



# STRENGTHENING RESEARCH CAPACITY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR DANISH SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH 2014 – 2018

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# PREFACE

Danish support for development research has not previously conformed to a formal strategic framework, but has been guided by the recommendations in the ‘Hernes report’ (2001)<sup>1</sup>, in which an international panel examined Danish development-oriented research. Key recommendations, followed up during the past decade, were to link support for development research closer to the priorities of Danish development cooperation, to carefully consider the relevance of research activities, and to support larger integrated research programmes rather than stand-alone projects.

The purpose of the strategic framework for Denmark’s support for development research is to guide the prioritisation and allocation of Danish funding of development research. In addition to guiding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it will also support the dialogue with stakeholders in priority countries and in Denmark. It is expected that this will increase transparency of future prioritisation between the various elements of support.

The strategic framework takes account of recommendations from reviews and evaluations of Danish-funded development research activities, notably the recent evaluation of Danida-supported research on agriculture and natural resource management<sup>2</sup>, other Danish and international experience, and stakeholders’ comments to an early outline of the strategy (April 2012). A public hearing of a revised draft held in Denmark and several priority countries during September-November 2013 provided further inputs to the strategic framework. This final version also includes examples of support modalities and lessons learned.

While much of the existing support for development research will continue over the coming years, the strategic framework has reorientations:

- Danish support will to a larger extent be based on needs, demands and priorities in priority countries and more emphasis will be placed on ownership and accountability in priority countries.
- Key principles from the Paris Agenda for Aid Effectiveness, including alignment, will guide the support for development research, i.e. research objectives should be in line with national priorities in developing countries.
- Attempts will be made to ensure closer cooperation and coordination with other bilateral and multilateral actors, e.g. in the form of thorough assessments of other donors’ support before embarking upon new Danish support, joint evaluations, joint support for national institutions and research strategies, etc.
- There will be increased geographical focus so that the bulk of the support will gradually be concentrated on 5-7 priority countries.
- A Human Rights-Based Approach will be applied in the design and management of research activities, and greater attention will be paid to gender equality.
- To ensure better application of research in development cooperation, there will be more emphasis on communication, dissemination, and use of research results in development cooperation.
- The results framework for support for development research will be strengthened, and particular attention will be paid to the development of better indicators for all support in order to document results.

1 Partnerships at the Leading Edge: A Danish Vision for Knowledge, Research and Development. Commission on Development-Related Research, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. April 2001.

2 Evaluation of Danida supported Research on Agriculture and Natural Resource Management. ORBICON & ITAD. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2013.

# INTRODUCTION

**“The major difference between developed and developing countries is the investment in science and technology. Governments in developing countries should start now to invest in research”.**

*President J.M. Kikwete, United Republic of Tanzania at the opening of the ‘Smart Partnership for Dialogue Conference’, Dar es Salaam, 28 June 2013.*

Research-based knowledge is necessary to address existing and emerging development problems, and support for development research is an important element of Danish development cooperation. These years, there is increasing awareness among political leaders in developing countries about the importance of research and research-based decision making, and some countries have begun to invest their own public funds in research. Needs and challenges vary significantly among countries. While in the last decade, some countries have undergone an impressive development and now have universities with internationally recognised researchers, others are struggling to increase the number of master’s degree holders among their staff. Some countries have high-quality universities, but they suffer from a growing division between these (usually based in the capital) and provincial universities and research institutions which are lagging significantly behind. The emergence of private universities adds to the complexity of the scenario.

The overall trend is encouraging, but developing countries cannot meet the massive challenges and needs for country-specific research and capacity development on their own. Research and development only attracts limited public investment in developing countries. For instance, on average, sub-Saharan African countries spend less than 0.3% of their GNP on research – the lowest level of research funding in the world<sup>3</sup>.

Assistance from Denmark and other countries remains essential. While in the past the main challenge was seen as the transfer of knowledge produced internationally, current developments suggests that emphasis should be on supporting the development of research capacity in developing countries. Instead of supporting Danish and other international research institutions to produce the knowledge needed to improve conditions in developing countries, support should aim at enabling the countries themselves to produce the knowledge they need and to apply knowledge in public decision making structures and processes.

