous Peoples in these cities describe valuable strategies for IFS in the northern urban context. Accessing Indigenous foods in the city goes beyond the consumption of game, it is about reconnecting to cultural practices, teachings, and the land through the entire harvesting experience. Applying a more place-based understanding was necessary to move away from a strictly social determinants of health approach to one that considers the social meanings that participants give to living in these particular urban contexts.

The 'inalienable connection with and right to' the natural world including local ecosystems, lands, and non-human beings are inseparable from health for Indigenous Peoples (de Leeuw, 2018). Further, an endorsement of traditional food practices cannot exclude a context-specific understanding of constraints Indigenous populations face in maintaining or re-integrating these foods into regular diets (Pal et al., 2013).

As newly explored in this study, the food premise regulations, and the hunting and possession, buying and selling of wildlife regulations, hinder access to Indigenous food for urban Indigenous Peoples in Ontario (*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 41*, 2020; *O.Reg 493/17: Food Premises*, 2017). Since individual health inspectors interpret policy

within their local teams, health units will follow different food safety procedures regarding surveillance of wild game consumption. When conducting risk-benefit analysis it should be considered if the perceived risks to consuming wild game outweigh the well-documented vast benefits (e.g. cultural, spiritual, and nutritional) for Indigenous Peoples. There should be direct acknowledgment of these same benefits for urban populations as reiterated for northern, reserve, and remote Indigenous populations. Our participants of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous identity highlighted the pervasive anti-Indigenous racism in Thunder Bay. The specific racist socio-cultural environment of Thunder Bay may make accessing Indigenous foods increasingly troublesome due to the stricter imposition of food premise regulations in institutions that wish to serve game. After all, it is well known that in cities, Indigenous Peoples face new challenges including the climates of racism, marginalization, and poverty (Browne et al., 2009). In future research, it will be key to scrutinize how interpersonal and systemic racism against Indigenous Peoples influences how regulations are designed and enforced across Canada, including wildlife management, meat processing, and food premise policy.

A defining feature of Indigenous food systems in Canada is their power to enhance community food security and IFS historically, currently, and into the future (Richmond et al., 2021; Shukla & Settee, 2020). We found that community-level access to Indigenous foods for Indigenous Peoples in the urban northwestern Ontario setting is not adequate. Food insecurity is a phenomenon that exists at the individual, household, community, and regional levels. Thus, eliminating it is a complex task that must consist of multi-level collaborative approaches. When government policy barriers are removed, local food systems can thrive as a foundation for which to build food security (Loring & Gerlach, 2015). Strategies presented by our Indigenous participants that align with Council of Canadian Academies (2014) action levels include short-

term mitigation (e.g. wild food banks and interpersonal food sharing), capacity building and skills development (e.g. on the land camps and traditional food preparation skills), and long term organizational and policy change targeting underlying causes (e.g. changes in wildlife management and food premise policy, poverty reduction strategies).

Indigenous community-based leadership should determine the next steps in the fight for IFS. Increasing Indigenous voices in public policy  and considering culturally significant concepts (e.g. reciprocity, holism, and sustainability) can combat current policies destructing their rightful access to land and water systems to curate Indigenous diets (Elliott et al., 2012; Richmond et al., 2021 (Martin & Amos, 2017)). Cidro, Martens, and Guilbault (2016) work reminds us that operationalizing IFS principles to suit unique urban contexts may be tested by lack of access to territories, but an adaptation of practices is possible. Much like the Indigenous women revealed, increasing food skills is a central tenet of urban IFS and combats more than just food insecurity, but is cultural reclamation.

## Chapter 4: Using Intersectionality-Based-Policy Analysis to Understand Stakeholder Viewpoints and Settler-Colonial Narratives Impacting Access to Wild Foods for Urban Indigenous Women in Northwestern Ontario

### Introduction

Internationally, food insecurity is an issue that touches the political, economic, and environmental spheres and is a question of gender justice as women are the most likely to be food insecure, least likely to own the means to produce food, and the most disadvantaged by food systems governance locally and internationally (BRIDGE, 2015; Brody, 2016; Carney, 2015; Pictou et al., In Press). In Canada, patriarchy and colonialism work to oppress Indigenous women, and are experienced through the dispossession of land, loss of Indigenous foodways, and disproportionate food insecurity (Mintz, 2019; Pictou et al., In Press). Poverty, lack of safe housing, and food insecurity are some of the realities for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+[12] people in Canada and Indigenous Peoples in urban centers experience greater health inequities than those who live on reserve (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019). These disparities are rooted powerfully in experiences of colonialism, specifically in gendered policies that affected profound social and cultural disruption in Indigenous lives (Neufeld et al., 2020).

Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS) respects struggles for self-determination within Canada, where food has been used as a tool of ongoing settler colonialization (Burnett et al., 2016; Martens et al., 2016). Policy is a pillar of the concept because oppressive land, water, food, economic, and environmental policies prohibit the land-based practices necessary enact IFS (Morrison, 2011, 2020). Specifically, the degradation of IFS and construction of food insecurity

[12] This acronym refers to people who identify as Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and/or asexual (Department of Justice, 2021).

is a function of Canadian settler-colonialism. Throughout history, Canada has inhibited Indigenous Peoples' ability to hunt, fish, forage, and farm in a multitude of ways including resource extraction, creations of national parks, prioritizing sport hunting and tourism and limiting of how wildlife is shared or sold (Burnett et al., 2016; Mintz, 2019; Teillet, 2005). Now, many Indigenous Peoples face declining access to harvesting territories and waters as well as a decline in the availability of nutritious wildlife or plants, directly causing a reliance on store-bought foods (Morrison, 2020). By removing Indigenous Peoples from their traditional harvesting lands, government policies disrupted the cultural meaning of being connected to such territory (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017). Indigenous Peoples have always disputed this dispossession by fighting politically, by petition, by occupation, and in the courts (Teillet, 2005).

There is currently a shortage of legal work surrounding food security and food sovereignty in Canada (Settee, 2020) but in particular for Indigenous peoples living off-reserve whom are required by provincial law to follow the same procedures as non-Indigenous populations when hunting or fishing despite their constitutionally-protected Indigenous and/or Treaty rights (Ermine et al., 2020). It is known that Indigenous harvesting is regulated in Canada through Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Rights, and provincial regulation(Ermine et al., 2020) but how these policies are experienced in various urban regions across provinces within Canada and by Indigenous Peoples who have various levels of recognition by the federal government  (i.e. Status Indian, Non-Status, Inuit, or Métis) is poorly understood and undocumented.  Herein we apply an Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA) to explore how the provincial and federal policy contexts have historically, and continues to impact Indigenous women and their communities' experiences of accessing wild foods[13] in urban northwestern

[13] In this work we consider wild food (e.g. non-farm raised meat or fish and plants that are harvested from the natural environment through fishing, hunting, picking, or trapping) as part of broader Indigenous or traditional food

Ontario. This analysis was borne from questions regarding wild food policy from community organizations during previous research in both cities. Further, this project responds to the call for more research on food "choice" which goes beyond affordability to a complex analysis of root causes of disparities, including social and gender relations (Neufeld et al., 2020). Highlighting Indigenous women's experiences brings forth the 'everyday decolonization and resurgence practices' of Indigenous Peoples which keep a continued focus on the revitalization of the well-being of their Indigenous communities by focusing on (re)localized and community-centered actions (Corntassel, 2012).

**Theoretical Framework: Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis**

Public policy discussions center on what governments "*ought or ought not*" to do about public health issues (Olena Hankivsky, Grace, Hunting, & Ferlatte, 2012) which involves non-overt and opaque processes that are hidden to the public (Walt et al., 2008). The IBPA advances current Canadian best practices in understanding the policy implications for diverse groups (including sex and gender-based analyses and health equity or health impact assessments) by fostering a complexity of understanding of multi-level and dynamic social locations that shape life through their place in power structures (Olena Hankivsky et al., 2012; O. Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019). IBPA responses to the need for an emphasis on how systems advance inequality and exploring how oppression is ordered and preserved through aspects of identity (Kanenberg, Leal, & Erich, 2019). Indigenous women whose material experience of accessing wild food is constructed according to their unique but shared identities based around race, gender, geographic location, place, urbanicity, and ties to traditional practices and lands. IBPA

---

systems. We focus on this subset of foods, and in particular wild meat and fish, because of their contention in the policy arena. We acknowledge that there are many other foods which can be considered traditional or Indigenous that are outside of the scope of this analysis.

allows for understanding the fluidity and fluctuations of identities to get at the deeper and more contextual meanings of Indigenous women's individual and group experiences, needs, and strategic resistance to the existing policy while proposing policy solutions (Bensimon, 2003; Olena Hankivsky et al., 2012; O. Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019).

**Methods**

We use an IBPA approach to interrogate the connections between the context of Indigenous Peoples lives in urban northwestern Ontario, and processes of food and natural resource policy development; including how problems of Indigenous Peoples' access to wild food and food insecurity are defined and the underlying assumptions about Indigenous Peoples and Western ideologies that are solidified through policy implementation and contribute to health inequities (Fridkin, 2012). We pay particular attention to values enacted through policy (O. Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019). The questions examined in this manuscript have been adapted from the IBPA Framework's list (O. Hankivsky et al., 2012). They were all asked in the urban northwestern Ontario context and are as follows: *(1) How is the policy 'problem' of accessing wild food and food insecurity for urban Indigenous populations defined by stakeholders? (2) How does the current policy landscape address, maintain, or create inequities between different Indigenous people or groups? (2b) What assumptions regarding Indigenous Peoples, their Indigenous foods, and harvesting practices underlie current policies that impact access to wild food for urban Indigenous populations? (3) Where are the policy gaps and are their interventions to improve the problem?* The results are organized in response to these questions. Question 2b is considered under the umbrella of the second question because these assumptions contribute to inequities. A temporal aspect (i.e. change over time) was considered throughout the analysis as interviews occurred over three years.

From 2017-2020, as part of a larger research project, we completed in-depth open-ended interviews with 18 participants living in either Thunder Bay (n=15) or Sioux Lookout (n=3), two urban hubs in northwestern Ontario. Participants were categorized into 3 stakeholder groups to build a sample of multiple relevant actors: self-identified female Indigenous community members (n=6) (i.e. those who currently access wild foods, desire to access more, or are food activists), non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations (n=6) (i.e. community organizations with services related to food), and policymakers (n=5) (i.e. those who either create, implement, or interpret policy related to wild food)[14]. We acknowledge individuals can shift between groups based on their complex identities and multiplicity of roles in these communities[15].

The two lead investigators have combined 30+ years of experience working and living in northwestern Ontario. Thus, recruitment for participation in this study was based on existing working relationships. Using the snowball sampling technique, the sample was expanded to others who were information-rich cases(Patton, 1990). In-depth interviews from 1 to 3 hours occurred either in person or through video conferencing software. Participants gave verbal or written consent and interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed prior to analysis. Interview guides provided a bank of potential questions according to the stakeholder group. In-depth open interviews were used to prioritize the lived and practical knowledge of participants in

[14] We interviewed individuals who worked at various institutions including public health units, community organizations, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), and the Ontario Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). Individuals were selected for their experiences and roles in these organizations but did not speak on behalf of them. Three of the individuals interviewed in Thunder Bay worked for organizations which would also serve or govern in Sioux Lookout. All stakeholders are categorized into groups based on the way they described their role and their interactions with Indigenous populations in their roles. To layer confidentiality, when quoting an individual we refer to them by stakeholder group and gender-ambiguous names and pronouns. The Indigenous participants self-identified as women and some have chosen to be identified by their real names.

[15] For example, many of the Indigenous community members we interviewed are also active in organizations that serve Indigenous Peoples.

a format that allows for a complex exploration of the topic area in a co-learning environment (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The conversational style is an important part of building research relationships and allowing for the interviewee to bring forth what is most relevant to their position in this policy ecosystem (Patton, 2014). These interviews were preliminarily coded using inductive and descriptive codes to capture the thoughts of participants in their own words. Through the iterative process of thematic analysis, the theoretical framework of intersectionality-based policy analysis was introduced retrospectively in a second round of interpretive coding to address the research questions.

**Findings**

**(1) How stakeholders define the policy problem of accessing wild food and food insecurity for Indigenous populations.** This section summarizes stakeholder viewpoints that are expanded upon throughout this work.

***Group 1: Policymakers.*** We found differences in problem definition across and within stakeholder groups. For policymakers, the general themes were 1) food safety concerns with wild meat, 2) preventing the commercialization of game, 3) case law definitions of Indigenous harvesting rights, and 4) administrative barriers to deterring consumption of wild game, for sake of conservation concerns. For example, a participant who implements policy focused on the importance of respect for treaty boundaries and the court-system when discussing increased consumption of game by Indigenous Peoples. Aiden explained the risk of being criminally charged for harvesting outside one's treaty area:

> "In theory, someone could be charged for harvesting outside of their Treaty area. Because the current understanding, based on case law, supports inner-Treaty harvesting. […] Yeah, so a lot of our directions are around case law." – Aiden, policymaker

A policymaker considered urban off-reserve access to wild game as a ‘minor issue’ and described hunting as very accessible in northern Ontario. They chose to emphasise concern with wild game as a food source because it is not inspected in a federally licensed facility, it should not be shared with others. This is important to note, as sharing is a cultural food practice. Further, they suggested that policy will not be changed without stronger political advocacy on the topic, stating:

> There’s *no inspection*[16]. And that's why hunted game is considered consumer-owned, […] completely controlled by the consumer, and it only is allowed to legally be distributed within their *immediate* family –Technically you're not even supposed to give it away. ” – Taylor, policymaker

Public health inspectors centered the issue of food safety and reducing commercialization of wild game as the reasons why policy must be in place restricting harvesting, even if it limits some access for Indigenous Populations. For example, one of the inspectors, Alex said:

> The purpose is to say, look, there's some principles here that are going to protect you and your patrons. With the Food Premises regulation, it may look picky, like keeping paperwork and tickets and posters and all this kind of stuff, but the point is to keep people safe. You're talking about uninspected meat, right? […] Yeah, it's a huge pain for someone who wants to do that. But *why* do we do it? We do it because we’re talking about uninspected meat. And it's also not carefully, how it's transported and everything else is not really very carefully controlled. […] You actually *want* to have a hurdle for people to jump over. […] Like, do you *really* want to do this? Like, it shouldn't be the easiest thing in the world to have a wild game dinner. Why? Because there's not that

[16] In quotations, italics are used to demonstrate words or phrases where the participants placed an emphasis.

