



TUNDRA project final report, February 2015

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Myself: I am a researcher who has spent the last couple of years looking through the results from the interviews and here is my attempt to summarize them, provide my personal observations, and hopefully give you information that is useful and interesting. I apologize in advance if any of my comments or approach taken in this report rubs people the wrong way, after all I am from Fairbanks and we are a little different. There are a lot of positive results about your communities that made me proud while living over in Norway. Thank you!

Please look for me at the tribal or city council office, school. You can also call me at 907-750-3750 to meet. I will be in Noorvik (2/2-2/5), Noatak (2/6-2/11), Brevig Mission (2/23-2/20), and Atkasuk (3/23-3/26).

Introduction

The goal of the TUNDRA project was to determine how environmental governance and socio-economic conditions influence ecosystems and the services they provide to local people. We also want to better understand the effectiveness of management approaches under different economic conditions and different types of government among arctic countries. This project involves 28 communities in tundra regions of Alaska, Canada, Norway, and Russia. For this project I lived in Norway on and off since 2010 and met with the people who conducted the interviews in the other countries. This project started in 2009, and I interviewed people in Alaska during January through March in 2012. Funding was from the Norwegian Research Council. We interviewed 16 people in each community, with the same numbers of Elders/Youth, employees of the government/non-government, and men/women.

These communities were chosen because they are in areas with tundra vegetation, and a large portion of their harvest is typically from the land. In Alaska we wanted to compare different boroughs/census areas, Native organizations, and access to wage income. During the interviews we asked about several topics including harvest and land use, community dynamics, conservation and mining opinions, wildlife management, and information about interactions and trust with various agencies. There was so much information asked that not all the results can be presented here. However, if you would like to see other results or more detailed results, please feel free to contact me.

Community Dynamics:

Alaska residents were very trusting, almost as trusting as Norwegians (Figure 10). We did not have interviewees define trust but simply asked them how much they agreed with the statement that “most people in your community can be trusted”. Churchill in Manitoba has the lowest amount of community trust which is likely due to issues surround development (railroad and port). This community is less homogenous than other

North American communities with a lower percentage of indigenous peoples and a mix of different wage income options. Murmansk is a region in Russia that shares a border with Norway and many people from this region have left for southern Russia or even Norway. Their relationship with the rest of Russia is a bit strained because of its nearness to Scandinavia. These circumstances may be reasons for lower trust in Murmansk. In Alaska, Brevig Mission had the lower trust (3.1 ± 0.2) while Noatak had the highest (4.5 ± 0.2). This result is similar to the overall cohesion results (see below).