The shift of emphasis does not imply that Danish and other international research institutions will cease to be important partners. Denmark has a strong tradition of undertaking development research. Danish research institutions are internationally renowned and contribute to generating new knowledge and innovative solutions that are much needed by developing countries. In a globalised world, international research cooperation is an important aspect of increased economic, social and political cooperation across national boundaries, and working together brings obvious synergies and gains for researchers both in developing countries and in Denmark. Danish research institutions, the private sector and society at large will continue to benefit from knowledge and experience gained through such cooperation. However, cooperation will to a larger extent be driven by researchers in the South reflecting the needs and priorities of developing countries. The recent evaluation of Danida-supported research on agriculture and natural resource management underlines the merits of the South-driven approach to research cooperation (see box).

3 The UNESCO Science Report 2010.

## SOUTH-DRIVEN RESEARCH – A NEW APPROACH FOR DANISH FUNDING

“The South-driven research projects represent a new approach for Danish funding. The modality has proved mutually beneficial and encouraged continued cooperation between the project partners, and where projects have been approved and implemented, satisfaction amongst stakeholders is high. The South-driven research project modality represents a new and relevant approach which creates strong ownership in the South, positive outcomes and new partnerships. It addresses issues linked to ownership and relevance as part of Denmark’s current approach to development research and alignment with the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*. By being more responsive to Southern demands and better reflecting national priorities and issues, it has created potential for leveraging additional funding. At the same time it has sparked new partnerships and opened up the possibilities of wider collaboration between Danish and Southern institutions”.

*“Evaluation of Danida supported Research on Agriculture and Natural Resource Management”. ORBOCON & ITAD. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2013, page 11.*

# OBJECTIVES AND MODALITIES

The overall objective of Danish support for development research is to strengthen research capacity in developing countries and to create new knowledge capable of alleviating development problems<sup>4</sup>.

The overall objective is supported by pursuing three immediate objectives. In relation to each of these, key result areas have been identified as being conducive to fulfilling the objectives (see box).

Denmark has a longstanding record of supporting development research with a range of modalities. These include grants to individual research projects, capacity development and scholarship programmes, contributions to international research institutions and larger research programmes implemented by Danish and international organisations.

Considering the diversity of needs in the various priority countries, the strategy for achieving the objectives must continue to include a broad range of specific support forms. The following modalities will be applied (see next box):

<b>IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 1</b>	<b>RESEARCH CAPACITY IN PRIORITY COUNTRIES STRENGTHENED</b>
Key result area 1.a.	Improving research policies and strategies at country level in priority countries.
Key result area 1.b.	Strengthening institutional capacity development of research entities in priority countries.
Key result area 1.c.	Strengthening individual capacity development at graduate/postgraduate levels.
Key result area 1.d.	Strengthening partnerships through collaboration with universities, research institutions, think tanks and private sector stakeholders.
<b>IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 2</b>	<b>INNOVATIVE AND RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH RESULTS PRODUCED</b>
Key result area 2.a.	Specific joint research projects between local researchers in priority countries and Danish/international researchers.
Key result area 2.b.	Core funding of leading regional and international research institutions.
Key result area 2.c.	Leveraging EU funding for development research.
<b>IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 3</b>	<b>RESEARCH RESULTS USED</b>
Key result area 3.a.	Research is driven by demand from relevant stakeholders.
Key result area 3.b.	Research results are communicated to and used by relevant stakeholders, such as policy makers, the private sector and other development actors, to stimulate development, reduce poverty and promote human rights.
Key result area 3.c.	Development cooperation draws on research results.

<sup>4</sup> International Development Cooperation Act (Lov om Internationalt Udviklingssamarbejde), approved by the Danish Parliament in May 2012, Art. 7. This objective should be considered in the light of the objective of Danish development cooperation, which is “to fight poverty and promote human rights, democracy, sustainable development, peace and stability” (Art.1).

