

IKERASAK and AKUNNAAQ GREENLAND

**The West Norden Foresight 2030 Project
The settlements' visions for the future**

**Addressing Demographic Change in the North
Atlantic Rim**

**Harris Centre/Nordregio/NORA Workshop
17-18 October 2011**

**Memorial University, St. John's
Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada**

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THE FRAMEWORK

- * The project's mission is to promote West Nordic cooperation among Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands
- * Identification of common ambitions and visions for the settlements on how to develop specific strategies to be used in order to meet the challenges of the coming years

THE OBJECTIVES

- ✱ To give the people in the settlements an opportunity to express themselves, their hopes, ambitions and visions for the next twenty years regarding their settlement
- ✱ To create dialogue with the people in the settlements about what they imagine they can do to reach their goals for their settlement

THE ORGANIZATION

✱ The Steering group is composed of the following project partner representatives:

- Municipality association (Greenland)
- Municipality association (Iceland)
- Municipality association (Faroe Islands)
- Research Centre for Social Development (Faroe Islands)

THE ORGANIZATION (continued)

✱ The project:

- Spatial Foresight (consultant company from Luxembourg) has been in charge of the implementation process
- Nordregio has contributed with background information
- The project manager is Freia Lund Sørensen from the Department of Spatial Planning, Government of Greenland



❄ Akunnaaq

Close to the local main town, 23 km from Aasiaat.

For years, there has been a decline in the number of inhabitants

Now approximately 100 inhabitants



❄️ Ikerasak

Distant from the local main town, 45 km from Uummannaq

For years, there has been an increase in the number of inhabitants

Now approximately 300 inhabitants



METHODS

- ✱ Resource persons:
Organizing and facilitating the workshops
- ✱ Active participation in the workshops
Ownership – New eyes – Preconceptions – Community
- ✱ New thinking
How is it possible to create changes?
- ✱ Challenges / Problems = Possibilities / solutions
- ✱ Evaluation and conclusions

VALUES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN COOPERATION WITH SETTLEMENT STAKEHOLDERS

- ✱ Promoting equality – an appreciative approach
- ✱ Encouraging and motivating individuals
- ✱ Supporting strengths and potentials
- ✱ Ensuring cooperation, commitment and a positive approach towards the establishment of growth and opportunities
- ✱ Identifying how the stakeholders themselves can make a difference in the development process



THEMES

- ✱ Identifying attractive elements within the settlements – what do they want to be known for?
- ✱ Local initiatives
 - what can they do for the future of the settlement?
- ✱ Social capital
 - where are the local strengths? Way of living and values
- ✱ Capacity to change
 - SWOT

ORGANIZING THE WORKSHOPS

- * Preparations. Travel. Division of tasks.
- * Meetings with local stakeholders
- * Teamwork groups
- * Challenge – Akunnaaq
- * Optimism – Ikerasak





FEEDBACK

- ✱ Support was missing in the past.
Now this project has brought new inspiration
- ✱ The project does not involve a top-down process
- ✱ WNF methods have given new idea
- ✱ “We must take responsibility”
“We will make a difference”
“We will do it together”

RESULTS

- ✳️ Inspired and committed citizens, with renewed potentials, dedication, faith, hope and determination
- ✳️ WNF has provided an opportunity for new potentials and strengths, both individually and in harmony with nature and resources
- ✳️ Allowing people to seek advice and guidance on new ways to utilize resources and how to start businesses
- ✳️ The settlements have a strong desire to be involved in the planning of future development



THOUGHTS FROM ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

“This process is so exciting. It gives us all hope for the future. If we continue the good work and keep the cooperation and discussions going, then I believe we can slowly create the things we are hoping for.

I think that today we have built a new bridge to the next phase, and we have taken a new step in our lives, with a focus on our future generations so that we can contribute to their development”



IKERASAK AND AKUNNAAQ – ONE YEAR LATER

- * Financial constraints for starting new initiatives
 - no financial support from the municipality
- * Engaging people in discussion groups
- * Possibilities have been tested
 - family education
 - focus on youth

MY PERCEPTION OF LIFE IN SETTLEMENTS

- * Attracted to the way of life in settlements – Possibilities
- * Strong life values – closeness to nature and to society
- * Living in the present
- * The possibility of silence
- * Strong and vital subsistence economy
- * Hope to be able to initiate and develop something new

Traditional culture and the “real” Greenland
(this is something that is somewhat lacking in the capital, Nuuk.
I wish that my 9-year-old son will be able to experience it and incorporate it into his
own life)



Qujanaq - Thank you

