Everybody on board

The human dimension
A Greenland perspective on capacity building in the Arctic
Foreword

A need for a different perspective on informal skills

Greenland, like many other Arctic and indigenous communities, is facing severe challenges in terms of lack of economic growth, declining income from living resources and slow establishment of new trades. Jobs in the primary sector are disappearing, while the creation of new jobs is lacking behind, resulting in negative development.

At the same time, the country is facing the challenge of a relatively large number of especially young unemployed citizens, most of whom have no or only limited formal education. This poses a problem for the individual, leaving too many people without the capacity of choosing their own way of living. Obviously it is also a problem for society. In a country with a very small labour force but with an ambition for growth, everybody needs to be on board. All human resources must be utilised.

When looking into the statistics and available official strategies and publications - and when looking at the Greenlandic society - it is evident that even though a string of initiatives have been taken in order to better the situation, a group of people are still left behind. They are unemployed and they are not part of any educational system.

This, however, does not mean they do not have other skills. Many of them most probably possess so-called informal skills, which leaves us with a number of questions: Could and should informal skills be recognised and used in a more systematic way compared to today? How would such a system affect the Greenlandic economy? How do we define and identify relevant informal skills? Could informal skills be useful for the emerging industries in Greenland? Are the people who possess such skills interested in these kinds of jobs? Is it possible to create a special “Arctic model” of a flexible labour market? And could international experiences be useful when doing so?

The purpose of this publication is to prepare the ground for further analysis and action to get everybody on board by presenting central facts when dealing with the issue of a more systematic and efficient use of informal skills in Greenland:

First, it presents the cold facts about the group of unemployed in Greenland. Second, it focuses on the present domestic initiatives on how to include and activate the unemployed with few formal skills. Third, it describes international cases that could be of inspiration to Greenland.
Greenland is the world’s 12th largest country...
with an area of 2,166,086 km² divided into 4 municipalities. Greenland obtained self-rule from Denmark in 2009. The Parliament is called Inatsisartut and the Government Naalakkersuisut.

…but has a challenging infrastructure: The Greenlandic infrastructure is based on sea and air transportation. There are no roads connecting towns and villages - commuting is not an option!

It has a small population - In total about 56,200 people. About 16,500 people live in the capital of Nuuk. About 48,000 live in towns, while 8,200 live in villages.

…which is becoming smaller and older: Total population is decreasing – the prognosis says 54,000 in 2040. Birth rates are decreasing and many young people are leaving the country. The number of 17-64 years old will decline from approx. 38,000 to 34,000 by 2040.

The economy is small… The country’s total GDP is approx. 1.85 billion EUR (2012), of which approx. 482 million EUR consists of the block grant from Denmark.

…with a large public sector and few and small companies. In 2011, 3,860 companies were based in Greenland. Almost 75% of these were owner-operator firms with fishing by far the most common occupation. Some 93% of Greenland’s export of goods originate from fishing and the industry generated approx. 348 million EUR in foreign revenue in 2011. The majority of all companies in Greenland are fully or partially owned by the self-government. This includes most of the infrastructure, the total energy supply, administration of 10,000 homes and a large part of the fishing industry. In total, these companies employ almost 6,000 people.
Greenland is developing – but not everyone is on board

In many respects Greenland is a modern, Western society. Greenland, like many other Arctic and indigenous communities also faces severe challenges in terms of lack of economic growth, declining income from living resources, slow establishment of new trades, emigration and a growing number of especially young unemployed citizens, most of whom have no or only limited formal education.

400 jobs lost in 5 years – men are paying the price

Especially the fishing industry has experienced a negative development as more than 600 people within this sector have lost their jobs from 2008 to 2013. Of these, more than two thirds were men.

On the other hand, within the same time span the public sector has grown by approximately 300 new positions of which women have occupied almost each and everyone.

Summing up the development across all sectors, in total, about 100 new positions have been established between 2008-2013, while approximately 500 jobs have been lost. This means that in total 400 jobs have disappeared. The new jobs created are solely occupied by women, leaving the men behind.