## MODALITIES

1. **South-driven development research cooperation;** joint projects are applied for, selected on a competitive basis, and implemented by research institutions in selected priority countries in collaboration with researchers in Danish institutions.
2. **North-driven development research cooperation;** joint projects are applied for, selected on a competitive basis, and implemented by researchers in Danish institutions in collaboration with institutions in priority countries<sup>5</sup>.
3. **Institutional capacity development** of a limited number of universities in selected priority countries through their collaboration with Danish universities.
4. **Ph.D. scholarships and postdoctoral studies** as part of the South- and North-driven research cooperation projects.
5. **Master's degree scholarships.**
6. **Core funding of selected international and regional institutions** and networks in the field of development research.
7. **Integration of research elements into development cooperation programmes.**
8. **Strengthening of national research management mechanisms** in selected priority countries.
9. **Leveraging EU funding** for development research.

The two latter modalities are new. Strengthening of national research management mechanisms will be tested in a country with extensive and long-established Danish support for development research. Denmark may support the development of a national research strategy and the establishment of national peer review mechanisms. Based on experience from a test case, options for moving further along this path will be explored. Furthermore, the possibilities of leveraging EU funding will be further explored in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

<sup>5</sup> The term "South- and North-Driven" development research cooperation should be understood as an equal partnership between North and South but where the institutions in the North and South, respectively, assume the overall management responsibility.

# CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT

## WHAT IS RESEARCH CAPACITY?

Research capacity has several dimensions. SIDA<sup>6</sup> proposes a useful distinction between the following levels:

- *Regional and international capacity*, reflected in resources for cooperation, financing and dissemination of knowledge.
- *National capacity*, reflected in a country's respect for the right to freely publish and disseminate research and its ability to develop overall policies and strategies both for research and for the coordination and administration of national resources for research.
- *Institutional capacity* (universities and research institutions), reflected in the ability to mobilise and allocate resources, assess research, recruit and train researchers and supply laboratories, libraries, internet services and other important infrastructure.
- *Individual research capacity*, reflected in the ability to identify, conduct and present research.

The above concepts and definitions are referred to in this strategic framework. When individual capacity development is mentioned in the context of Danish support, it mainly refers to M.Sc., Ph.D. and postdoctoral courses. When discussing the various forms of support for research capacity development, it is also relevant to include the capacity of researchers to form partnerships with actors outside of universities.

## A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

The promotion of human rights is a key objective of Danish development cooperation<sup>7</sup>. Human rights are conceived as both a means and an end<sup>8</sup>. The Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) is being rolled out in all policy and programme areas and should be applied to all development cooperation activities. Recognising that there is no standard recipe for a HRBA, Denmark's approach is meant to balance ideals with pragmatism and realism. Thus, the HRBA takes a country-specific point of departure and adheres to the following four principles<sup>9</sup>:

- **Non-discrimination:** On a global scale, academic and research environments tend to be skewed in disfavour of ethnic and linguistic minorities and poorer groups in society, often being viewed as elitist and non-inclusive. As for gender equality, significantly larger numbers of male than female researchers apply for and receive funding for research projects. This reflects deep and complex underlying structures and challenges, which are mostly beyond the scope of what can be addressed by Denmark in this field. However, when supporting research activities, attention will be paid to promote that female researchers in priority countries are included, and that obstacles to their participation are identified and addressed.
- **Participation and inclusion:** Most of the modalities described in this strategy are based on the premise that partnerships at individual, institutional and organisational (e.g. NGO) levels can be established between stakeholders in priority countries and in Denmark. It is a key objective that partnerships should be forged among equals, in the sense that researchers, organisations and institutions in both priority countries and in Denmark contribute to the design, implementation and

6 Research for Development – Policy for research in Swedish development cooperation 2010-2014 and strategy for SIDA's support for research cooperation 2010-2014. SIDA, 2010.

7 The International Development Cooperation Act, 2012, Article 1, sec. 1.

8 "The Right to a Better Life". Strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. May 2012

9 A Human Rights-Based Approach to Denmark's development Cooperation. Guidance and Inspiration for Policy Dialogue and Programming. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. February 2013.



completion (including policy inputs and dissemination in various forms) of research activities.

