



VELFERÐARRÁÐUNEYTIÐ

Ministry of Welfare



UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

Risk and disaster management in Nordic welfare states: The role of local social services

Reykjavík 10th of November

NWW final conference:

Are the Nordic countries prepared for future risks?

How can we prepare?

Guðný Björk Eydal

Professor, Faculty of Social Work UI and project leader

The Nordic Welfare Watch –In Response to crisis (*Velferð og vát*)



Thanks to the Ministry of Welfare and the Nordic Council of Ministers for entrusting us with the project and all support

- 1)** The project and the people
- 2)** The main results from our latest report on *Local Social Services in Times of Disasters*

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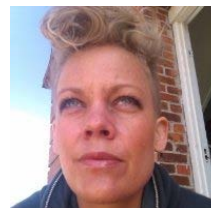
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Activities



2014:

- Field visit** to Almannavarnir – SC meeting in September
- The conference Þjóðarspegil, Reykjavík in October

2015:

- Nordic Welfare Watch, open meeting, Reykjavík 18th March
- Social Services in Times of Disaster NWW NORDRESS **Symposium**, Reykjavík 4-5 May
- Danish Emergency Management - now and then, presentation by Rasmus Dahlberg, Akureyri 27th April
- ESA conference in **Prague**, August 25-28th
- NWW presented at the final meeting in the project emBRACE, **London** 3d September
- Nordic Welfare Watch, **open meeting** in Reykjavík 17th September
- The conference Þjóðarspegil, Reykjavík in October
- Visiting scholar Erna Danielsson Nov 2015-Dec 2016
- NEEDS - The First Northern European Conference on Emergency and Disaster Studies, Copenhagen 9-11 December

2016:

- Carin Björngren Cuadra, **visiting scholar**
- Emergency Management in Iceland and Sweden - Symposium, Reykjavík 18th January
- Social capital in post-disaster recovery, Seminar, Lis Montes de Oca, Reykjavík 25th February
- Communities coping with crisis – NWW-workshop, Grímsnes 20-22 April
- Volunteer Organizations in Disaster – Symposium Reykjavík 25th April
- SWSD 2016 conference **Seoul** 27-30 June
- ISA conference: **Vienna** 10-14 July
- Seminar on the role of the voluntary sector in the context of disaster, Östersund Sweden 10-13 October
- The **conference** Þjóðarspegil, Reykjavík in October

-Planned in 2017

- PhD course in Disaster Social Work 24-27 May
- IFSW European Conference 2017 – Marginalisation and Social Work in a Changing Society, Reykjavík 28-30 May

Aims and output



1) Evaluate the activities of the Icelandic Welfare Watch (2014-2015)

Report at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/>

2) Examine the role of local social services in emergency management in the Nordic countries (2014-2016)

Report at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/>

3) Map the known risks that the Nordic welfare system could face in coming years and challenges for social services (2016-2017)

Report forthcoming spring 2017

+ Final report + articles and academic publications

Why?