> many moose left. Hence, why MNR doesn't want it commercialized." – Alex, policymaker

Public health inspectors shared the intense worry about any form of selling wild game, in restaurants or otherwise. While the inspectors were receptive to working with organizations to serve wild game, they are at the mercy of provincial regulations even with Indigenous-led organizations.

***Group 2: Non-Indigenous Staff from Indigenous-Serving Organizations.*** For the non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations, the main themes in how they defined the problem of access to Indigenous foods in urban settings were 1) an ability to comprehend and value both Indigenous and Western worldviews, 2) the necessity to navigate complex regulations and find loopholes to serve game to Indigenous Peoples in the city, and 3) poverty as a determinant of food insecurity. Multiple public health nutritionists recognized the conflict in adherence to Western food safety standards and promotion of Indigenous foods such as wild game, which impedes access in the cities. Emerson discussed the need to be more flexible in the regulation of wild game to serve community needs:

> That's part of the whole discussion right? Is what's the processes and who's really the regulating authority? Like the health unit they look after the consumption but then the MNR they're kind of concerned about you know the meat that's coming off land and not being – or not being inspected right? So it's everybody working together just to make it simplified and not be so strict on everything right? Got to kind of loosen up the rules a little bit just to kind of allow – especially now we've got more people coming from the remote communities into Thunder Bay. We need to you know, we need to evolve with that and they're living that, and they're relying on services and you know we need to

> evolve with that demographic change. – Emerson, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

When asked about reasons for Indigenous Peoples' food insecurity, a non-Indigenous Staff of an Indigenous-serving organization in Sioux Lookout spoke about the situation of their clients:

> Social welfare does not provide enough money [for all needs] and we have seniors that come over here, and they just can't make it stretch, They just can't do it, and it's not because they're mis-using whatever funds they have. […] And so it's really difficult. I think most of the people we see are on social assistance. You see a few younger guys that have work, but they're working at minimum wage, and housing costs in this town…There is no housing, so they can charge whatever they want, almost. Subsidized housing, there is, you know, a minimum number of units and its all for family. One of our guys, he was on the list for ten years before he got his apartment. – Reese, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

This perspective highlights how food cost is one of the basic needs which their clients experiencing poverty are trying to balance. The local housing crisis and insufficient social assistance are thus drivers of food insecurity for Indigenous Peoples and others living in poverty in Sioux Lookout.

***Group 3: Female Indigenous Community Members.*** Indigenous women highlighted that their communities' access to wild food centered on the core themes of 1) residential schools de-skilling and stigmatizing Indigenous foods, 2) the issue of sovereignty – government controlling their harvesting and consumption of wild foods in colonial systems, 3) how environmental management and food premise policy do not respect Inherent rights as Indigenous Peoples, and 4) that poverty is a driver of food insecurity and the inability to afford to harvest. Tyna spoke

about her class privilege and her harvesting skills which facilitated her access to wild foods. She also commented on the way she shares with family and other community members:

> Well I'm in a situation where I'm very fortunate to have like it's two hours away you know I have a vehicle, I have access to being able to purchase a trailer to stay out there. Not everyone is fortunate like that, but I am. And because I can do that I'm able to share with that food that I have that people aren't able to access it. - Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

She also notes the challenges of accessing wild foods for Indigenous populations in urban Thunder Bay who may not have financial means to travel to harvesting territory or may not have a skilled harvester in the home:

> [They cannot access the meat] unless they have relatives giving it to them as well. Unless they have a vehicle. Unless they have money for gas, you know you can't just walk out and go harvest from Thunder Bay. And smaller towns, rural towns you could walk out not far and be surrounded by the bush. –Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

Equally, Jessica noted that in Thunder Bay, wild game has become increasingly policed by the health unit in comparison to ten to fifteen years ago.

**(2) The current policy landscape in Ontario: how it constructs and maintains inequities of food insecurity and access to wild foods.**

***Intergenerational Impacts of Residential School Policy on women's families and food practices.*** Our Indigenous participants set the stage for their current realities and experiences by linking the traumas of residential school that their mothers or grandmothers endured with an

impact on the lifelong food practices and food insecurity of the survivors and their children. Tyna shared the story of her mother, growing up on the land in Attawapiskat, and how her First Nation would harvest in collective coordination - with dedicated hunting camps and trap lines. Further, she indicated how her mother's attendance at residential school disrupted her life in many ways, including her overall well-being and diet:

> She had that knowledge from her parents, but then when she went to residential schools she got exposed to anything but wild food, like porridge and stuff like that, milk. […] They're just not used to that kind of foods so introduce something that made them sick. There was a lot of malnutrition and overcrowding, she developed TB, her and her siblings. So, eventually she ended up back home with her mother because my grandmother got TB so they had to take care of each other. Then she was able to go back on the land again, but it was from there where she was able to pass on that knowledge." – Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

Tyna's story demonstrated that only once their family was re-united on their harvesting lands could the cultural transfer of gendered food-related knowledges continue. Similarly, Jennifer mentioned that in adulthood she reflected on unappetizing recipes her grandmother used to make her as a child – only to realize they were the foods she had grown accustomed to eating in residential school. Tyna also underlined how cultural food guidance was severed because of attending, or being a descendent of a survivor of residential schools:

> It wasn't people didn't want to do it [traditional food practices] before, they were ashamed. They did it, they just didn't do it openly like they are doing it right now. […] Like my mom, she would, in Geraldton we wouldn't even build a fire or cook outside or anything. We would take a boat, go to an island and we'd build a fire and she'd cook her

> geese in hiding. And even when we roasted a goose or boiled a goose she made sure like wash your hands really good so no one smells you because of the smell. […] Because they were told it's not the right way to eat, to cook. […] Today it's being more celebrated. I think that's what we're doing, seeing all these more of the community trying to access land-based programs. – Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

Further, April touched on the intergenerational impacts of residential school on the women in her family – both her mother and grandmother, which contributed to her growing up and experiencing food insecurity in the city of Thunder Bay:

> So I'm originally from here, I guess this is where I've lived all my life. Like I was telling you, I grew up hungry, because I come an Indigenous single mother. Survivor of resident school, and so is my grandmother. And kind of I guess off reserve, displaced woman, not really – she didn't really stay anywhere too long. […] And then we ended up in Thunder Bay. – April Head, Indigenous Community Member

Indigenous women in this study shared the intergenerational impacts of residential schools that have broken family ties and led to themselves or other women in their immediate family moving away from home communities to urban settings, either for a short time or permanently.

**(2b) Assumptions about Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous foods, and harvesting – how they underlie current food and natural resource policy.** The policies commonly referred to by participants in all stakeholder groups were the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affair's Food Safety and Quality Act (which houses meat regulations), the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care's Health Protections and Promotions Act (which houses Food Premise regulations) and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's Fishing

and Wildlife Conservation Act (which houses regulations surrounding hunting, fishing, trapping – and the possession, buying, and selling of wildlife) (*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 41*, 2020; *Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 20*, 2019; "Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7," 2020). These Acts, along with the Indian Act (*Indian Act*, 1985), dictate who can harvest which wild game (including the time of year, the need for a license, and which lands they can use) as well as how wild food is shared or sold, including within food premises across the province. When our participants in all stakeholder groups discussed these acts, it was clear that certain values underlie their purpose, and deep-rooted assumptions about Indigenous Peoples, their Indigenous foods, and their sovereignty in accessing those foods rationalize the current state of policy. The meat regulations and food premise regulations were found to be based on similar values, and thus are discussed together and referred to as 'food regulation' where appropriate.

It is key to consider how living in an urban off-reserve setting impacts the ability to enact Treaty or Indigenous Rights surrounding harvesting. A staff of an Indigenous-serving organization commented:

> On reserve my understanding is that there is no provincial jurisdiction or legislation[…] They have their own kind of [Indigenous] governance, whereas in urban settings there is still that component of –the provincial regulations still exist. So we can talk a little bit about that, the tensions that might be there – how, at the same time at the Indigenous level, they have an agreement with the federal government, but then it's provincial regulations that kind of are the barriers that are holding them back. […] Provincial regulations say it's up to the health unit to kind of determine what's appropriate[…] But I

would say the health unit is more of the interpreter and also the implementer if they choose to do so. – Blake, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

Despite long-standing jurisdictional complexities, since the Constitution Act of 1982, wildlife has been assumed to be a provincial matter. Equally, while the health of the non-Indigenous population is the responsibility of the province, it is the federal government's responsibility to protect the health of Indigenous Peoples (Judge et al., 2020). Thus, in practice, urban Indigenous Peoples and the staff of organizations which serve them, as demonstrated in our study, are left with the struggle of understanding and navigating the blurriness of jurisdiction over wild foods. There is an intricacy of applying laws that govern wild food, as it is at times considered wildlife and at other times considered food. Consequently, accessing wild food implicates multiple ministries in Ontario. The policymakers we spoke with were not overly concerned about the impacts of the bureaucratic ambiguities in this policy area while Indigenous participants highlighted the impacts of these policies contribute to the structural violence enacted on their communities by the Canadian state.

***Racialization of Indigenous Foods - in regulation and in society.*** Western food safety policy stigmatized and created barriers to food that has holistic value to Indigenous Peoples, contributing to their mental, spiritual, and physical health and nutrition. The staff of Indigenous-serving organizations and Indigenous women linked negative stereotypes and anti-Indigenous racism which manifested through concerns over foods and food practices that are associated with Indigenous Peoples. A staff of Indigenous-serving organization in Thunder Bay elaborated:

> Indigenous neighbourhoods within the urban setting… lot of times, they'd be characterised as, like, for lack of a better word, the slums, poverty, low income. […]Just that racial description of it already has a negative impact, that then kind of sets a

> foundation for other things, like accessing wild game, right. Like, oh, it's different, it's separate, it might be risky. I think that's a huge part of it." – Blake, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

Tyna re-iterated how in cooking wild game at different venues throughout Thunder Bay, she repeatedly felt stigmatized:

> I just don't like the fact that it's, stigmatized as being dirty you know? […] I feel like a dirty Indian cooking wild meat. I don't like that feeling. We have to be inspected, but every other meat in a grocery store doesn't? They're pumped full of antibiotics and […] hormones and yet that's ok and wild meat is not. There's something wrong. It is very undignifying. – Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

These racially motivated assumptions about Indigenous foods are important to understand how in practice, wild game is over-regulated and over-monitored in community organizations, while market foods are not. A staff of an Indigenous-serving organization underlined that the focus on surveillance of wild game, but the ignorance of other food safety risks is structural discrimination based on the association of wild game with Indigeneity. This fact perpetuates an inequity for Indigenous Peoples to consume their culturally relevant foods, promote their food security, and have self-determination in their food choices.

***Food Regulation –"no food sovereignty within food safety."*** In food regulation in Ontario, due to settler-colonial underpinnings of the definitions of health and food, there are fundamental differences in the way wild meat, as opposed to federally inspected meat, is viewed. We found that food safety and mitigating risk of food-borne illness preoccupied the health inspection team (i.e. staff who inspect food premises) over holistic notions of well-being derived

from food. This instance is an example of disruptions of Indigenous knowledges of health and well-being. A policymaker highlighted their perception that wild game poses a significant food safety risk and how the current legislation inhibits Indigenous self-determination in personal, interpersonal, and community settings:

> It’s just like, food safety, […] We’re wanting to make sure that it's processed to the same standard as bovine, with the same kind of oversight, or pork, for that matter. Just because it's, it reaches so many more people. I guess, it's interesting how it intersects with First Nations governance and self-determination. Because it's perceived as very limiting. […] I can see how that would be so challenging, because it really, I don't want to say contradicts, but it doesn't, it's not in line with the whole meat processing, I don't know how OMAFRA would offer those kinds of exemptions when, it just contravenes the logic around meat processing and food safety – Jayden, policymaker

This necessity to hold wild game to the same Western food safety standards as farmed meat is unrealistic and the current provincial regulations do not offer organizations the ability to serve it regularly. In Ontario, to serve wild game in a community setting (i.e. food premise), first, it must be donated. Second, regulations require recording of the harvest location and personal information of the harvester, signage informing patrons they are consuming uninspected meat, recording of patron contact information, separate storage of wild meat, and specific sanitization procedures or use of separate kitchens to ensure no cross-contamination with other foods. By following these requirements and applying through the local health unit, organizations can be granted wild game event permits which allow the serving of game in public as a one-time non-profit event. This process is resource-intensive for organizations who desire to serve wild game consistently and reproduces structural racism. The Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre

can serve wild game regularly due to their exceptional clause in food premise regulation (*O.Reg 493/17: Food Premises*, 2017)[17], yet they continue to have to use separate kitchen facilities for food preparations. Thus, this approach, if legal, would still be unfeasible and unrealistic for most non-profits. An active harvester in Thunder Bay pointed out how Indigenous food practices are viewed as inadequate within this Western system. Their traditional practices for harvesting and butchering game are starkly classified as different and unsafe by health unit inspectors, evidenced by the hurdles in place to serve it:

> So yeah, they [health unit inspectors] create barriers. Not only that, but when we package it and when we care for it, we have to do it in a specific manner that's to their code, *as if the process we have is unclean*. And then we have to have a separate freezer for it, so, you can't have any wild game near chicken. God forbid you do that, right? Poisoned chicken that's already dead – Brooke, Indigenous community member

The staff of Indigenous-serving organizations and Indigenous women strongly indicated that they experienced an over-regulation of wild meats due to food safety concerns yet the under-regulation of all other foods being served to the public through non-profit organizations. This was maddening to Cameron because they repeatedly had to turn away wild game that was offered to the community kitchen before 2019 when they were legally unable to store it or serve it under provincial food premise policy. In particular, Cameron noted the low quality of foods being donated (e.g. rotten produce or unmarked meat) was never the subject of health inspection:

[17] The Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre was created in response to a protest in 1988 regarding the poor health conditions of First Nations populations in Northwestern Ontario. Advocacy on behalf of the organization translated into an exemption in provincial food legislation ("Miichim: Traditional Foods," 2021). When the Ontario Food Premises Regulation 493/17 came into force on July 1, 2018, section 38 (5) named only one food premise, the Meno Ya Win Health Centre, as allowed to store and serve uninspected food, such as wild meat and fish, across the province (Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, 2017). The Miichim program offers Indigenous food minimum twice a week to their patients who are mostly from northern First Nations communities ("Miichim: Traditional Foods," 2021).

