


















Programme for Knowledge and Innovation

<p>Key results: The programme aims to foster greater mutual understanding between Africa and Denmark through joint responses to global development challenges. Strengthened partnerships, networks and collaborative learning between African and Danish universities for knowledge and innovation will be achieved within two outcome areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks, and outreach of the Africa-Denmark university environments in support of knowledge development and innovation to tackle shared global challenges. Strengthened academic capacity of young Africans through scholarships for short-term (non-degree) or full-degree programmes in Denmark, incl. top-up grants for African students on Erasmus+ scholarships. <p>Justification for support: - The programme aligns with the vision in the Danish Governments new <i>Strategy for a Strengthened Engagement with Africa</i> (2024) to scale-up exchange of African students to Denmark as an avenue to strengthen the broader and more long-term ties and relations between Denmark and African countries. - The programme contributes to sustainable development by strengthening capacity in higher education environments in Denmark and African partner countries as well as academic capacity of young Africans through scholarship programmes. The programme will furthermore create avenues for joint responses to shared global development challenges.</p> <p>Major risks and challenges: - The ongoing reform of Danish Higher Education creates uncertainty within universities and may result in reluctance to engage in partnerships with a large number of incoming African students on full-degree programmes. - The programme, and especially the exchange/scholarship component, may be subject to criticism in Danish domestic political discussions on immigration. - Logistical and administrative challenges, incl. lengthy and sometimes prohibitive Danish visa entry procedures may limit the number of participating students from Africa.</p>	File No.	24/49710					
	Country	Denmark					
	Responsible Unit	LÆRING					
	Sector	Education					
	Partner	Danida Fellowship Centre					
		<i>DKK million</i>					
	Commitment	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total
	Projected disbursement	110	190	110	30	-	430
	Duration	2025-2029					
	Previous grants						
	Finance Act code	§6.38.02.20					
	Head of unit	Tove Degnbol					
	Desk officer	Karen Obling					
Reviewed by CFO	NO						
Relevant SDGs							
 No Poverty	 No Hunger	 Good Health, Wellbeing	 Quality Education	 Gender Equality	 Clean Water, Sanitation		
 Affordable Clean Energy	 Decent Jobs, Econ. Growth	 Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure	 Reduced Inequalities	 Sustainable Cities, Communities	 Responsible Consumption & Production		
 Climate Action	 Life below Water	 Life on Land	 Peace & Justice, strong Inst.	 Partnerships for Goals			

Objectives

To achieve greater mutual understanding and ties between Africa and Denmark through strengthened partnerships, networks and collaborative learning between African and Danish universities for knowledge and innovation. This will be achieved through 1) networks and collaborative learning and 2) short-term and full degree programmes for African students in Denmark

Environment and climate targeting - Principal objective (100%); Significant objective (50%)

	Climate adaptation	Climate mitigation	Biodiversity	Other green/environment
Indicate 0, 50% or 100%				
Total green budget (DKK)				

Justification for choice of partner:

For more than 30 years, Danida Fellowship Center (DFC) has been a well-established partner managing the fellowship (learning) programme and the Danish support to development research. DFC is furthermore implementing an ongoing pilot Master programme for African students affiliated with SSC. DFC has great insight and understanding in the Danish and African learning environments, and extensive experience with facilitating both short and long-term exchange programmes for African students.

Summary:

Through partnerships between African and Danish universities and scholarships for African students, the programme will foster shared learning, greater mutual understanding and joint solutions to shared global challenges. Activities will be developed in equal partnerships between universities in Denmark and Africa and based on shared needs and strategic priorities. They can include capacity strengthening elements such as collaborative learning, education development, networks, staff exchange, and a large number of scholarships for short-term stays and full-degree programmes for African students in Denmark.

Budget (engagement as defined in FMI):

Outcome 1 – Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks	DKK 90 million
Outcome 2 - Scholarships for short-term studies and full-degree programmes (incl. for Erasmus+)	DKK 311.5 million
Danida Fellowship Centre administration	DKK 28.5 million
Total	DKK 430 million

Knowledge and Innovation Programme

University Partnerships between Denmark and Africa

Draft Programme Document

Version 20 December 2024

This draft has been prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Higher Education and Science has been consulted in the formulation process but has not yet provided comment to all parts of the document. The dialogue will continue in early 2025.

Abbreviations

BA	Bachelor of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
BSU	Building Stronger Universities
DFC	Danida Fellowship Center
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)
ERASMUS+	European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
EO	Erasmus Office under the Agency for Higher Education and Science
EU	European Union
FFU	Development Research Grants (Research Committee for Development Research)
HRBA	Human-Rights Based Approach
LÆRING	Evaluation, Learning and Quality (MFA)
MA	Master of Arts
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NORHED	Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
KOM	Public Diplomacy, Press and Communication (MFA)
QA	Questions and Answers
REGSEK	Secretariat for Government Policy (MFA)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SU	Danish Educational Grants
TOC	Theory of Change
UFM	Ministry of Higher Education and Science
UIM	Ministry of Immigration and Integration

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1. Introduction

This document presents a new programme for partnerships between Danish and African universities on knowledge development and innovation, envisaged to develop the foundation for closer ties between Denmark and countries in Africa through common responses to global development challenges. The programme is a main initiative under the Danish Government's new Strategy for a Strengthened Engagement with Africa (2024).

The overall objective of the programme is to achieve greater mutual understanding between Africa and Denmark through joint responses to global development challenges.

The specific programme objective is strengthened partnerships, networks and collaborative learning between Danish and African universities for shared knowledge and innovation. This will be achieved through university partnership projects that focus on two main outcome areas, namely:

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks, and outreach of the Africa-Denmark university environments in support of knowledge development and innovation to tackle shared global challenges

Outcome 2: Strengthened academic capacity of young Africans through scholarships for short-term study stays (non-degree) or full-degree programmes in Denmark

Activities under outcome 1 may include e.g. development of teaching programmes based on digital training, innovative teaching methods, seminars, conferences, summer schools, innovation platforms, visiting scholars (African countries to Denmark/Denmark to African countries), preparation of joint research projects, development of communication skills, and connecting students with accelerators and incubators.

The focus under outcome 2 is on scholarships for African students to study in Denmark on short (non-degree) courses or full-degree programmes at Danish universities, blended learning programmes, and programmes including both online and in-person courses in Denmark.

The partnership projects between Danish and African universities will be designed based on individual partnership needs and priorities. Grants will be awarded based on annual calls for applications. Jointly developed partnership project proposals will be submitted by the Danish universities to Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC), which will manage the programme. A Selection Committee will assist DFC in choosing the best proposals for funding, based on a set of quality and relevance criteria. First application rounds for the partnership projects will be implemented in 2025 with expected project start in 2026.

The total expected programme budget for 2025-2029 is DKK 430 million, divided between DKK 90 million for outcomes 1 (partnerships for capacity, networks and joint-learning) and DKK 340 million for outcome 2 (scholarships).