- **Transparency:** Sound and motivated research must be substantiated by available empirical material and data, while research results need to be freely communicated and exchanged within and beyond academic circles. When selecting partners and projects for funding, it is crucial that decisions are based on clearly established assessment criteria openly presented to applicants and other stakeholders.
- **Accountability:** Danish development cooperation frameworks demand accountability of partners both in priority countries and in Denmark. This applies to all aspects of the project cycle, including the phases of planning, implementation, and follow-up. Partners receiving funding are subject to strict ethical requirements as well as requirements in terms of governance and administration, social accountability, and regarding documentation of academic input and output. Inclusion of all relevant stakeholders such as NGOs and interest organisations is encouraged.

## THEMATIC FOCUS OF THE SUPPORT

Danish support for development research is derived from the overall budget frame for the Danish development cooperation. Thus, there is an obligation to align development research with the overall objectives of poverty reduction and promotion of human rights, democracy, sustainable development, peace and stability. In view of this, the support for development research must be strategic in nature. Rather than supporting research in general, thematic research areas will be carefully selected in order to maximise the development impact in the South. The selection of thematic research areas will be based on thorough consultations and will follow established and transparent criteria.

For the South-driven research cooperation, Danish support will take departure from the needs of partners in priority countries. Thus, partners will identify the research areas that they find to be most pertinent for their development efforts. This will be based on a process of consultations with stakeholders in the South. The selection of research themes will, however, also be made with due consideration to research themes that may be sensitive or contested

in the priority countries but that are important for Danish development cooperation objectives.

For the North-driven research cooperation managed by researchers in Danish institutions, support will be guided by themes relevant for development cooperation strategy in force. Since it takes years to build strong research environments, it does not represent the best use of resources to immediately cut off funding of certain research activities when political priorities change. Accordingly, the link to the current development cooperation strategy cannot be overly rigid. During the past decade, key themes have been growth and employment, governance and democracy, environment, energy and climate change, human health, and conflict and fragility. The selection of research themes for the North-driven research cooperation will be made with due consideration both to continuity and also to the need for new and innovative research themes and approaches.

The selection of research themes will promote multidisciplinary approaches and emphasise the application of natural science, social science and humanities.

## GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS OF THE SUPPORT

The geographical orientation will be narrowed down to fewer countries in order to foster closer partnerships, raise the efficiency of limited resources and improve the quality of the support. By concentrating on fewer countries it will be possible to strengthen synergies between the various support modalities, notably individual and institutional capacity development support. Inspired by lessons from Sweden and Finland, Denmark will limit funding to 5-7 countries which will, over time, receive the bulk of funds allocated to development research (see box). These

will be countries where there is a long-term Danish engagement in academic cooperation and research. The group will include Tanzania, Ghana and Nepal, where several of the support modalities are already being applied with positive results. The geographical focus on 5-7 countries will apply to a majority of the support modalities including North- and South-driven research projects, institutional capacity development including Building Stronger Universities II programme, Ph.D., postdoc and master's scholarships, as well as support to national research management mechanisms.

### FOCUSING ON FEW COUNTRIES TO INCREASE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF AID – AN EXAMPLE FROM SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

SIDA has, during the last years, focused on fewer countries as an essential instrument to promote closer partnership and raise the efficiency and quality of Swedish development cooperation. This approach is in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness including the aim to limit each donor inputs to fewer sectors (areas) and fewer partners. The Swedish bilateral research cooperation has thus been reduced to seven countries since 2010.

*"Strategirapport för forskningssamarbete september 2011 – september 2012", SIDA*

# ACTIVITIES

## OBJECTIVE 1:

### RESEARCH CAPACITY IN PRIORITY COUNTRIES STRENGTHENED

Strengthening of research capacity in priority countries aims at making the countries less dependent upon knowledge produced in developed countries and better able to plan, create and use research-based knowledge to foster development, alleviate poverty and promote human rights.

*Support for research policies and strategies at country level in priority countries (1.a)* is a new activity for Denmark, but a logical next step after many years of individual and institutional capacity development support. It could involve a contribution to the preparation of a national research strategy in a selected priority country linked to the national development plans, establishing or promoting existing national research councils (management procedures, etc.), strengthening the interface between research and policy, establishing or strengthening ethical committees, and strengthening procedures for peer assessment of research funding applications.