One part of the explanation for this decrease in the number of jobs in Greenland is that the total labour force in Greenland has decreased during the same period of time - mainly due to emigration.

This tendency is expected to continue in the future, hence putting further pressure on Greenland’s economy and the population’s general well-being.

A declining labour force

The fishing industry is huge but jobs within the sector are disappearing. Photo: Kuupik V. Kleist

Number of jobs

Source: Statistics Greenland

Population projection, 17-64 years

Source: Statistics Greenland
Pace is slow but new industries are emerging
Over the last few decades efforts have been made to establish new industries and new economic trades; so far with limited success:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing &amp; emerging industries in Greenland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Handicraft</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believed to hold the biggest economic potential. 1 mine under construction today (approx. 80 jobs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mining</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By far the largest industry today. Growth potential in processing and new species (eg. seaweed &amp; urchins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fishing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth potential. Today approx. 60,000 tourists a year. 4-500 full time jobs today but up to 3 times more during peak season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth potential. Biotech company (cold water enzymes) under construction. Hydroponic agriculture on the rise. Conventional agriculture may grow due to climate changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greentech &amp; agriculture</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who will get the new jobs?
Due to the strained Greenlandic economy many investments in emerging industries will come from outside of Greenland.

If Greenland is to gain a fair share of the industries and sdevelop a sustainable growth scenario it is necessary to involve local communities. This is also true if the Greenlandic people are to gain a fair share of the jobs following this development.

The local involvement must be done both by employing locals and by involving locals in the decision-making process.

This can be a challenging task on several levels:

- It is no secret that top management of most of both private and publicly owned companies in many cases consists of non-local employees (often people coming from Denmark).

- A large share of the Greenlandic labour force today is unskilled.

Even though the share is declining, more than 55% of the entire local labour force is unskilled – and often not likely to be hired by the new industries.

This often leads the new industries to employ specialists and skilled labour from other countries.

The 100 dollar question
Could a stronger focus on recognising and using informal skills be a way forward?
And if so - how should it be done?
This will address the need to ensure that more individuals will have the chance to take on the emerging jobs – if they wish to – and thus widen their possibilities in life.

Unskilled workers are still a majority

Unskilled share of labour force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Unskilled share of labour force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of unskilled workers in Greenland's total labour force
Source: Statistics Greenland
Informal skills and new ways to use them

Lack of formal education does not necessarily mean lack of skills. Many people living in the Arctic possess skills passed down from generation to generation. For the group of individuals with no formal education, subsistence economy plays a vital role in terms of providing for the family. For some it is a choice - for others it is due to lack of opportunities.

The informal skills might be useful in the emerging industries be it within tourism, raw material extraction or other types of industries. There are several examples of people using their informal skills to provide services for groups such as researchers, exploration companies and tourists.

However, there is no systematised way of identifying and recognising informal skills in Greenland today. This could be a matter for further analysis to be used in a dialogue with emerging industries in order to make sure, that everybody gets on board and that there is available local labour for emerging industries. An example of the skills acquired by a hunter is listed below.

The kind of skills it takes to be a hunter

- **Judicial knowledge**
  (knowing rules, regulations & legislation)

- **Oceanography – sea currents**
  (determining where and when to go)

- **Knowledge about climate change**
  (adapting to consequences)

- **Meteorology**
  (ability to foresee weather changes)

- **Planning & logistics**
  (flexibility to adapt to changing conditions & environment)

- **Biology**
  (knowledge of species and their migration patterns)

- **Technical skills**
  (knowing how to maintain motors and weapons)

- **Hygiene**
  (handling of catch)

Definition by the OECD

**Formal learning:**
Always organised, structured and with explicit objective to gain knowledge/skills.

**Informal learning:**
Never organised, has no set objective in terms of learning outcome. Never intentional. “Learning by experience”.

**Non-formal learning:**
Rather organised and can have learning objectives. Happens as a bi-product of more organised activities.