The Knowledge and Innovation Programme supplements the existing Danish support to collaborative research projects (FFU grants), capacity development of selected universities in Africa in the Building Stronger Universities (BSU) programme, the Master-programme for partners in Strategic Sector

Programmes in African countries, and the wide range of training courses offered by DFC. Unlike FFU and the BSU programme, the focus of the new programme is on education rather than research. While the BSU programme is targeting less experienced universities, it is expected that the new programme will include partnerships with more well-established African universities.

The programme has been prepared based on consultations with Danish universities, African universities and potential interested parties such as philanthropical foundations. Lessons from previous Danish support have been considered, notably the BSU programme and the wide range of scholarship activities run by Danida Fellowship Centre, as well as other relevant donor programmes, especially in Norway. The Ministry of Higher Education and Science has been a key sparring partner in the preparation.

2. Context, strategic considerations, rationale and justification

2.1 Global challenges and the role of universities and partnerships

The world faces a multitude of challenges and progress is off-track. Most of the challenges (health, education migration, climate change, etc.) cut across countries, continents and the north-south divide and are, therefore, shared and global challenges. This programme's overarching focus is to develop the partnerships and relations needed for a collaborative approach to tackle these shared global challenges. In order to allow partnerships to tackle the most relevant challenges given their core thematic competences and capacities, the programme will not have a narrow thematic focus.

Need for multi-actor and multi-disciplinary collaboration. The shared global challenges are all complex and interconnected. Tackling them require working across sectors and professional disciplines. It also requires collaboration between states and institutions across developing and developed countries. Geopolitical dynamics increasingly interact to shape the possibilities to tackle the challenges. Geopolitics determine which actors Denmark can most effectively engage with to define and implement the solutions. This underlines the basic relevance of partnerships between Danish and African universities, but also of including private sector actors and foundations where relevant. The programme will actively encourage such multi-actor partnerships.

Africa's global role in tackling the shared development challenges will increase considerably. This is highlighted in the Danish Government's policy to strengthen its engagement with Africa to tackle global challenges. By 2050, more than one-fourth of the world population will live in Africa. The majority will be youth. To provide young people with education will be significant for securing them good jobs and incomes – and for Africa's wider economic and social development, migration, and peace and stability. African institutions and stakeholders across African societies are central actors in identifying, deciding, and implementing solutions to the shared global challenges.

African and Danish universities have core roles in developing effective responses to the global challenges. They provide research-based learning, teaching, and professional training, and universities fundamentally contribute to shaping the norms and worldviews in the public and private sector and play central roles for setting the directions for how the societies develop. They are the platforms for producing new knowledge and methods that are key to developing solutions to the social and environmental

challenges across sectors. By providing evidence-based knowledge on the state of the environment, economy, and social and political development, they provide basis for public awareness, informed decision-making, and accountability. The programme builds on these roles of the African and Danish universities for open and evidence-based debates and development of solutions to the shared global challenges and will support partnerships that promote innovation to define effective responses to global challenges by combining Danish and African university-based knowledge.

University environments also form cross-national communities, generating relations and mutual understanding. Collaboration and exchange of staff and students are core to Danish and African universities' knowledge development and teaching programmes. This creates communities across universities and countries that help improve the mutual understanding of challenges, perspectives, and priorities. A clear lesson from previous and existing collaboration is that solid partnerships start from a shared thematic interest and focus.

High demand among African students for flexible international study opportunities Many African students seek study opportunities outside Africa, and African universities have for long sent students abroad for exchange studies. But demands for international study spaces among African students far exceed those available. Moreover, African students have varied needs and priorities and far from everyone is looking for full master programme. While full-degree programmes in Denmark are relevant to some, for others shorter study stays tailored to match their home-based education programmes may be the best solution. The programme, therefore can accommodate a wide range of study exchange options to match demands.

Europe receives many students from Africa, but more and more Africans are also looking elsewhere for education. In order for Denmark to become an attractive place of study, proactive measures must be taken. African students increasingly select countries like China, Russia, and the Gulf states as destination for study exchanges. Yet, some European countries have managed to significantly increase the number of African exchange students by proactive strategies. Likeminded countries such as Norway and Sweden also have exchange programs, and lessons from these will inform the programme when relevant and possible.

2.2 Policy and strategic frameworks – priorities guiding the programme

The Danish Government's **Strategy for a Strengthened Engagement with Africa** (2024) is the main point of departure for the programme. The strategy defines the scaled-up exchange of African students to Denmark as an avenue to strengthen the broader and more long-term ties between Denmark and African countries. The programme contributes to the intent to build on Africa's significant global position and respond to its young population's need for education and job opportunities. The programme's focus on increasing exchanges and partnerships between Danish and African universities follows directly from the Strategy. It underlines the wider aim of young Africans studying in Denmark and Europe to strengthen ties between countries, create mutual understanding, and strengthen human relations.

[Denmark's upcoming development strategy – section to be inserted when outline of new strategy has been prepared]

To maximise impact and a coherent approach, the programme will focus on Denmark's **partner countries in Africa where a Danish embassy exists**¹.

The programme will build on **ownership and alignment** with the university partners' needs, priorities and frameworks. Each partnership project's specific focus and contents will be determined by the priorities and strategies of the Danish and African universities in the partnership in question. There are varied focus areas and interests among both African and Danish universities, and the programme is designed to be responsive to this variety in strengths, needs, interests, and priorities. As such, the universities will define the project activities together to ensure ownership and sustainability.

2.3 Main actors and stakeholders - the university landscape in Denmark and Africa

The main stakeholders of the programme are universities in Denmark's partnership countries in Africa and Danish universities.

Africa's university landscape is varied in focus areas and capacity levels. Across Africa, universities are undergoing a transformation to meet the growing demand for higher education and the higher education landscape is rapidly evolving. Some countries in Africa have numerous universities – up to 50-60 - covering both public and private institutions and many exclusively teaching universities. There is significant variation in capacity, across- and in-country. Several countries have a handful of well-established universities in addition to large numbers of younger and less established universities. While the majority are highly constrained in terms of resources and institutional capacity, there are several international level universities across Denmark's partner countries in Africa where a Danish embassy exists. The programme does not focus on particular African universities and will encourage that not only well-established African universities are included as partners. With a view to promote south-south learning, capacity development, and pooling of knowledge and resources, it will be an option to have more than one African partner in a partnership with a Danish university.

The Danish university landscape is also diverse in focus and types of strengths. Danish universities as a whole have strong competences across areas that are core to tackling global challenges within e.g. health, sustainable agriculture and food production, water resources, conflict, migration, green energy, biosciences and more. The eight Danish universities vary in size and in terms of whether they cover several fields of education or have a more specialised focus. The programme will enable flexibility for partnerships to decide and tailor initiatives from a wide menu of options for accommodating and capitalising on this diversity in university strengths.