> Well, that's like I have all those conversations with the health unit. Like how can you come here and regulate this amount like to this capacity regulating whether I'm serving wild game or not but you're not regulating the rotten –vegetables coming in here and the ground beef.  […] Our freezer's full of all the other stuff that's been donated like[…] I don't understand the disconnect that's happening here. Why are you overregulating wild game but underregulating other stuff that probably is actually going to cause people to be sick?" – Cameron, Non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

The Indigenous participants and staff of Indigenous-serving organizations questioned why the health unit could accept the health risks of consuming poor-quality produce stemming from donations that could not be traced in case of an outbreak yet, would not extend that same leniency to allow the serving of wild game without a large number of stipulations. The health inspectors must implement these food regulations, and thus the decisions of how to do so lie with them. Here we view how settler colonialism acts through food policy, including how settlers think and act to promote a settler-colonial view of 'health' undermining IFS. Impeding Indigenous Peoples from enacting their traditional practices of harvesting and consuming wild game as a culturally valuable food source may be further pushing food consumption towards market sources and contributing to disproportionately high rates of food insecurity. However, ultimately, it is a limit on IFS, of which self-determination and supportive legislation and policy are pillars.

***Natural Resources Regulation – arbitrary treaty boundaries and colonial control of wildlife and Indigenous bodies.*** As mentioned above, to ensure accordance with the provincial Fishing and Wildlife Conservation Act, health inspection teams demand information such as the location where the game was harvested and the name of the harvester. Both staff of community

organizations and harvesters pointed to how these requirements add to the surveillance of the movement and practices of Indigenous Peoples by the state. Also, the requirements re-iterate Indigenous Peoples' settler colonial oppression as they are disrupted from sharing food with others. Brooke demonstrates their resistance:

> Then I have to sign paperwork, I have to say what I killed it with, I have to say where I killed it at, I have to say how hot it was, you know, how I took care of it. You know, it's giggle-worthy, that they think they're going to get any of that information. Yeah, sure, they're going to get things on a piece of paper, but you're never going to *actually know* where we shot that animal. Because it's none of their business[…]They don't appreciate when you put 'the bush' or 'the water' – Brooke, Indigenous community member

Our Indigenous participants highlighted how conservation officers are the direct enforcers of the Fishing and Wildlife Conservation Act, but health inspectors also monitor for infringements of the act when they approve wild game to be served to the public. Both conservation officers and health inspectors made it clear that the guiding principle of this regulation is to prevent the commercialization of wild game. However, this purpose must be questioned as Indigenous Peoples harvesting their Indigenous foods and sharing with their communities is infringed by the Act – and yet these practices are in no way in the spirit of commercialization. Moreover, and equally important, at the individual level, the federal government controls who is classified as a 'status Indian' according to specifications in the *Indian Act*, and thus who is afforded the rights to harvest within the settler colonial resource management framework. The implementation of hunting regulation is a further application of the colonially constructed and imposed categories of Indigenous identities. Non-status Indigenous populations are left with inequitable access to traditional territories for lands-based practices.

The natural resources regulatory regime of Ontario has always been employed to settle and develop Ontario. Since the early 1900s the ideas of wildlife access for all, and conservation, were gaining popularity and Ontario policymakers continued with assimilatory motivations to protect the interests of sport hunters and fishers – with no recognition of Indigenous commercial economies and at the expense of Indigenous Peoples harvesting (Teillet, 2005). Many wrongly assumed that with the entrenchment of Aboriginal and treaty rights into the Constitution Act in 1982, natural resource policy would have to integrate these aforementioned rights (Teillet, 2005). In this study, the words of implementers of policy, confirmed the dominant discourses surrounding the prevention of commercialization and protection of wildlife.

In practice, Indigenous Peoples harvesting is restricted according to provincial laws. Indigenous harvesters re-iterated that conservation officers did not understand the application of treaty rights and that instead, they clung tightly to precisions about the exact land people are on. Brooke points to their status as a dual Canadian and American 'Indian' and how they view their harvesting rights and experiences with conservation officers in Ontario:

> People don't really appreciate Treaty rights often, and they always try to challenge them — most Treaties, I don't know if you ever really look at them, you know, they'll say, you know, your Treaty area and your traditional lands. These are defined by non-Indigenous people. Now, I don't have a border anywhere. I'm actually dual Indian. So I'm American Indian, and I'm also Canadian Indian. And I also *will* harvest in any Treaty area I choose to, because of the reason that I just told you. I don't have these borders. I can walk where I want, and I'm going to kill something if I want to eat it. But you come across conservation officers — and I don't know if it's a resentment thing, or they're envious of the rights that I have — but they definitely try to push you and challenge things, and you

> know, you can outsmart them pretty quick. I say, oh, really, where's your GPS? Let's make sure we have the coordinates so we can look this up. Right? Which they don't appreciate, but it's always worth a good laugh. Conservation Officers are not my fav, at all. – Brooke, Indigenous community member

The main sub-theme repeated by the Indigenous women who harvest was the arbitrary treaty boundaries which often do not reflect traditional territories of which their people have occupied for millennia. In particular, they described how the culture of conservation in Ontario – implemented by conservation officers—differed from other provinces, such as British Columbia. The Indigenous women underscored that in Ontario you must know exactly where each treaty boundary lies, which becomes comical in northwestern Ontario where multiple treaty areas all intersect. Dakota tells us an exemplary story:

> One time I was on a plane, I was coming from Poplar Hill, and we had someone from the MNR [Ministry of Natural Resources] on our plane with us, and it was a charter plane and someone had given us fish and we were like, oh no, only Treaty 5 can have those. And I said, well I'm Treaty 5, sure, but we were about to go into Treaty 3 — hey, Treaty 3! [Laughter]. We were just throwing it back and forth. It was like, what are you going to do? But, Ontario is the only province or territory that tries to limit the Treaty rights and the portability of those Treaty rights. Between Treaty areas. Like, if I was in BC, if we were in BC we wouldn't have to worry about that. – Dakota, Indigenous community member

Further, Dakota's comments signified how conservation officers do not understand that treaty and Indigenous rights are implemented as per the Canadian constitution. She compared their regulatory power and behaviour towards Indigenous Peoples to that of police officers. Equally,

Indigenous participants highlighted that environmental management practices implemented by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, such as spraying blueberry bushes, can disrupted the traditional harvesting lands and made wild food increasingly unsafe or inaccessible in proximity to urban living areas. Specifically, Dakota described how in the Ontario policy landscape, forests are treated as commodities, or 'natural resources' as opposed to ecosystems.

**(3) Policy Gaps and Entry Points for Improvement.**

***Permanent Wild Game License? Filling Gaps in Institutional Policy for Organizations Desiring to Solicit Donations and Serve Wild Food.*** Staff of Indigenous-serving organizations explained how the downstream impacts of a lack of provincial policy which supports consistent use of wild game in food premises (i.e. serving and storage) means that at the institutional level there are not detailed policies or practices in place to uphold the practice. In the case of Cameron's organization, they took it upon themselves to develop these policies from scratch and seek health unit approval. Throughout the duration of this study, health inspectors at the TBDHU have taken actions to assist the acquisition of wild game in Indigenous-serving organizations through the development and implementation of a permanent wild game license. The license was first negotiated with a shelter in the fall of 2019. Here we examine the reactions from various stakeholders to give insight into the tensions surrounding the license. Also, we investigate its merits as an exemplary practice to be used in other jurisdictions.

The permanent wild game license does not change the necessary administrative barriers outlined above (e.g. tracking donations, putting up signage, etc.) but it translates to less surveillance of organizations. They are permitted to either solicit, store donations, or serve wild game whenever they desire. To acquire one of these licenses, organizations must meet TBDHU's

health inspector's requirements. The staff of Indigenous-serving organizations we interviewed who were in the process or had recently acquired a permit described the health inspectors as willing to accommodate certain practices that are specific to the needs and resources of their organizations. Further, the ability to solicit donations gives an outlet to the residents of Thunder Bay (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who have been previously been refused the opportunity to donate wild game to Indigenous-serving non-profits.

Tyna and Jessica highlighted that for Indigenous Peoples, engaging with the health unit on topics of wild game can create more barriers than serving game without engaging them. Tyna recounted how she was cooking with wild game at her college but when her supervisor attended a meeting hosted by the health unit on serving wild game in institutions, he felt they could no longer continue with their existing practices:

> If we were to do anymore wild meat stuff like that, I would now be expected to fill out those forms […] Now he wants to dedicate just one kitchen for wild meat instead. We are segregating it now. I thought that was problematic. I was like 'what the hell did you guys do over there? You know I thought this was supposed to be helpful not set us back? So I was like I thought I got full range, freedom to do things there and then as soon as he went there [to the health unit meeting] I got restricted and I just wasn't too happy with that. -
>
> Tyna Legault Taylor, Cree member of Attawapiskat First Nation residing in Thunder Bay

We must ask: *who* is this license for? There is value in distinguishing this policy intervention's use within *Indigenous-led organizations* versus non- Indigenous-led organizations that *serve* Indigenous populations. This is crucial because the license is still enforcement of the problematic settler-colonial policies discussed earlier. As Indigenous Peoples, choosing to enact their

Indigenous or Treaty Rights to harvest from their lands and consume this food are practices that should not be regulated by the local health units as that is not their jurisdiction.

Additionally, the permanent wild game license based on Western food safety principles. One of the stipulations under the license is that meals with wild game are to be cooked from a list of pre-approved recipes that follow food safety principles and are approved by the health unit. This once again highlights discriminatory practices towards wild game and Indigenous knowledge (including its oral transmission). The shelter staff explained how insulting it would be to ask Elders to follow recipes provided by the non-Indigenous organization:

> They [health inspectors] had identified they wanted us to have recipes, which again, we laughed at because we don't do recipes for *anything*[…] Never have I been told I have to have this done for the pasta we cook every single day, or… tell the people what to do with the wild game, cause God forbid, it doesn't look like ground beef or smell like ground beef, we don't know what to do with it. *I just thought that was absurd*. […] I'm white and I've never cooked wild game before, but here's my recipe for you to cook the meal that you have *offered* to cook for our community. Like, just so offensive. – Cameron, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

Additionally, Jordan, a staff from another Indigenous-serving organization, said that while the license would be useful for their organization they have concerns about the lack of consultation and integration of Elders and traditional knowledge into the permitting process. Jordan reiterates that when their organization works with Indigenous-led organizations the non-Indigenous staff follow their lead and abide by their traditional cooking methods:

> We are supportive of the temperature charts and things like that to make sure that we're checking the temperatures of meat and things like that. […] But if we're working at or

with an Indigenous run organisation we have a different conversation, we talk to the Elders about what they want to do, what they think is appropriate. Compared to in our space here, where we're like, okay we'll follow the process. – Jordan, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

Throughout the process of acquiring a permanent wild game license for their organization, Cameron was never satisfied with the responses to their questioning of the food premise regulation. They were operating from a food sovereignty lens while the health inspectors continued to bring their values of Western food safety. When speaking with us they continually questioned the need for a separate wild game policy at all:

> I was like what about the hot-handling temps and she was like, "Well, I guess goose would just fall under poultry". […]*Ya it would cause it's a bird*. Like, similar to like moose and deer falling under the same red meat as, *it's the same*. […] So, I said, couldn't we just add this to our food policy to begin with? Why do we have to have a separate wild game policy if we already have one in place that says all these temperatures for all of these other things?– Cameron, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

Within the health unit themselves, we witnessed that public health nutritionists were working to instill values of IFS and Indigenous worldviews to the broader institution but that each sub-field of public health tends to prioritize the values that underlie their education and relevant legislation. In this case, there has been a local adaptation of provincial regulations, yet some participants suggested a hesitancy exists on the health unit's part to advertise it for fear of criticism from within the environmental health field. However, since 2017-2018, the public health nutritionists of the Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) and TBDHU in northern Ontario

have been using Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program Enhancement funding from the Ontario Government for an IFS portfolio[18]. Thus, the tensions will likely continue as food safety philosophies come into direct conflict with IFS when Indigenous populations try to access wild game in urban areas because food regulation was not written with their interests in mind. Thus, the outcomes of the implementation of the license appear to have re-iterated many of the historical issues of racism, discrimination, and disruptions to IFS for Indigenous Peoples living in the urban center of Thunder Bay. We found the license was perceived as a barrier to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous-led organizations but as an opportunity to Indigenous-serving organizations. Moving forward, the perpetuation of settler-colonial power in control over Indigenous Peoples' food practices should not be ignored.

***Indigenous Led and Culturally Safe Collaborations Towards Indigenous Food Sovereignty.*** We learned from Indigenous women and staff of Indigenous-serving organizations that improving relationships between the diverse Indigenous community and Indigenous-serving organizations is critical to community-level food security and takes financial and human resources. The public health nutritionists responsible for the use of the IFS funding have been instrumental in building genuine relationships with Indigenous partners, but they have lots of work ahead. The NWHU’s approach is to partner with existing Indigenous-led organizations doing health and food work, such as the Sioux Lookout First Nation’s Health Authority as opposed to direct engagement with each First Nation community, the strategy of the TBDHU.

[18] The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has funded the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program since 2006 in the Algoma and Porcupine Health Unit and has expanded to others over time. The main program goal is to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables for students in northern Ontario by providing two servings of fresh fruits and vegetables to elementary students weekly as well as educational resources on healthy eating and physical activity. In 2018, it expanded to the NWHU and the TBDHU catchment areas (Northwestern Health Unit, n.d.-b; Terry & Terry, 2018). Enhancement funding to this program targeting IFS is now part of annual funding for both health units. The responsibility to use this funding is part of the respective public health nutritionists’ portfolios.