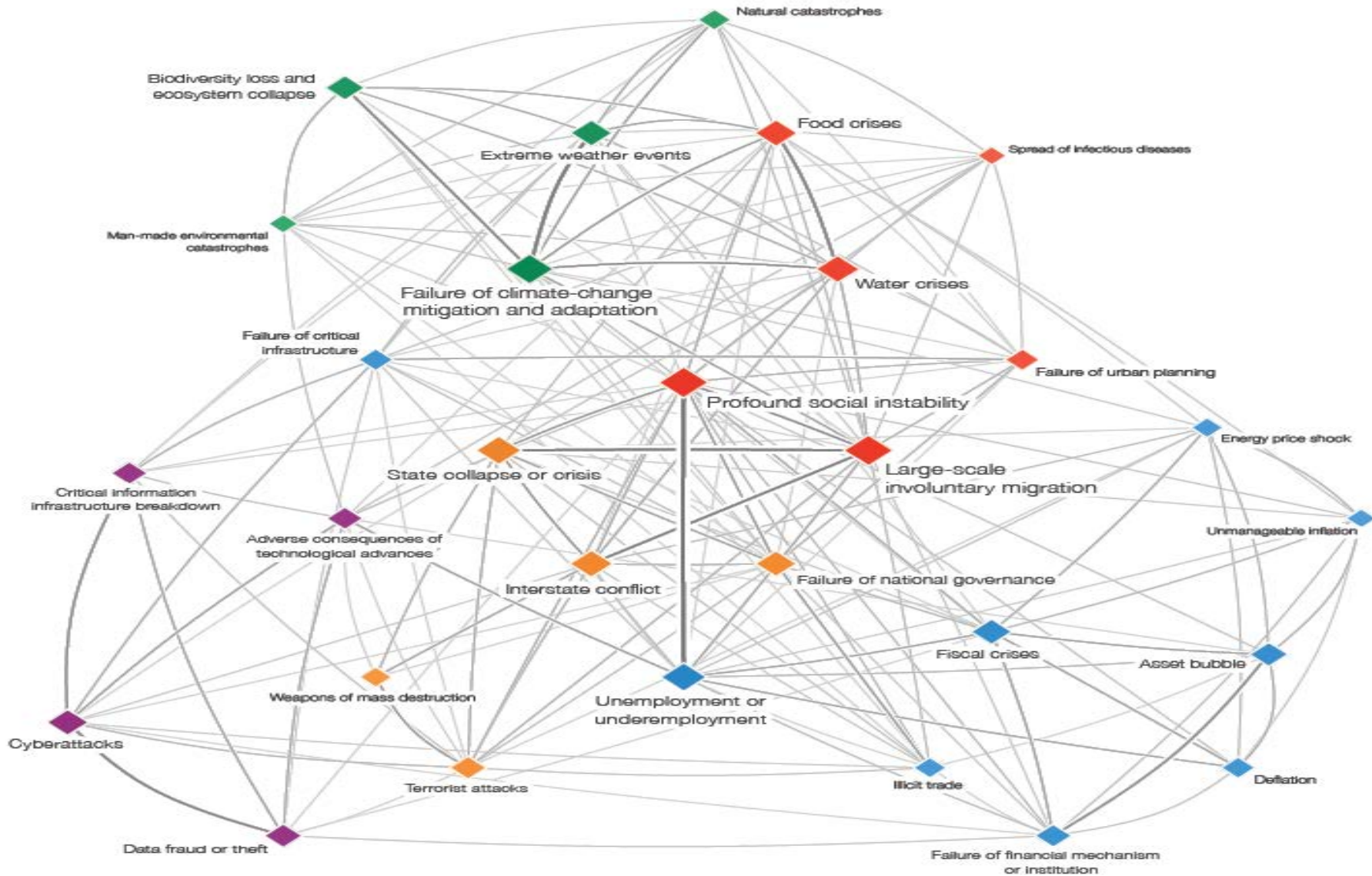
- Interest in lessons learned from the Icelandic vveitare Watch- important to evaluate
- The Nordic countries are known for their extensive welfare systems and social services but few (Nordic) studies have addressed their roles in times of disasters
- Due to the increase in both natural and man-made disasters there is an increased emphasis on disaster studies, disaster risk reduction and disaster management

Nordic countries: Recent disasters



Known risks





 Economic Risks

 Environmental Risks

 Geopolitical Risks

 Societal Risks

 Technological Risks



Number and strength of connections ("weighted degree")



LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES IN TIMES OF DISASTERS: MAIN FINDINGS

Trends in emergency management



- To enhance national **resilience**- to be able to withstand, respond and recover
- Shift from disaster to risk management: Governments are emphasizing **pro-active risk management** in co-operation with a wide range of stakeholders
- **Localization**, first responders, bottom up, collaboration of different actors including communities, households and individuals
- Information sharing and enhanced **communication** before, during and after disasters

Vulnerability and social status

- Socioeconomic status can determine the capacity to prepare for disastrous events, their immediate impact as well as the outcomes
- Some groups are more vulnerable than others due to various factors like age, health, gender, family situation, etc.
- “The literature on disaster management reveals that vulnerable populations tend to be the ones that suffer most.” (Mathbor, 2007, p. 358)