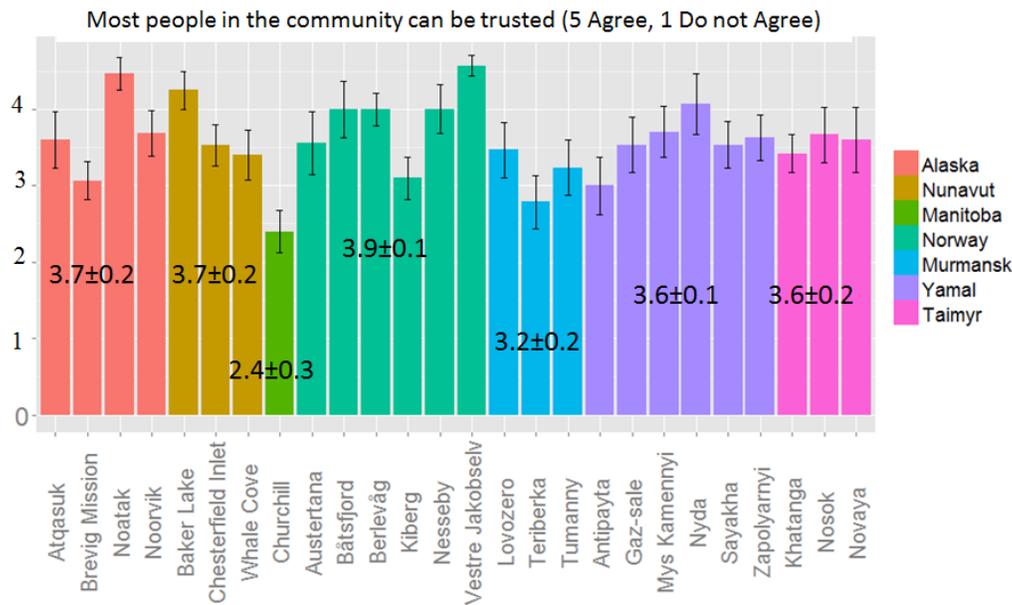
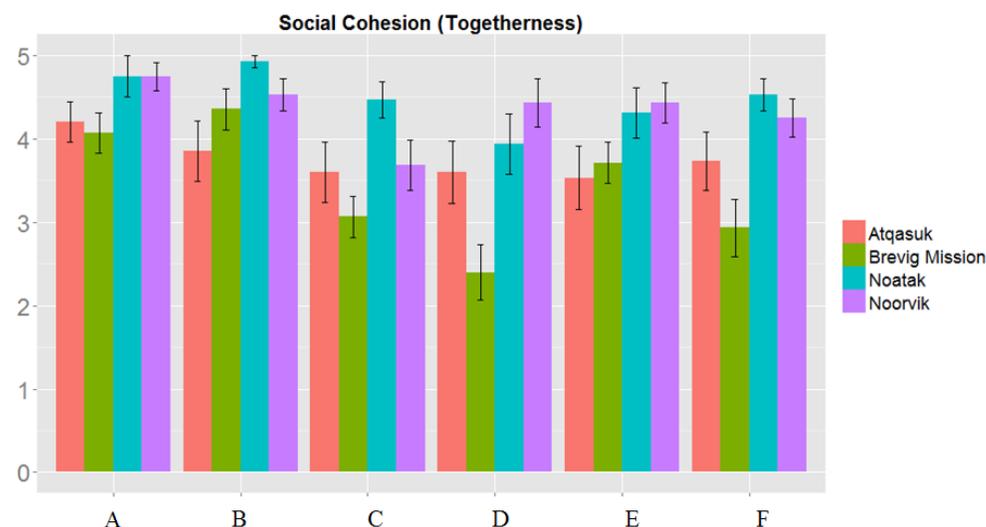


Figure 10. Community average response to the question of whether they thought most people in the community can be trusted.

Norway is known for its high social cohesion but Alaska actually tied with Norway (4.0 of 5 with 5 indicating a high amount of social cohesion). Lowest was in Manitoba (Canada), Yamal (Russia), and Taimyr (Russia)

at 3.3 out of 5. There was a high amount of social cohesion (togetherness) among Alaska communities with the highest in Noatak and slightly lower in Atqasuk and Brevig Mission (Figure 11).



- A) People in the community are willing to help one another
- B) Our community is a close knit community compared with other villages
- C) Most people in the community can be trusted
- D) There are many opportunities in the community to work towards common goals
- E) Most people in the community are involved in activities that benefit the community
- F) There are volunteer groups that actively work for common benefits of the community

Figure 11. Community averages for questions about social cohesion with 5 indicating high cohesion and 1 is low cohesion.

Some of the potential reasons for the lower overall trust and social cohesion in some communities could be tied to two observations. First, some Elders during the interviews felt a bit isolated and left out. There were some comments about not having children stop by or bring subsistence foods like in the past. What could be done to help improve community connection with Elders? Secondly, schools are a main centerpiece in Brevig Mission the relationship between the school and community was strained. This may be why this was the only place with an increase in youth with no high school education from 2000 to 2010 (Figure 12). However, since my visit this community has a new principle and hopefully this relationship has improved.

Change in Education Achievement among 25 year olds and older between 2000 and 2010

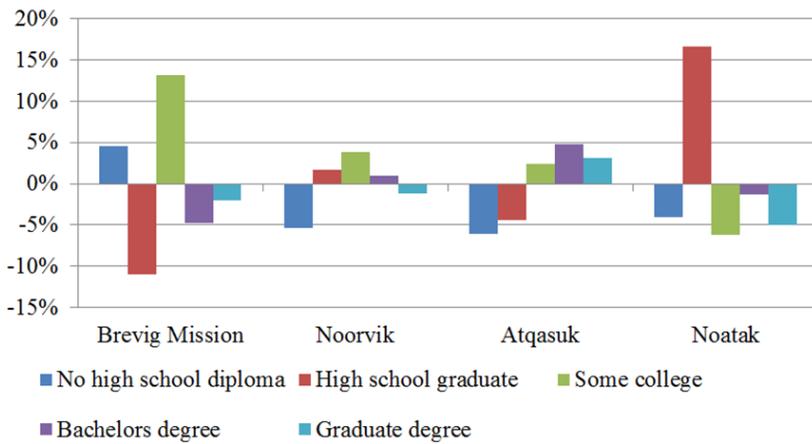


Figure 12. Change in the percent of adults (>24 years old) with various levels of education attainment.