A long collaboration between African and Danish universities but mostly in limited areas. There is long-standing and well-established collaboration, facilitated by the research funding, where significant research knowledge and networks have developed between communities of African and Danish researchers. The collaboration in the Building Stronger Universities programme (BSU) with its focus on

¹ When the programme starts implementation, countries in Africa with a Danish embassy will include the following: Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Uganda. In South Africa, University of Cape Town, University of the Witwatersrand, and Stellenbosch University are not eligible as primary partners (due to their high position at the ShanghaiRanking) but may have a role as additional partners in a partnership between another university in Africa and a Danish university.

institutional capacity strengthening at selected African universities cuts across Danish universities as they pool competences in partnerships with African universities. While several collaborations exist between Danish and African universities, they remain few, usually not focused on institutionalised partnerships, and they do not yet cover a wider range of disciplines. Consultations with Danish universities indicate an interest among universities to expand into new partnership constellations and thematic areas to generate a wider impact and amplify partnerships.

African and Danish universities partnerships can leverage access to EU and other funds.

Partnerships between Danish and African universities can strengthen joint-application efforts to large international research funds, including public funds such as EU, and large private foundations. Universities already engage in partnerships supported by other international partners, and the programme can add value by strengthening Danish and African universities' positions within these international frameworks.

2.4. Poverty considerations, gender equality, and youth

The programme will address poverty reduction in its multi-dimensional definition in line with the How-to-Note on poverty reduction². The programme does not directly target people living in poverty, but indirectly supports poverty reduction by strengthening the capacity of universities to develop and apply new knowledge in key thematic areas for poverty reduction and sustainability.

In line with the Human-Rights Based Approach (HRBA)³, the programme will apply a transformative approach to gender equality, seeking to change fundamental social and gender-based norms and power structures and promote the rights of women. This will happen i.a. through the criteria for project selection which will require that applications specify gender distribution of participating staff and describe how gender equality measures are factored into the design and implementation of the partnership activities.

The programme will have special focus on youth. Through its focus on education, the programme directly strengthens prospects for young Africans' better future through building of competences, innovation and better access to decent jobs. The programme will include mechanisms to emphasise voice and participation of youth in decision making processes.

2.5 Lessons learned and potential constraints

Lessons learned from previous collaboration

The Knowledge and Innovation Programme is informed by the experience from several decades of support to collaborative research projects (FFU grants), 13 years of experience from collaboration on capacity strengthening of selected universities in Africa in the Building Stronger Universities (BSU) programme, the recent Master-programme for partners in Strategic Sector Programmes in African countries, and more than 30 years of provision of the wide range of training courses and other activities offered by Danida Fellowship Centre. Among the main lessons learned are the following:

² [Approach note - Fighting Poverty and Inequality](#)

³ [How to - Human Rights and Democracy](#)

- It is critical to *ensure equal participation in the partnerships from the start*. This requires joint processes for defining the individual partnerships' focus and content that allow reflection of both African and Danish partner needs and priorities. Partners should contribute equally to delivering the final results.
- Solid and sustainable partnerships require *a long-term commitment*. It can take years and a gradual process to develop the joint work areas and relations to deliver valuable results, and to justify the transaction costs involved in developing and managing the partnerships, including start-up and administrative costs. The partnerships must build on a genuine mutual interest, otherwise they disappear when funds are no longer available.
- *Flexibility and adaptation* during implementation are important, since the areas and initiatives with best potential value may only be identified and realised as the partnership develops.
- Typically, university partnerships are rooted in shared thematic interests in the field of research between the partners, which suggests that at programme level there should be *no thematic delimitation*, since that might exclude applications and overly limit the number of partnerships. A narrow up-front definition of themes can limit the relevance of the programme for applicants.
- The *workload involved in administrating and coordinating partnerships is often high*, both for partnership leads and participants. Such workloads are necessary to consider and compensate to avoid that they prohibit partners from participating. The constraints put on administrative capacity of universities - especially African but also Danish - are critical to consider.
- [mentioning of lessons from relevant Nordic/European university partnership mechanisms including NORHED and more about lessons from DFC's scholarship programmes].

Potential constraints to be investigated during the further preparation of the programme

During consultations with Danish and African universities, relevant Danish authorities, and resource persons, a number of potential constraints to the implementation of the new programme have been mentioned. Some of these require thorough investigation and further consultations during the next steps of the preparation process and may imply changes to the final design compared to the outline presented in section 3 of this draft programme document.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Science is a key stakeholder and has been consulted in the preparation process but has not yet commented on the issues listed below. Thus, possible misinterpretations are entirely the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- The ongoing reform of Danish university educations, which, among other things, from 2028 will change the duration of a number of Master studies ('kandidatuddannelser') from currently two years to one year, implies uncertainty in Danish universities with regard to continuation of existing studies and initiation of new study programmes. This may be reflected in reluctance to engage in

partnerships that facilitate the enrolment of larger numbers of African full-degree students.

- The cap on the number of English-language Master education students, resulting from political agreements in Denmark, exempts non-EU students who are either financing the education themselves or receiving a scholarship from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or others. The implementation of the exemption, however, is based on a complex set of regulations which make it difficult for the Danish universities to forecast the number of students who can be enrolled. Also, this may result in hesitation to enter into partnerships which include full-degree programmes.
- If a Danish university wishes to establish a new education with a view to accommodate the interest of African students in a particular thematic field, this is challenged by the requirement that justification has to consider the potential number of new work places in Denmark.
- Each university has to balance the number of incoming international students and outgoing Danish students across all faculties. Universities do not receive state subsidy for incoming students that 'tips the balance'. Universities can, however, choose to pay the subsidy themselves if they wish to receive additional international students. Size of the subsidy depends on the education.
- Currently, Master education of a duration of one year can only be applied for by people with at least two years of work experience. This makes it irrelevant for graduate students coming straight from an African university but a Master education of one year could be relevant for university staff wanting to embark upon further studies.
- Master degrees for working professionals take four years and allows for part-time work in addition to the study. It has recently been possible for African students to enrol, but it may be a challenge to find part-time work in Denmark.
- Some Danish universities, but apparently not all, allow students to obtain a double degree in Denmark and from their university of origin. This is an obvious incentive to choose to study in these universities, but double degrees are contested and a much-debated issues, and it cannot be taken for granted that existing agreements will be continued.
- Different views exist among Danish universities on the appropriateness of partnership agreements as a relevant way to facilitate the enrolment of full-degree African students in Danish universities. One argument is that several educations, which are particularly relevant for African students on scholarships, are unlikely to get many students from a single African university but would benefit from being able to recruit students across a number of universities. A counter argument emphasises the importance of African students not being spread over a large number of educations as this would make it difficult to ensure the necessary support.

- Experience suggests that it is not necessarily easy for African graduate students to meet the academic requirements in Danish universities. Recently, the pilot Master programme (two years) run by DFC has seen that less than half of the students screened for a scholarship have been enrolled.
- Potential African scholarship students will face the same obstacles to staying in Denmark as African citizens in general. These include challenges of obtaining a visa and a residence permit, high cost of living, and managing the induction to Danish society and university life. Examples exist of students who have obtained a scholarship and been accepted by a Danish university but have been denied a student residence permit.
- It will be demanding for Danish universities to find accommodation and get insurances for a large number of African students. The legal basis for this role for the Danish universities has to be further investigated.

