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CREATE CHANGE

From an SIA to a resilience lens: implications for learning between fields

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My studies in SIA and resilience

SIA 1980s – 2000s

Coordinator East Kimberley Impact Assessment Project (1986-1990) - Indigenous Community SIA methodology (Ross 1990) – Indigenous/generic

Coronation Hill SIA (1990, with Lane, Dale) - Indigenous

Theoretical frameworks (e.g. Ross and McGee 2006) – health and mining case

Resilience (2000s to present)

Stanthorpe study – what makes communities resilient, relationship between individual and community resilience (Buikstra et al. 2010)

North Queensland – what makes communities resilient? Guidance for regional managers (Ross et al. 2010, Maclean et al. 2013, 2014, 2017)

Theoretical development across psychology and social-ecological system paradigms (Berkes & Ross 2013, Ross & Berkes 2014, Berkes & Ross 2016)

SIA and Community resilience both involve ‘agency’

Communities are proactive in responding to potentially impactful developments and events.



SIA

Focuses on the events (projects, cumulative) and also on SEA – impact assessment in planning

Shaping the event

The impact is seen as arising from the event (linear thinking?)

Usually single level, e.g. a community, a region.

Usually one-off assessments

Even in cumulative (where we need to consider over time as well as multiple projects)

Resilience

Focuses on the nature of responses and outcomes

Not much differentiation among the events (since the focus is on unplanned, usually 'natural' events)

Thinks cumulatively

Responses to single and successive events

Not linear. A system can build, then lose, resilience over successive shocks

Multi-level view

Levels in the system affect each other in complex ways (beyond 'cumulative')