Additionally, cultural safety training was recommended by Jessica to target inspectors with stringent Western food safety logic and practices to better promote the overall well-being and sovereignty of the community they serve. Indigenous participants underlined that it is the creation of culturally safe spaces for embracing Indigenous cultures, paired with increased access to wild game, that is key to keeping the cultural and spiritual aspects attached to Indigenous foods in urban spaces. The IFS funding injected necessary resources to bring Indigenous leaders from within these cities and regions together to begin strategically around Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay. This is a potential first step, yet Jessica highlighted the tensions of government control over this funding:

> Like I told the health unit, I said, 'I'm coming after that enhancement fund'. Because literally give that money to Indigenous folks who are directing their work in their communities and let's make change; like not you holding my purse strings or to tell me what I can and cannot spend on and fight me. – Jessica McLaughlin, Anishnaabe, Long Lake #58 First Nation

The sentiment that money should be going directly to community initiatives as opposed to funneled through Western institutions was mirrored by many, including non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations and staff of both health units. Jessica further expressed the need to break colonial governance structures in communities to see food across many areas.

We heard that productive partnerships working on Indigenous food systems between First Nations, Indigenous organizations, community organizations, and policy stakeholders (including the health units) had IFS, as opposed to food security as their guiding principle. Peyton spoke from their perspective of a non-Indigenous person working for a health unit:

> We have a *very* broken system which we're all very aware of, it's not hidden. And plus we do need to change the system … I think it is not necessarily the best approach to give health units the money for the First Nations' communities, but that's what we have so let's put it to good use. – Peyton, non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organization

Peyton acknowledged that there is an all-around agreement that the current provincial and federal government approach to food security in northwestern Ontario is deeply flawed in design which leaves colonial institutions in control. Equally, that non-Indigenous people working in health organizations must develop personally and to disrupt and reconfigure these systems.

**Discussion**

The burden of these food and natural resource regulations is an equity concern because they impede the rights of food, health, and culture for Indigenous Peoples. Policymakers explanations showed the values behind their practices, illuminating in this context how the language of land management comes from a Western world view of domination over non-human beings and is in conflict with Indigenous eco-philosophy based on the values of interdependency, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity (Corntassel, 2012; Martens et al., 2016; Morrison, 2011).

Yet, food can be a powerful tool to restore relationships with Indigenous identity when disconnected from land and culture(Robin & Cidro, 2020). Learning and practicing traditional food knowledges brings about feelings of pride and identity for our participants and other Indigenous women who have experienced disruptions in cultural food knowledge due to urbanization and assimilatory policy (Neufeld & Richmond, 2017; Neufeld et al., 2020). We reiterate that women have central roles in Indigenous food cultures and continue to lead movements aimed at both social and environmental justice (Neufeld, 2020; Pictou et al., In Press).

Structural racism in colonial policy is responsible for the disproportionate health inequities experiences by Indigenous Peoples in settler-colonial nations (Morrison, 2020; Stout, 2018). Pictou et al. (in Press) and Kepkiewicz et al. (2015) highlighted that there is a need for current settler food movements to better critically engage with intersecting structural oppressions such as capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy. We argue that provincial and federal governments who claim goals of improvement of health equity – specifically improving food security for Indigenous populations, must interrogate the tensions between goals and the deeply rooted white supremacist values permeating the institutions they represent. These experiences of confrontation with conservation officers highlight how a restoration of lands and water-based relationships by Indigenous Peoples are continually perceived by colonial institutions, both provincially and federally, as a threat to state sovereignty. In practice, provincial ministries give more power to resource extraction companies than Indigenous Peoples who are the first to experience impacts of changes to these ecosystems in multiple ways, including through food sources (Mintz, 2019). Calls exist for governments who manage wildlife and natural environments to authentically integrate Indigenous worldviews and rights into their policy and practices to promote Indigenous Peoples' ability to enact their rights to land-use (Ermine et al., 2020; Loring & Gerlach, 2015).

The racialization of wild game cannot be understood outside of the racism which exists in the city, and which the Indigenous women described. In cities with less racial tensions, possibly due to lower proportion of Indigenous Peoples, other health units may not be paying as close attention to wild game in institutions and thus reducing some barriers via lack of surveillance. In Thunder Bay, the issue of systemic racism in policing (McNeilly, 2018) and through the case of Barbara Kentner (Porter, 2020; Ray & Burnett, 2020) has been brought to public's attention and

thus forcing reaction from the various institutions. Significantly, the issue of gendered violence is one that has been raised in the context of IFS (Morrison, 2020; Pictou et al., In Press).In sum, licensing as an intervention should be evaluated to understand the impact (if any) on addressing access to Indigenous food in Thunder Bay to determine its value to be applied locally, within Ontario, or in other Canadian provinces[19]. At the time of interviews, many stakeholders were concerned about possible reprimanding by the health unit for those who chose to avoid this colonial process.

This work has revealed patterns of gendered impacts of settler colonialism that were identified in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The report cited four pathways to the maintenance of colonial violence in Canada: (1) trauma that is historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational (2) social and economic marginalization (3) maintaining the status quo and lack of institutional will (4) ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019). The stories of our participants tied together the lives of women in their families and communities to demonstrate the everlasting impacts of residential school policy and historical environmental dispossession which has left many people living in poverty and with food insecurity in an inability to regularly consume culturally fulfilling diets.

The current barriers to sharing food in their preferred ways in the urban setting pointed to strong values and discourses of white supremacy, food safety, and conservation in institutions that implement the policies related to harvesting, sharing, and selling of wild game – as well as

[19] In terms of the permanent wild game license explored in this work, health units do have some flexibility in the interpretation of food premise regulation. In their interpretations, there should be more emphasis placed on a holistic and balanced approach to well-being, where food safety is but one consideration alongside Indigenous food sovereignty, and the right to privacy, food security, culture, and health.

food processing and consumption. The question of institutional will is key as individual health inspectors are evidently holders of power in the realm of urban Indigenous Peoples' access to wild game – and the TBDHU has demonstrated a change in the application of wild food policy within the period under study. This evidence demonstrates that with institutional support in organizations serving game, as called for through Indigenous community resistance and support from ally organizations, innovative locally-informed solutions that center more holistic views of food and well-being can be implemented.

The concept of cultural safety is relevant in moving forward with Indigenous and settler relations in the pursuit of IFS. Cultural safety acknowledges the safety risk of inappropriate interactions (Nguyen, 2008) and moves us beyond cultural awareness, which is simply an acknowledgment of culture in health contexts. To achieve cultural safety, there must be purposeful power-sharing and self-reflection of individuals within the organization alongside cultural training for service providers and policy-makers (Brooks-Cleator, Phillipps, & Giles, 2018). Our research demonstrates how Indigenous-serving community organization staff have engaged in a reflection of their roles and worked to disrupt institutional barriers to accessing wild food for their Indigenous clients, indicating that some progress towards culturally safe environments may be occurring. However, it is clients themselves who have the power to define interactions or environments as culturally safe – and we also heard Indigenous women in this study describe the opposite. A cultural safety approach may facilitate existing cross-organizational work at the community level and lead to tangible results to promote food security, which is not in direct conflict with Indigenous conceptions of well-being.

Further, we propose further use of an IBPA framework to serve our understanding of urban Indigenous Peoples and women's experiences of inequity within Canada and

internationally (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019). If governments at various levels are to adequately consider Indigenous Peoples as beneficiaries of their policies, they have a long way to go in terms of transforming policy development and implementation. This research reveals that the values underlying the formation of regulation undoubtedly trickle down to those who implement it and those who feel its effects in their daily lives based on their social location (i.e. the intersection of characteristics such as class, geography, gender, Indigeneity, and Indian status). An intersectional approach to policy investigating Indigenous food security and IFS, can connect multiple interrelated inequities stemming from overlapping structural conditions. Consequently, there is an opportunity to take action in one sphere with broad-reaching impacts on multiple health and social outcomes (e.g. food insecurity, poverty, mental health, chronic disease). Researchers should aim to share resources widely to stakeholders to increase public outcry and thus political action (Varcoe, Pauly, & Laliberté, 2011). Equally, the IBPA framework is based on the principles of time and space, making it useful in many geopolitical contexts to promote a policy analysis for Indigenous Peoples' food challenges that is responsive to the historical complexities of colonialism, the trans-national climate crisis, and the global nature of industrialized food systems. A power analysis is necessary to see who is privileged based on government responses because equity is a value that's actively avoided in policy-making and government decision-making in Canada (Varcoe et al., 2011).  An analysis of power is necessary to see how privilege operates through government responses and policy-making, which is first, political which supersedes concerns of equity. In practice, the application of equity in policy and programming is actively avoided in Canadian government decision-making (Varcoe et al., 2011)

**Conclusions**

This work is unique in its use of IBPA to analyse interview data, its focus on the inherent values in specific policies, and expressions of such values through institutions in Ontario as experienced by individual Indigenous women and their communities at large. We highlighted how stakeholders defined the topic of access to wild food, and how their actions either supported or disrupted the efforts for food security and IFS. We tied the colonial control over 'wildlife' and the Western food safety discourse, with infringements on IFS, experiences of racism in food settings and on the land, as well as with broad control over Indigenous sovereignty in Ontario. The topic of accessing wild foods in the city brings together many aspects of Indigenous People's rights to live sovereignly in the nation-state of Canada. Provincial and federal governments must negotiate hunting and food policy that fosters IFS through a respect of Treaty and Indigenous rights in all places across Canada whether urban or remote, on or off-reserve.

The examination of Indigenous and settler relations in urban Canada is critical and must be further investigated to promote IFS (Dennis & Robin, 2020; Pictou et al., In Press). Dismantling of settler colonialism requires settlers to redress epistemic violence in food studies and unlearn positivist Western knowledge systems while integrating diverse ways of knowing into decolonial practices (Pictou et al., In Press). Systemic racism and the tensions between the practice of different knowledge and governance systems grow when non-Indigenous people are unaware of how their values influence the way they see the world and interact with others. Jurisdictional confusion and siloed thinking in institutions is an indication of the inability to reconcile how food is interrelated to the natural world. We advocate in unison with previous demands for both individual and community self-determination to reinstitute healing and

intergenerational food relationships for urban Indigenous Peoples within Canada (Neufeld, 2020).

To move forward, colonial governments must acknowledge that there are multiple ways of reaching the same goal: having access to and consuming culturally relevant foods and support well-being. Corntassel (2012) cautions against a performative rights-based discourse which the state implements to avoid strong movements of decolonization and resurgence. Respect, reciprocity, and interconnectedness are principles of Indigenous law that can help to decolonize Western-based notions of rights in the context of Indigenous populations (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019). Recognizing Indigenous Peoples as the environmental stewards of their territories will support their collective food security as well as demonstrate exemplary practices to shift the values inherent in local, national, and global food systems we all rely on. As such, supporting IFS is part of a cross-cultural understanding process of prioritizing Indigenous knowledges, traditions, customs, and laws to inform action-oriented policy and community resiliency, tying to the broader goals of the sovereignty of food, land, and every aspect of Indigenous lives and reconstructing relationships amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through food justice (Martens et al., 2016; Morrison, 2011).

Indigenous Peoples' lands and waters require protection that is not forthcoming from provincial governments. The above shows that, from Confederation on, Ontario never did, and never intended to respect, recognize or protect Indigenous lands and resources but rather grasped control by every available means, including the use of policy, force, settlement, public opinion, and in the courts (Teillet, 2005). There is a need to disrupt the inequality in privilege and power in policy-making that dictates governance of traditional lands and waters within Canada and other settler-colonial nations (Morrison, 2020). Indigenous Peoples and communities are critical

to the evolution of humanity and the protection of biodiversity heritage. Meaningful participation and power in policy will enable the use of diverse knowledges, including Indigenous women, to facilitate a re-design of the agri-food system in a sustainable manner that supports subsistence harvesting and respect for all land and waters – no matter the political boundaries(Morrison, 2020).

# Chapter 5: Conclusion

## Summary of Main Findings

The objective of this thesis was to explore and better understand how Indigenous Peoples in the urban northwestern Ontario service hubs of Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay access Indigenous foods, and the relationship of Indigenous food to their food security and Indigenous food sovereignty. Interviews with a broad range of stakeholders provided data to answer the overarching research questions. The main results by manuscript are as follows.

In chapter 3, seven themes were constructed to interrogate how place and urbanicity impact access to Indigenous foods:

- Colonial Dispossession and Access to Harvesting Territory
- Disruptions and Cultivations of Traditional Knowledges and Indigenous Foodways
- Implementation of and Resistance to Colonial Policy
- Changing Environments and Sustainable Harvesting
- Financial Resources: 'Harvesting Traditional Foods is Becoming a Rich Person's Thing'
- Building Interpersonal Food Networks and Reciprocity
- 'Bridging the Disconnect': Increasing Traditional Food Knowledges and Practices in the City

This manuscript highlighted the importance of geography as a determinant of food access and concluded that both place and urbanicity are central to how Indigenous populations in these towns harvest, share, and consume their Indigenous foods. Further, this work reiterated that on the community and individual levels, Indigenous Peoples in these towns are often in situations of food insecurity for multitudes of reasons, mainly due to financial, geography, and policy barriers (from the institutional up to the federal). Participants highlighted the abundance of ways that

Indigenous food sovereignty is being expressed. Building food networks and sharing practices amongst friends, family, and broader communities (both inside and outside the city) was central to promoting access to food for Indigenous Peoples. People traveled between the city, rural, and reserve environments to harvest or share Indigenous foods. Indigenous women pointed to colonial policies which make it impossible for most people to harvest in a self-determined way; thus, resistance is necessary. To continue to improve food security and Indigenous food sovereignty in these towns, intergenerational transfer of cultural and traditional harvesting and food practices must be promoted so individuals can participate in the entire process of harvesting, preparing, and consuming Indigenous foods – as each step is valuable to holistic well-being.