Based on investigation of the above-mentioned possible constraints, in particular in the dialogue with the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, there may be implications for the design of the programme, including for the balance between full-degree programmes and non-degree studies in Denmark (short courses and study stays of one or two terms). The first call for applications expected to be announced in June 2025 will reflect what is deemed possible in a short-term perspective, while subsequent calls may adjust the emphasis as more clarity and experience have been gained.

3. Programme objective, theory of change and key assumptions

The overall objective of the programme is to achieve greater mutual understanding between Africa and Denmark through joint responses to global development challenges.

The specific programme objective is strengthened partnerships, networks and collaborative learning between Danish and African universities for shared knowledge and innovation. This will be achieved through university partnership projects that focus on two main outcome areas, namely:

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks, and outreach of the Africa-Denmark university environments in support of knowledge development and innovation to tackle shared global challenges

Outcome 2: Strengthened academic capacity of young Africans through scholarships for short-term study stays (non-degree) or full-degree programmes in Denmark

The two outcomes are envisaged to be mutually reinforcing, and partnership projects between African and Danish institutions will be the organisational framework for both. It will be a condition for funding for short-term scholarships for young African students in Danish universities that the two (or more) partners also apply for funding for activities under outcome 1. During the further preparation process, it

will be considered if applications for full-degree programmes could be funded also outside of the established partnership projects.

The Theory of Change is deliberately broad and flexible with no single direct path towards the objective. It aims to establish a set of medium-term results that all are significant in their own right – and which together prepare the ground for achieving the longer-term results linked to the overall programme objective.

Some of the main medium-term results (intermediate outcomes) are as follows:

- Expanded joint-knowledge and joint-understanding of thematic areas key for tackling the global challenges, through academic exchanges, and joint-learning and collaboration
- African and Danish university students have strengthened competences and joint-understanding of issues, an expanded international outlook, and have established lasting relations
- African students gain competences to pursue their professional goals, secure improved incomes, and enhanced value of their contribution to economic and social development in their countries
Strengthened capacity of partners to improve curriculum development, problem-based learning, blended learning, etc. Strengthened capacity of partners to source and manage joint research grants and engage in international research networks, by building support systems for grant sourcing and research
- Dissemination and application of research and knowledge developed for use in policy and programmes for tackling shared global challenges through joint outreach activities

The longer-term results (objective and impact level) are as follows:

- As the Danish and African universities collaborate on common agendas, their relations deepen, and their understanding expand of mutual strengths and opportunities for wider collaboration - further solidifying and expanding partnerships
- As Africa-Danish relations develop at levels of academic staff and management, it paves the way for scaling up African student exchanges to Denmark, and (through other funding channels than this programme) Danish student exchanges to Africa
- As more African and Danish students develop mutual relations and are exposed to each others' societies and systems, their mutual interest and joint understanding improve
- As African students obtain higher education degrees from Danish universities or deepen their degrees from home universities by study exchanges in Danish universities, more are likely to gain well-positioned employment and careers
- As more African and Danish peers from shared university studies, through their higher education degrees become placed in African and Danish public institutions or private firms, better opportunities exist for Denmark and African countries to engage directly and work on solutions to global challenges based on shared values and understanding of the challenges

The main building blocks of the **Theory of Change** (TOC) can be summarised as follows:

Impact	Greater mutual understanding between Africa and Denmark through joint responses to the global development challenges.	
Objective	Strengthened partnerships, networks and collaborative learning between Danish and African universities for shared knowledge and innovation	
	Pathway 1	Pathway 2
Outcomes	1. Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks, and outreach of the Africa-Denmark university environments in support of knowledge development and innovation to tackle shared global challenges	2. Strengthened academic capacity of young Africans through scholarships for short-term study stays (non-degree) or full-degree programmes in Denmark
Indicative Outputs	<p>Teaching programmes development, management, and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved teaching methods developed and applied • Development of knowledge and innovation skills and platforms/hubs • Administrative support systems for education management strengthened <p>Networks and joint learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint agendas and initiatives for collaboration on knowledge development and innovation • Joint-preparation and skills development for application for significant international research funds/programmes <p>Outreach for dissemination and application of research-based knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches and initiatives to disseminate knowledge and turn knowledge into policy and practice 	<p>Short-term study stays (non-degree) and full-degree programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term study programmes/courses completed by African students • Full-degree programmes completed by African students • On-line courses for induction of African students to study and stay in Denmark

The main **assumptions** for the Theory of Change are:

- Sufficient initial contacts (and possible prior collaboration experience) between potential Danish and African partner universities with an interest in partnerships on exchanges, knowledge development, and innovation.
- Shared thematic interests at “excellence-level” exist between Danish and African universities to provide a joint interest in collaboration on learning and innovation.

- Adequate demand and interests exist among African students for study visits in Denmark.
- Visa processes and regulatory/administrative constraints to African nationalities visiting Denmark can be managed by the Danish partner universities to the extent that delays do not undermine planned visits.
- Constraints for foreigners on short-term stays in Denmark, including housing, insurance, and allowances can be managed by the Danish partner universities.
- Solutions can be found to potential constraints related to the enrolment of African students in full-degree programmes (ref. section 2.6).

4. Summary of the results framework

At programme level, the results will be monitored based on the preliminary results framework below. Indicators and targets will be further developed as part of the preparation of the first call under the programme.

Project/Programme	Knowledge and Innovation Programme
Project/Programme Objective	Strengthened partnerships, networks and collaborative learning between Danish and African universities for shared knowledge and innovation
Impact Indicator	To be developed
Baseline	

Outcome 1	Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks, and outreach of the Africa-Denmark university environments in support of knowledge development and innovation to tackle shared global challenges		
Outcome indicator	To de developed		
Output indicator 1.1	Number of significant joint initiatives and result by partners (*)		
Baseline	Year		
Target	Year		

Output indicator 1.2	Number of jointly delivered significant improvements in support systems for teaching and research programmes (**)		
Baseline	Year	2025	0
Target	Year	2026	5
Target	Year	2027	15
Target	Year	2028	20
Target	Year	2029	20
Output indicator 1.3	Number of completed gender and inclusion mainstreaming undertakings (***)		
Baseline	Year	2025	0
Target	Year	2026	5
Target	Year	2027	10
Target	Year	2028	10
Target	Year	2029	10

Outcome 2		Strengthened academic capacity of young Africans through scholarships for short-term study stays (non-degree) or full-degree programmes in Denmark	
Outcome indicator		To be developed	
Output indicator 2.1		Number of completed short-term study stays by African students in Danish partnership universities	
Baseline	Year	2025	[information from DFC on existing short-term study stays]
Target	Year	2026	+50
Target	Year	2027	+100
Target	Year	2028	+100
Target	Year	2029	+100
Output indicator 2.2.		Number of African students enrolled in full-degree programmes in Danish universities (by gender)	
Baseline	Year	2025	[information from DFC on existing enrolment of full degrees students]
Target	Year	2026	+10
Target	Year	2027	+50
Target	Year	2028	+100
Target	Year	2029	+100

(*) Significant joint initiatives will be further defined. It will include completed joint-innovation events, completed outreach initiatives, completed summer schools, joint-research proposals submitted, and others.

