

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



Photo: Meesha Wittkopf, 2021

Yukon University, Climate Change Policy

Presented for: U Arctic Seminar, 2021

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Outline

- About the Capstone Project
- Meet the Presenters
- Background & Principles
- Scope & Review Process
- The Framework
- Key Considerations
- Q & A



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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.



Background & Policy Question

Address the climate change impacts on rural and Northern mental health and well-being through the development of a targeted resiliency planning framework

**Community Centred
Expertise & Traditional
Knowledge**

Guiding Principles

**Risk Informed, Integrated
Adaptive Practices**

Holistic Health

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

Jurisdictional Scan

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

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?

The Framework

Resiliency Planning Elements and Key Mental Health Resources



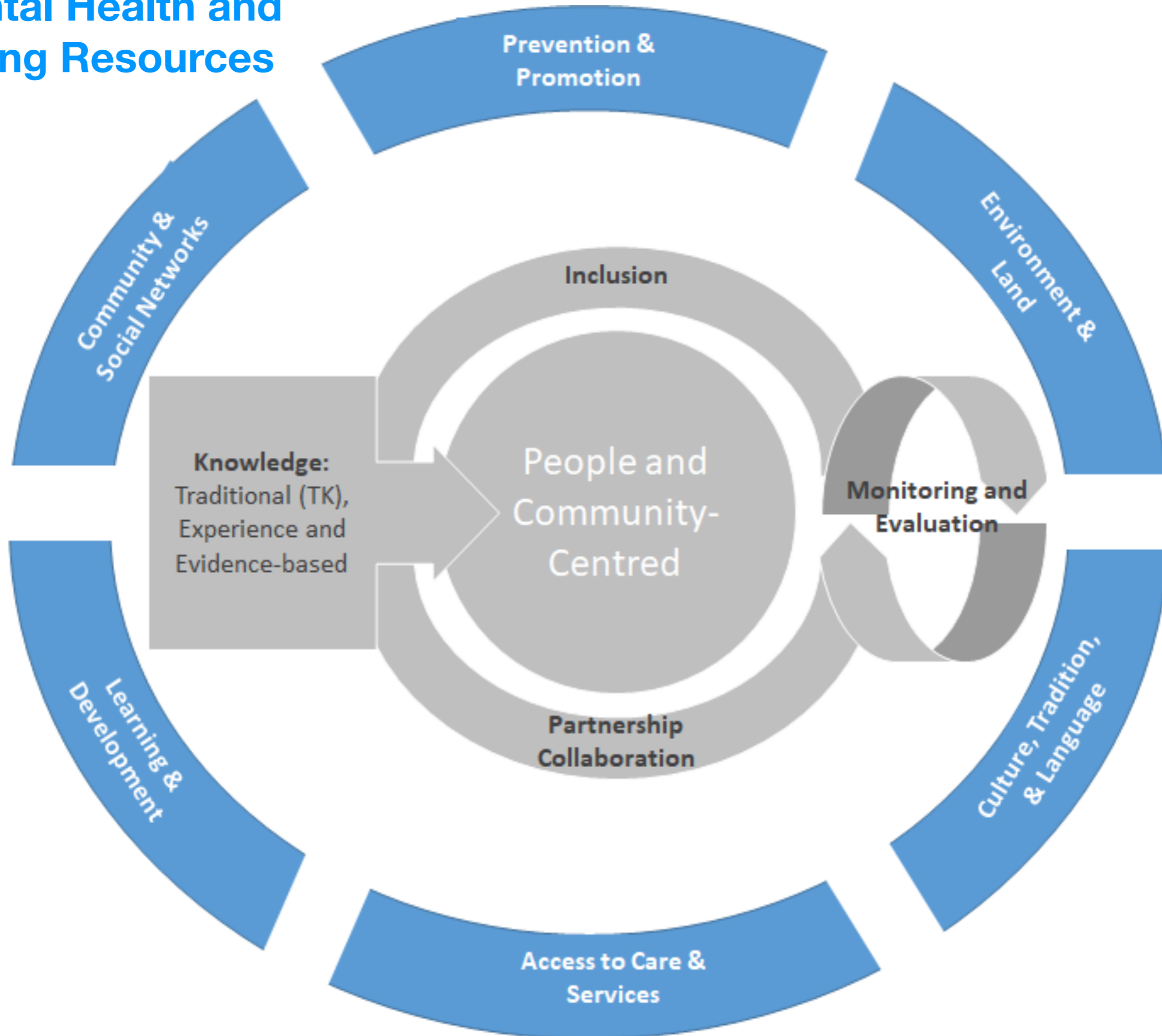
Resiliency Planning Elements



Resiliency Planning Elements




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

