

Development in Indigenous Australia: international meanings and local approaches

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The 'Development' story

- **50s/60s Modernisation: stages of development (Rostow 1960)**
- **70s Basic Human Needs: integrated rural development.**
- **70s Dependency theory: development = exploitative relations**
- **80s Reduced state role & structural adjustment: 'lost decade'**
- **90s and onwards:**
 - **Human Development & the capabilities approach (UNDP);**
 - **Ecologically Sustainable Development**
 - **Ownership, participation, partnership, empowerment (OECD)**
 - **Human rights and citizenship approaches**
 - **Sustainable Livelihoods approaches**
 - **'Post'-development.**

Development in Indigenous Australia

Modernisation

- dominant policy approach
- labour market/CDEP/job seeker & training programs (DEEWR)
- support for Indigenous entrepreneurs, businesses
- IBA programs.

Development in Indigenous Australia

Dependency Critique: the development of underdevelopment

- evident in some writings 1970s & 1980s e.g. Hartwig (1978), Drakakis Smith (1984)
- appropriation of land; exploitation of cheap Aboriginal labour; early relations with mining industry; welfare economy.

Development in Indigenous Australia

Human Development approach: development = expanding people's choices and capabilities for people to lead a life *they value*.

- Pearson and Cape York Reform Agenda
- Development related to range of determinants of freedom & removal of *unfreedoms*
- Capabilities = person's abilities to make use of resources at their disposal
- Diversity in evaluation of capabilities

Cape York Agenda

- 'Ensuring that CY people have the capabilities to choose a life they value'
- Expanding the choices available to CY people
- Welfare payments have limited capabilities and contributed to *unfreedoms* – loss of rights, responsibilities, dignity
- Development necessary to provide meaningful life choices

North American Native Nations

Development's goal - freedom to

- Choose where to live, what c'ty to be part of
- Run own schools: own curricula
- Have own people sustain the environment, adjudicate disputes
- Provide health care: own standards & priorities
- Build communities where people can & want to live.
- Begay, M., Cornell, S., Jorgenson, M., and Kalt, J. 2007. 'Development, Governance, Culture', in, Jorgensen, M. (ed.) *Rebuilding Native Nations: Strategies for Governance and Development*, University of Arizona Press, p. 36.

Indigenous Development in Australia

- Community development and participation
- 1970s, and later through ATSIC
- Reflected in work of Aboriginal community organisations
- CDEPs meant to reflect such approaches, but variable
- Govts struggle to respond to & support holistic Indigenous-driven development

Participatory Approaches

- Participatory tools & processes widely used internationally
- Emphasis on community empowerment and sustainability of development outcomes
- Debates about genuine empowerment
- Australia – ritual ‘consultation’

Indigenous Development in Australia

- Human rights and citizenship
- History of Aboriginal campaigns
- NGOs e.g. Oxfam, Save the Children
- Close the Gap Health Rights Campaign basis

Indigenous Development in Australia

- Livelihoods approach
- Based on 'insider viewpoints' and realities of way people construct and give meaning to their lives
- Considers five types of assets: natural, human, cultural, social and economic/financial – and institutional frameworks which mediate their use.

Livelihoods approach

- *Implicit* in hybrid economy, caring for/working on country, IPA strategies
- DKCRC *explicitly* using Livelihoods framework in desert Aboriginal communities
- Contributing as
 - participatory process to develop shared understandings, and
 - way of understanding local systems - how policy can better support them
- External linkages important to facilitate these approaches.

Indigenous Development in Australia

- Post-development
- Concept of 'Indigenous modernities' (Robins 2003)
- People resist, embrace, reshape & accommodate development interventions
- Use modern technology to reinvigorate culture (e.g. GPS for land management, IT for language revival, internet marketing of art).

Indigenous Development in Australia

- No single strategy for all contexts
- No agreed definition of development or desired outcomes
- Govt policies strong on modernisation, with some human development emphasis
- Other actors using/advocating more diverse approaches
- Need for policy to support these diverse approaches more clearly as well.