

Human Security in the Arctic : From Canadian Rangers to Climate Change

Magali Vullierme, Ph.D.

CEARC/IRSEM, Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin, France / magali.vullierme@gmail.com

Introduction

Human Security (HS) focuses on the protection of individuals or groups of individuals against violent or non-violent threats, physical or non-physical threats. The 1994 Human Development Report identifies seven dimensions of Human Security (e.g. personal, community, or environmental security)¹.

What elements could lead to the protection of Human Security in Canadian Arctic communities ?

To determine whether Human Security is applied in Canadian Arctic domestic policy, this research analyses relational dynamics within Canadian Rangers patrols.

Case study

Canadian Rangers patrols are a sub-component of the Canadian Armed Forces reserve. Patrols are mainly composed of Indigenous Rangers under the responsibility of non-Indigenous instructors².

Objectives

- ✓ **How** do these patrols work ?
Relationships between members
- ✓ **Why** do members join these patrols ?
Purpose of these patrols
- ✓ **What** benefit(s) have these patrols ?
Safety/security benefit

Methodology

Qualitative Exploratory Inductive



This study focuses on **Nunavik** (Quebec, Canada).

- **When ?**
 - August 2016 in Aupaluk
 - December 2016 in St-Jean
- **21 interviews :**
 - 10 with Rangers
 - 11 with chain of command

Results

1st Step

Balanced Relationships



First, balanced relationships exist between Indigenous and instructors of a same patrol.

This balance results (i) from instructors' willingness to work with Indigenous cultures, from their open-mindedness and their humility ; (ii) from the adaptation of Canadian Armed Forces and of their trainings to Indigenous cultures.

2nd Step

Assimilation & Agency³



Then, this balance is not detrimental to Indigenous cultures.

On the contrary, (i) elements of instructors' assimilation – albeit limited – were identified in the data analysis ; (ii) in addition, Inuit communities strongly support these patrols which train them for Search and Rescue operations on land.

3rd Step

Strengthening of Human Security



Finally, these patrols help strengthen the Human Security in Arctic communities.

For instance, (i) by working on personal development and prevention, patrols impact on personal security; (ii) by giving structure and funding to communities, patrols help the intergenerational transmission of Inuit culture and strengthen community security.

Conclusion

The strengthening of Human Security in Canadian Arctic communities results from a **three-step process** based on balanced relationship dynamics between Inuit Rangers and non-Inuit instructors and based on a strong support from these communities towards Canadian Rangers patrols.

Going Further

Using the same inductive exploratory methodology, my post-doctoral research aims at **understanding the risks related to permafrost thaw**. Arctic communities are facing the acceleration of climate change, which poses several risks related to human security.

- How is permafrost thaw affecting Arctic communities ?
- What are the solutions – if any – to mitigate these risks ?

This research is conducted within the **Nunataryuk** project.



References

- 1 – United Nations. (1994). *Human Development Report 1994*. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). New-York : Oxford University Press.
- 2 – Lackenbauer, W. (2013). *The Canadian Rangers: A Living History*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- 3 – Vullierme, M. (2019). The Social Contribution of the Canadian Rangers: A Tool of Assimilation or Means of Agency?. *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*. Center for Military, Security and Strategic Studies. Calgary: University of Calgary.