

# 'Tools' used in Local and Regional Development Workshops and Partnerships in the Northern Periphery

Understanding indigenous economic development in northern,  
rural, and remote settings workshop

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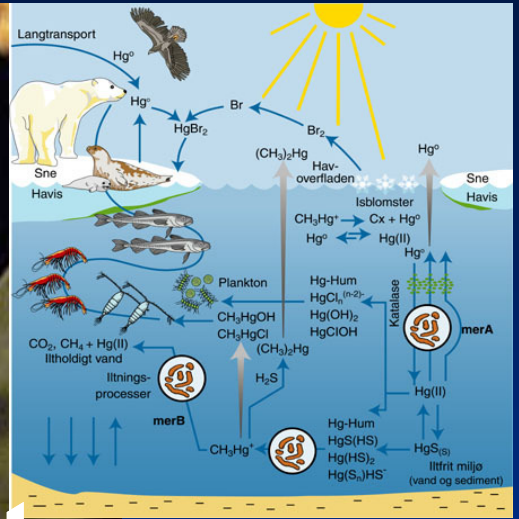
I BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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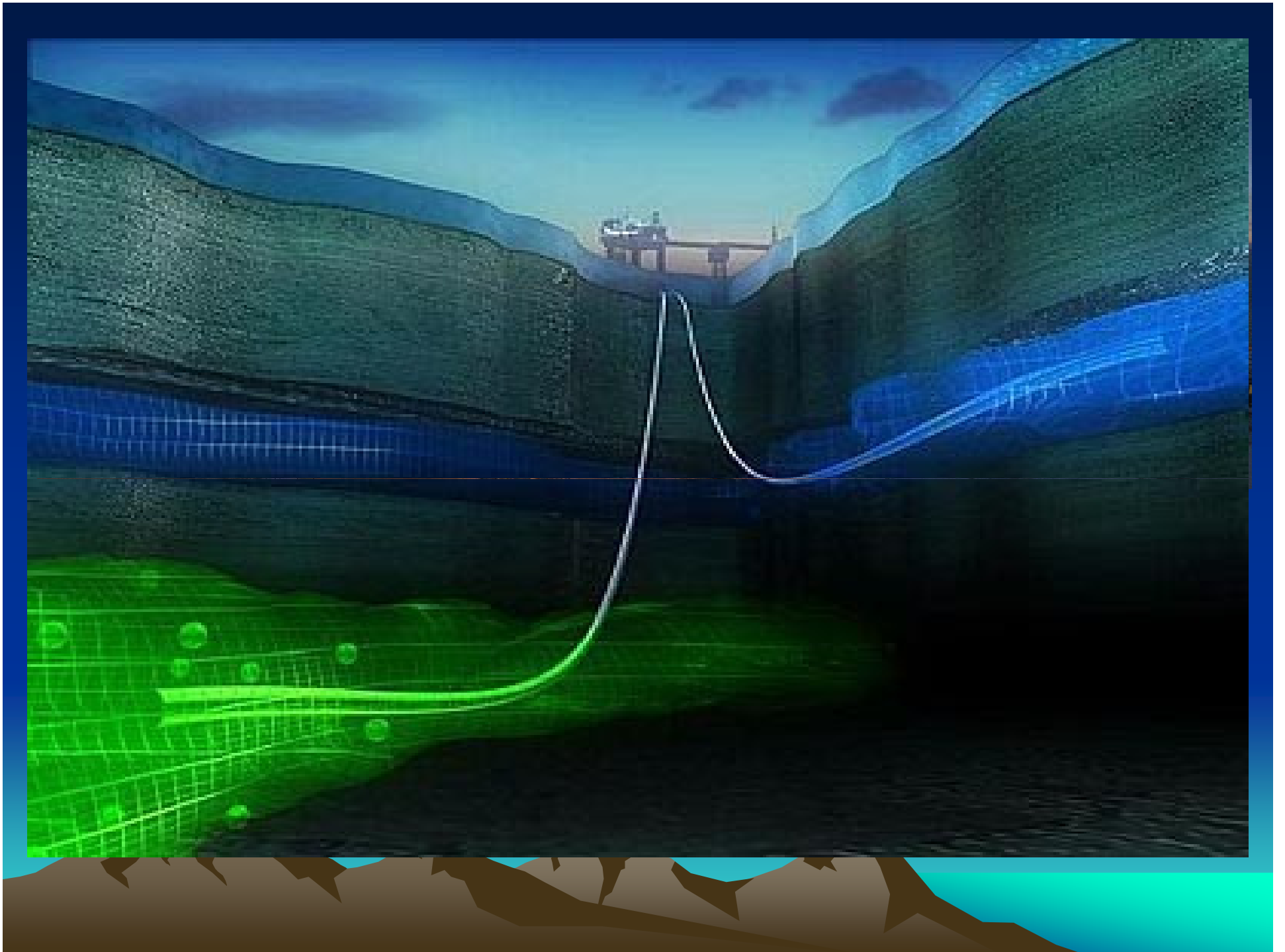