In chapter 4, the application of the Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework demonstrated how the provincial and federal policy context has historically and continues to impact Indigenous women and their communities' experiences of accessing wild foods, food insecurity, and practicing Indigenous food sovereignty in urban northwestern Ontario. We found that stakeholder groups defined the policy problem differently and brought different values to their place in the systems which impede or facilitate access to wild foods. Generally, policymakers were strongly concerned about the food safety risks of wild game and preventing commercialization of wild game through the creation or implementation of food, natural resource, and 'Indian' policy. The staff of Indigenous-serving organizations approached the topic from a more culturally relevant perspective, often showing an ability to comprehend and negotiate between both Indigenous and Western worldviews surrounding food and health. Equally, they were eager to work under Indigenous food sovereignty principles. There was an acknowledgment of Indigenous food sovereignty's conflict with the current food safety policy in

Ontario based on Western principles. The staff of Indigenous-serving organizations had the desire to and had taken some action towards disrupting these systems under the leadership of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous women tied their personal, family, and community experiences related to wild foods with residential schools, environmental management (including the application of Indigenous and treaty rights), and food premise policy. Importantly, they underlined the anti-Indigenous racism in urban northern Ontario which perpetuates experiences of interpersonal racism as they enact their Indigenous or Treaty Rights to harvest and consume wild food. Equally, there is a racialization and negative connotation towards their wild foods and traditional food practices. We considered how the practice of TBDHU's permanent wild game license serves Indigenous Peoples and found that many Indigenous Peoples (and non-Indigenous staff of Indigenous-serving organizations) perceived the license as a perpetuation of settler-colonial control over their food practices. However, some Indigenous-serving organizations welcomed the ability to serve game with reduced administrative barriers through collaboration with the TBDHU.

Independently, both manuscripts provide a different insight into opportunities for and barriers to accessing Indigenous foods at the personal, community, institutional, and policy levels. In chapter 3, policy was but one type of barrier in their experiences of accessing Indigenous foods in urban settings. In chapter 4, we expanded on the values and beliefs inherent in policy and its implementation, as evidenced by the multiple stakeholder viewpoints which come from either Western or Indigenous concepts of food and health. In sum, these manuscripts reiterate that Indigenous-led and culturally safe collaborations between the Indigenous community and other organizations are critical to improving Indigenous food sovereignty in these urban settings. This work revealed patterns of resistance to policy and resurgence of

Indigenous food practices despite the gendered impacts of Canadian settler-colonialism. It also uncovered how the values and discourses of white supremacy, food safety, and conservation (as opposed to Indigenous self-determination), continue to be expressed through policymakers views and actions. Together, it is clear that handing over control of traditional territories to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous voices holding meaningful power in public policy is necessary to support urban Indigenous Peoples' food sovereignty and access to Indigenous foods.

**Strengths and Limitations**

This study is the first of its kind in northern Ontario, and part of a small group of literature on Indigenous foods in urban environments, to document and interrogate the discourse of actors who impact Indigenous Peoples' access to their foods in urban settings. Implementation of health, food, and natural resource policy is often unclear due to the tensions of government jurisdiction over Indigenous foods and the erasure of Indigenous Peoples within Canadian cities. Illuminating the non-Indigenous actors' understandings of Indigenous Peoples' food security and sovereignty in urban settings is key as they hold power in colonial institutions. This work displayed how settler-colonial discourse and values surrounding health, food, and natural resources, are perpetuated in policy and workplace culture, thus impacting Indigenous individuals and communities who desire to consume wild game. An additional strength of this study is the ability to investigate this topic over time during which a new health unit initiative unique to TBDHU was implemented. This analysis can be of use to other health units that may be interested in starting a similar initiative.

During the time of COVID-19, the world as we know it has shifted. Data collection was mid-way completed when the pandemic significantly changed life in Ontario. As a result, changes in the methods of this thesis occurred. The inability to travel to both cities significantly

decreased the amount of time I was able to spend in communities and collaborate with participants in the analysis process. Acknowledging the burden of the pandemic on our participants meant we had to be flexible in their involvement going forward. We were still able to share results and have follow-up video calls with three of the six Indigenous participants of the study which informed the analysis of this thesis. Relatedly, we acknowledge that since data was collected there could have been additional dramatic shifts in how these actors interact. However, it is broadly accepted that the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities, including the phenomena of food insecurity which is highly racialized and tied to income.

This study was exploratory in nature and does not attempt to make conclusive statements about the experiences of all Indigenous Peoples across the two study sites. The breadth of the sample across stakeholders was a strength to understand how the various players act in a system. However, our sample of six Indigenous community members does not account for the great diversity in perspectives from distinct Indigenous Peoples and organizations in both cities and is a limitation of the study. An additional limitation is the fact that the Intersectionality-based Policy Analysis framework was applied post-data collection. Thus, in-depth demographic information was not part of the study design, which limits the ability to investigate the research questions from an intersectional perspective.

There were multiple challenges in disseminating the results of this work while also protecting the confidentiality of participants and any repercussions of their quotations at their place of work or in the broader community. Defining participants by stakeholder groups and using pseudonyms was our best effort to display how participants act in the system but giving them the protection of confidentiality. However, we also valued Indigenous participants' agency in determining how they would like to be identified in this work. Thus, some Indigenous

participants have chosen to be identified by their name and self-described Indigenous identity. This practice was also an effort to acknowledge their unique identities and decrease pan-Indigenizing where possible.

**Contributions to Research and Practice**

This work contributes to the geographies of Indigenous health, a new critical sub-discipline that engages with understanding how Indigenous Peoples' health is shaped by relationships with their local environments, experiences of colonialism, and environmental dispossession (Richmond et al., 2021; Richmond & Big-Canoe, 2018). Specifically, this work can inform how changes in environments at both the small scale and through various systems have an impact on the health, food security, and food sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples living in urban northern Ontario. This thesis exemplifies new uses for the IBPA framework – specifically in analyzing interview data from actors in a policy system.

This work is a unique contribution to research due to its exploratory aim and holistic principles. It tied food insecurity at various levels (e.g. individual, household, community, and regional levels) to broader policy systems and systems of oppression such as racism and settler-colonialism. Thus, it acknowledges that progress towards food security and achieving Indigenous food sovereignty will require actions at multiple levels as well. This entire thesis may be useful to other urban Indigenous Peoples and organizations as it offers exemplary community-based strategies for promoting food security and enacting food sovereignty in urban settings despite policy barriers. This project also demonstrates that Indigenous-led and culturally safe collaborations with non-Indigenous organizations are possible as part of a strategy to promote Indigenous food sovereignty.

The information presented herein is relevant to policymakers in understanding problematic aspects of their own worldview and the tensions of policies with Indigenous Peoples rights and food practices. In this study, policymakers include those who create, interpret, or implement policy. It brought forth points in the policy system where individual interpretation can have important impacts on the lives of Indigenous individuals. Health inspectors have power as implementers of food regulation and conservation officers have power as implementers of natural resource policy, and Treaty and Indigenous rights. Moving forward, this work can be used to advocate for improved training and personal reflection for those in such key positions, as they are vital in either supporting or hindering Indigenous sovereignty.

**Implications, Future research, and Final Thoughts**

This research centers on the stories of urban Indigenous Peoples, specifically Indigenous women, whose experiences are often ignored or are assumed that they do not engage in traditional or culturally relevant practices. This research makes the case that characteristics of Indigenous Peoples' environment, including urbanicity and geography, impact their ability to access their Indigenous foods as a cultural practice and a means to food security and Indigenous food sovereignty. Urban Indigenous populations who live with the intergenerational impacts of colonization can no longer be ignored in the health policy or health promotion fields.

Programs that are Indigenous-led should be funded to retain and pass on traditional food knowledges and skills. We must further consider how the use of rights discourse for topics impacting Indigenous Peoples can be performative in nature, seeking recognition and affirmation without acknowledging that decolonization and resurgence are interrelated actions that are practiced in daily life at the individual and community level (Corntassel, 2012). In future work, it is important to continue to acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous Peoples living or spending

time in urban centers. Pan-Indigenizing to simplify relationships between institutions and Indigenous Peoples does not support Nation-specific sovereignty generally, nor promote the necessary retention of diverse knowledges and cultural food practices across Nations and Peoples.

Further research could include working with a larger sample of diverse Indigenous representation to develop systems maps that illuminate how the unique determinants of food security and access to Indigenous foods interact in these urban settings and other cities. System mapping supported by additional in-depth interviewing can facilitate the design and evaluation of interventions to improve well-being for urban Indigenous people. Highlighting inefficiencies or barriers in these systems can provide actionable areas to better distribute existing resources aimed at improving Indigenous Peoples' food security and Indigenous food sovereignty. Permanent wild game licensing is one possible way forward, but it may not be the best. Specifically, evaluating this intervention would be beneficial to determine its value to Thunder Bay, and lessons learned may apply to other urban Indigenous communities. In Ontario, we should continue to look to other provincial and territorial jurisdictions for ways to work with the federal government and the best practices in serving Indigenous foods (e.g. Government of Nunavut's Guide for Government-Funded Facilities and Community Programs Serving Country Food) (Ermine et al., 2020; Government of Nunavut, n.d.). This thesis provides additional evidence to contribute to existing discussions surrounding wild food policy on the federal and provincial levels.

In terms of the policy work, there is a continued need to push distinctions-based (i.e. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples) approaches to all policy at all levels – from the federal to the institutional. This thesis illuminates that it is not simply 'Indian Policy' that marginalizes

Indigenous Peoples within Canada. Policymakers at all levels of government need to improve their understandings of their personal biases and how they impact the decisions they make which are powerful influences on individual lives. This work calls on settler Canadians who make, interpret, or implement policy to approach their work with an intersectional understanding and to be critical of how their decisions create or perpetuate inequities. At the federal government level, there has been a reiteration of focus on closing the socio-economic gap between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous populations while advancing self-determination and self-government. We must hold the federal government to account for their promises to deconstruct colonial structures that oppress Indigenous Peoples and be critical of the nation-to-nation, Inuit-Crown, and government-to-government relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples within Canada ("New Ministers to support the renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples," 2017). Equally, future research should continue to investigate the often-forgotten implications that provincial policies have on diverse Indigenous Peoples, depending on where they reside (i.e. on-reserve, urban, rural, or remote settings).

As the world continues amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Indigenous Nations and Canada must plan for recovery and the lasting impacts on food, health, and economic systems. Globally, the largest non-health impact of the pandemic has been accessing food due to lost income, shifts in demand, border restrictions, and business closures (Klassen & Murphy, 2020). Food insecurity despite food abundance is a marker of social injustice and the incidence and severity of COVD-19 cases continue to disproportionately ravage the same Indigenous communities and racialized peoples in North America who are more likely to be food insecure(Klassen & Murphy, 2020). A historical and contemporary lack of collection of race-based health data in Canada (Mandhane, 2020; Nasser, 2020) coupled with poor recognition of urban Indigenous Peoples in Canadian

society (Browne et al., 2009; Skinner et al., 2016) and ineffective sampling methods in national surveys (Our Health Counts Toronto, 2018) makes it currently difficult to directly assess how urban Indigenous populations are experiencing all health and social phenomena, including food insecurity and the pandemic. In follow-up calls with our participants, they noted how the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced existing inequities for Indigenous Peoples related to income and access to land. They discussed the disproportionately large impact on Indigenous women, in particular mothers, who try to care for their families amongst such health and economic uncertainty.

However, an increase in the flow of funding to community-based food systems work and a decrease in bureaucratic red tape in some government programs was also mentioned. Indigenous Peoples in urban off-reserve areas are more vulnerable to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 due to higher levels of poverty, and resulting food insecurity (Arriagada, Hahmann, & O'Donnell, 2020). For those who have financial and physical access, the pandemic may have opened more time to spend on the land, leading to more practice of traditional skills and the potential for increased knowledge transfer. Recent work in Délı̨nę, Northwest Territories, has underlined this return to the Land to support the community as a result of the pandemic. However, for individuals in Indigenous communities who were already vulnerable to the health and economic impacts of COVID, opportunities to learn traditional cultural practices and skills, access to training and tools, and mentorship to support land-based practices may be more inaccessible even though they are more crucial than ever (Bayha & Spring, 2020).

In sum, I hope this work contributes to policymakers' understandings of the implications of their work, and a continued drive for the dismantling of systemic racism in these institutions. By understanding the inequitable outcomes of the aforementioned policies for Indigenous

Peoples I wish that this work can be a part of the necessary disruption of systemic violence enacted towards Indigenous Peoples as a result of government decision-making. These systems must be disrupted and we, as white settler folk, must align with the leadership of Indigenous communities to drive institutions to the point where they have the will to change and a drive to act. This includes a de-centralization of control from federal or provincial offices. There is a tension of forming policy that is responsive to the diversity of Indigenous communities' needs and working with their desired governance structures. Yet, it is necessary to enact Indigenous Peoples' self-determination.

Connection to lands and waters is a determinant of Indigenous Peoples' health as relationships between humans and non-human relatives are integral to well-being. Indigenous women continue to be central in supporting cultural resurgence, resistance to colonial policy, and re-invigorating Indigenous food systems as part of self-determination. Control of lands and waters, and resulting Indigenous food systems, need to be restored to Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples have long worked in unison with the natural world to actively impact and form the current land and associated traditional food systems (Morrison, 2011); thus, practices of resurgence enact sustainable praxis of Indigenous livelihoods which involve a restoration of presence on the land, increased reliance on traditional diets, and working towards sustainable land-based economies for urban and rural Indigenous populations (Corntassel, 2012).

## References


About Us. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.visitthunderbay.com/en/about-us/about-us.aspx

Air Services | Sioux Lookout Airport. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.siouxlookoutairport.ca/category/air-services/

Anishnawbe Mushkiki. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://mushkiki.com/program/aboriginal-health-access-centre/

Anishnawbe Mushkiki. (2020a). *Our Health Counts Thunder Bay: Adult Chronic Health Conditions*. Retrieved from Thunder Bay: https://www.stmichaelshospital.com/media/detail.php?source=hospital_news/2020/1102

Anishnawbe Mushkiki. (2020b). *Our Health Counts Thunder Bay: Adult Demographics*. Retrieved from Thunder Bay: http://www.welllivinghouse.com/our-health-counts-thunder-bay-factsheets/

Arriagada, P., Hahmann, T., & O'Donnell, V. (2020). *Indigenous people in urban areas: Vulnerabilities to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19*. Retrieved from Ottawa, ON:

Askew, D. A., Brady, K., Mukandi, B., Singh, D., Sinha, T., Brough, M., & Bond, C. J. (2020). Closing the gap between rhetoric and practice in strengths-based approaches to Indigenous public health: a qualitative study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 44*(2), 102-105.