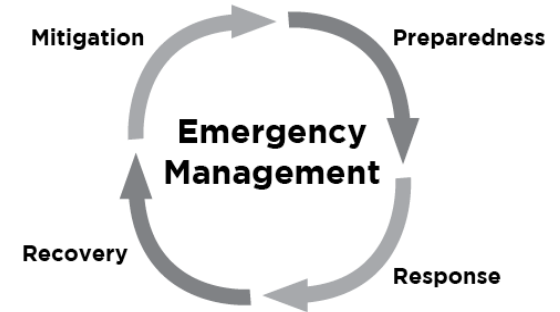


Importance of social services



- The social services have important knowledge about the needs and strengths of the community and vulnerable groups
- Local social services reduce vulnerability and enhances resilience in everyday life (Cuadra, 2015)
- Emphasis on user involvement and community work
- Disaster social work “It involves preventive interventions as well as distribution of emergency aid, identification of the most exposed... support to the individual and its closest to recover after critical situations, reconstructions of social functions as well as being a channel for information and mediator between individuals, communities and organizations.” (Cuadra, 2015, p. 1)

Social services in all phases



- Important roles in disaster **mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery** (Cuadra, 2015; Dominelli, 2012; Elliott, 2010; Mathbor, 2007; Thomas and Healy, 2010, Rowlands, 2013)
- “The full range of community and social service providers needs to be integrated into **response and recovery processes**, through the recovery plan, so that these resources can be harnessed for the community” (Rowlands, 2013, p. 15).

The report asks:

- Do local social services have a formal role in the contingency planning of the emergency management systems in the five Nordic countries?



Results

	D	F	I	N	S
Are social services legally obligated to prepare a contingency plan?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the act on EM address the role of local social services?	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Does the legal framework outline <u>distinctive</u> role/roles?	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Results

	D	F	I	N	S
Does the law on social services specifically address the role of the services in the context of disaster?	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are there specific guidelines for social service contingency planning?	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Main findings



- The risk profiles differs
- The organization of social services and emergency management differs, but the core tasks are the same
- Social services are legally obligated to make contingency plans, but only in the case of Finland and Norway the law address the roles of the social services
- Neither Denmark nor Iceland has special guidelines for contingency planning for social services

Recomendations:

The Svalbard Group



- The Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Welfare Center (NVC) **should address social sector preparedness issues**
- Social sector preparedness cooperation should be enhanced under the umbrella of the Nordic Council of Ministers (**Svalbard Group**) and collaborate closely with the Haga-process
- Such high-level co-operation enhances regional and local level co-operation

Share knowledge



- There is a need to share **knowledge** on how to increase the involvement of social services in all phases of emergency management
- The **guidelines** for social services' contingency planning and their **plans** should be shared across the Nordic countries and among various actors on the state, regional and local levels
- This task could also be implemented under the umbrella of the **Svalbard Group**

Informed partners



- There is a need to **make the role of social services known in the emergency management systems**, so that the relevant parties can activate the full potential of social services in all phases of the disaster cycle
- It is likewise important to **inform the social services of emergency management law and organization** in order to facilitate effective co-operation in the event of disaster

Preparedness and exercises



- It is important to create opportunities for the **social services to prepare** for future disasters
- It is also important to include the social services in **emergency management exercises**. The exercises might also be extended in scope in order to cover all phases of disasters
- Nordic countries could **share exercise scenarios** involving tasks for the social sector and make use of scenarios already developed

Education and research

- It is important to address the **role of emergency management in the education of social workers and social carers** and **enhance disaster research in the social sciences**
- (In preparation a PhD course + workshops with stakeholders)





NORDRESS the Nordic Centre of Excellence on Resilience and Societal Security



WP 6 Can the **societal resilience of the Nordic countries** be improved through changes in legal and regulatory frameworks and enhanced institutional cooperation?

WP 6.1. The Nordic Welfare States: Cases of best practices, one from each country, of how municipalities can enhance resilience of the local community and the inhabitants will be examined and compared
2016-2018



For further information please see: <http://nordress.hi.is>

Thank you