# How do we picture the North?



# The "TRUE AND FREE", beautiful and EXOTIC North





# I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



# Local development workshops and partnerships. Problem background:

- Growing problems in resource-based businesses and industries in the region, especially in the fish industry, leads to a never-ending chain of bankruptcies
- The usual problem of "small numbers and great distances", but not as BIG as in Canada
- Traditional, resource-based, economies have problems adapting to changes on the global market
- Withdrawal of the state. Downsizing in public sector, especially on state level (incl. military activities)
- Increasing unemployment and out-migration, especially from coastal areas of Finnmark (up to 50% in 15 years)



# Conditions for development in Northern regions

- Dependency on natural resources
- Role of state distribution
- Connection to global market
- Political structures (local & regional government)
- Knowledge and competence





# Two options for Northerners

- Surrender or accept a condition of continuous depopulation, while opting for different compensation measures of a welfare state, individual benefit nature, or;
- Develop strategies that are compatible with an increasingly globalized and competitive economic order



# The post-industrial restructuring

- Introduction of manpower-saving technologies in the processing of timber, fish and agricultural products
- New jobs in an expanding service sector can not make up the total loss of jobs in industry
- Generative perspective substituted by **locally based 'coping' strategies involving economic innovations, far-reaching networking and creation of new identities as central dimensions**



# Definition of 'coping' strategies: (Aarsæther and Berregaard, 2004)

- **Innovation.** The process of change in economic structure that includes new solutions to local problems, as responses to the transformations of a globalizing and increasingly knowledge-based economy
- **Networking.** The development of interpersonal relations that are transcending the limits of institutionalized social fields, and;
- **Formation of identity.** The active formation of identities that can reflect on cultural discourses from the local to the global



# Myths and realities in Northern knowledge and competence (I)

- The North is usually explained within conceptual frameworks and intellectual paradigms of the South
- The standard theoretical approaches tend to limit the role of Northerners in shaping the destiny of their region
- We need new theoretical concepts and models for knowledge and capacity building in the North