Since such support requires a concerted in-country effort by Danish embassies in close collaboration with priority country institutions as well as with other donors, it is not expected that Denmark can provide this on a larger scale. Instead

various approaches will be tested in a selected country. Based on such experience, it will be decided whether to pursue the same approach elsewhere.

The backbone of the support for *institutional capacity development (1.b)* is the Building Stronger Universities (BSU) II programme. It aims at strengthening research environments and research processes by linking up selected institutions in a number of priority countries to Danish universities. Activities include establishment of Ph.D. schools with related course development, courses in better Ph.D. supervision, development of protocols, faculty exchange, accreditation, dissemination of research results and organisational development in order to attract and retain qualified staff. The programme is also managed by partners in priority countries who are assisted by Danish universities in the capacity development process.

Denmark will continue to support *individual capacity development (1.c)* mainly by funding Ph.D. and postdoctoral studies in the South as part of wider strategic research cooperation projects. To a limited degree, Danish Ph.D. and postdoctoral studies can also be included in research cooperation projects, but emphasis will be on supporting students from priority countries.

Denmark aims at strengthening research capacity rather than financing tertiary

education, as the latter is well funded by other donors. However, with a view to improving networks and mutual understanding among Danish students and students from African and Asian countries, a limited number of Master's degree fellowships are funded under the Building Stronger Universities II Fellowship Programme. The students will combine studies at Danish universities with studies at universities in their own countries.

*The support for strengthening partnership and innovation capabilities (1.d)* is presently funded mainly through the UNIBRAIN programme (see box). However, it is an area that will be further explored through e.g. the integration of innovation support functions as an intrinsic part of research capacity.

## UNIBRAIN – FOSTERING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The UNIBRAIN programme was launched in 2010 to support the setup of agribusiness incubators in a joint undertaking between universities, research institutions and the private sector in a selected number of African countries in order to foster innovative solutions and products, and to strengthen the role of the research community and of universities in agriculture and agro-industry. UNIBRAIN's immediate objective is to enable universities, business and agricultural research institutions to commercialise agricultural technologies and produce graduates with entrepreneurial and business skills through agribusiness incubator partnerships.

The activities of UNIBRAIN fall within three areas related to agriculture, agribusiness and agroindustry, i.e. development of innovation and incubation centres, strengthening of related tertiary education, and dissemination of experiences and best practices regarding incubation and innovation.

UNIBRAIN has enabled the creation and establishment of six incubator consortia in five countries in Africa including Ghana, Mali, Zambia, Uganda and Kenya. The consortia are led by universities, research institutions and the private sector. The consortia are dedicated to promoting commercialisation of smallholder livestock, non-timber agro-forestry products and cereals, tropical fruits and vegetables, staple food and cash crops (incl. banana and coffee) as well as food grains. The aim is that UNIBRAIN will contribute to the larger development objective of poverty reduction through the creation of economic activities and jobs for poor people in the selected priority countries.

For more information on Unibrain:  
<http://www.fara-africa.org/our-projects/unibrain/about/>

### OBJECTIVE 2:

#### INNOVATIVE AND RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH RESULTS PRODUCED

Production of relevant research-based knowledge is an important means to alleviate poverty and promote human rights.

For many years, Denmark has supported *joint research projects between researchers based in priority countries and Danish researchers (2.a)*. Projects are selected after competitive bidding based on three equally weighted criteria: Research quality, relevance and effect. Each grant is allocated for of up to 5 years with a budget of up to DKK 10 million.

While the traditional approach has been to invite researchers based in Danish institutions to apply in cooperation with researchers from institutions in priority countries, in 2008 the South-driven approach was introduced on a pilot basis in Vietnam and Tanzania. Since then, a similar approach has been applied in Ghana and Nepal.

The funding of research cooperation projects is set to continue in the future, and based on positive experiences of South-driven projects, this modality will be scaled up relative to North-driven projects. While in 2008-2012, about 80% of this type of funding was allocated to North-driven and 20% to South-driven

projects, the ambition over time is to arrive at a distribution of about 50-50. In order for South-driven projects to reap their full benefits, efforts may need to be invested in strengthening research management capacity in the priority countries concerned. This gives rise to potential synergies with the Building Stronger Universities II programme.