Trust

Previously we presented trust within the community while here we look at trust of agencies and organizations. Overall trust was greatest in Alaska and Nunavut (Table 2) which are dominated by rural, isolated, Inuit communities. Even though, trust may seem low people were much more trusting in Alaska than Norway and Russia. **Why do people in Alaska trust their agencies? Are agencies doing something right?**

Table 2. Trust of various agencies or organizations by Arctic communities.

Country	Region	Yes (%)	Partly (%)	No (%)	NA (%)
Alaska	Alaska	46.1	12.2	7.3	34.4
Canada	Nunavut	46.3	13.5	19.7	20.5
	Manitoba	12.1	5.9	42.1	39.9
Norway	Norway	36.7	16.8	20.8	25.7
Russia	Murmansk	13.5	6.8	18.8	60.9
	Yamal	20.1	8.3	26.7	44.8
	Taimyr	8.8	1.6	18.0	71.7

However, many responses in Russia were “don’t know” or “no response”. Trust was in general higher for local agencies and lowest among agencies or institutions associated with industrial development (Figure 13).

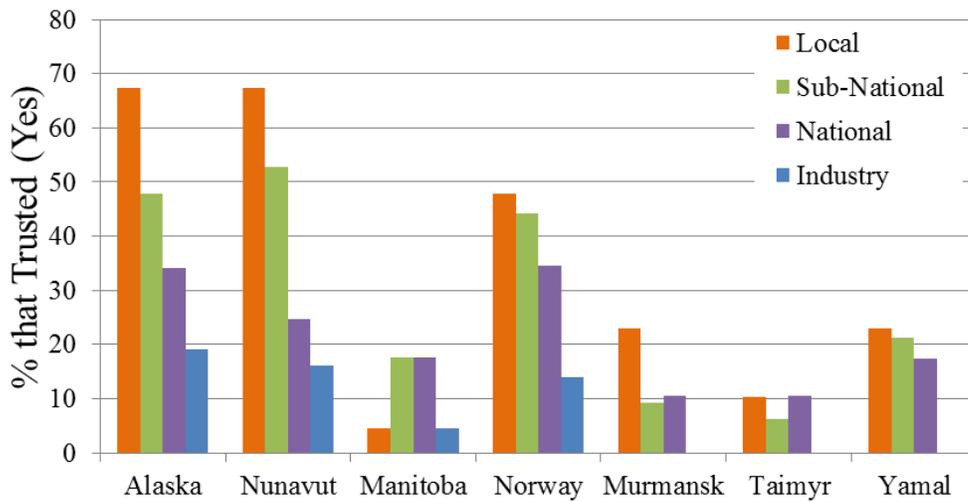


Figure 13. Percent of people that said they trusted agencies grouped by the scale of the agency.

Within Alaska communities trust for local government and industry was greatest in Noatak. Also in Noatak and Noorvik support for national agencies was greatest with much lower “do not know” responses which are likely due to recent interactions with the Alaska Division of Subsistence on subsistence household surveys and the Western Arctic Caribou Working Group (Figure 14).