3 examples: Informal skills to industry
1. Sailing/navigation skills
   > tourism, transport & logistics
2. Fishing/hunting
   > food industry, tourism
3. Technical skills and knowledge of terrain
   > setting up camps for research and exploration
Who are the unemployed?

It is obvious that the most vulnerable people in Greenland - when it comes to keeping up with the pace of globalisation, modern society and emerging industries - are the people who are unemployed today. When working with informal skills, this should be the group to focus on.

But who are they? How many are they? And what are the causes behind this situation?

While a great deal of statistics exist on this matter, it is important to stress that not all information is available and that the statistical methods change quite often. This makes it difficult to compare unemployment figures from year to year. It is also important to be aware that there is probably a group of non-registered unemployed people.

Finally, emigration from Greenland influences the unemployment numbers, making it probable that the actual unemployment rates might be higher than accounted for in the statistics.

They are numerous - with seasonal peaks

When counted over a full year, approximately 6,086 citizens are unemployed, i.e. more than 10 percent of the population and 22 percent of the labour force, are unemployed for a shorter or a longer period of time. (Source: Statistics Greenland 2013). Some of them are just unemployed for a few days while others are unemployed every day throughout the year. The statistics on the subsequent pages refer to the total number of 6,086 unemployed people throughout the year in order to show what characterises this group.

As evidenced by the figure below, unemployment rises considerably during the winter months. Women generally occupy less seasonal positions such as in the public sector.

The number of unemployed only exceeds 3000 a month during the winter period when i.a. the fishing industry experiences a significant lower production and therefore requires fewer workers.

At worst, Greenland’s monthly unemployment rate, thus, accounts for about 12 percent of the total labour force.
They are men living in towns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towns</td>
<td>1,981</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>4,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>1,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,506</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>6,086</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unemployed in numbers by gender and place of residence, (2013). Source: Statistics Greenland

They are young people and women living in villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>18-34 years</th>
<th>35-49 years</th>
<th>50-64 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towns</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sermersooq</td>
<td>54,7%</td>
<td>17,6%</td>
<td>9,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eqeqta</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>18,5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qaasuitsup</td>
<td>77,9%</td>
<td>9,1%</td>
<td>3,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujalleq</td>
<td>49,2%</td>
<td>8,6%</td>
<td>3,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total average</td>
<td>63,7%</td>
<td>13,45%</td>
<td>4,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


They have little or no formal education

Unemployed Greenlanders’ highest level of completed education compared to general educational level in Greenland (2013). Source: Statistics Greenland

Need for new initiatives

A majority of the total number of unemployed has only finished primary school and are, thus, mainly qualified for manual labour. This makes them vulnerable to seasonal changes in e.g. the fishing industry, while narrowing down their possibilities to get jobs in other sectors. This has negative consequences to the individual’s well being, the national economy and, thus, to the Greenland society as a whole. There is a great need for extra educational efforts to provide this group with more formalised skills. The Government of Greenland is very well aware of this and several initiatives are implemented in order to get some of these people back into the educational system.

Some of the unemployed do, however, have informal skills.

Supplementary initiatives could put greater emphasis on such informal and non-formal skills to make it more visible that some of the unemployed people possess competences that could be useful to other industries in Greenland and to new Arctic investors.

By systematising these skills and to some extent formalising them so they correspond with the most basic requirements in e.g. the mining and tourism industry, the sum of possibilities could be improved for some of the unemployed people.

But an estimated 70 % would be able to have a job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Match grp 1</th>
<th>Match grp 2</th>
<th>Match grp 3</th>
<th>Undefined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Sermersooq</td>
<td>54,7%</td>
<td>17,6%</td>
<td>9,5%</td>
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<td>3,4%</td>
<td>9,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujalleq</td>
<td>49,2%</td>
<td>8,6%</td>
<td>3,5%</td>
<td>38,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total average</td>
<td>63,7%</td>
<td>13,45%</td>
<td>4,6%</td>
<td>18,25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry estimate</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be stressed that the indications of the different match groups are still quite uncertain hence the difference between the municipalities’ own categorisation and the ministry’s estimate in the table. This is both a challenge to the everyday social work in Greenland, the long-term strategies and to the present fact sheet. One explanation to this uncertainty according to Greenland’s Ministry of Industry, Labour and Trade is that the system is still relatively new and that it may be problematic to categorise friends and family members as being part of match group 2 or 3. The share of unemployed placed in especially match group 1 might, thus, be larger on paper than it is in reality. For the same reasons Statistics Greenland do not use the match group categories.