Baum, F., MacDougall, C., & Smith, D. (2006). Participatory action research. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 60*(10), 854-857. doi:10.1136/jech.2004.028662

Bayha, M., & Spring, A. (2020). Response to COVID in Délı̨nę, NT: reconnecting with our community, our culture and our past after the pandemic. *Agriculture and Human Values, 37*, 597-598.

Bensimon, E. M. M., C. (2003). Like It or Not: Feminist Critical Policy Analysis Matters. *The Journal of Higher Education, 74*(3), 337-349.

Bhawra, J. (2013). *The Impact of Food Insecurity and Diet on Obesity among Métis and Off Reserve First Nations Children in Canada* University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON. Retrieved from https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/handle/10012/7765

Blumental, D. S., Hopkins III, E., & Yancey, E. (2013). Community-Based Participatory Research: An Introduction. In *Community-Based Participatory Health Research, Second Edition: Issues, Methods, and Translation to Practice* (2 ed., pp. 1-18). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol 2: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 57-71). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.

BRIDGE. (2015). *In Breif: Gender and Food Security*. Retrieved from Institute of Development Studies: https://www.wocan.org/sites/default/files/Gender%20and%20FS%20In%20Brief.pdf

Brody, A. (2016). *Towards Gender-Just Food and Nutrition Security: Policy Brief*. Retrieved from https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/11766/BRIDGE_PB_Online.pdf?sequence=1

Brooks-Cleator, L. A., Phillipps, B., & Giles, A. (2018). Culturally Safe Health Initiatives for Indigenous Peoples in Canada: A Scoping Review. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 50*, 202-213. doi:DOI: 10.1177/0844562118770334

Brown, J., Lengyel, C., Hanning, R., Friel, J., & Isaak, C. (2008). Moving to the City from the Reserve: Perceived Changes in Food Choices. *Pimatisiwin, 6*, 1-16.

Browne, A. J., McDonald, H., & Elliott, D. (2009). Urban First Nations health research discussion paper. doi:10.14288/1.0084587

Burnett, K., Hay, T., & Chambers, L. (2016). Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Peoples and Food: Federal Indian policies and nutrition programs in the Canadian North since 1945. *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History, 17*(2). doi:10.1353/cch.2016.0030

Burnett, K., Skinner, K., Hay, T., Leblanc, J., & Chambers, L. (2017). Retail food environments, shopping experiences, First Nations and the provincial Norths. *Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in Canada : Research, Policy and Practice, 37*(10), 333-341.

Carney, M. (2015). *The Unending Hunger : Tracing Women and Food Insecurity Across Borders*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.

Charter of Relationship Principles for Nishnawbe Aski Nation Territory. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/transparency/health-agreements/charter-nan.html

Cidro, J., Adekunle, B., Peters, E., & Martens, T. (2015). Beyond food security: understanding access to cultural food for urban indigenous people in Winnipeg as indigenous food sovereignty.(Report). *24*(1), 24-43.

Cidro, J., Martens, T., & Guilbault, L. (2016). Traditional Indigenous Food Upskilling as a Pathway to Urban Indigenous Food Sovereignty. In F. F. Deer, T. (Ed.), *Indigenous Perspectives on Education for Well-being in Canada* (pp. 41-57). Winnipeg: Education for Sustainable Well-Being Press.

Clark, N. (2012). Perseverance, Determination and Resistance: An Indigenous Intersectional-Based Policy Analysis of Violence in the Lives of Indigenous Girls. In O. Hankivsky (Ed.), *An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework* (pp. 133). Vancouver, BC: Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Simon Fraser University.

Corntassel, J. (2012). Re-envisioning resurgence: Indigenous pathways to decolonization and sustainable self-determination. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1*(1), 86-101.

Council of Canadian Academies. (2014). *Aboriginal Food Security in Northern Canada: An Assessment of the State of Knowledge*. Retrieved from Ottawa, ON: https://cca-reports.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/foodsecurity_fullreporten.pdf

Crenshaw, K. (1989). *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.

de Leeuw, S. (2018). Activating Place: Geography as a Determinant of Indigenous Peoples' Health and Well-being. In M. Greenwood, S. De Leeuw, & N. Marie Lindsay (Eds.), *Determinants of Indigenous People's Health: Beyond the Social* (pp. 187-203). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

De Schutter, O. (2012). Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. Retrieved from https://www.refworld.org/docid/511cb0422.html

de Souza, R. J., Bilodeau, N. M., Gordon, K., Davis, A. D., Stearns, J. C., Cranmer-Byng, M., . . . Anand, S. S. (2021). Entsisewata'karí:teke(You Will Be Healthy Again): Clinical Outcomes of Returning to a Traditional Haudenosaunee Diet. *International Journal of Indigenous Health, 16*(2). doi:https://doi.org/10.32799/ijih.v16i2.33098

Dennis, M. K., & Robin, T. (2020). Healthy on our own terms: Indigenous wellbeing and the colonized food system. *Journal of Critical Dietetics, 5*(1), 4-11.

Department of Justice. (2021). Government of Canada provides support to survivors and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in BC. Retrieved from https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2021/02/government-of-canada-provides-support-to-survivors-and-families-of-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-girls-and-2slgbtqqia-people-in-bc.html

Desmarais, A. A. (2012). Building Food Sovereignty: A Radical Framework for Alternative Food Systems. In J. S. M. Koc, & A. Winson (Ed.), *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies* (pp. 359-377). Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada.

Donated wild game added to Shelter House menu. (2019). Retrieved from https://www.tbnewswatch.com/local-news/donated-wild-game-added-to-shelter-house-menu-2-photos-1711387

Elliott, B., Jayatilaka, D., Brown, C., Varley, L., & Corbett, K. (2012). "We Are Not Being Heard": Aboriginal Perspectives on Traditional Foods Access and Food Security. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health, 2012*, 1-9.

Ermine, R., Engler-Stringer, R., Farnese, P., & Abbott, G. (2020). *Towards Improving Traditional Food Access for Urban Indigenous People*. Retrieved from Saskatoon, SK: https://foodmattersmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Urban-Indigenous-Food-Access-Final-Report-March2020.pdf

Etmanski, C., Dawson, T., & Hall, B. L. (2014). Introduction. In C. H. Etmanski, B.L. Dawson, T. (Ed.), *Learning and Teaching Community-Based Research: Linking Pedagogy to Practice* (pp. 3-22). Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press.

Fairbairn, M. (2010). Framing Resistance: International Food Regimes and the Rooots of Food Sovereignty. In A. A. Wiebe, Desmarais, & H. Wittman (Eds.), *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community* (pp. 15-32): Fernwood Publishing.

FAO Agricultural and Development Economics Division. (2006). *Food Security Policy Breif*. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitaly/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Cocept_Note.pdf

*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 41*. (2020). Ontario: Government of Ontario Retrieved from https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f41

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2009). *The State of Food Insecurity in the World: Economic crises – impacts and lessons learned* (10). Retrieved from Rome:

*Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 20*. (2019). Queen's Printer for Ontario Retrieved from https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01f20

Food Strategy: About. (2019). Retrieved from http://tbfoodstrategy.ca/about/

Food Strategy: Food Access. (2016). Retrieved from http://tbfoodstrategy.ca/pillars/food-access/

Ford, J. D. (2009). Vulnerability of Inuit food systems to food insecurity as a consequence of climate change: A case study from Igloolik, Nunavut. *Regional Environmental Change, 9*(2), 83–100. doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/s10113-008-0060-x

Fort William First Nation. (n.d.). Home. Retrieved from https://fwfn.com/

Fridkin, A. (2012). Decolonizing Policy Processes: An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis of Policy Processes Surrounding the Kelowna Accord. In O. Hankivsky (Ed.), *An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework* (pp. 115-132). Vancouver, B.C. : Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Simon Fraser University.

Gieryn, T. (2000). A Space for Place in Sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*, 463-495.

Gordon, K., Xavier, A. L., & Neufeld, H. T. (2018). Healthy Roots: Building capacity through shared stories rooted in Haudenosaunee knowledge to promote Indigenous foodways and well-being. *Canadian Food Studies / La Revue Canadienne Des études Sur L'alimentation, 5*(2), 180–195. doi:https://doi.org/10.15353/cfs-rcea.v5i2.210

Government of Canada. (n.d.). Ontario - Weather Conditions and Forecast by Locations. Retrieved from https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/canada/index_e.html?id=ON

Government of Nunavut, N. F. S. C. (n.d.). *Guide for Government-Funded Facilities and Community Programs Serving Country Food*. Retrieved from https://www.nunavutfoodsecurity.ca/sites/default/files/news/Serving%20country%20food.pdf

Hacker, K. (2017a). Chapter 3 | Methods for CBPR. In *Community-Based Participatory Research* (pp. 41-62). doi:https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452244181

Hacker, K. (2017b). Chapter 4 | CBPR—Step by Step. In *Community-Based Participatory Research* (pp. 63-88). doi:https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452244181

Haman, F., Fontaine-Bisson, B., Pilon, S., Lemarche, B., & Robidoux, M. A. (2017). Understanding the Legacy of Colonial Contact from a Physiological Persepective: Nutrition Transitions and the Rise of Dietary Disease in Northern Indigenous Peoples. In *A Land Not Forgotten: Indigenous Food Security & Land-based Practices in Northern Ontario* (pp. 34-50). Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: University of Manitoba Press.

Hankivsky, O., Cormier, R., & De Merich, D. (2009). *Intersectionality: Moving Women's Health Research and Policy Forward*. Retrieved from Vancouver: https://bccewh.bc.ca/2014/02/intersectionality-moving-womens-health-research-and-policy-forward/#:~:text=Intersectionality%3A%20Moving%20Women%E2%80%99s%20Health%20Research%20and%20Policy%20Forward.,its%20applicability%20in%20the%20context%20of%20women%20

Hankivsky, O., Grace, D., Hunting, G., & Ferlatte, O. (2012). Why Intersectionality Matters for Health Equity and Policy Analysis. In O. Hankivsky (Ed.), *An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework* (pp. 7-32).

Hankivsky, O., Grace, D., Hunting, G., Ferlatte, O., Clark, N., Fridkin, A., . . . Laviolette, T. (2012). Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis In O. Hankivsky (Ed.), *An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework*. Vancouver, BC: Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy, Simon Fraser University.

Hankivsky, O., & Jordan-Zachery, J. S. (2019). Introduction: Bringing Intersectionality to Public Policy. In O. J.-Z. Hankivsky, J. S. (Ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Intersectionality in Public Policy* (pp. 1-28): Springer International Publishing AG.

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies, 14*, 575-599. doi:doi:10.2307/3178066

Harding, S. G. (1991). "Strong Objectivity" and Socially Situated Knowledge. In *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from women's lives* (pp. 138-163). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7, (2020).

Hesse-Biber, S. N., Leavy, P., & Yaiser, M. L. (2004). Feminist Approaches to Research as a Process: Reconceptualizing Epistemology, Methodology, and Method. In *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research* (pp. 3-26). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

History. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://tbifc.ca/aboutus/history/

*Indian Act*. (1985). Justice Laws Website Retrieved from https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/I-5/FullText.html

*Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations*. (2020). Toronto: ON: Canadian Scholars.

Israel, B. A., Schulz, A. J., Parker, E. A., Becker, A. B., Allen III, A. J., & Guzman, J. R. (2008). Critical Issues In Developing and Following CBPR Principles. In M. W. Minkler, N. (Ed.), *Community-Based Participatory Research for Health: from Process to Outcomes* (pp. 47-67). San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Jackson, F. M., Saran, A., Johnson, P. G., & Morris, S. J. (2013). Qualitative Research in CBPR. In D. S. Blumenthal, R. Diclemente, R. Braithwaite, & S. Smith (Eds.), *Community-based Participatory Health Research: Issues, Methods, and Translation to Practice* (2 ed., pp. 111-130). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Judge, C., Skinner, K., & Spring, A. (2020). A comparative policy analysis of wild food policies across Ontario, Northwest Territories, and Yukon Territory, Canada. *Submitted for Publication*.

Jull, J., Giles, A., & Graham, I. D. (2017). Community-based participatory research and integrated knowledge translation: advancing the co-creation of knowledge. *Implementation Science : IS, 12*. doi:10.1186/s13012-017-0696-3

Kanenberg, H., Leal, R. L., & Erich, S. E. (2019). Revising McPhail's Feminist Policy Analysis Framework: Updates for Use in Contemporary Social Policy Research. *Advances in Social Work, 19*, 1-22. doi:DOI: 10.18060/22639

Kepkiewicz, L., Chrobok, M., Whetung, M., Cahuas, M., Gill, J., Walker, S., & Wakefield, S. (2015). Beyond Inclusion: Toward an Anti-colonial Food Justice Praxis. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development, 4*(4), 99-104. doi:https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2015.054.014

Kerpan, S. T., Humbert, M. L., & Henry, C. J. (2015). Determinants of Diet for Urban Aboriginal Youth. *Health Promotion Practice, 16*(3), 392–400. doi:10.1177/1524839914557862

Klassen, S., & Murphy, S. (2020). Equity as both a means and an end: Lessons for resilient food systems from COVID-19. *World Development, 136*. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105104

Kouris, L., Engler-Stringer, R., Thomson, T., & Wood, M. (2020). Food Justice in the Inner City: Reflections from a Program of Public Health Nutrition Research in Saskatchewan. In P. Settee & S. Shukla (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations* (pp. 173-195). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Kuhnlein, H. V., & Receveur, O. (1996). Dietary change and traditional food systems of indigenous peoples. *Annual Review of Nutrition, 16*, 417-442. doi:10.1146/annurev.nu.16.070196.002221

Kumar, M. B., Furgal, C., Hutchinson, P., Roseborough, W., & Kootoo-Chiarello, S. (2019). *Harvesting activities among First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit: Time trends, barriers and associated factors*. Retrieved from

Lac Seul First Nation. (2019). Lac Seul First Nation | About. Retrieved from http://lacseulfn.org/about/

Leblanc, J., & Burnett, K. (2017). What Happened to Indigenous Food Sovereignity in Northern Ontario?: Imposed Political, Economic, Socio-Ecological, and Cultural Systems Change. In *A Land Not Forgotten: Indigenous Food Security & Land-based Practices in Northern Ontario* (pp. 16-33). Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: University of Manitoba Press.

