

Gap Analysis: Outline and Initial Bibliography

Social Dimensions of Resource Development and Well-being

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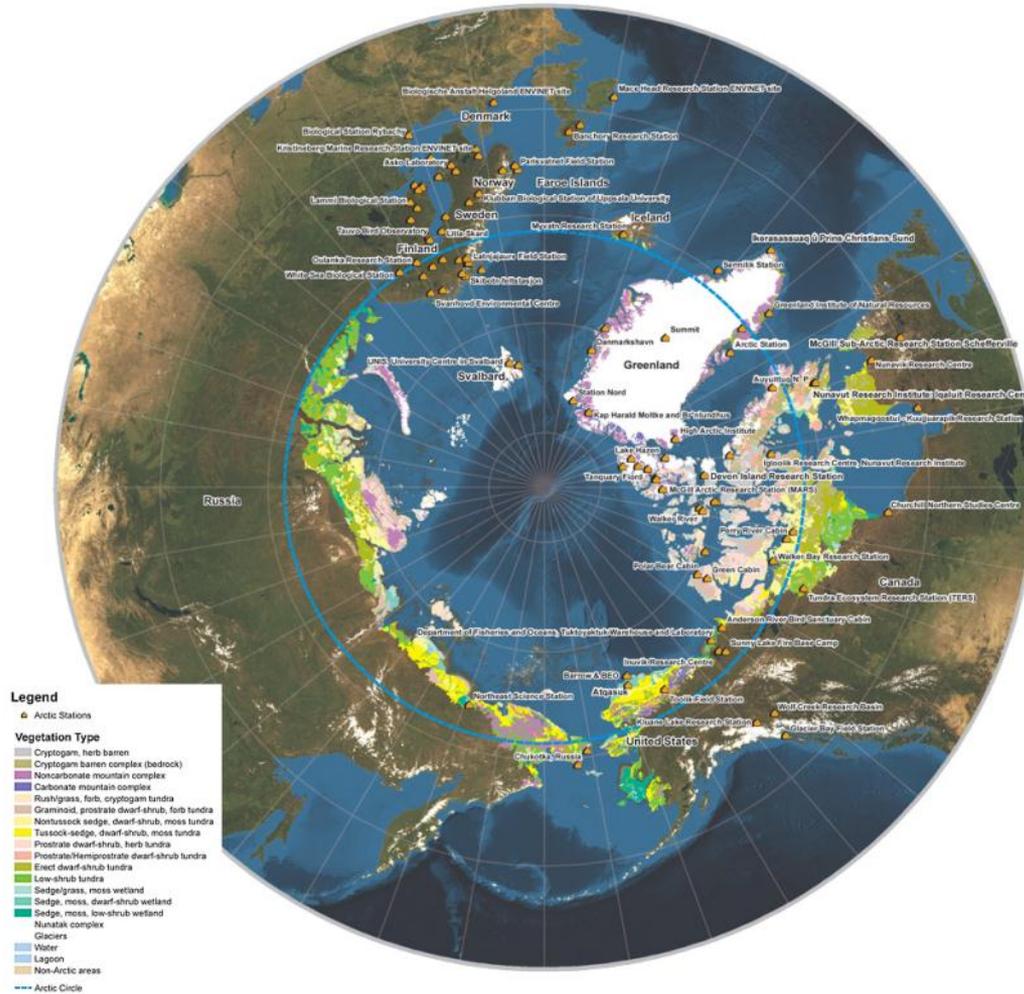
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Resource Development - Circumpolar



Well-being

- Different meanings among different peoples and different ways it is measured / monitored;

- Many influences or determinants



Historical Context

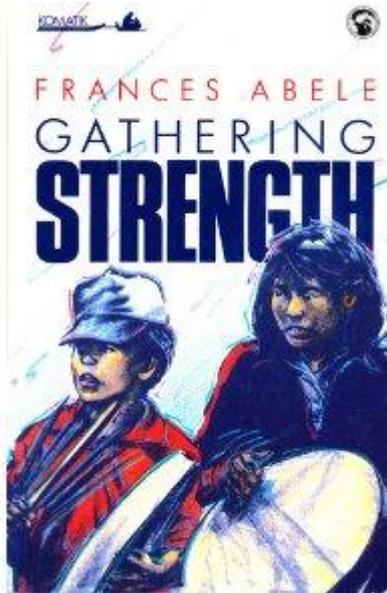
- Many significant social issues have been created with mining, oil and gas projects
- Theory of “**virgin soil epidemics**” - social illnesses did not exist until the last one hundred years or were better managed in the past through traditional systems of justice and governance;
- Many problems created by settlement and colonization – seen in other Aboriginal communities globally (e.g. Australia) – poverty and marginalization
- Development may be compounding some critical social conditions – “**outstripping adaptive capacity**” --- but disempowering views of “**vulnerability**”