**There is a residual group of very young people**

A factor to take into account when trying to describe the group of unemployed with no formal education is the fact that there are still some groups of unemployed who have no incentive to register with the local labour offices and, thus, do not appear in the unemployment statistics. One of these groups is people younger than 18 years who usually have no access to social welfare and therefore do not register. They are often referred to as the ‘residual group’ - and it is therefore a significant challenge that there is very limited knowledge about this group.

According to an estimate by a Special Consultant from the Ministry of Industry, Labour and Trade, this group consists of more than 1000 young people under 29 years:

**Up to 1000 young people are left outside**

Greenland citizens younger than 29 years. The residual group consists mostly of people under 18 years. According to an estimate by a Special Consultant from Greenland’s Ministry of Industry, Labour and Trade this group consists of 542 men and 598 women. Source: Presentation by Janus Chemnitz Kleist, 17 June 2015.
The complexity of understanding flow in the labour market

In this publication flow is defined as the movements from bottom to top positions in a society, movement between sectors or movement of labour between countries.

Like most other societies, Greenland imports labour but in the case of Greenland there are, however, some special features. Because of the country’s very small labour force and low educational level combined with a wish to match the level of public welfare of other Nordic societies and an aspiration for economic growth, Greenland has imported specialised labour for top management positions, mainly from Denmark. This has caused a tendency towards a division of the population into “A and B teams” with Greenlandic labour taking the hard jobs with low salaries.

There is also an import of unskilled labour even though the unemployment rates are rather high and that especially people without formal education are at risk of becoming unemployed.

The Greenlandic society is characterised by a rather elevated mobility rate both internally in Greenland and externally; a large number of people moves from Greenland to Denmark every year. Many of these people are young and well educated, thus, causing a problem of brain drain.

Migration 1987-2012 - Many people emigrate

The level of both emigration and immigration is high but the tendency towards a net emigration is stable.

A large number of emigrants do not return to Greenland and at the same time there is a need to attract qualified labour.

Source: Greenland Economic Council, 2014

Education, braindrain and urbanisation

In general, the group of people who leaves Greenland has a higher educational level than those who stay. In 2012, 66 percent of the people who has left Greenland since 1994 has a higher educational level than primary school.

A large part of the emigrants are characterised by the fact that they have a close connection to the outside world - either because they themselves or their parents were born outside of Greenland.

It is particularly this part of the group of emigrants who has a high educational level. 83 percent have a higher educational level than primary school.

Source: Calculations made by Greenland Economic Council, 2014
Greenlandic labour is first choice – on paper

Greenland is fighting the "Greenlandic Paradox" which is the fact that even though the unemployment rates are high, there is still a need for companies to import labour - including unskilled labour - from abroad, indicating a mis-match between available and wanted qualifications.

For many years, there has been a great deal of political focus on this issue. In 1992, the so-called Law no.1 was passed. It says that if it is not possible to fill a vacant position with local labour, the employer must document this before employment of foreign labour can be accepted. The law extend to jobs requiring higher maritime education, jobs requiring education as social worker, jobs requiring craft’s apprenticeship and jobs that do not require any formal education whatsoever. If the law is violated, the employer will be fined.

The rules for employing Scandinavian labour are less strict. The employer is required to ask for relevant local labour at the municipality before employing Scandinavian labour, but if there are no relevant local candidates, the employer is allowed to recruit from all the Nordic countries.