Another way of supporting the development of innovative research is to provide *core funding to leading regional and international research institutions (2.b)*. In order to ensure sufficient dialogue with the institutions, Denmark will continue to concentrate core funding on a limited number of research institutions, mainly regional institutions in Africa, and in a few cases leading international research institutions that cooperate closely with national institutions in developing countries. Cooperation with other donors, notably Norway and Sweden, supporting the same institutions will be increased. This will include undertaking joint evaluations to inform the ongoing dialogue with the institutions.

*Leveraging EU funding for development research (2.c)* will also be considered. However, since this is a new modality for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, possibilities will need to be further investigated. One option is to consider – within a limited budget frame – co-funding relevant EU programmes with joint projects between European researchers and

researchers in developing countries. Such support could be demand driven with a focus on global challenges in relevant areas. Another option might be that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, the Danish universities and other research institutions, work to promote that EU programmes initiate funding calls in the area of development research which should be open and relevant to Danish researchers and researchers in priority countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will explore the various options further in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

### OBJECTIVE 3:

#### RESEARCH RESULTS USED

Failure to share research results with relevant stakeholders represents a missed opportunity for optimising the impact of funds invested. It is a key objective to ensure that research results are communicated in appropriate forms to the various stakeholders, thus informing both development agendas and practical solutions in the countries involved.

Being more responsive to the *demand for research from relevant stakeholders* in our priority countries (3.a) implies that the South-based partners will to a larger extent take the lead in writing the proposal and setting the research agenda.

#### RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT – AN EXAMPLE FROM THE HEALTH SECTOR

The **Bandim Health Project (BHP)** is an example of a research project with an innovative approach and with ground-breaking results. The BHP is a collaboration between The Ministry of Health in Guinea-Bissau, the National Institute of Public Health in Guinea-Bissau, and Statens Serum Institut in Denmark. The BHP was launched in 1978 and has since systematically been collecting large amounts of health data in the same geographical areas in Guinea-Bissau. The results of the research project have inspired scientific debates and have been published in more than 500 scientific papers. The BHP has built individual and institutional research capacity in Guinea-Bissau by participating in the formation of a National Institute of Public Health and by supporting 7 national researchers in obtaining a Ph.D. degree, all of whom now hold prominent positions in the health system in West Africa.

The BHP has made a significant contribution to reducing mortality in children under the age of 5 years in Guinea-Bissau, from 50% to 15% since the late 1970s, primarily due to the successful implementation of preventive health measures such as vaccines and micronutrient supplementations. The application of the research findings of the BHP has thus had a positive and tangible development impact based on real evidence from the ground. The BHP has also influenced WHO vaccination policies and thus had an effect on global health policy.

The total support from Denmark to the BHP during the past two decades amounts to more 50 mio. DKK, which adds to the support from a range of other donors including Novo Nordisk Foundation, the Danish National Research Foundation, the Lundbeck Foundation, and the EU.

For more information on the BHP: [www.bandim.org/](http://www.bandim.org/)

This is believed to create greater ownership of the research conducted and to maximise the likelihood that research results will be used. Local researchers tend to be better informed than foreigners about the many conflicting agendas in their own country and about the needs of the various stakeholders. They are also

better placed to link up with the private sector, civil society and government representatives when designing their research.

Closely linked to the demand aspect is the process of ensuring that *research results are communicated to and used by relevant stakeholders, such as policy makers, the*

*private sector and other development actors, to stimulate development, reduce poverty and promote human rights (3.b)* (see box). The recent evaluation of Danida-supported research on agriculture and natural resource management<sup>10</sup> points out that more could be done to ensure that research results are shared.

Denmark will support dissemination and communication of results from research to ensure that research is useful, accessible, actively disseminated, and communicated in a way that enables potential users to engage and make use of the research information. This includes the need for research results to be published in formats which are accessible to non-experts and may be more appropriate for decision-makers than articles in peer-reviewed journals. Publication of research results in open access journals will also be encouraged.

Research communication and uptake of research results will be improved based on best practice and lessons learned from cutting-edge research communication. Particular inspiration will be sought from DFID working systematically on these issues for several years (see box).