Education

- Concerns expressed about loss of traditional knowledge and skills -- (high school graduation) are low in most parts of northern Canada;
- Concerns -- “not ready” for the training and employment;
- Opportunities for learning - uneven within communities; diverse family histories often account for some children having many opportunities for learning and others having very few.
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Education - Training



- Increasingly, industry is playing an important role in the dynamics of education and training – directly tied to employment
- Concerns that over-emphasis on resource development employment versus those jobs of value in communities or other sectors;
- “Brain Drain” in communities and limit economic diversification - limit the resilience of individuals and communities to the boom-bust cycles of development;

Infrastructure and Well-being

- Absence of basic infrastructure correlated with poor health and well-being outcomes;
- Housing insecurity is likely to be compounded by boom-bust cycles of resource development and uneven development across the territories with vulnerable populations (e.g. homeless, single mothers) facing the greatest dis-benefits;



Culture and Well-being

- Culture is “**protective**” is a departure from biomedical interpretations of well-being and health from the past which situated “culture” as the cause of poor health. Today culture is seen as **fundamental** – but sometimes and used **uncritically as a cure-all** (e.g. industry references to traditional knowledge);

Culture and Well-being

- Represent culture in some degree as a health determinant. This can range from the:
 - Land use
 - tracking of harvest practices,
 - fluency in an Aboriginal language;
 - participation in ceremonies or cultural activities;
- “Essentialization of culture into measureable bits or “things” is seen as overly simplistic -- part of a colonial and neo-colonial process of Aboriginal surveillance.

Culture and Well-being

- **Traditional Knowledge**
- Use in management and monitoring of resource development increasing – best practices and critical discussion of “community-based monitoring” has been limited;
- Youth – more consideration of elders with younger adults being marginalized (neither successful in school or on the land --- “youth know nothing” – dangerous narrative in northern communities;



Psycho-Social Well-being

“How would you describe your own well-being”?

- **Subjective well-being** with self-esteem, personal control, happiness, life satisfaction and positive outlook on life. It is also associated with self-efficacy as it pertains to goal setting and achievement.
- Well-being is most likely to be experienced by those who are able to make **progress towards or achieve personal goals**.
- Anglo-American and Judeo-Christian emphasis on individual **productivity and functionality** have led to criticisms and exploration of alternative meanings.

Social Well-being and the Social-Economy

- **Income and well-being** are thought to be strongly related – a theory which drives resource development (i.e. people will be better off with jobs and higher incomes);
- **Not accurate at all income levels - not absolute in northern Canada where culture, community and the land figure into peoples sense of a “good life”.**
- Relationship between well-being and growth in income are strongest at lower income levels;



Social Well-being and the Social-Economy

- “The proportion of people in developed societies who are happy or satisfied with their lives has remained stable over the past decades even though they have become, on average much richer” (Eckersley 2001: 77).



Social Well-being and the Social-Economy

- Social networks, extent of social supports and feelings of belonging are strongly associated with well-being. Individualistic traits and lack of social connectedness are conversely associated with the absence of well-being;
- Less understood role of social networks in the success and management of adverse effects of resource development (e.g. homeless shelters);
- Formal (co-management) versus informal social networks (e.g. friends and family);



Social Well-being

Transience, Mobility and Immigration

- Less consideration to impacts of resource development on non-Aboriginal peoples who live and create communities in the north:
 - Immigration of new arctic citizens – Nfld. Filipino, Chinese, African etc. not just to major centres but small communities;
 - 2-week in/out rotations – Kimberly BC community supporting Diavik Diamond;
- Not just demographic (e.g. statistical analysis – lived experience);



Land and Well-being

“If the land is not healthy, how can we be?”

“Arctic hunters and herders have always lived with and adapted to changing environments...” --- Reification of “**environmental change**” as a new problem caused by development or climate is **problematic**;

Integration into the wage economy driving -- declining participation in hunting, trapping and fishing in many regions – traditional food consumption – also significant research on contaminants and risk;

Less study of indirect effect on well-being -- food security -- chronic illness – Type II diabetes; -- more work on surveillance rather than solutions (e.g. Healthy Foods North).



Human Security and Well-being

- Human security in the Arctic is concerned with the intersection of power and governance and the social, economic political and environmental factors that contribute to the well-being of arctic people;
 - Self Determination (global sovereignty, regional self-government – personal (well-being -- self-efficacy).