Levkoe, C., Ray, L., & Mclaughlin, J. (2019). The Indigenous Food Circle: Reconciliation and Resurgence through Food in Northwestern Ontario. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development, 9*(B). doi:10.5304/jafscd.2019.09B.008

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2 ed., pp. 163-188.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Loring, P. A., & Gerlach, S. C. (2015). Searching for Progress on Food Security in the North American North: A Research Synthesis and Meta-analysis of the Peer-Reviewed Literature. *Arctic, 68*(3), 380-392.

Luppens, L., & Power, E. (2018). “Aboriginal isn't just about what was before, it's what's happening now:” Perspectives of Indigenous peoples on the foods in their contemporary diets. *Canadian Food Studies / La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation, 5*(2), 142-161. doi:10.15353/cfs-rcea.v5i2.219

Mandhane, R. (2020). *OHRC statement: Demographic data necessary to fight COVID-19*. Retrieved from http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-statement-demographic-data-necessary-fight-covid-19

Martens, T., Cidro, J., & Hart, M. A. M., S. (2016). Understanding Indigenous Food Sovereignty through an Indigenous Research Paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development, 5*, 18-37.

Martin, D. (2012). Nutrition Transition and the Public Health Crisis: Aboriginal Perspectives of Food and Eating. In *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies* (pp. 208-222). Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada.

Martin, D., & Amos, M. (2017). What Constitutes Good Food? Toward a Critical Indigenous Perspective on Food and Health. In M. Koc, J. Summer, & A. Winson (Eds.), *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies*. Don Mills: ON: Oxford University Press Canada.

Mason, C. W., & Robidoux, M. A. (2017a). Food Security in Rural Indigenous Communities. In *A Land Not Forgotten: Indigenous Food Security & Land-based Practices in Northern Ontario* (pp. 1-15). Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: University of Manitoba Press.

Mason, C. W., & Robidoux, M. A. (2017b). Restoring Local Food Systems: A Call to Action. In *A Land Not Forgotten: Indigenous Food Security & Land-based Practices in Northern Ontario* (pp. 146-157). Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: University of Manitoba Press.

McDowell, L. (1999). *Gender, Identity, and Place Understanding Feminist Geographies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

McLaughlin, J., Levkoe, C., & Strutt, C. (2019). *Indigenous Food Circle Annual Report 2018 - 2019*. Retrieved from Thunder Bay, ON:

McNeilly, G. (2018). *Broken Trust: Indigenous People and the Thunder Bay Police Service*. Retrieved from Toronto, ON: http://oiprd.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/OIPRD-BrokenTrust-Final-Accessible-E.pdf

Miichim: Traditional Foods. (2021). Retrieved from https://slmhc.on.ca/departments-and-services/traditional-program/miichim/

Ministry of Indigenous Affairs. (2020). Treaties. Retrieved from https://www.ontario.ca/page/treaties#section-0

Minkler, M., & Blackwell, A. G. (2008). *Promoting Healthy Public Policy through Community-Based Participatory Research: Ten Case Studies*. Retrieved from

Mintz, C. (2019). The History of Food in Canada Is the History of Colonialism. *The Walrus*. Retrieved from https://thewalrus.ca/the-history-of-food-in-canada-is-the-history-of-colonialism/

Morgan, D. L. (2008). Snowball Sampling. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (pp. 816-816). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Morrison, D. (2011). Indigenous Food Sovereignty: a Model for Social Learning. In H. D. Wittman, A. A. & N. Wiebe (Eds.), *Food Sovereignty in Canada: Creating Just and Sustainable Food Systems* (pp. 97-113). Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.

Morrison, D. (2020). Reflections and Realities: Expressions of Food Sovereignty in the Fourth World. In P. Settee & S. Shukla (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations* (pp. 17-38). Toronto: ON: Canadian Scholars.

Municipality of Sioux Lookout. (2014, 2014). About Sioux Lookout. Retrieved from https://www.siouxlookout.ca/en/living-here/about-sioux-lookout.asp

Nasser, S. (2020, April 17). Early signs suggest race matters when it comes to COVID-19. So why isn't Canada collecting race-based data? Retrieved from https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/race-coronavirus-canada-1.5536168

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. (2019). Centering Relationships to End Violence. In *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (Vol. 1a, pp. 93-128).

Neufeld, H. T. (2020). Socio-Historical Influences and Impacts on Indigenous Food Systems in Southwestern Ontario: The Experiences of Elder Women Living On-and Off-Reserve. In P. S. Settee, S (Ed.), *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations* (pp. 251-268). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Neufeld, H. T., & Richmond, Chantelle A. M. (2017). Impacts of place and social spaces on traditional food systems in southwestern Ontario. *International Journal of Indigenous Health, 12*(1), 93-115. doi:10.18357/ijih112201716903

Neufeld, H. T., Richmond, C., & The Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre. (2020). Exploring First Nation Elder Women's Relationships with Food from Social, Ecological, and Historical Perspectives. *Current Developments in Nutrition, 4*.

New Ministers to support the renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples. (2017). Retrieved from https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/backgrounders/2017/08/28/new-ministers-support-renewed-relationship-indigenous-peoples

Nguyen, H. T. (2008). Patient centred care - cultural safety in indigenous health. *Australian Family Physician, 37*(12), 990-994.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation. (2020). Health Transformation. Retrieved from https://www.nan.ca/health-transformation/about/

Nishnawbe Aski Nation. (n.d.-a). About NAN. In NEWMAP-DEC2012 (Ed.): https://kiitigaanaskihub.ca/.
Nishnawbe Aski Nation. (n.d.-b). Intro to NAN Food Strategy. *Introduction and Background to Food Determination.* Retrieved from https://kiitigaanaskihub.ca/introduction-to-nan-food-strategy/
Nishnawbe Aski Nation. (n.d.-c). Six Pillars for Food Self-Determination. Retrieved from https://kiitigaanaskihub.ca/six-pillars/
Nishnawbe Aski Nation, & Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority. (2016, n.d.). Backgrounder: Health and Public Health Emergency. *Nishnawbe Aski Nation.*
Northwestern Health Unit. (n.d.-a). Community Food Programs—Sioux Lookout. Retrieved from https://www.nwhu.on.ca/ourservices/HealthyLiving/Pages/Community-Food-Programs---Sioux-Lookout.aspx
Northwestern Health Unit. (n.d.-b). Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program (NFVP). Retrieved from https://www.nwhu.on.ca/ourservices/HealthyLiving/Pages/Northern-Fruit-and-Vegetable-Program-(NFVP).aspx
*O.Reg 493/17: Food Premises*. (2017). Ontario Gazette: Health Protection and Promotion Act Retrieved from https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r17493#:~:text=Food%20service%20premise%2C%20food%20handling,-26.&text=(1)%20All%20food%20shall%20be,shall%20not%20be%20re%2Dserved.
OFIFC. (2016). *USAI Research Framework: Utility Self-voicing Access Inter-relationality* (2). Retrieved from Toronto, ON: https://ofifc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/USAI-Research-Framework-Second-Edition.pdf
Olsen, T. A. (2018). This Word is (Not?) Very Exciting: Considering Intersectionality in Indigenous Studies. *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research, 26*(3), 182-196. doi:10.1080/08038740.2018.1493534
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care. (2017). *Ontario Regulation 493/17*. Queen's Printer for Ontario Retrieved from https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/170493/v1
Our Health Counts Toronto. (2018). *Adult Demographics*. Retrieved from Toronto, ON: http://www.welllivinghouse.com/resources/whl-publications-reports/our-health-counts-toronto-fact-sheets/
Pal, S., Haman, F., & Robidoux, M. A. (2013). The Costs of Local Food Procurement in Two Northern Indigenous Communities in Canada. *21*(2), 132-152.
Parker, B., Brady, J., Power, E., & Belya, S. (2019). Introduction: This Is What Feminist Food Studies Looks Like. In B. Parker, J. Brady, E. Power, & S. Beylea (Eds.), *Feminist Food Studies: Intersectional Perspectives*. Vancouver: Women's Press.
Parker, B., Burnett, K., Hay, T., & Skinner, K. (2018). The Community Food Environment and Food Insecurity in Sioux Lookout, Ontario: Understanding the Relationships between Food, Health, and Place. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, 0*(0), 1-18. doi:10.1080/19320248.2018.1537867
Patton, M. (1990). Purposeful Sampling. In *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (pp. 169-186). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
Patton, M. (2014). Qualitative Interviewing. In *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods: Intergration Theory and Practice* (4 ed., pp. 422-456). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Pawlowska-Mainville, A. (2020). *Aki Miijim* (Land Food) and the Sovereignty of the Asatiwisipe Anishnaabeg Boreal Forest. In *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations* (pp. 57-81). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Perkel, C. (2016). First Nations in 'state of shock' as they declare public-health emergency. Retrieved from https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/02/24/first-nations-in-state-of-shock-as-it-declares-public-health-emergency.html

Pictou, S., Robin, T., Parker, B., & Brady, J. (In Press). *Pestiewink/Wihokewin: Invitation to Indigenous and Intersectional Feminist Food Studies*.

Porter, J. (2020). Racism killed Barbara Kentner, says Thunder Bay group rallying outside trial of man accused of killing her. Retrieved from https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/racism-brayden-bushby-trial-1.5788549

Power, E. (2008). Conceptualizing food security for Aboriginal people in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Public Health, 99*(2), 95-97.

Prevost, H., & Kilty, J. (2020). "You Start to Feel Like You're Losing Your Mind": An Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis of Federal Correctional Segregation Policy and Practice. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law, 32*, 162-195. doi:10.3138/cjwl.32.1.07

Ray, L., & Burnett, K. (2020). Justice for Barbara Kentner: Statement on the sentencing of Brayden Bushby. Retrieved from https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/justice-for-barbara-kentner-sentencing-of-brayden-bushby

Ray, L., Burnett, K., Cameron, A., Joseph, S., LeBlanc, J., Parker, B., . . . Sergerie, C. (2019). Examining Indigenous food sovereignty as a conceptual framework for health in two urban communities in Northern Ontario, Canada. *Global Health Promotion, 26*, 54-63. doi:10.1177/1757975919831639

Reading, C., & Wien, F. (2009). *Health Inequalities and Social Determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' Health*. Retrieved from Prince George, BC:

Richmond, C. (2018). The Relatedness of People, Land, and Health: Stories from Anishnabe Elders. In M. Greenwood & S. M. L. de Leeuw, Nicole (Eds.), *Determinants of Health: Beyond the Social* (pp. 167-186). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Richmond, C., Bezner Kerr, R., Neufeld, H., Steckley, M., Wilson, K., & Dokis, B. (2021). Supporting food security for Indigenous families through the restoration of Indigenous foodways. *The Canadian Geographer*, 1-13. doi:10.1111/cag.12677

Richmond, C., & Big-Canoe, K. (2018). The geographies of Indigenous health. In V. A. Crooks, G. J. Andrews, & J. Pearce (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of health geography* (pp. Routledge). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Richmond, C., & Ross, N. A. (2009). The determinants of First Nation and Inuit health: A critical population health approach. *Health & Place, 15*(2), 403-411. doi:doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2008.07.004

Rieger, K. L., Gazan, S., Bennett, M., Buss, M., Chudyk, A. M., Cook, L., . . . Schultz, A. S. H. (2020). Elevating the uses of storytelling approaches within Indigenous health research: a critical and participatory scoping review protocol involving Indigenous people and settlers. *Systematic Reviews, 9*(1), 257. doi:doi: 10.1186/s13643-020-01503-6

Robin, T., & Cidro, J. (2020). Rebuilding Cultural Identity and Indigenous Food Sovereignty with Indigenous Youth through Traditional Food Access and Skills in the City. In P. Settee & S. Shukla (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Systems, Concepts, Cases, and Conversation* (pp. 135-151). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Settee, P. (2020). Impact of Climate Change on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. In P. S. Settee, S (Ed.), *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations* (pp. 211-228). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Shelter House Thunder Bay—About Us. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.shelterhouse.on.ca/about/

Shelter House Thunder Bay. (2017). *Annual Report 2016/2017*. Retrieved from http://www.shelterhouse.on.ca/upload/documents/annual-report-final.pdf

Shukla, S., & Settee, P. (2020). Synthesis: Revitalizing the Past, Nourishing the Presnet, and Feeding the Future. In S. Shukla & P. Settee (Eds.), *Indigenous Food Systems: Concepts, Cases, and Conversations* (pp. 269-284). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Sioux Lookout. (2019). *Wikipedia.* Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sioux_Lookout&oldid=922854136

Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Centre. (2019). About Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre. Retrieved from https://slmhc.on.ca/about/about-slmhc/

Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre: Traditional Healing, Medicine, Foods and Supports Program. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.slmhc.on.ca/traditional-healing

Sioux Lookout Out of the Cold. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/OutoftheCold1/

Skinner, K., Pratley, E., & Burnett, K. (2016). Eating in the City: A Review of the Literature on Food Insecurity and Indigenous People Living in Urban Spaces. *Societies, 6*(2), 7. doi:10.3390/soc6020007

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and Indigenous Peoples*. London ; New York : Dunedin, [NZ]: Zed Books ; University of Otago Press.

