

# SDWG PROJECT PROPOSAL. Gender Equality in the Arctic: Current Realities and Future Challenges.

2013

Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

[Sustainable Development Working Group \(SDWG\)](#)

---

<http://hdl.handle.net/11374/1276>

*Disclaimer: This document may not be the final or approved version. It may be a working or draft version, as submitted to one of our Senior Arctic Officials meetings. Drafts are available in order to provide historical perspective on the work of the Arctic Council and the development of our scientific reports and assessments. To find final, approved versions of our reports and assessments, please make note of the title and visit the appropriate collection in our archive. Each collection listed below contains final documents from one of the six Working Groups. <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/1>, <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/617>, <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/126>, <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/3>, <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/52>, <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/4> Any citation of an Arctic Council document must include reference to the author. If no author of a particular document is identified, the document may still be cited; in these cases, the Arctic Council should be listed as the author. Downloaded from the Arctic Council Open Access Repository. <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/>*

## SDWG PROJECT PROPOSAL

<p><b>Project Title:</b></p> <p><b>Gender Equality in the Arctic: Current Realities and Future Challenges.</b></p>	<p><b>Lead Country:</b> Iceland</p> <p><b>Co-lead:</b> Norway (Sweden?)</p> <p><b>Project leader(s):</b></p> <p>The Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for the overall implementation and lead of the project. Other relevant partners include the Icelandic Centre for Gender Equality and the Stefansson Arctic Institute, relevant academic institutions, the business sector as well as the Permanent Participant organisations of the Arctic Council.</p>
<p><b>Total Cost of Project:</b></p> <p>(Identify all sources and types of funding.)</p> <p>19.4 million ISK / 160,000 USD.</p> <p>90% Grants from different government bodies,</p> <p>10% In-kind contributions from the Centre for Gender Equality and the Stefansson Arctic Institute, as well as other interested parties.</p>	<p><b>Relationship to other AC Working Groups:</b></p> <p><i>(name of Working Group/contact name)</i></p> <p>Sustainable Development Working Group</p>

### Objective of Project:

The purpose of this project is to promote extensive, policy-relevant dialogue on gender equality issues in the Arctic region in the context of current realities in terms of economic and social development as well as current and future challenges, inter alia relating to climatic and environmental changes. In order to facilitate and strengthen this dialogue, a conference will be held in Akureyri, Iceland in November 2014. The conference will bring together government representatives, policy makers, academics and a wide range of other stakeholders such as from the business community, resource managers and users, community leaders and NGO representatives. The conference will mainly focus on the diverse and differentiated situations

of women and men throughout the Circumpolar North and how to meet these societal challenges in the region. A special effort will be made to include women leaders from different sectors throughout the Arctic region. The conference, together with a comprehensive follow-up report, will lay the foundation for a cooperation network of the various stakeholders researching, teaching and discussing and promoting gender equality issues in the Arctic.

### **Gender equality issues and the Arctic:**

In August 2002, the Arctic Council co-organised a conference on gender equality and women in the Arctic entitled *Taking Wing*. The conference, which took place in Inari, Finland, focused mainly on the three broad themes of women and work, gender and the self-determination of indigenous people, and violence against women. The goal of the conference was to raise 'decision-makers' awareness of the situation of women in the Arctic and making recommendation for integrating a gender perspective in the work of the administrative bodies in the Arctic, including the Arctic Council. The recommendations were then supposed to be proposed at the Council's Ministerial meeting October 2002.

Although several chairmanships have highlighted gender equality issues, they have not featured prominently in the work of the Arctic Council during the past decade. At the same time, most Arctic states have actively promoted gender equality and women's empowerment within various international fora such as the United Nations. The first Arctic Human Development Report, (AHDR), published in 2004, includes a significant multi-authored chapter on gender issues, addressing critical issues such as men's changing roles in society and how this affects social problems; women's security, job opportunities and out-migration; and women's positions of leadership and representation in decision-making bodies. In the second Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR II), which will be published in 2014, gender equality issues are mainstreamed into each chapter rather than being addressed as a separate subject.

The advancement of gender equality is a very important aspect in Iceland's foreign policy and international cooperation. This is inter alia based on the assumption that gender equality is a prerequisite for economic and social development, increased productivity, contributes to stronger institutions and improves prospects for future generations.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is working closely together with the Centre for Gender Equality and the Stefánsson Arctic Institute to design the project. Preparations will begin in November 2013 by soliciting participants for a Conference Preparatory Meeting of 12

individuals to be held in January 2014. It is foreseen that the outcome of this conference will be the formation of a working group largely responsible for developing the themes and program and for selecting key participants for the *Gender Equality in the Arctic* conference to be held in Akureyri, Iceland 5-7 November 2014. A report on the outcomes of the conference will be published in February 2015 and circulated widely, thus setting the completion date for the formal project, although the resulting cooperation network on gender issues in the Arctic will continue to operate. The Centre for Gender Equality and the Stefansson Arctic Institute will solicit participants for the conference preparatory meeting, together with the Ministries for Foreign Affairs and relevant institutions working with gender equality issues in several Arctic States, Permanent Participant organisations and other relevant partners, including academic and business sector organisations and, the project leaders and chapter authors of the second Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR II, 2014).

