

# **Traditional Ecological Knowledge transmitted by reindeer herding women**

## **Abstract**

The participants in the project, about 15- 20 women, are from different Sami reindeer herding regions and as one of the women explain:

“These days we, younger women belonging to the reindeer husbandry, are involved in several activities in the society and have also experiences from other environments.

Because of this, we have less time to take part of the subsistence activities on the land, connected to the reindeer husbandry, such as herding, picking berries, woodcutting and fishing.

We still have the goal to practice the traditional activities and pass it down to the next generation. But nowadays we have to give priority and choose what we want to spend the time on when we are on the land. We have to be more conscious of the vulnerable knowledge and the deeper values of the practical activities.”

Through close cooperation between all involved in the above projects we see here the opportunity to discuss how we can protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional practices, extended and adapted to the needs that exist today.

There is a wide geographic spread of the women and they come from regions with different topography and habitats. One of the purposes is to recognize and promote the diversity of experiences, knowledge and vocabulary between family groups in the local communities across Sami.

We hope that the interactional, synergistic nature of sharing circles and focus group methodology allows participants to clarify or expand upon their contributions to the discussion in the light of points raised by other participants. By arranging work-shops and dialogue seminars we also hope to contribute with capacitybuilding.

These women can in the future get a central role in managing the knowledge base on the local level, and pass it on to the next generation. We hope that the network that has been built will ensure the projects ongoing capacity and facilitate the knowledge to be used in many ways within the Sami communities.

This ongoing project is a cross-border cooperation between two Sami institutions in the northern part of Sweden and Norway. Sami University College has an educational approach, while Ajtte Swedish Mountain and Sami Museum has a biological approach.