Greenland’s four municipalities have altogether permitted an import of approximately 200-250 unskilled foreign workers per year. They are mainly from Asia and primarily employed in the tourism industry, in restaurants and in the service sector. Immigrants from the Nordic countries work primarily as skilled specialists in mining, construction and as educators. In official publications, such as the employment strategy of the Government of Greenland, the mining and quarrying sector bears the hopes of future employment in spite of negative contributions for the past years. Increased employment in health care and tourism is also considered likely.


Close relation between educational level and sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational profile</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Higher</th>
<th>Upper secondary</th>
<th>Only primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary sec. (excl. public)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Distribution of main employment in different sectors according to educational profile, 2013.
Source: Statistics Greenland

Sector-difference between villages and towns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Towns</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary sector</td>
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<td>Secondary sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sectorial distribution according to place of residence. Source: Statistics Greenland
Fishing dominates the primary sector - and is mostly done by locals

The primary sector in Greenland

Fishing, hunting, and agriculture

A somewhat segregated labour market

Women's occupation

Men's occupation

Occupation by gender in Greenland. ‘Public sector’ consists of public administration, health services, educational and social institutions. Source: Statistics Greenland

The public sector is also dominated by locals - but with higher share of non locals

Salary difference shows the flow problem

Average salary

Source: Statistics Greenland
The case of tourism

Hotel Arctic: A strategy for local youth

As part of their CSR policy, Hotel Arctic in Ilulissat specifically seeks to establish apprenticeships combined with school attendance for local youth interested in a career in the hotel business. In 2014 and 2015, 11 young people will finish their apprenticeship at Hotel Arctic. Together with the Society for Greenlandic Children, a reputable NGO promoting the welfare of neglected children in Greenland, Hotel Arctic works to prepare students in lower secondary school for further education or employment.

On a few occasions, the hotel has made special efforts to include trainees from the local orphanage Sarliaq which is invited around each year for Christmas celebrations. In 2013, the managing director of Hotel Arctic, Erik Bjerregaard, received an award from the Greenlandic unions for creating a business with mainly Greenlandic labour and encouraging the further education of locals.

Source: Erik Bjerregaard, Hotel Arctic, www.hotelarctic.com

Tourism in Greenland is expected to be an area of growth in the future. No official estimates exist as to the level and composition of employment in the tourism industry. Unofficially, it has been estimated that 400-500 are employed full-time in the industry and that the number increases by up to a factor of three during the peak-season of the summer months.

For several years, various Greenlandic politicians have demanded that foreign workers in the industry should be replaced with local labour. The exact extent of foreign employment in the tourism industry is unknown. One estimate states that of 150 guides working in the country during peak seasons, only 20 percent are from Greenland. The Hotels and Restaurants industry is dominated by people born in Greenland.

Obstacles point towards solutions

A number of obstacles to hiring more local labour can be identified from reviewing the ongoing public debate on the topic. No formal survey of the issue has however been carried out.

Greenlanders dominate the hotel and restaurant jobs

A tax issue?

If a worker from a Nordic country hired by a tour operator in her home country replaces Greenlandic labour for periods shorter than 6 months a year, she is not liable to pay taxes in Greenland. This is a common practice among Danish operators and it has considerable negative implications for the public finances.

Reasons for few Greenlanders in tourism industry according to local operators

Negative incentives for local candidates:
- Low wages
- Intensity and seasonal character of work

Negative incentives for tour operators
- Lack of profession specific skills
- Lack of foreign language proficiency

Source: Statistics Greenland
Development throughout history

To understand the situation of today it is necessary to look at some of the previous events throughout history. In the present case, some tendencies stand out when looking at the societal developments since Greenland was decolonised and formally included as a county in the Danish Realm in 1953: First of all, the rapid modernisation caused a more divided society where an increasing number of Danes often occupied the most powerful positions. In reaction to this, the so-called greenlandisation process was initiated, which had grave consequences for the educational system, e.g because the majority of teacher, who were Danes, were not able to teach in Greenlandic. While having negative influence on the educational level, these policies were successful in the way that more Greenlanders came to occupy some of the higher positions in society at the expense of Danes. More details are available in the brief overview below, while more nuances will be added in the project’s future analysis.
Public and company initiatives