# Myths and Realities in Northern Communities and Societies (II):

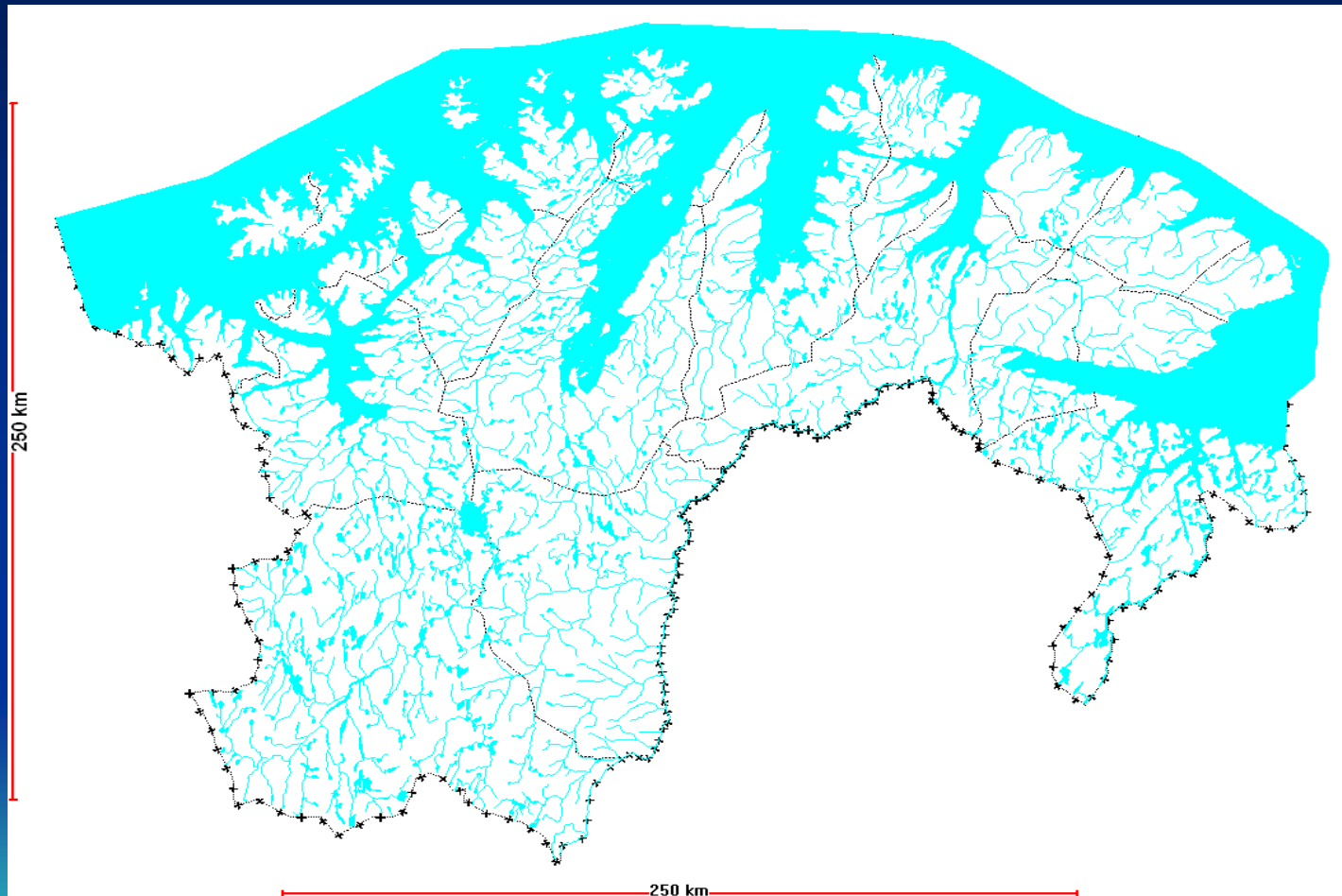
- The Nordic Periphery is as (post-)modern, competent and productive as the SOUTH
- The Alta-Hammerfest region, **the most competent region in Norway** (% of people with higher education)
- 3 of 5 Sami municipalities in Finnmark (Tana, Karasjok and Kautokeino) above national average