(**) Significant improvements will be further defined.

(***) Will be further defined. It will include mainstreaming policies developed, gender equality integration in teaching materials and education programmes, gender mainstreaming in research undertakings and management, etc.

5. Programme description

5.1 Partnership projects

The programme will support partnership projects established between one (or more) Danish university(ies) and at least one African university. The projects should focus on improving capacities of systems and people in university education, teaching programmes, and develop collaborative learning and networks in relevant areas for tackling common global development challenges.

The primary *target groups* are African universities, including African researchers, lecturers, students, and support staff, as well as Danish universities, researchers, lecturers, and students. Equal participation of men and women will be aimed at in all activities.

Universities can form the partnerships at faculty level, but projects should be signed off at rectorate/university level. A university can engage in more than one partnership project.

Each project will define its specific objective and scope that should align with the programme objective and address one or both of the two outcomes. For short-term stays by young African students in Danish universities, it will be a condition for funding that partners also apply for funding for activities under

outcome 1. During the further preparation process, it will be considered if and how full-degree programmes under outcome 2 can be part of established partnership projects.

Box 1 lists relevant activities to consider under outcomes 1 and 2, but the partnerships are not bound by these and may propose other activities as long as they align with the two programme outcomes.

The programme cannot fund research activities directly, but such activities can be supported by FFU grants. According to OECD-DAC guidelines, visits by Danish students to African countries cannot be funded, but the partnerships are expected to motivate exchanges of Danish students to African universities through other funding channels.

Box 1: Example of types of activities to consider under outcomes 1 and 2

<p>Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks, and outreach of the Africa-Denmark university environments in support of knowledge development and innovation to tackle shared global challenges</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation platforms, summer schools, workshops, fairs, seminars, incl. partnerships for innovation with private companies/foundations • Entrepreneurship training programmes and accelerators, incubators, business courses etc. • Seminars/conferences for joint learning and/or research proposal preparation and scoping • Knowledge and innovation information sharing hubs • Policy briefs, and/or, seminars/conferences with policy makers, private sector, civil society, etc. • Visiting scholars, African countries to Denmark/Denmark to African countries • Master teaching programme revisions • Innovative teaching methods, supervision, mentoring, interdisciplinary work • Laboratories training, research methods, writing courses, etc. • Knowledge, information, and learning management systems • Digital training and information technology (websites, internet and e-services) • Library search systems access and training • Joint (Master) education development/curriculum development • Preparation of joint research proposals and funding applications for international research funds • Strengthening/sharing of fund application skills and approaches • Use of digital technologies and platforms • Development of communication skills, communication material • Mainstreaming gender and inclusion perspectives in teaching programmes curricula, research projects, recruitment, and monitoring and evaluation • Assessments and institutional policy development on gender equality and inclusion • Workshops or courses on inclusion and rights • Measures to include women in formal and informal research networks • Gender studies development of inclusive recruitment strategies • Special teaching material/equipment/personal assistance for students with disabilities • Blended learning initiatives
<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened academic capacity of young Africans through scholarships for short-term study stays (non-degree) or full-degree programmes in Denmark</p>

- Scholarships for African students for short-term study stays in Denmark (non-degrees)
- Scholarships for full-degree programmes
- On-line courses in preparation of African students' application to Danish university programmes

Specific modalities for scholarships for African students who want to study in Denmark either on short-term stays or in full-degree programmes might have to be developed based on investigation of possibilities to find solutions to the list of constraints identified (ref. section 2.6).

5.2 Partnership participants and roles

A partnership can consist of (at least) one Danish university and one, or preferably two or more, African universities (both within and across African countries). One Danish university will be lead. To maximise opportunities for leveraging south-south learning, preference will be given to partnerships with more than one African partner.

Where more than one Danish university partner is included, this should be justified by the opportunity to capitalise on existing networks across institutions and/or the pooling of resources and comparative advantages to best address the objective, which Danish partners cannot mobilise individually. Every partnership should, however, appoint an overall administrative and coordinating lead. Danish research institutions can also participate in the partnerships.

The Danish universities are expected to be responsible for all aspects of receiving and supporting the African students. Besides enrolment in the teaching programme, their responsibility includes providing the necessary information for visa and residence processes, ensuring accommodation, providing allowances, insurance, air tickets and induction to studying and staying in Denmark. The legal aspects of this role of the universities need further investigation.

Other European universities can also participate in the partnerships as secondary to the Danish and African core partners. Such wider European university participation should be motivated by possibilities, for instance, to add competences or connections to the partnership that would strengthen their overall attraction and potential value for knowledge development and innovation for tackling the shared global challenges.

In addition to university/research institutions as core partners, partnerships can include relevant private sector actors as secondary partners, including companies, foundations, and research-based think-tanks. The inclusion of such secondary private sector partners is encouraged. Its aim should be to capitalise on wider and applied knowledge and networks where this can add value to and strengthen the partnerships and their contribution to tackling the shared global challenges. The inclusion of secondary partners is an option that each partnership decides whether and how to use. The programme cannot support non-government/civil society organisations.

For any non-Danish university partner from the global north, a ceiling will be set on funds they can receive under the programme.

5.3 Project duration and scale

A partnership project is envisaged to have a duration of 5 years. A budget ceiling will apply for a partnership project's outcomes 1 of DKK [5-7] million. The funding requested should be justified against the proposed project results and activities. The budget for outcome 2 (scholarships for short stays) should be justified against realistic plans for number of types of scholarships to award and manage. It will be decided in the further preparation process, how scholarships for full-degree programmes will be organised.

5.4 Seed funding option

In cases where more time and process are required to develop the idea and foundations for a partnership project, applicants can apply for seed funding to adequately develop the idea and content of a partnership project. The output should be a full partnership project application for submission in the following year's application round.

The requirement is that a basic commitment and potential exist to form a partnership with relevance for the programme objective and outcomes. However, relations between prospective partners may be in their early stage with limited possibilities to jointly develop the partnership idea and clarify the focus and scope of a potential project. This should particularly enable the development of partnerships between actors who do not already have established collaborations to build on. It can also apply to situations where for instance relevant master programmes are still being developed. In addition, the seed funding can support preparation for inclusion of a third African university partner.

The seed funding can cover joint project proposal development activities, including travel, seminars, and staff time. The seed funding projects will be limited to max. 1 year and DKK 1 million. A maximum of 8 seed funding applications is envisaged for 2025. Partners will apply for seed funding through the same window and process as full partnership projects, but with a simplified format.

The criteria for granting seed funding will be specified in the call document and will include among others: Relevance of partnership idea to programme objective; clarity and potential value-added of project focus to overall programme objectives; potential value-added of partners to overall programme partnerships; evidence of commitment of partners to the partnership; quality of plan for project concept development; no or limited previous collaboration.