Navigating (not shaping) the system responses

Adaptive co-management

Understanding and building adaptive capacity

SIA theory

Very few models were ever developed

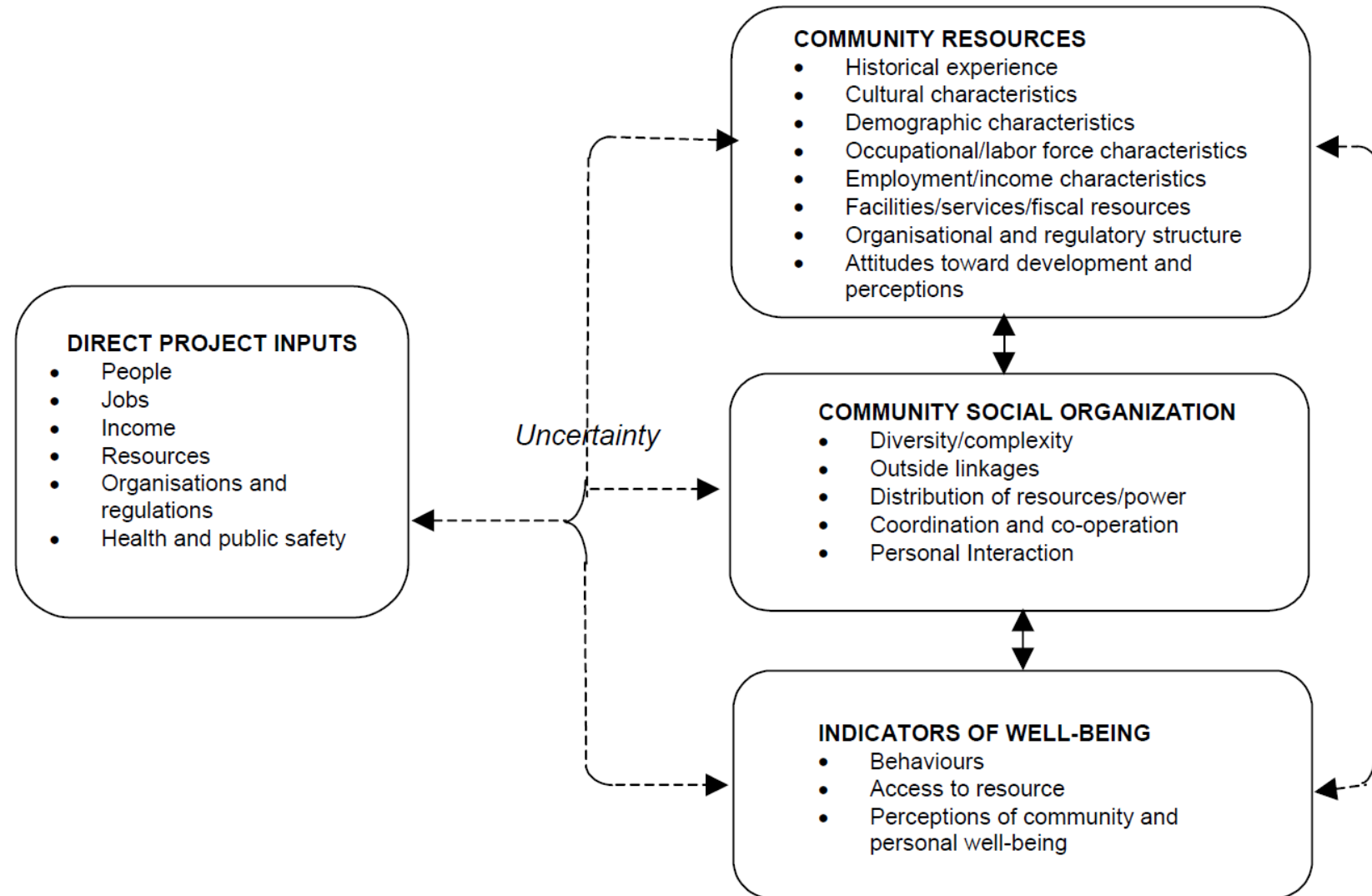


Figure 1. Social organisation model
Source: Branch et al (1984: 27)

SIA theory cont.

Community organization model

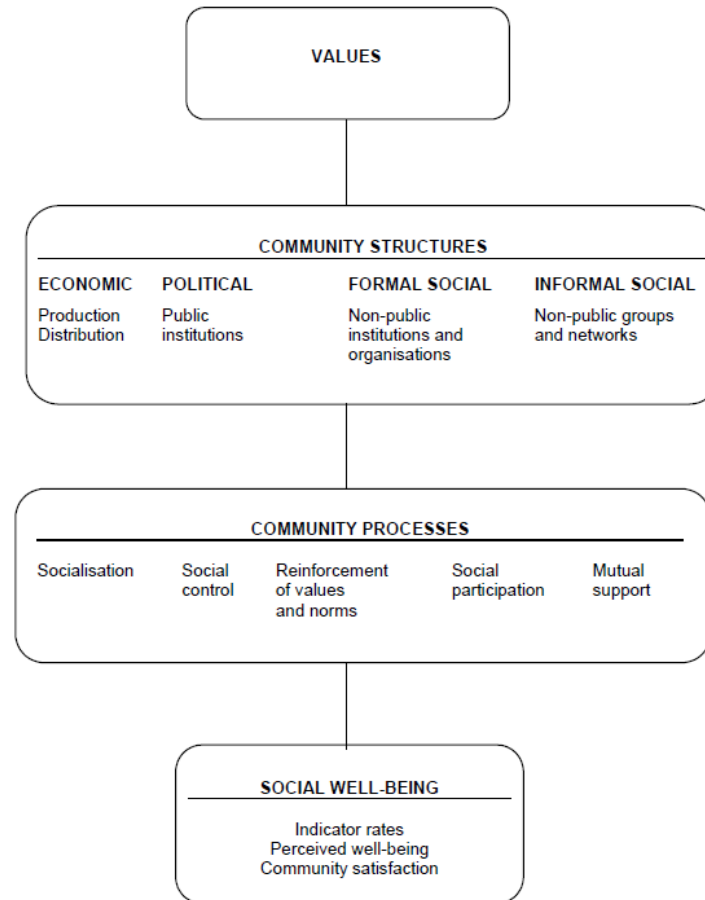


Figure 2. Community organisation model
Source: Little and Krannich (1988: 30)

SIA theory cont.

Community response model

Social vitality

patterns of social behaviour (interactive or private)

Economic viability

degree to which communities are economically dependent on, or independent of, the regional, provincial or national economy

Political efficacy

the extent to which social vitality and economic viability are associated with the mobilization of political power and processes. Internal debates and use of external linkages.



