Angeralsimaffeqangiarneri kanginnuaqatigiinni
Nuummi paasisimasaqarneq
Understanding the social dynamics of homelessness in Nuuk

Steven Amftjord (Iliisimatusarfik) & Julia Keruliuk Christensen (Roskilde University)

Angeralsimaffeqangiiq nunni isuttiri qaaffaktarpoota, sooita Kalaitli Nunanni iluqortiit aqaniik naa Nunmi, tassiia angeralsimaffeqangiiqerinnuq arnekurarputtaraqta uqokuq 2000-pi aqaniik Nunanni. Nunani avarneriti angeralsimaffeqangiiqerringiiq niisassiiuniqeq ingoqinijatilluqtaqeqaasiiaq uqarnaniittuqtaa nunalliiqarinnaat昆iiq niississassuulluqtaqeqaasiiaq.

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Nuuk (17,000 inhabitants) is the capital city of Greenland (56,500 inhabitants) and the city where visible signs of homelessness in the country are most apparent. In many ways, Nuuk demonstrates social mechanics to those found in the rest of the world’s urban centres, where the uneven concentration of social, economic, infrastructural and institutional resources act as a draw for those who are in need or in search of opportunity. Those who often find themselves living under homelessness, however, generally do not have either a resourceful social network, nor the skills and qualifications that are in the demand by the current labour market. For a skilled and modernized workforce is one challenge of Greenland’s rapid modernization from former colony to a self-governing nation. These changes in combination with demographic shifts have put an immense pressure on the government to supply people with affordable housing, all in the part where transportation, infrastructure and labour costs are significant. Underloring or worsening the trendual challenges inherent to modernization and urbanization in the Canadian context are the many and complex structural, social and health factors that relate to homelessness.

We are currently engaged in a collaborative, community-based research approach with a range of qualitative methods over a period of two years aimed at understanding the social strengthen of Greenlandic people and communities (see Arnfjord and Christensen 2013b). The principal aim of this research is to understand through a western-oriented perspective rooted in the experiences of North American and European urban locales in Europe or North America. The principal aim of this research is to not only advance a place-based understanding of the social dynamics of homelessness in Nuuk, but also to contribute to a trendual understanding of homelessness in the context of seeking meaningful research outcomes through research objectives that emphasize the health and social strength of Greenlandic people and communities (see Amftjord and Christensen 2014). We are currently engaged in a collaborative, community-based research approach with a range of qualitative methods over a period of two years (2010-2011) and the city where visible signs of homelessness are most apparent.

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