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (Second edition. ed.). London; New York: Zed Books

Statistics Canada. (2017a). *Sioux Lookout, MU [Census subdivision], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (table). Census Profile.* . Retrieved from Ottawa: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

Statistics Canada. (2017b). *Thunder Bay [Census metropolitan area], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (table). Census Profile.* . Retrieved from Ottawa: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/censusrecensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

Statistics Canada. (2018a). *Sioux Lookout, MU [Census subdivision], Ontario (table). Aboriginal Population Profile. 2016 Census.* Retrieved from http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/abpopprof/index.cfm?Lang=E

Statistics Canada. (2018b). *Thunder Bay, Unorganized, NO [Census subdivision], Ontario (table). Aboriginal Population Profile. 2016 Census.* Retrieved from Ottawa: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dppd/abpopprof/index.cfm?Lang=E

Stout, M. D. (2018). atikowisi miýw-a¯ ya¯ win, Ascribed Health and Wellness, tokaskitamasowin miýw-a¯ ya¯ win, Achieved Health and Wellness: Shifting the Paradigm. In M. Greenwood, S. de leeuw, & N. M. Lindsay (Eds.), *Determinants of Indigenous Peoples' Health : Beyond the Social* (pp. 63-72). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Suschnigg, C. (2012). Food Security? Some Contradictions Associated with Corporate Donations to Canadaa's Food Banks. In *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies* (pp. 223-246). Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press Canada.

Tam, B. Y., Findlay, L., & Kohen, D. (2014). Social Networks as a Coping Strategy for Food Insecurity and Hunger for Young Aboriginal and Canadian Children. *Societies, 4*, 463-476. doi:10.3390/soc4030463

Teillet, J. (2005). *The Role of the Natural Resources Regulatory Regime in Aboriginal Rights Disputes in Ontario*. Retrieved from Final Report for the Ipperwash Inquiry: https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/ipperwash/policy_part/research/pdf/Teillet.pdf#:~:text=The%20natural%20resources%20regulatory%20regime%20plays%20a%20significant,settled%20the%20province%20and%20now%20implements%20its%20development.

Terry, K., & Terry, J. (2018). *Taking Back Our Food Chain: Building Capacity in Remote Communities*. Retrieved from Lac Seul First Nation, ON: https://www.nwhu.on.ca/ourservices/HealthyLiving/Pages/Understanding-Our-Food-System.aspx

Thunder Bay. (2019). *Wikipedia.* Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Thunder_Bay&oldid=920726618

Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy. (2016). Food Strategy: Forest and Freshwater Foods. Retrieved from http://tbfoodstrategy.ca/pillars/forest-and-freshwater-foods/

Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy. (n.d.). *Thunder Bay Food Charter*. Retrieved from http://tbfoodstrategy.com/files/1914/8485/8224/Food_Charter.pdf

Union of Ontario Indians. (2020). Anishinabek Nation. Retrieved from https://www.anishinabek.ca/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/

United Nations. (2007). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

Varcoe, C., Pauly, B., & Laliberté, S. (2011). Intersectionality, Justice, and Influencing Policy. In O. Hankivsky, S. De Leeuw, J. Lee, B. Vissandjée, & N. Khanlou (Eds.), *Health inequities in Canada: intersectional frameworks and practices* (pp. 331-348). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Walt, G., Shiffman, J., Schneider, H., Murray, S. F., Brugha, R., & Gilson, L. (2008). 'Doing' health policy analysis: methodological and conceptual reflections and challenges. *Health Policy and Planning, 23*, 308-317. doi:doi:10.1093/heapol/czn024

Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay: A List of Food Programs and Services. (2016). Retrieved from https://www.tbdhu.com/health-topics/healthy-eating/where-to-get-food-thunder-bay-list-of-food-programs-and-services#students

Zurba, M., Islam, D., Smith, D., & Thompson, S. (2012). Food and healing: an urban community food security assessment for the North End of Winnipeg. *Urban Research & Practice, 5*(2), 284-289. doi:10.1080/17535069.2012.691624

## Appendices

## Appendix A

### Participant Information Letter and Consent Form

***September 16, 2020***

Dear [inset name],

This letter is a request for your assistance with the research we are conducting at the University of Waterloo, Ontario. The title of this research project is "***Culture, Resiliency, and Prosperity: Transitioning from Food Security to Food Sovereignty and the role of Relocation and Migration on Traditional and Market-based Food Consumption***". This research is being led by Kelly Skinner, Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health and Health Systems and graduate student Breanna Phillipps, along with colleagues at Lakehead University (Barb Parker; Kristin Burnett), the University of Guelph (Hannah Neufeld), the University of Winnipeg (Jaime Cidro), and the University of Manitoba (Tabitha Robin Martens). I would like to provide you with more information about this project that explores the responses of Indigenous communities and their members to changing local food economies and existing policies.

You have been invited to participate in this research project. You have unique understandings and stories relating to your experiences with food and the wild food environment. For this specific aspect of the research, we are gathering information about wild food policy in northern Ontario and about wild food access in urban settings. We would like to interview you.

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate you may withdraw from the interview without penalty at any time. You may choose not to answer specific questions or discuss certain subjects during the interview or to ask that portions of our discussion or your response not be recorded. The interviews will take about 60 minutes at a private location agreeable to you, and be digitally recorded and transcribed.

Your confidentiality will be respected and no information that identifies you will be made public or published unless you tell us it is okay. If you do wish to be identified, some risks could include your quotes being taken out of context by others, being sought out for comment by media or other organizations, and being recognized for these thoughts in your community. You can decide if you wish to be identified by name in any publications or presentations on the consent form. All electronic data, including digital recording(s), will be kept on a password protected computer and the transcripts will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in Kelly Skinner's locked office at the University of Waterloo. The minimum retention time for all files is 7 years. All paper notes will be confidentially destroyed after this. Further, all electronic data will be stored for a minimum of 7 years on

a memory stick with no personal identifiers. Finally, only myself and my research team will have access to these materials. De-identified data may be shared across the institutions involved in this study. If your organization, or you as an individual wish that your data not be shared across institutions, please contact me. There are no known or anticipated risks to participants in this study.

During the course of this study, my colleagues and I will be conducting interviews with individuals to gather their stories of their experiences with food. At the end of this study, we will work with our partner organizations to develop appropriate knowledge sharing materials for communities and organizations, which could involve community presentations and reports. We also plan to publish academic papers that will share the knowledge from this study with other researchers, government, and community members.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE#22459). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Office of Research Ethics, at 519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at 519-888-4567, ext. 38164 or by email at kskinner@uwaterloo.ca .

I hope that the results of this study will be beneficial to you and to Indigenous organizations and peoples across Canada, as well as the broader research community. I very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance with this project.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Kelly Skinner
Assistant Professor
School of Public Health and Health Systems
University of Waterloo

## Consent of Participant

By signing this consent form, you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

---

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Dr. Kelly Skinner in the School of Public Health and Health Systems at the University of Waterloo. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study without penalty until the time that information is in publication by advising the researchers of this decision.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #22459). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Chief Ethics Officer, Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca. "

For all other questions contact Dr. Kelly Skinner at kskinner@uwaterloo.ca or at 1-519-888-4567 x38164.

1. Do you consent to participate in this research?: YES [ ] NO [ ]

2. Do you consent to have your interview audiotaped?: YES [ ] NO [ ]

3. Do you consent to your name affiliated with quotes in any publications?:YES [ ] NO[ ]

    If no, do you consent to you anonymous quotes in any publications?:

    YES [ ] NO [ ]

**Name of the participant**:________________________________________

**Signature of the participant**:____________________________________

**Date**:______________________________________

## Appendix B

## Indigenous Participants Interview Guide

Interviewee Characteristics

Where do you currently live? (Urban/home community/both/other)

Who do you live with (family/friends/extended family, etc)?

Do you have opportunities to get out on the land? If yes, how often?

Accessing Traditional Food

Do you eat wild foods? What are some of your traditional foods?

How often do you eat them?

Who is/are responsible for getting traditional foods in your household?

What roles do wild/country foods play in your community specifically for Indigenous women? Indigenous men?

How does your access to traditional foods impact your ability to eat the way you want?

What difficulties do you experience in getting traditional food? (hunting, fishing, trapping, agriculture, food preparation, food skills, sharing)

What opportunities do you have to get traditional food in (Sioux Lookout or Thunder Bay)?

Do you share traditional food (or market-based foods) with others? Who? What kinds?

How does your access to the land impact your ability to consume traditional food in *Sioux Lookout or Thunder Bay*?

Are there any municipal regulations that limit your ability to access traditional foods?

Has the access to knowledge or teachings surrounding harvesting and traditional food preparation skills changed depending on where you live? (urban/non-urban or reserve community)

Can you describe the importance of traditional food to you, your family, and your community?

How does traditional food impact your health and well-being?

Do you ever worry about having enough traditional food to eat for you or your household/family? Would you like access to more?

<u>Food Programming</u>

What food programs do you currently access (or are you involved in)?

Do you have any relationships with organizations where you donate wild food, or are you part of an organization that receives wild food donations?

Tell me more about your relationship with this organization/ its food programs?

How do these programs impact your wild food access and use/for others?

Does this program affect your how much/and what kinds of food you buy at the store?

Do you access any other programs that impact your store food access?

What food needs have not been met by these programs, and that you would like to have programming for?

<u>Action</u>

What do you think needs to change (if anything) to allow Indigenous Peoples to have more access to wild food in (Sioux Lookout or Thunder Bay)?

What do you think needs to change (if anything) to better support Indigenous Peoples' food security (in Sioux Lookout/ Thunder Bay)?

What do you think (if anything) needs to change to better support Indigenous Peoples' self-determination in what they eat (in Sioux Lookout or Thunder Bay)?

<u>Final Questions</u>

Is there anything you would like to tell us that we have missed?

Is there anyone that you think we should talk to?

## Appendix C

## Additional Questions Related to Wild Food Policy

<u>Part 1: Wild Food in Public Venues</u>

What are the current policies/regulations regarding making wild foods available (meat, fish, and plants) in public venues (hospitals, Indigenous organizations, restaurants, nursing homes)?

Do the policies/regulations differ for different venues? How so?

Do the rules for plant land-based foods in public venues differ from wild meat?

Are there differences in the rules for fish vs. wild game, such as moose?

Have these policies changed in recent past? What happened before?

What do you see as the largest barrier to the inclusion of wild foods in public food venues?

What forms do people/organizations need to fill out when serving wild foods?

What are the procedures/rules governing the serving of wild foods?

Where and how are people serving wild foods in public venues, despite the barriers?

Why can't institutions solicit donations of wild game if it is desired by clients?

<u>Thunder Bay Shelter House:</u>

Can you describe the process of acquiring the permanent Wild Game Dinner permit?

How have things changed since you acquired the permit?

Can you describe reactions from the community of the increased presence of wild food at Shelter House?

Have you been able to fill the demand of wild food from your patrons?

Are you currently experiencing any challenges in serving wild food to your clients?

Ministry of Natural Resources:

What is the process an officer goes through when ticketing someone under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act?

What considerations must the officer consider if the person is Indigenous (enacting their treaty or Aboriginal rights?)

Are people allowed to share their hunted, fished, or trapped game? How much can be shared and with whom? How does this differ for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples?

Can you explain your perspective on the need for the wildlife conservation act, in relation to harvesting of wild game? Are you facing any specific challenges related to wildlife conservation in *Sioux Lookout or Thunder Bay* regions right now?

Health Units:

Can you explain the different considerations a public health unit has regarding the serving of hunted, trapped, or fished food versus store bought meat? Why is wild game so heavily regulated?

How are you responding to the desire in the community to have access to a more traditional diet that includes wild game? How can your organization reduce barriers?

How much flexibility to health units have in interpreting policy to allow for wild game in institutions?

Thunder Bay District Health Unit: How are you ensuring information is available for other organizations to complete the permanent application to serve wild game?

Part 2: Donation and Processing of Wild Foods

What is the process if an individual wants to donate wild food (such as a moose) to an organization (e.g., friendship centre, shelter, etc)? Process for the MNR?

Who is responsible to take donated wild meat to a butcher? Does it have to be a regulated butcher? What are the administrative requirements that the butcher must adhere to? Are there rules about how the wild meat is packaged by the butcher? How much does it cost for you to have a moose butchered?

Harvesters/hunters are required to provide their names/addresses when donating wild foods – what are the consequences for these people if there is something wrong with the food they have donated? For example, if someone gets sick from food that was donated.

What paperwork do hunters/fishers have to fill out when donating wild food?

We have been told that hunters/fishers donating food must provide information such as the radius of the kill. Given that people want to protect their hunting/fishing areas – how exact does this location have to be?

Are the rules the same for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who are donating wild food? And the same for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who are eating the wild food that has been donated?

Who is/are the regulating bodies that you report to be able to offer wild food at Shelter House?

Do you have relationships with the MNR and/or conservation officers to get wild food donations? OR Does the MNR and/or conservation officers have relationships with organizations or individuals to donate wild food?

Are you notified/Do you notify the public if there are any changes to the policies about hunting/receiving/donating and/or serving wild food?

Do you have enough wild food donations to sustain your programming? What supports are needed for those who donate? How do you think you can increase the amount of wild food to be used in programming?

## Appendix D

## Participant Feedback Letter

University of Waterloo

***[Date]***

Dear ***[Insert Name of Participant],***

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study entitled "***Culture, Resiliency, and Prosperity: Transitioning from Food Security to Food Sovereignty and the role of Relocation and Migration on Traditional and Market-based Food Consumption***". As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to explore experiences with access to traditional and market food in northern communities and in urban centres.The data collected during interviews will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges of food insecurity and resilience when living in a northern or urban environment and the programs that could support better access to traditional and market food.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE#XXXXX - insert your ORE file # here). If you have questions for the Committee contact the Chief Ethics Officer, Office of Research Ethics, at 1-519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or ore-ceo@uwaterloo.ca.

For all other questions contact Kelly Skinner at 519-888-4567, ext. 38164 or by email at kskinner@uwaterloo.ca.

Please remember that any data pertaining to you as an individual participant will be kept confidential. Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this project, we will work with the ***[name of organization]*** to develop appropriate knowledge sharing materials for your community, which could involve community presentations and reports. We also plan to publish academic papers and present at conferences that will share the knowledge from this study with other researchers, government, and community members.

If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or would like a summary of the results, please provide your email address, and when the study is completed, anticipated by January 2020, I will send you the information. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or telephone as noted below.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Kelly Skinner
Assistant Professor
School of Public Health and Health Systems
University of Waterloo
519-888-4567 x38164
kskinner@uwaterloo.ca