One test

A study of the cumulative effects of lead contamination and mining industry downsizing in Broken Hill (1990s)
Ross & McGee found these frameworks would not have fully predicted the outcomes.

Social response model

- Community had strong social vitality, apparent political efficacy, yet did not provide strong social support. Economic dependence on mining led to unwillingness to confront the source of the health threat. i.e. interactions among the factors in the social response model matter.

Social organization, community organization, models

- How to tell which values are pivotal?
 - In such a socially cohesive community, why did individual values and behaviour prevail over social support?
The social processes are subtle: disempowerment of private individuals

Conclusions:

Frameworks are still useful but remain a 'best guess'.

Dynamics in an impact situation are complex.

They draw attention to different aspects, e.g. formal and informal social organization, values, culture

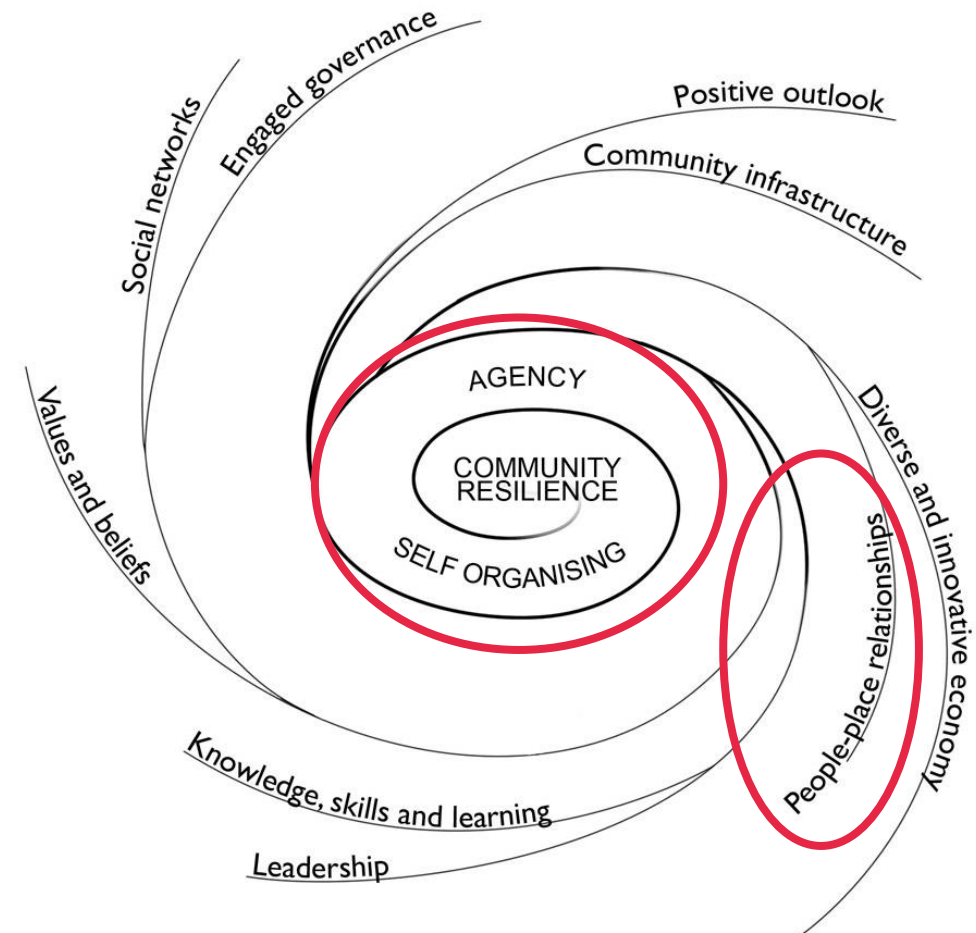
** Importance of community *agency***

Turning to resilience

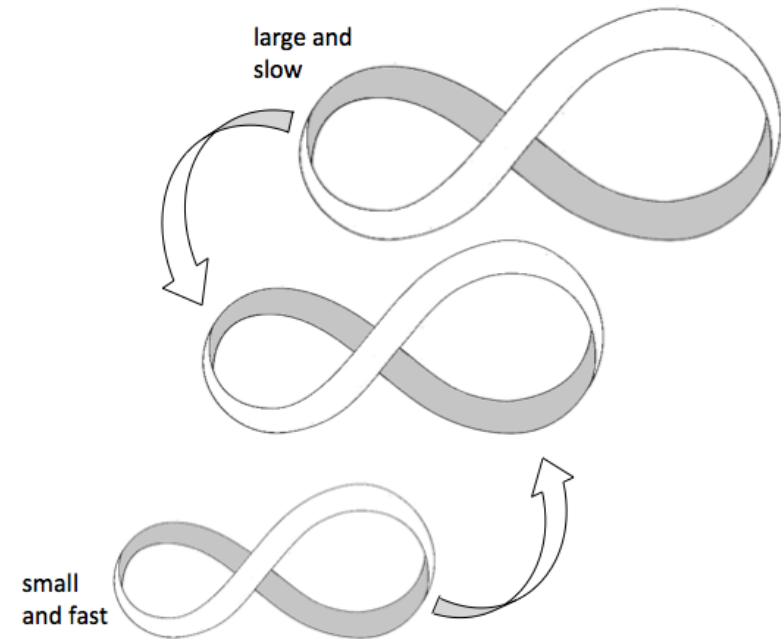
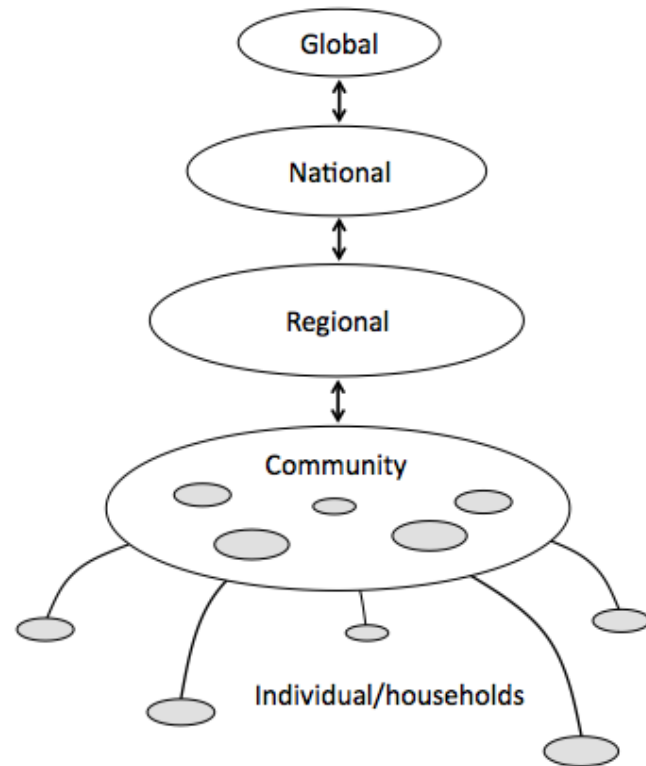
Many of the same factors are identified as characteristics in community resilience (Berkes & Ross 2013)

They are not a checklist – agency and self-organizing are crucial to turn the latent characteristics into a resilience process

Greater linkage to environmental characteristics



Social-ecological systems – and resilience – are multi-level



Berkes & Ross 2013

What can we learn?

Potential power in combining impact assessment and resilience thinking

Focus on the events and the responses – people have agency in both

Resilience is one response to an impacting event

Adaptive capacity (related to the resilience characteristics and SIA models is surely important

Suggests we should not only minimize negative social impacts (and improve opportunities), but build adaptive capacity and resilience where we can

But where? Regions prone to shocks, regions subject to massive developments?

That takes longer than project time-frames

But it would be wrong to expect communities to cope with social impacts, on the argument that they ought to be resilient (and are somehow deficient if not).

Mutual learnings

SIA can learn from community resilience

Look more closely at community-environment connections (how does this social-ecological system work)

Complexity theory, complex adaptive systems

Multi-level analysis: individual, group, community, within region etc. all influencing one another

Community resilience can learn from SIA

The complexity of community dynamics, how groups interact in creating the eventual 'impact'

- The nature of self-organizing behaviour

More attention to values, culture, political dimensions

Over to you – further suggestions please

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Thank you

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