Throughout history a string of initiatives have been taken to upgrade and qualify the unskilled labour force to take on jobs in current and emerging industries. The statistics speak volumes: The task is challenging and the curve is yet to be broken in order to provide Greenlanders with little or no formal education with a wider range of job possibilities and better their chances of entering a formal labour market. Many current initiatives aim at enrolling people into some kind of formal education programme:

Piareersarfíit

Established in 2007 with the purpose of offering guidance on training and employment opportunities, skills development, skills upgrading and retraining of the labour force, including the preparation of individual action plans for education or employment.

Second largest educational institution in Greenland measured by the number of persons activated. Each person enrolled at a Piareersarfík course receives an allowance from the Government of approx. 575 Euros per month. The duration of a course is 10 months.

In 2014, a total of 577 people completed a course. Most participants are women between 18 -25.

NUIKI

10-months courses adapted to each settlement. NUIKI is a five-years project (2012-2017) made possible by a donation from the Villum Foundation and a two-years sponsorship of free internet from Tele Greenland. The goal is to establish 12 one-year entities with 15 students in each.

NUIKI is expected to reach a total of 180 participants. Courses equivalent to 10th grade in a public school and it focuses primarily on Greenlandic, Danish, English and mathematics. Students also get vocational guidance and receive training in personal development. According to the mid-term evaluation, 80 percent of the 43 persons who had completed a NUIKI course at the time of evaluation either got a job or were enrolled at another educational course.

Piorsaavík

Piorsaavík offers educational and activation programmes for young people between 16-24 years who are not yet ready for a job, further education or a course at Piareersarfík. The initiative focuses on practical upskilling through different workshops focusing on e.g. carpentering, cooking and needlework. The activities varies from one town to another and currently only Nuuk, Paamiut and Tasiilaq have such offers, while the Piareersarfík in Ittoqqortoormiit offers similar courses.
Royal Arctic Line

Royal Arctic Line - which has exclusive concession to all maritime transport of goods to and from Greenland and between Greenland’s towns and settlements – offers both maritime and land-based educations. The list of maritime educations includes machinist, navigator and ship mechanic, while the land based educations are IT support, construction engineer, metal worker, office clerk, shipping clerk, storage and transportation. They all combine theory and practice and the students get an “attractive salary” whilst being enrolled in the programmes.

Royal Greenland

Every year, Royal Greenland offers four of their employees’ children a stay at a continuation school in Denmark with the purpose of upgrading their skills in a particular field.

Nukissiorfiit

The energy company Nukissiorfiit offers 20 trainee positions annually for many kinds of different jobs such as ship fitter, office employee, machinist and engineer.

Strategies and other public initiatives

The Ministry of Industry, Labour and Trade is responsible for strategies and initiatives in the area of recognition of skills and up-skilling.

In 2010-11, the Ministry carried out a pilot programme on recognition of prior learning (RPL) in the Kujalleq Municipality in the south of Greenland in collaboration with several educational institutions. Teachers from Piareersarfiit throughout the country have shown a keen interest in the programme. An evaluation of the pilot programme has shown that participants are mostly interested in a locally based recognition of their skills allowing them to apply directly for a job. An RPL programme is yet to be implemented.

A project targeting capacity building for non-skilled workers (the so-called PKU-programme) is part of the Government’s educational plan focusing on people at risk of losing their jobs (often in the primary sector) with the aim of further educating this group but also to match it with growing sectors such as tourism and mining but also construction and childcare in the municipalities.

The target group is unskilled people in risk of unemployment and with a need for up-skilling. The means are short courses of 1-2 weeks payed by the Government.
International examples

The challenge of coping with a low educational level is not isolated to the Greenlandic case. Other countries throughout the world are dealing with similar problems and have also - in different ways - tried to solve them. Some countries are focusing on specific programmes targeting people with informal skills. Some by matching the informals skills with industry needs, some by upskilling initiatives taking their point of departure in the identification of informal skills. A few examples are shown here.