5.5 Top-up grants for African Erasmus+ Scholarships

The programme will also seek to support existing scholarship opportunities for African students such as the Erasmus+ programme, that is part of EU's umbrella framework for mobility in education, training, youth and sport.

The Erasmus+ programme facilitates a wide range of activities for education purposes and actors from both within and outside Europe, including African countries.⁴ Activities can take place under Erasmus+

⁴ Covered in Erasmus+ Region 3 – Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, and Region 9 – all Sub-Saharan countries

agreements between institutions and can include e.g. mobility⁵ for university students (both BA and MA-level), staff, as well as students and staff at university colleges and universities of applied science ('erhvervsakademier' and 'professionshøjskoler') and other Higher Education Institutions.⁶

In total there are roughly around 40 African Erasmus+ students in Denmark each year but potential for many more, which is also confirmed by the Danish National Agency for Erasmus+ under the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. It is an obstacle for African students within the Erasmus+ programme that scholarships are too low to cover the cost of living in Denmark. It is thus difficult for African students to come to Denmark on an Erasmus+ scholarship, and also not attractive for Danish universities to accept African students who cannot provide for themselves.

To confront this challenge, the programme will include top-up grants for African Erasmus+ students coming to Denmark, in order to increase their total grant to a level that matches the stipends that Denmark (through DFC) offers other students from the global south coming to Denmark for longer study stays. The top-up grants will be made available for universities through an annual application process managed by DFC. Unlike other activities under the programme, these grants will be available for students from all African countries in order to honour existing and well-established Erasmus+ partnerships and the Erasmus+ programme as a whole.

There is close dialogue between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish National Agency for Erasmus+ regarding initiatives that can further the number of African students in Denmark through the Erasmus+ programme.

5.6 Programme coordinator

Acknowledging the comprehensive task of supporting African students on scholarships in Denmark with entry and residence requirements, accommodation, etc., Danish universities can apply for funding of a coordinator as part of outcome 2. The ceiling for meeting applications will depend on the number of visiting students in each partnership, whether stays are for non-degree courses or full-degree programmes, and whether there are particularly geographically-determined constraints related to finding suitable accommodation. This will be further specified in the call for applications.

5.7 Call-based application process

Universities will apply for the partnership projects through a call managed by Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC). First application rounds for the partnership projects will be implemented in 2025 with expected project start in 2026. The initial two annual rounds in 2025 and 2026 are expected to each result in selection of 3-4 partnership projects (not including seed funding projects).

The universities will apply as full partnerships with all intended partners included. The applications should show evidence of having been prepared jointly by the main Danish and African partners. They should show a balanced mix with substantial representation both from Danish and African partners.

⁵ Mobility in Erasmus+ enables higher education students to study at a higher education institution abroad as a part of their degree at their home institution.

⁶ Danish/European students are not eligible for Erasmus+ mobility grants when going to ODA countries, however, university/institutional staff from Danish institutions are.

DFC will announce each call with details for submission of the application, including selection criteria and process. The format for the application will be defined in the call. Submission of the application will be electronic. As far as possible, formats and approach will be modelled based on the FFU-application process which Danish universities and many partner institutions are familiar with.

Applications will be assessed and scored based on pre-defined criteria. A first administrative check by DFC will assess the basic eligibility of partners to apply, based on eligibility criteria. Eligible applications will subsequently be assessed by a Selection Committee based on the selection criteria. Box 2 defines the (immediate) selection criteria [to be further developed].

Box 2: Preliminary selection criteria for strategic university partnership projects

Eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligned with programme objective’s scope • At least one African university included • Not direct research
Selection criteria	
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic relevance to tackling shared global development challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thematic focus on key knowledge gaps and innovation needs for tackling the shared global challenges • Relevance to institutional needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interventions relevant to capacity needs and opportunities in partner research and education systems, staff capacities, networks, and outreach
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential value-added and originality of project in relation to capacity and academic networks to improve shared knowledge and innovation • Clarity and focus, coherence, and adequacy of project design in view of objective and outcomes • Partner composition and coordination/management set-up reflects equal partnership
Effect and value-added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On capacity strengthening of people including exchanges • On capacity strengthening of teaching and research support systems • On networks and joint learning for knowledge and innovation
Additional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated focus on gender equality • More than one African partner; substantial role of African partner

5.8 Selection process and committee

The selection process will consist of the following main steps:

- *Administrative screening for eligibility:* Conducted by DFC. Review of applications for basic compliance with eligibility criteria and documentary requirements. Triggers pass of application to scoring for possible approval and award of grant or administrative rejection of application.
- *Scoring of application:* Conducted by Selection Committee (see below). Scoring of applications based on selection criteria (Box 2), supported by question-based screening guide for systematic and

consistent treatment of applications. Results in screening note that synthesises the assessments and scores, including ranking of applications.

- *Approval or rejection of applications.* Conducted by DFC based on the scoring of applications. DFC notifies applicants on the award or rejection of the application, including background for assessments and way forward, both for approved and rejected applications.

A *Selection Committee* will be appointed with the responsibility of scoring applications. The committee will have four external members, representing competence and experience with university partnerships and exchanges (2 members), specialist knowledge about requirements concerning full-degree education in Denmark and insight into requirements in (some) universities in African countries (1 member), and project design and management (1 member). DFC will have a member of the committee who will cover processes and partnerships. MFA will be represented by an observer. Gender equality among committee members will be prioritised. The committee will be responsible for preparing the screening note, including documenting lessons and issues arising.

After the first selection round in 2025, lessons learned from the selection process will be identified with stakeholders, including DFC, MFA, universities in Denmark and African countries, and Selection Committee members as basis for relevant adjustments to the process and formats.

6. Inputs/budget

The preliminary breakdown of the budget is given in Box 3 below.

Box 3: Preliminary budget

Budget items	DKK
Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity, collaborative learning, networks	90 million
Outcome 2: Scholarships for short-term studies and full-degree programmes	311.5 million
Erasmus+ topping up of scholarships	10 million
Administration (DFC)	28.5 million
Total	430 million

Overheads to universities in Denmark and Africa is 20%

7. Institutional and Management arrangement

Overall programme governance

MFA has overall responsibility for overseeing the programme, and Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) is responsible for management of the programme. The implementation of the programme will be in accordance with the Danida Aid Management Guidelines⁷. The governance and management arrangements will be specified in an agreement between DFC and MFA and will follow the

⁷ www.amg.um.dk

“Administrative retningslinjer for forvaltning af tilskudsmidler fra Udenrigsministeriet – Danida Fellowship Centre”.

Programme management and implementation

DFC is responsible for the overall management of the programme, including conducting the call processes, managing the selection processes, and monitoring implementation until the end of the programme period.

DFC will, in collaboration with the MFA, produce the call text for the programme and produce general conditions for the partnership projects. The general conditions will contain guidelines for project management, steering committees, financial management and audits, reporting etc. DFC will approve annual work plans and budgets prepared by the partnerships as a basis for disbursements.