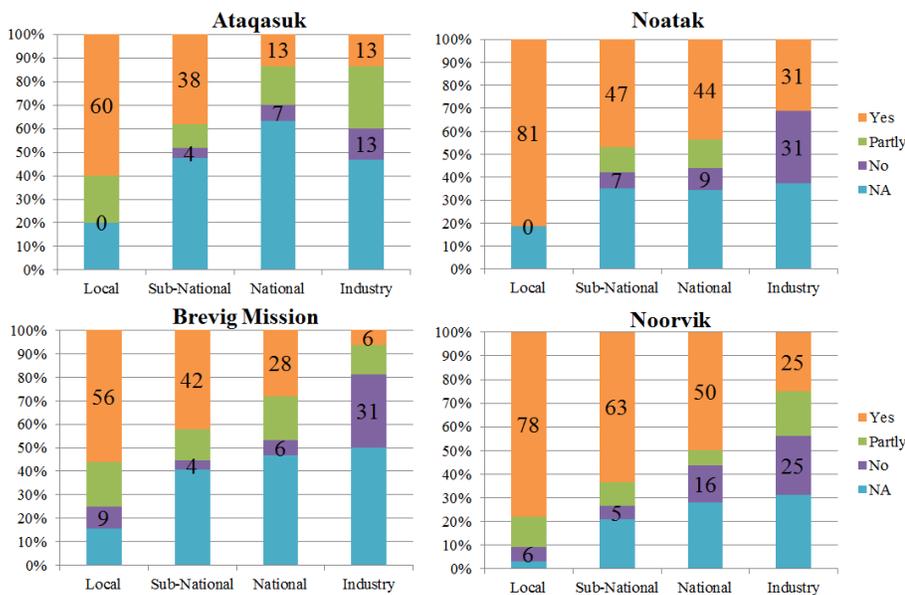


Figure 14. Percent of people that said they trusted agencies grouped by the scale of the agency for communities in Alaska.

Within North America trust was also higher for agencies that are comprised of largely indigenous employees or focused on indigenous issues (Table 3).

Table 3. Trust levels among the people who provided an answer for agencies that are primarily indigenous either based on employees or agenda.

	Alaska	Nunavut	Manitoba	Norway	Murmansk	Yamal	Taimyr
Indigenous	78.4	69.2	NA	13.8	31.0	41.5	57.9
Non-Indigenous	65.2	39.0	20.1	54.5	34.3	35.3	26.9

In Alaska we asked about 13 different agencies and even though both city and tribal council are local governments trust was much greater for the tribal council. Noatak had high trust for its tribal council and since it did not have a city council the higher trust found in Noatak did not influence city council results. Support for the State fish and wildlife advisory committee was much greater than the federal committee (RAC) largely because people were more familiar with the State committee and two of our communities had a very popular wildlife biologist who works for the state.