- **Cost estimate and budget.**

**Gender equality in the Arctic  
Project budget**

<b>Preparations</b>	<b>subtotal</b>	<b>5,350,000 kr.</b>
preparatory meetings (x4, approx. 12 participant)		250,000 kr.
travel cost*		3,100,000 kr.
[salary of preparatory committee - in kind]		2,000,000 kr.
<b>Main conference (3 days, approx. 100 participants)</b>	<b>subtotal</b>	<b>10,200,000 kr.</b>
project management		600,000 kr.
publicity and translation of promo material		900,000 kr.
conference cost (meeting room, catering, interpretation, technical equipment, etc.)		4,500,000 kr.
travel cost*		4,200,000 kr.
<b>Follow up</b>	<b>subtotal</b>	<b>3,950,000 kr.</b>
launching of web site		350,000 kr.
report (work on, publishing, translation)		2,500,000 kr.
travel cost*		1,000,000 kr.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>19,400,000 kr.</b>

\*travel cost refers to grant to participants from remote areas as well as to lecturers.

The project has already received a grant of 2 million ISK from the Icelandic Government's Equality Action Fund, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will support the project with 3 million ISK. So far the Ministry has secured two additional funding, one from the Nordic Cooperation Committee (Nordic Arctic co-operation program 2013) amounting 6.5 million ISK and a contribution of 2.2 million ISK from the Council of Ministers for Gender Equality (MR-JÄM). As of October 2013 the project has received 13.7 million ISK or up to 70% of the total budget.

### **Rationale:**

The Arctic States have all emphasised the need for wide and active participation of local residents, regional governments and civil society organisations in discussions and decision-making about future developments in the Circumpolar North. Furthermore, several of the Arctic States place emphasis on gender issues in their foreign policy and work actively on promoting gender equality in their international work. Concurrently, there is an inherent gender imbalance in the on-going policy discussions and decision making about the Arctic, as women are underrepresented in Arctic governing bodies, administration, business and science. The geopolitical and global economic significance of the Arctic region is growing, inter alia a consequence of climate change, accelerated resource development and prospects for trans-arctic shipping. Although generalisations should be avoided, given the cultural and social diversity of the North, economic development throughout much of the region seems to be affecting men and women differently. It is a cause for concern that future development in the North may for the most part focus on traditional male sectors such as oil and gas, mining, shipping and tertiary industrial development. Disproportionate out-migration of adult females characterises many rural areas of the Arctic, primary as a result of diminishing employment and lack of education opportunities for women. The resulting sex-ratio imbalance negatively affects the resilience and development of Arctic communities, many of which are seeing very high death rate for males, especially from external causes.

The *Gender Equality in the Arctic* project will broadly focus on the living condition of women and men, addressing key issues such as access to and control over resources, representation in decision-making positions, political participation, and material and cultural well-being.

### **Activities and Outputs**

The work of soliciting participants for a preparatory meeting of 12 individuals in January 2014 will begin in October 2013. The *Gender Equality in the Arctic* conference of around 90 participants will be held in Akureyri, Iceland in November 2014. A final report on the outcomes of the conference, produced by the conference working group will be published in February of 2015 and circulated widely.

The broad organisational support for this project (enlisted above) will aim to ensure the participation of, and input from, a wide range of stakeholders and the public for a constructive integrated, circumpolar and cross-sectorial dialogue and serve as a knowledge-base on gender issues, hopefully leading to better management of future challenges and opportunities in the circumpolar region.

The Centre for Gender Equality and the Stefansson Arctic Institute in Iceland will provide support carrying out this project, provided through in-kind contributions. Funding and in-kind services will also be sought from other partners, i.e. in several Arctic States, as well as parties from the academic, research, business and civil society.

### **Anticipated Outcomes**

The conference and its follow-up report will lay the foundation for a formal cooperation network of the various stakeholders interested in researching and discussing gender equality and gender issues in general in the Arctic. A clear and jargon-free conference report should be made electronically available to members of the attentive public and to university teachers and students, notably those teaching and enrolled in graduate and undergraduate circumpolar studies courses and programs that are delivered through the University of the Arctic and at its member institutions.

The project aims to involve and reach out to stakeholders such as policy makers, academics, students, media, business leaders, community leaders and civil society organisations as to strengthen their cooperation on gender equality issues in the Arctic. Furthermore, the outcome will serve to sharpen the focus on gender equality and gender-issues within the Arctic Council's SDWG, in particular in the context of promoting sustainable economic and social development in the circumpolar region. The cooperation and network resulting from the project have the potential of informing policy decision-making in favour of strengthening the capacity of those living in the Arctic and thus their ability to better manage their current and future challenges and opportunities.

## **Timetable and Project Completion**

A conference preparatory meeting, including a working group of 12 participants from throughout the Circumpolar North, will be held in Reykjavík, Iceland on January 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> 2014.

The *Gender Equality in the Arctic* conference of approximately 90 participants will be held in Akureyri, Iceland on 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2014.

A final report - including the conference presentations as well as an extensive summary of discussions, written by the conference working group - will be published in February 2015 and presented at the Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council in May 2015 and followed by wide circulation, in both digital and printed forms.

## **Communications:**

The target groups are policy makers, academics, university students, gender equality experts and a wide range of stakeholders such as business leaders, resource managers and users, civil servants, community leaders, and representatives of civil society organisations in the Arctic. The outcome of the conference and the activities of the cooperation network will strengthen the work of the Arctic Council, in particular the SDWG, emphasising sustainable economic and social development, viable communities, and material and cultural welfare for women and men across the Arctic.