A Framework for Rural & Northern Resilience: Climate Change Impacts on Mental Health and Well-Being

Yukon University, Climate Change Policy

Presented for: U Arctic Seminar, 2021

Presented by: Julia Cottle, Eli Thipphawong & Meesha Wittkopf

Photo: Meesha Wittkopf, 2021
Outline

• About the Capstone Project
• Meet the Presenters
• Background & Principles
• Scope & Review Process
• The Framework
• Key Considerations
• Q & A
Where We Are

- Yukon University (Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada)
- Population: 42,827
- Yukon is home to 14 First Nation groups - 11 of which are self governing
- Latitude: 63° 37' 59.99" N
- Longitude: -135° 45' 59.99" W
Climate Change Policy & Literacy Capstone

• The climate change policy program introduces the wicked problems of climate change and equips students with policy tools that can aid organizations, governments, and other groups to mitigate and further adapt to its impacts.

• The Capstone Project aims to: Develop a Framework to increase the resiliency of rural and Northern communities addressing the adverse effects of climate change on mental health and community well-being.
The Presenters

**Meesha Wittkopf**
Background in International Food Security Issues, and recently relocated to the Yukon to pursue further work in this field. Bachelors of Arts Degree with focus on Politics, History & Economics.

**Julia Cottle**
Based in the Yukon since 2018, she has been working in health policy and planning for over 10 years with a background in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (MSc.) and is a Knowledge Mobilization professional.

**Eli Thipphawong**
First Generation Lao Canadian from Northwestern Ontario. Graduate of Trent University, with a background in community organizing and 10 years in Emergency Management in Canada and throughout the Asia Pacific.
Address the climate change impacts on rural and Northern mental health and well-being through the development of a targeted resiliency planning framework.
Scope & Review Process

Literature Review

Inclusion Criteria: Available in full-text online; with an Abstract; Canadian; Reference to Indigenous populations; Only English results were used; Published between 2010-2021

Results: 16 resources after exclusion criteria applied; 8 selected for final inclusion

Conclusively, the reviews have highlighted a lack of existing frameworks that address the intersection between resiliency planning, rural and Northern communities, mental health and well-being, and climate change.

Primary Question: What are necessary/possible components for a resiliency planning framework for rural and Northern communities addressing the adverse effects of climate change on well-being?

Jurisdictional Scan

• Reviewed Yukon, National and International sources
• Results: Frameworks and broad actions yet to be made
The Framework

Resiliency Planning Elements and Key Mental Health Resources

- Prevention & Promotion
- Environment & Land
- Community & Social Networks
- Learning & Development
- Access to Care & Services
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Knowledge: Traditional (TK), Experience and Evidence-based

Inclusion

Partnership and Collaboration

People and Community-Centred
Resiliency Planning Elements

People and Community-Centred

Knowledge: Traditional (TK), Experience and Evidence-based

Prevention & Promotion

Environment & Land

Culture, Tradition, & Language

Learning & Development

Community & Social Networks

Access to Care & Services

Partnership Collaboration

Inclusion

Monitoring and Evaluation
Key Mental Health and Well-being Resources
Key Considerations

- As the COVID-19 pandemic, its variants, and international cooperation/policy continues to evolve, the application of this framework will adapt

- **Further research and focus on:**
  - Incorporating the needs of rural and Northern communities
  - Additional resources to support strong and effective community engagement
  - Tools and expertise to support mental health and well-being in rural and Northern communities
  - Deep dive into different intersectionalities and their relationship to climate change, mental health, and well-being

“resilience is not something that [an organization] can ‘do’ or ‘bring’ to individuals or communities.”
- **IFRC Framework for Community Resilience**
Thank You ~ Looking Forward to Your Questions