Australian Mining company targets aboriginees?

VTEC programme: Initiative aiming at levering the status and living standards between the aboriginees and the white population.

Goal: Employing and educating aboriginees with limited or no formal education and/or challenged by personal issues.

Cornerstones of the program: For every individual enrolled with the programme, it shall be assured that all aspects of her/his condition and living standards be examined out of a holistic point of view. Enrolled individuals are guaranteed a job when the programme is finished to both the trainees and the employers’ satisfaction.

Means: Trainees are guided by a mentor from day one – often a senior colleague. Holistic approach including respect and awareness of the trainees’ culture, traditions and language, including special holidays, community events and habits, which may differ from the dominant group of workers employed. A prerequisite condition is that trainees must have access to existing public training and rehab programs.

Southern Africa: Tour guides with informal skills

Namibia: A Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pilot programme in the occupational areas of Hospitality, Tourism and Construction took place from 2012 through 2014. The programme provided an alternative to the formal training opportunities leading to certification within the industries. According to MCA Namibia’s Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Operations, the recognition of informal skills provided RPL graduates with the opportunity to achieve equal salaries and improved career opportunities.

South Africa: Tourist guides, trainers and assessors have to be accredited by the Culture Art Tourism Hospitality and Sports Sector Education and Training Authority who provide access to further learning and provide “redress” through certification and recognition. The category “Local Guide” was introduced by the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (FGASA), a CATHSSETA accredited training provider, to allow predominantly illiterate guides to obtain a qualification and register to work legally as a guide in a restricted geographical area. The FGASA also assesses and trains nature guides at more advanced levels, which include theoretical knowledge.
Saskatchewan: "Ready to Work" Programme

A structured transition into the tourism labour force through classroom and workplace training based on emerit National Occupational Standards. Over 11,000 unemployed and underemployed people across Canada have accessed job readiness training and career planning through the Ready to Work internship programme. The programme provides participants with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and experience required for long-term, stable employment in tourism.

Evaluation: Main contribution of the programme are “soft skills” and pre-employment training rather than job-specific skills.

Faroe Islands: Knitting company trains Jordanian women

Background: The Faroese knitwear company Guðrun & Guðrun has been termed as ‘eco lux’ in which authenticity, craftsmanship and elegance are central elements. Add a mix of sustainability, CSR and international attention – through the popular Danish TV-series The Killing in which the protagonist wears a Faroese sweater – and you will get a globally successful knitwear label.

The global demand for Faroese jumpers has increased so much that the knitting capacity on the Faroe Islands, with less than 50,000 citizens, is no longer sufficient. Today, the wool is send to Scotland for washing and to Lithuania for spinning before either returning to the Faroe Islands or send to Jordan where a local women cooperative is engaged in the final process. A similar knitting cooperative in Peru is producing handmade sweaters of Peruvian alpaca wool.

Training: Though the Jordanian women were used to polyester, the traditional way of creating Jordanian knitwear is similar to those of the Faroese. The cooperation with the Peruvian women was initiated because of a parallel production of alpaca wool (some find the Faroese wool a bit too itchy) and instead of buying expensive alpaca wool in Italy, Guðrun & Guðrun established direct contact to women in Peru who they soon after visited. Besides the economic benefits for both sides, the Jordanian women also receive business training to get the knowledge and motivation needed to establish an independent business.

Results: Approximately 120 women are involved in the handmade knitting production on the Faroes Islands, in Jordan and in Peru with about 40 women each place. The Peruvian and Jordanian women’s background may vary, but no kind of formal education is needed to become part of the cooperation.

Need for further investigation

Which international cases are the most interesting in a Greenland Perspective?

Which cases are the most successful?

Which cases could inspire a new kind of programme focusing on the people without formal skills - but without a point of departure in a formal educational structure?
The missing links

In this publication we have let the numbers, charts and tables do the talking and the message is clear: Greenland faces a job-challenge. Traditional jobs are disappearing, the educational rate is too low and many young people are risking a life without formal education and, thus, often without the possibility of getting a job and choosing their own path in life.