# II. PROJECT AND PROCESS



# Finnmark County (larger than Denmark)

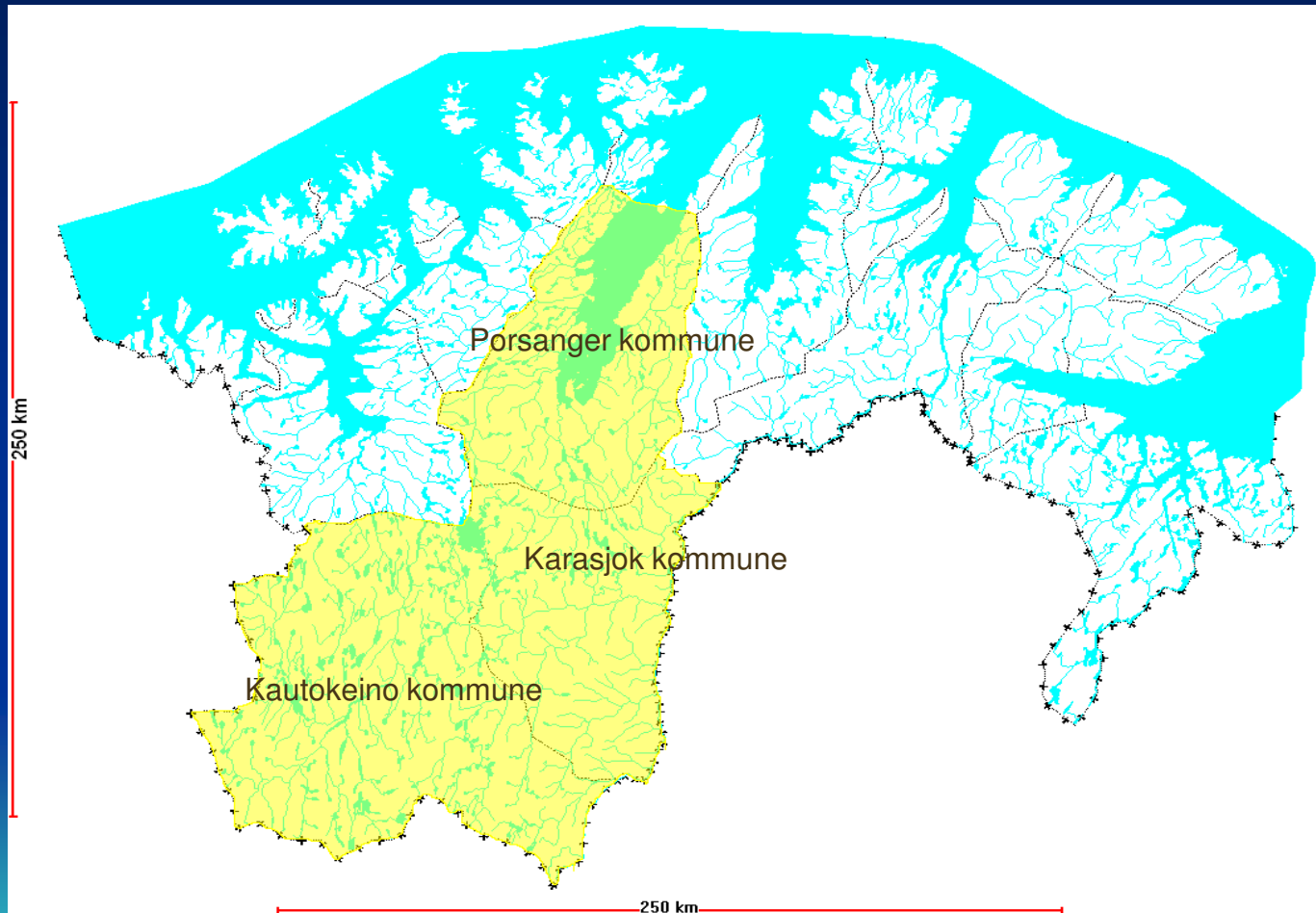


# Hasvik and Loppa development workshop (“Win - or get lost...”):

- The big question: Did FiUC have anything to contribute to local change and development processes, and in that case, with WHAT?
- An informal meeting in “the lions cave” was set
- Main objective: Rationalization of public services through increased intermunicipal cooperation
- Partnership formed with both municipalities, but not continued because of government change
- Cooperation initiated again in spring 2008 with Hasvik evaluation and learning workshop



# Ávjavárri Indigenous Region: Including Kautokeino, Karasjok and Porsanger mpls



# Avjovarri Indigenous Region

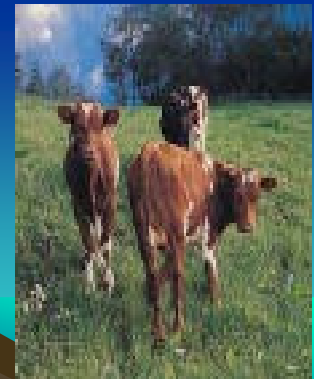
## Key figures:

- Area: 20041 km<sup>2</sup> (1/2 of Finnmark)
- 10 109 inhabitants by January 2006
- 25.1 % under 17 years (2004)
- 0.6 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>



# Main economic activities in the Avjovarri Indigenous Region

- Reindeer herding
- Agriculture
- Fishing, berry picking and other natural resource based activities
- Public administration
- Service
- Tourism



# III. RESULTS



# **Avjovarri Regional Development Workshop I - in Hetta, Finland**

- **Participation of 86 top- and middle-management**
- **Main objective: Improving economic efficiency and the quality of public services**
- **Focus on education, health and social work**
- **Tools: Common ICT/economic steering systems, council and adm. meeting between the 3 mpl's**
- **Regional partnerships and innovation systems**
- **Important side effect: Explosion of contact and cooperation on all levels. Social Capital**
- **The formation of a new regional identity through a cultural and political integration process**



# TANA (2004-10): The local development circle completed?

- The "Skiippagurra syndrome" (1996-2004)
- May 2004, Public meeting about branding and positive image-building – local mobilization against prostitution
- June: Local development workshop and partnership
- Skiippagurra Rock Festival (300 - 3000 in 3 years)
- FiUC study about the good ways of life in Tana (2004)
- 2004-2006: Broad development process and program
- 2008: LDP included in the Municipal Plan as the main document, after political pressure from the inhabitants
- Partnership continued through Skiippagurra Evaluation and Learning Workshop I (2007), II (2008), III (2009) and IV (2010)
- 2010: Focus on cross-border cooperation (Tana-Utsjoki)
- Local partners involved in course and study plan revision
- Next step – internationalization (Canada and Russia)



# Project status (2003-10)

- Development workshops organized in 8 small, rural mps in Western, Eastern and Central Finnmark (Hasvik, Loppa, Tana, Gamvik, Porsanger, Karasjok, Kautokeino and North Cape)
- 3 single, 1 intermunicipal and 1 regional (Avjovarri Indigenous Region) workshops
- Development partnerships established in 5 mps
- Gradual change from project to programme status, from municipal to intermunicipal and regional (international?) level, from single workshops to partnership organizations
- Regional innovation & development networks



# Study in Management of Local and Regional Development

- Advanced Emphasis course (30 ECTS) in UArctic's BCS-program, and 5 other bachelors
- Based on experiences with local and regional development workshops and partnerships
- Involvement of local and regional development agents from public and private sectors, both in curriculum development and course evaluation
- Evaluation and learning workshops, a continuous learning process for everybody involved (local development agents, teachers and students)





# UArctic Thematic Network on Local and Regional Development

- Established June 2006 (in Bodø, Norway)
- Strategic objective: Strengthen Northern post secondary knowledge and skills in management of sustainable local and regional development processes and projects, by sharing facilities, resources and experiences among UArctic member institutions



# Main Objectives of TN on Local and Regional Development:

- Stimulate student and teacher exchange
- Development of joint course and study programs at both bachelor and masters levels (Next: International applied masters in Northern Governance and Development)
- International cooperation in Regional R&D
- Network web-page ([www.hifm.no/regional](http://www.hifm.no/regional))
- Data base on Northern Innovation and Development
- The bi-annual international **Borealis Conference** on building capacity for sustainable development in the North
- Local and regional development workshops and partnerships in Northern Norway, Finland, Russia – and Canada (?)
- The annual **Gargia Conference** on Regional Research and Development



# Internationalisation of local and regional development workshop

- 'Alive Villages': Rural development workshops in Arkhangelsk (2007-)
- Youth and rural development project in Kainuu, Eastern Finland (2008)
- Development in Rural Yakutia (2009-10)
- Development partnership and workshops in the Izhma-region, Komi Republic (2011)
- Canada????