DFC will enter into agreements with each of the lead universities for the partnerships which will, on their part, resume full responsibility for the implementation of each project.

DFC will be the focal point on all communication related to the programme with the university partners on project management and financial management related issues.

When relevant, DFC will organise programme support activities, including seminars/workshops across partnerships, events for African (Danish) students in Denmark for networking etc.

Coordination and management of partnership projects

Each partnership project will have one Danish university partner as lead for overall management and coordination of the partnership. A focal point will be appointed in the lead Danish university partner as primary entry point for all communication with DFC and coordination of follow-up in relation to the partnership. The organisational set-up for each of the partnerships will be described in more detail in the call applications.

Each partnership will be responsible for implementation and coordination of their project. The management set-up by the universities will be aligned to existing university structures.

The responsibility for managing the logistics, accommodation, allowances, insurances, and entry and residence procedures for African students coming to Denmark on scholarships is expected to rest with the individual Danish universities under the partnerships. As part of applications under outcome 2 and depending on the administrative burden of supporting African students on scholarships in Denmark, partnerships can apply for a coordinator in the Danish lead institution.

Monitoring and managing and reporting on results

Each partnership will prepare annual results progress reports, with narrative reporting on main activities and progress on outputs and towards outcomes based on the results frameworks defined for the project. The lead partner is responsible for monitoring and compiling the results reports. A common format for

the annual report will be defined by DFC. The format will include lessons learned and suggestions for any relevant adjustments to the project.

At programme level, DFC will monitor overall progress based on the programme results framework and prepare annual programme results reports for the MFA. Based on partnership results, progress reports, and consultations with the partnerships, DFC will identify overall programme lessons, strategic issues, update the risk matrix, and suggest strategic level adjustments to the programme for presentation and discussion with MFA.

During the programme period, DFC will conduct monitoring visits to the partnerships when relevant. A stock-taking review of the programme will be scheduled for end 2026 in order to identify the immediate lessons and needs for adjustments to the programme. This will be conducted jointly by DFC and MFA.

8. Financial Management, planning and reporting

Disbursements

The budget for the programme will be transferred to DFC, which will manage the budget according to “Administrative retningslinjer for forvaltning af tilskudsmidler fra Udenrigsministeriet – Danida Fellowship Centre”.

DFC will, on a biannual basis, disburse funds to the Danish lead universities in each partnership against an approved implementation plan. The lead partner is responsible for transferring funds to other partners in the partnerships based on the workplans and budgets.

Financial management

Each university will apply its own financial management system and procurement rules to ensure alignment with local systems. However, the financial management and procurement guidelines of the individual university must as a minimum adhere to the MFA grant management standards.

DFC will approve all financial and audit reports and recommend measures for additional financial control or systems strengthening if so required.

Progress and financial reporting and auditing

DFC will receive annual financial and audit reports from each partnership and consolidate these into an overall financial reporting on the programme which will be a part of the DFC annual financial reporting, approved by the Board of DFC and forwarded to MFA.

DFC will submit an annual programme-level progress report and aggregated results measurement to MFA based on annual progress and financial reports prepared by each of the university partnerships to DFC. The format for the DFC annual report will be submitted to MFA for approval. DFC is responsible for review, substantive comments, and approval of the progress reports from the partnerships, which will guide the universities in their implementation.

Anti-corruption and Danish red lines

Denmark's zero-tolerance stance on corruption will apply to the programme, which implies that all cases of suspected mismanagement, corruption or fraud will be followed up on. Partners are expected to report any suspicion of irregularity to DFC immediately.

The programme will apply the principles of zero-tolerance towards Child labour; Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH); and terrorism. Specific articles on this are included in the legal agreement, where it is specified that violations hereof are grounds for immediate termination of the agreement.

9. Risk Management

Annex 1 presents the full risk matrix, while the below highlight the most central risks facing the programme.

Contextual risk:

- Political unrest or conflict in countries. This risk varies by country but is likely in some. The main mitigation measure is to use alternative ways to continue activities working by distance and videoconferencing. Mostly the risk will be confined to individual projects. The remaining overall risk to the programme is considered minor.
- The partnership programme becomes a topic of attention in Danish domestic political discussions on immigration, since there will continue to be an active public debate about immigration in Denmark across the political spectrum. The main measure will be to manage the programme strictly based on the political instructions and ensure on-going monitoring of the risks.

The programme risks:

- Too few partnership applications and/or too few qualified applicants relative to plans and expectations, due to initially few shared thematic areas of interest or still early relations to build on for more rapid development of joint project ideas. This requires early proactive engagement by DFC and Danish universities to working on potential partnerships and use of seed funding.
- Too few scholarship applications, due to Denmark having still limited track-record among African students as destination for studies. This will be managed through proactive communication by African partner universities and possibly implementing a joint-communication strategy by African and Danish universities on African campuses.
- Delays or outright hindrance of African visiting students on scholarships, leading to fewer than targeted scholarship visits. The Danish visa entry procedures are lengthy and are often prohibitive for visits including from Africa. This can be somehow alleviated by proactive engagement, but not fully.

Institutional risk:

- [Some of the constraints related to the enrolment of African students in full-degree programmes will be listed here (ref. section 2.6)]

10. Closure

The main immediate results of the partnerships will be the joint knowledge and contributions to innovation developed through the projects, and the wider lasting results will be strengthened relations between Danish and African institutions and across academic staff, researchers, lecturers and students. While these are mostly intangible, they represent the results that will be sustained after completion of the programme's 5-year period. There will also be more tangible sustainable results, such as the improved teaching programmes, joint-research undertakings resulting from joint-application processes, and the improved capacity of researchers, academic staff and systems for managing research application process, strengthened capacity of back-up support for research and teaching programmes, and gender mainstreaming policies and systems. The individual project descriptions will be required to describe the plans for ensuring sustainability of the partnership results.

Depending on availability of funds in future Finance Acts, it is expected that the first 5-year phase of the programme, will be followed by new programme phases.