From existing publications, surveys and statistical documentation we know that young people in villages and men having held traditional jobs are especially at risk of missing opportunities in a future Greenland with emerging industries which often look for specialised or at least formally educated employees. We also know that the Greenlandic economy is under pressure. In addition, the Greenlandic society faces a flow challenge caused mainly by historical and educational reasons. A large part of top management in Greenlandic companies and of public administration is carried out by people born outside Greenland, causing a division into A and B teams in society. If the Greenlandic people wants more influence on own lives this challenge needs to be solved - there need to be a push from the bottom and up to fill all positions in society. Establishing a University was an important step to fill up the positions from the top - but it is also important to establish a push from the bottom.

On the lookout for a new type of action

All of these factors combined underline the need to make better use of the resources of young people in Greenland. In a society with a very small labour force, it is crucial that all human resources are used in the best way if society is to create growth and wealth - not to mention the saved benefits and added tax revenues when moving people from unemployment to jobs. And not less important: It is crucial for the individual to feel needed and useful.

From the information gathered, it is evident that there could be a need for a new type of approach to this challenge, which has remained for many years. Even though many initiatives have been taken throughout history and even though the Greenlandic Government as well as companies and private organisations are focusing on the challenge, too many people are still left behind to the damage of themselves and society.

It also seems clear that it is not an option to wait 2-3 generations for the educational level to improve. For society as much as for the individual there is no time to wait; action needs to be taken immediately.

Further analysis and collaboration

Further analysis must be done to find the answer to what kind of action is needed. In the making of this publication it has become clear that although information about the number of unemployed, the educational level, current initiatives and historical facts are available, there is still a need for further investigation and analysis. On the basis of the information we have gathered, we estimate that there is a group of approximately 1500-2000 young people who are unemployed with little or no formal education who are not - and maybe never will - become part of a formal educational system. This, however, does not mean they are without skills. A system a needed to identify these skills and to provide more information about which actions could be relevant to activate these people into society and give them a proper chance.

Under the auspices of Greenland Perspective we have undertaken this preliminary study and we intend to deepen and widen the topic with the aim of further analysis and establish concrete new programmes such as economic opportunities for on-the-job-training outside Greenland, to create a system of formalising informal skills without going through the school system.

To avoid an escalating deroute, concrete actions has to be taken in a not too distant future. If new ways are found to deal with the challenge, it would be an advantage not only for Greenland, but for many of the other Arctic communities.
About Greenland Perspective

Greenland is rich in human and natural resources which could contribute to solving both local challenges such as unemployment, too limited growth, poor living conditions, and global problems like food shortage, health problems and climate problems. Greenland Perspective believes it can be done by exploring what we already know about the country, by developing new technologies and by exploring new ways of developing society.

Greenland Perspective is a multi-disciplinary and cross-border project doing just that: Exploring the resources of Greenland, sharing knowledge – and doing it in collaboration with civil society, industry and authorities. The initiative is started by the University of Copenhagen in collaboration with Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland. The initiative’s strategic partner - Polar DTU (Technical University of Denmark) – is focusing on making the research of the initiative available to industry.

Greenland Perspective is headed by professor at the University of Copenhagen, Minik Rosing.

More information on the initiative can be found at www.greenlandperspective.dk
Follow Greenland Perspective on Twitter: @glperspective

About “the human dimension” project

The Human Dimension project is part of Greenland Perspective’s Nation Innovation theme package, exploring the use of human resources and societal development.

The human dimension project is headed by Kuupik Vandersee Kleist, former Premier of Greenland. A final analysis and catalogue of possibilities with the participation of organisations, industry and researchers from several universities is set to be published primo 2016.

About the publication

Research and production: Kuupik V. Kleist, Marc Jacobsen, Peter Andreas Nielsen, Monica Therese Jacobsen, Rebekka Johanne Knudsen.

For a workpaper version with references please check out www.greenlandperspective.dk

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