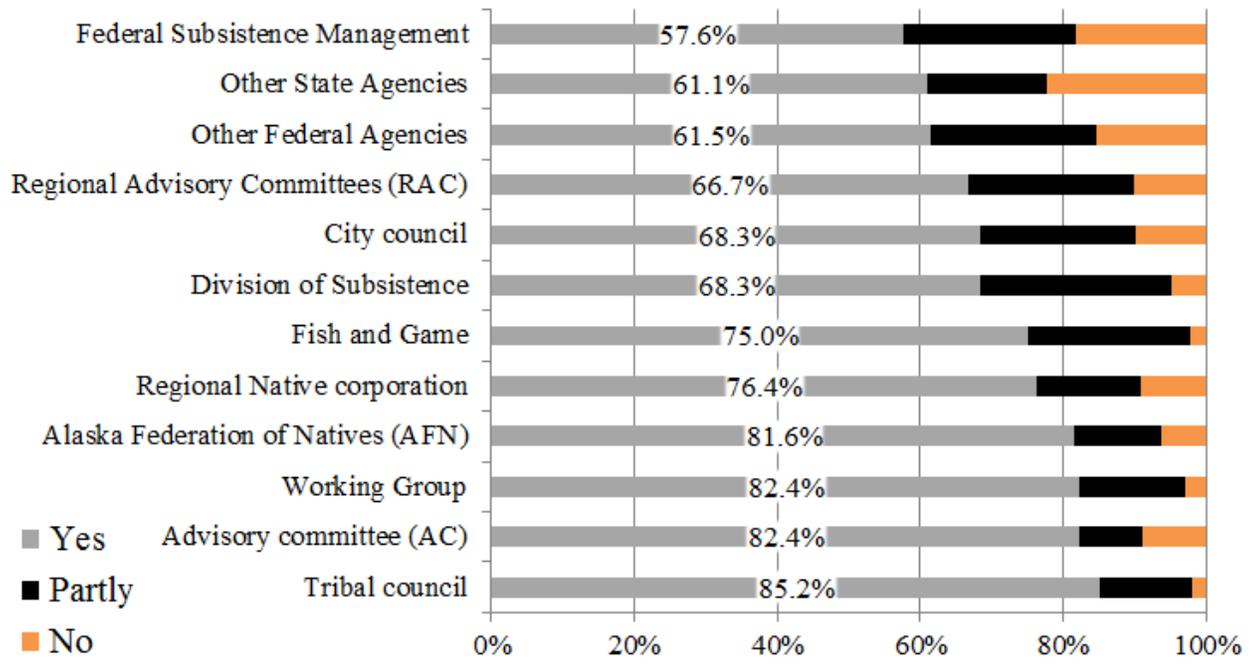


Figure 15. Trust of agencies as expressed by interviewees from Atqasuk, Noatak, Noorvik, and Brevig Mission in Alaska.

In North America education appeared to increase trust (Figure 16). Unlike Alaska, there were several interviewees in Nunavut that had no formal education.

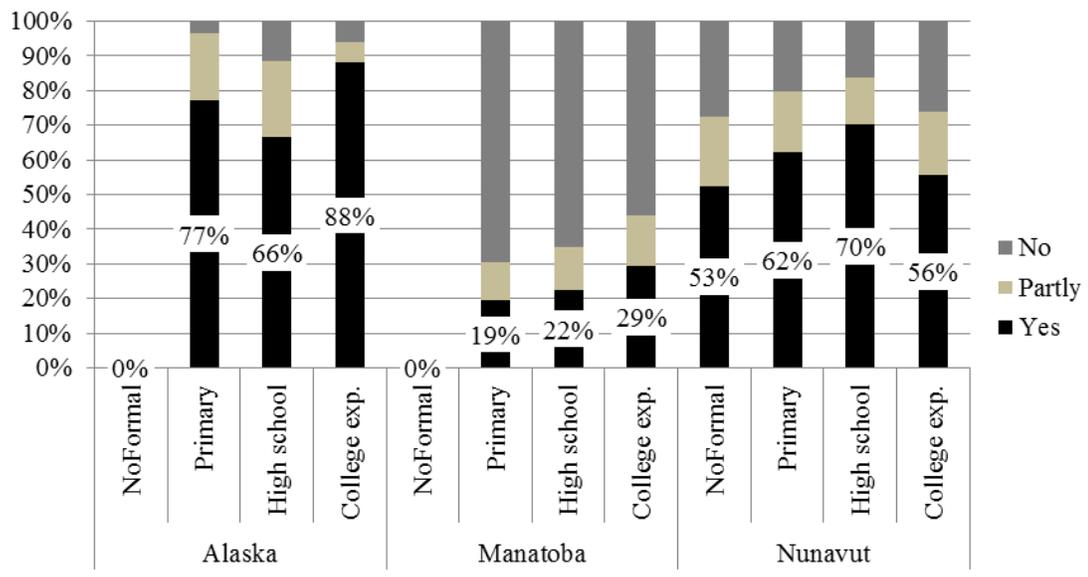


Figure 16. Trust in agencies based on different education levels.

Thank you to everyone who helped including the local hires, interviewees, University of Alaska Fairbanks, University of Tromsø, and tribal councils.

I especially want to thank the local hires

- Josh Melton & Merna Sheldon (Noorvik)
- Ward Olanna Sr. (Brevig Mission)
- Hannah Onalik (Noatak)
- Wanda Kippi (Atqasuk)

And Interviewees

- Gilbert Tocktoo, Elmer Seetot Jr., Joyce Tocktoo, Rita Olanna, Daisy Rock, Floyd Olanna, Aurthur Tocktoo, Bessie Olanna, Leonard Adams, Marcus Barr, Carla Kakoona
- Johnny Nayukok, Kate Aiken, Thomas Itta III, Doug Whiteman, Wanda Kippi, Della Shugluk, Della Ivanoff, Martha Kagak, Bert Shugluk, Elizabeth Hollingsworth, Virginia Brower
- Mary Arey, Alvin Ashby, Floyd Wesley Jr., Wendle Booth Sr., Robbie Kirk, Evelyn Shy, Carol Wesley, Allen Downey, Vernon Adams Sr., Helen Ashby, Hannah Onalik, Rebecca Brutche

To give comments or for more information about the TUNDRA project please contact:

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