# The Gargia Conference on Regional Development

- Meeting place for academics, politicians bureaucrats and business people engaged in local and regional development projects and processes (2004 -)
- Building capacity through integration of theory and praxis based knowledge and competence
- Internationalized in 2007 through the UArctic Thematic Network on Local and Regional Development
- Gargia 2010: Community and Economic Development in Indigenous Regions of the North



# IV. GENERALIZATIONS



# Local and regional development workshops and partnerships are:

- A way to democratize both planning and political decision-making processes
- A method to help develop communities and municipalities based on concepts of participatory democracy (governance)
- by empowering people in organizations and communities, including representatives of the municipal authorities and business community



# Impacts of development workshops and partnerships

- **Effectiveness** (the ability to achieve their objectives)
- **Endogenous development** (mainly driven from within and oriented towards the local area)
- **Capacity building** (improvement of technical, social and organizational skills of people)
- **Innovation** (introduction of new behaviour and practices)
- **Integrated development** (projects are synergistically linked, creating added value)
- ***Community involvement***
- **Legitimation** (formal/informal acceptance of partnerships or their products by the local community)
- **Organisational and financial sustainability**
- **Democratisation** of society



# Local challenges and strategies in Northern regions

1. Although historically dependent on natural resources, characterized by harsh climates and sparsely populated, the modernity of local life can be surprising to outsiders
2. There are diverse patterns of development: Some regions and within them, separate localities, seem to be better off than others with respect to living conditions, both socio-economically and socio-culturally
3. These diverse patterns within the 'general modernity' of Northern Canada, the Nordic countries or Russia can both be explained by obviously diverse national institutional regimes, and also by **the specificity of local strategies, innovation and entrepreneurship**





# Conditions for efficient operation of local development workshops:

- **A clear strategy and a sense of purpose, closely reflecting the needs and resources of the area (endogenous development)**
- **Leadership without domination – equitable partner participation in decision-making**
- **Committed, competent and sufficient management and staff**



# Some more necessary conditions:

- **Secure and adequate funding over several years**
- **Good informal networking and communication within and beyond the local and regional workshops and partnerships**
- **An atmosphere of mutual trust**
- **A good level of involvement of the wider community – individuals, community groups, other organisations and the business world**
- **High level of local community and business entrepreneurship**



# What increases the effectiveness of workshops and partnerships?

- Competence and commitment of staff
- Successful mobilization of local knowledge about needs and resources of the area
- Decision-making exerted at local level
- Sectorial heterogeneity of partners
- Involvement of one or more local key actors with leadership skills
- The way the workshop/partnership were initiated
- Networking activities
- Independent/neutral status
- Community participation achieved



# Key factors of success in local workshops and partnerships:

- **Diversity and commitment – both of the partner organisations and the individuals representing them**
- **A shared vision of sense of purpose, reflecting local needs and resources**
- **A clear and coherent strategy, built on local knowledge and respecting the strategies of other relevant actors, to guide activities**
- **Clear rules of engagement, setting out mutual expectations and contributions of participants**
- **Decision-making firmly at the local level**
- **Secure, flexible and sufficient funding**
- **Strong involvement of local groups and individuals with local knowledge**



# Successful coping strategies at the local and regional level

People in modern localities depend on, contribute to and identify with several communities and localities

- Coping strategies are multidimensional and multilevel
- A collective and shared character of reflexive praxis



# **The connection between coping strategies and local development**

- **With the coping strategy understanding, we want to stress how business economies, welfare state regimes and local civil society organisations are interacting through different network/partnership organisations to define the common goals and strategies for local development**
- **The coping strategy approach highlights the importance of different economic, social and cultural context for local development**



# Most successful coping strategy

It seems that it is coping strategies combining **innovation, networking** (social capital) and the **formation of identity** rather than specific resources, access to political systems, markets or the physical infrastructure that makes the difference in creating long term sustainable development in Northern Norway and the rest of the Arctic region



'In the North,  
People first...'

Thank you for your attention

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