Annex 1: Risk matrix

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Background to assessment
Contextual				
Delays or interruption of partnership projects due to political unrest or conflict, pandemics, or environmental hazard events	Likely	Significant	Find ways together with partner to continue selected partnership activities by distance, using video conferencing facilities, and other means	Risk of conflict or unrest persist in several of the African countries relevant for the partnerships. Activities may in many cases be able to continue in spite of political unrest
Security risks to staff	Unlikely	Significant	Observe MFA/Embassy managed security procedures and maintain contact with embassies to monitor security risks and take appropriate measures	Several of the African countries have pockets of conflict or insecurity, university campuses are on occasion the center of demonstrations that could escalate
The partnership programme becomes a topic for attention in Danish domestic political discussions on immigration	Likely	Minor	The programme does not focus on immigration but partnerships and exchanges. Maintain focus on implementing the programme to deliver	There will continue to be an active public debate about immigration in Denmark across the political spectrum, which can impact on initiatives that involve foreigners staying in Denmark

			its results on mutual joint-learning and collaboration for knowledge and innovation	
Programmatic				
Too few partnership applications and/or too few qualified applicants relative to plans and expectations	Unlikely	Major	On-going engagement by DFC with the universities confirm their basic interest and priority to engagement in the partnerships; continue such dialogue to maintain interest and address issues arising in due time	There may be too few shared thematic areas of interest between Danish and African universities to result in applications. The universities are stretched for resources and management time, including with implementation of the university reform, and unable to devote the resources to engaging in new partnerships. The grant sizes may not be high enough to justify the universities' use of time
African universities unable to engage with a stable level of effort due to unpredictable funding situation	Likely	Major	On-going open dialogue with between the Danish and African partners; use of an adaptative and flexible approach to agreeing and managing joint inputs	African universities tend to depend on often unreliable government funding and donor-funded and determined research programmes which result in often low and sometimes unpredictable resource envelopes. This can constrain their ability to engage in a stable and planned way in the partnerships. University staff have many tasks and may already have difficulties balancing time for teaching, research, and administration
Too few scholarship applications relative to the targets and resources made available	Likely	Major	Proactive dialogue and clear communication approach via African partner universities about the opportunity	Denmark may be viewed as less attractive for foreign students than countries with larger language pools, such as English and French speaking countries. Or it will require a period of time before knowledge among Africa students about scholarship opportunities in Denmark spread and they decide to pursue these

			for scholarships. Monitor progress closely.	
Delays or outright hindrance of African visiting students on scholarships, leading to fewer than targeted scholarship visits.	Almost certain	Major	Proactive engagement by MFA and DFC with responsible ministries in Denmark	The Danish visa entry procedures are lengthy and are often prohibitive for visits including from Africa. This can be somehow alleviated by proactive engagement, but not fully.
African students' stays are prevented by lack of accommodation	Almost certain	Minor	The universities are responsible for accommodation and will need to be proactive	Accommodation possibilities are scarce and expensive especially around Copenhagen.
The high Danish cost of living expenses are prohibitive for African students to stay in Denmark	Almost certain	Minor	The students will be paid an adequate living allowance through the universities; part of the scholarship budget	Danish cost of living levels are high and the average African student's financial resources are even more limited than the average Danish student.
Complexities of legal framework for African students in Denmark	Likely	Major	[To be identified]	[The Ministry of Higher Education and Science will help describing the issues]
Institutional risks				
Mismanagement of funds or corruption	Unlikely	Minor	Observe the standard MFA international financial management practices practiced by DFC and the universities Partnership selection	Levels of corruption and problems with misuse of funds and corruption are recognised to be high and widespread in several of the partner countries. This is not necessarily the case in the university sectors, however

			process defined to ensure impartiality be and integrity	
Complexities of legal framework for African students in Denmark, in particular concerning full-degree programmes	Likely	Major	[to be identified]	Universities must operate within the rules and regulations of the higher education sector. This can result in barriers for allowance payments, housing, tickets and insurance for scholarships students [The Ministry of Higher Education and Science will help describing the issues]

Annex 2: Justification based on DAC criteria (in terms of choice of partner modalities)

Relevance	The programme directly supports Danish policy priorities on a strengthened engagement with Africa, focusing on mutual understanding and relations. It supports universities in Africa and Denmark in joint-development of knowledge and innovation key for tackling global challenges in climate etc. It addresses African students' needs and demands for exposure to international academic environments and societies.
Effectiveness	<p>Projects will be designed by the university partnerships themselves, based on their first-hand knowledge, needs and priorities on initiatives that will result in collaborative learning, academic networks, outreach, and capacity for advancing knowledge and innovation. Both Danish and African universities and students show interests in exchanges, and scholarships tackle the main immediate constraint in terms of funding and study spaces for these to materialise.</p> <p>Danish universities have strong capacities to manage the project implementation effectively and they will partner with African universities of a certain capacity. Ownership will ensure the necessary focus and drive on implementation.</p>
Efficiency	
Coherence	Promotes coherence across Danish institutions engaged in tackling the global challenges by building on Danish universities' efforts, competences, and partnerships, and by promoting partnership with private sector actors and Embassies where it adds to knowledge development and innovation.
Impact	The wider impact in terms of improved knowledge and innovation to tackle the global development challenges. The larger and more long-term societal and institutional ties between Denmark and African countries, both at institutional and individual level, from linking the academic environments.
Sustainability	Sustainability of the project results will be ensured as they derive from the universities' own defined projects that align with their wider institutional priorities and plans. The relations developed will continue beyond the project lives. Students will achieve lasting education outcome they and African societies will continue to benefit from into the future. The project activities themselves will only be sustained until the end of the funding.

Annex 3: Process Action Plan (PAP)

Partnership Programme for Knowledge and Innovation

Action/product	Deadlines	Responsible/involved Person and unit	Comment/status
Formulation and consultation with universities in Denmark and African countries, relevant authorities and other stakeholders	March – December 2024	Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) LÆRING (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MFA) External consultant	Incl. close dialogue with Ministry of Higher Education and Agency for Higher Education and Science and meeting on 2 Dec with representatives for all Danish universities
Programme cover and case approved by Ministers in MFA, Ministry of Higher Education (UFM), and Ministry of Immigration and Integration (UIM)	Mid-October 2024	REGSEK/LÆRING	Approved in mid-November 2024. Delay of formal approval implied that only part of the allocation is visible in Finance Act 2025
Submission of draft programme document incl. annexes to Programme Committee secretariat + external hearing	20 December 2024 / 8 working days prior to meeting	LÆRING	Link to external hearing: Programme Committee Meeting on 13 January 2025
Meeting in the Programme Committee (MFA)	13 January 2025	LÆRING	Internal quality assurance in MFA. Responses to external hearing are taken into account
Continued formulation and consultation	January- February 2025	LÆRING/DFC/Consultant	
Appraisal	Late February-early March	External consultant	
Final programme document incl. annexes, sent to Secretariat for the Council for Development Policy	25 March <i>(Minimum 13 days prior to meeting)</i>	LÆRING (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MFA)	
Presentation to the Council for Development Policy	10 April	LÆRING	

The Minister of Foreign Affairs approves the programme	Late April	LÆRING	
Signing of agreement between MFA and Danida Fellowship Centre and establishment of Selection Committee	Mid May	LÆRING/DFC	External specialists together with DFC (MFA as observer)
Press Launch with Minister(s) and relevant partners (universities, foundations, DFC etc)	Mid/late May	REGSEK/KOM/LÆRING	
Launch of first call for applications	June 2025	DFC	
Deadline for first call	Early October	DFC	
First meeting in new Selection Committee	Late October	DFC/LÆRING	
First activities under the programme initiated	Q2, 2026	DFC/partners	
First master students arrive	Q3, 2026	DFC/partners	
2 nd call	Q2, 2025	DFC	
3 rd call	Q2, 2026	DFC	
4 th call	Q2, 2027	DFC	