



ReSDA Research Priorities 2013-2014

The primary objective of ReSDA is to find ways to ensure that more benefits from resource development flow to northern communities and that negative impacts are mitigated. To achieve this task with the relatively limited resources available it is wise to undertake this research in stages. The initial stage was a gap analysis of the major areas of research that are likely to assist us to obtain our objective. This gap analysis, conducted by over 20 ReSDA researchers, came up with a long list of potential areas of research. These suggestions supplement the research questions outlined in the initial proposal.

A common thread shared by these gap analyses was the need to provide information to northerners on how resource development conditions, impacts, and benefits vary across the Circumpolar North and elsewhere in the world. In other words, there is a need to make available to communities a range of information and data concerning resource development that would allow them to compare their particular situation to that of others and to better understand options available.

The 2nd Annual ReSDA Workshop which took place in Whitehorse also pointed out a strong desire on the part of community representatives that ReSDA researchers make their work available to communities as soon as possible. These communities are currently facing a wide-range of issues that are a result of new resource development projects and they require information that will assist them in their discussions with governments and the resource industry.

Given the results of the gap analyses and the comments made at the Whitehorse workshop, it seems appropriate that the main priority project for 2013/2014 be structured around the gathering and initial analysis of existing material relating to current conditions, impacts, and benefits, as well as making this material available to northern communities. At the same time, it is wise to start work now on the integration of this information into specific examples of resource development in the North.

A. The Key Project for 2013/2014: The ReSDA Atlas of Arctic Resource Development

The objective here would be to initiate a series of one-year subprojects that would gather and analyze information on conditions, impacts, and benefits and make this work available immediately to Arctic communities through a web-based atlas. The ReSDA Atlas of Arctic Resource Development would be a virtual “one-stop” place for access to information on how resource development conditions vary across the North. It would be comprised of a web-based map of resource developments with data and analysis on each development. In addition to specific developments, information will be available on the regulatory and other conditions regarding resource development for the varying jurisdictions of the Circumpolar North. A print form of the Atlas could also be created for distribution.

The subprojects would be a series of “analytical surveys” as suggested by the gap analyses. These analytical surveys would be focused in the following areas:

- 1) Historical comparison of research development in the Circumpolar North: This work could be conducted in stages with a first stage concerned with collecting basic historical data that could be used to provide background information for the ReSDA Atlas.
- 2) Analytical surveys of conditions: Many of the gap analyses noted that it would be useful to have information about how the conditions surrounding resource development varies across the Circumpolar North (and perhaps similar regions outside the North).
 - a. Regulatory regimes
 - b. Ownership patterns
 - c. Regional economic development policies
 - d. Subsistence economy
 - e. IBAs in Canada and Alaska (much of this work is already done)
- 3) Analytical surveys of impacts: Almost all of the Gap Analyses noted the need to collect and make available existing information on resource development impacts on Arctic communities. A comparative analysis of this information would enable us to identify impacts that need to be avoided and to identify “best case” examples. These analytical surveys could start out by developing a list of all potential community impacts of resource development identified in previous research. This initial list would not be limited to the Arctic. It would use research carried out in other similar regions. This list could then be applied against Arctic development projects to see if data on these impacts exists or not. The data that exist would be made available through the Atlas. These impacts surveys would deal with many of the issues mentioned in the gap analyses such as mobility,
 - a. General social impacts
 - b. Economic impacts
 - c. Cultural and subsistence economy impacts
 - d. Environmental impacts
- 4) Analytical surveys of potential benefits: The benefits of resource development are often mentioned by industry and governments but as the gap analyses have indicated, very little systematic analysis has been done on what benefits exist and how these benefits vary by project. A comparative analysis of the benefits flowing to communities from resource developments would be useful to make available to communities so that they could make judgements about likely benefits and about different models that are used to provide benefits. (Note - It may be wise to have the same teams conduct both the impacts survey and the benefits survey when they are dealing with similar subjects – ie economic impacts)
 - a. Revenue distributions
 - b. Employment benefits
 - c. Education and training
 - d. Support for cultural vitality, the subsistence economy, and the integration of Traditional Knowledge
 - e. Infrastructure support

- 5) Analytical survey of baseline data used to measure impacts and change: Previous to the Gap Analyses, many of our Northern partners indicated a need for basic reliable baseline data relating to social and economic change. This is necessary in order to evaluate the impact/benefits resulting from resource development. Partners also noted the need for baseline data that could be collected and analyzed by communities themselves.
 - a. Survey of social indicators used in Environmental/Social and Economic Impact Assessments
 - b. Survey of community-based social and economic monitoring projects

B. Subprojects

While much of the work for the next year will be focused on the above mentioned work, the ReSDA Steering Committee is now also prepared to accept other proposed subprojects. It should be understood that ReSDA funds are to be seen as seed funding and that additional funding for these projects must be sought from other sources. Researchers should consult with a ReSDA Theme Coordinator before submitting a proposal.

These projects would be evaluated based on the following set of criteria:

1. Projects need to clearly show that the proposed research addresses the primary objective of the ReSDA project – to find ways to ensure more resource development benefits flow to northern communities with fewer costs.
2. Priority will be given to projects that are directly related to the research questions outlined in the ReSDA research proposal and/or those outlined in the gap analyses.
3. Proposals should be developed in collaboration with regional/ community partners.
4. Proposals should have a plan to quickly transfer research results so that they can be put to use by communities.

In addition to the analytical survey work it would be wise for ReSDA to start now at integrating data gathered into specific case studies. It would be good to start several case studies of resource projects at various stages of development.

C. Knowledge Mobilization

Community participants at the 2nd Annual ReSDA Workshop in Whitehorse noted the importance of making research available and useful to communities. It is hoped that the Atlas will be useful in this regard but not sufficient. ReSDA needs to find more effective ways of ensuring that the work they are doing is transferred and mobilized. Another survey that can be conducted for 2013/2014 is knowledge mobilization techniques. Research on this issue exists already as a result of IPY. Existing information can be collected and presented at the 3rd Annual ReSDA Workshop where partners and researchers can share information about the relative usefulness of the varying techniques.

Steps for applying for ReSDA funding

1. Discuss your project ideas with one of the Theme Coordinators to ensure that it fits with the ReSDA themes and priorities to be considered for funding
2. Complete the subproject application form on the ReSDA website
[http://dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/resda/stories/storyReader\\$29](http://dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/resda/stories/storyReader$29)
3. Submit your application to the ReSDA coordinator (email to vwalker@yukoncollege.yk.ca)
4. Applications will be reviewed by the ReSDA Management Committee and Steering Committee.
5. If your project is approved for funding, you will be required to sign the ReSDA Research Agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the funding. As the funding is provided through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council all applications must come from SSHRC eligible institutions.