Research uptake is an important element in ensuring that research results are applied to stimulate development, fight poverty and promote human rights. Research uptake includes all the activities that facilitate and contribute to the use of

## PUTTING RESEARCH TO USE – AN EXAMPLE FROM DFID’S APPROACH AND INSTRUMENTS ON ENHANCING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND UPTAKE OF RESEARCH RESULTS

DFID’s position is that the primary aim of a research programme is to carry out high-quality, relevant research that can inform policy and practice decisions. To qualify for direct DFID support, research programmes must have a Communication Strategy and a Research Uptake Strategy to explain how research will be put into use. Moreover, 10% of research programme funding should be allocated to communication.

Although there is no ‘one size fits all’ communication template applicable to all research programmes, DFID’s Central Research Department has identified ten Guiding Principles for effective research communication in order to increase the impact of research.

DFID stresses the need for monitoring and evaluating research uptake and expects projects to devote resources to monitoring and evaluation from the outset of a programme rather than waiting until the end and merely reporting on what has been done. This also implies that indicators for research uptake should be embedded in the project’s logical framework.

Additionally, a range of facilities have been developed to support and strengthen research communication skills. These include a Monitoring & Evaluation Wikipedia and a Communications Corner on DFID’s research portal.

For more details see DFID’s “*Guidance Note on Research Communication*”  
[http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Publications/GuidanceNote\\_Communications.pdf](http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Publications/GuidanceNote_Communications.pdf)

More details are also available in: “*A guide for DFID-funded research programmes*”  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/200088/Research\\_uptake\\_guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200088/Research_uptake_guidance.pdf)

research evidence by policy-makers, the private sector and other development actors. For instance, when awarding grants for research projects, it has become a requirement that a management brief with key recommendations to policy makers and other stakeholders is produced at the end of the research.<sup>11</sup> All research applications must present reflections on how to involve relevant stakeholders better in the preparation and implementation of research in order to strengthen the relation between producers and users of research. It may

also be necessary to consider communication skills as a requirement in the manning of research teams.

Earmarked funds for the dissemination of research results will be a general requirement in all Danish support for development research (except in core funding of organisations, in which case their communications should be an issue in the general dialogue).

It is an important aspect of research uptake that *development cooperation*

<sup>11</sup> Other recent initiatives to improve communication about research include the establishment of the Danida Research Portal with information on all Danida-funded research projects: <http://www.forskningsdatabasen.dk/>

*draws on research results (3.c).* This is best ensured through direct integration of research into a development programme. There are research components in some Danish funded sector programmes where funds are channeled to projects of cooperation between Danish and national research entities. While excellent synergies between development cooperation and research have sometimes been seen, past expectations of extensively integrating research have not materialised. One reason might be that national development partners (e.g. ministries, private sector or civil society actors) do not necessarily see research as a key priority.

Denmark will work to strengthen the link between research and development cooperation. There are several options that may be applied. The Minor Studies modality has been used to inform the handling of particular issues that have emerged from development cooperation in a particular country, or to inform the overall direction of Danish development cooperation. Minor studies are being financed both by programme funds in the various countries where Denmark is involved in cooperation, and through a special budget managed by headquarters. This modality will be continued.

It is also possible to enhance research uptake through the North- and South-driven research cooperation projects, the Building Stronger Universities II

## RESEARCH AND POLICY DIALOGUE – REACHING OUT TO POLICY MAKERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SOUTH

Annual Meetings are held in all partner countries where South-driven research projects have been supported. The purpose is to take stock of the progress, exchange experience between researchers, and discuss the policy implications of research findings with all relevant stakeholders.

The Annual Meeting in Tanzania in 2012 was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Land, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology as well as researchers from all the ongoing research projects, representatives of national research institutions/NGOs, the Danish embassy and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The discussion revealed the public authorities' keen interest in the research projects. However, it also highlighted the challenge of getting the private sector on board, and translating research results into useful policy recommendations. It was generally agreed that more emphasis needs to be placed on overcoming these challenge not only by researchers but also by politicians and civil servants in the public administration. A particular concern raised was how best to link research to needs and demands in the local or regional setting around the universities.

programme and research by institutions receiving core funding. For research cooperation projects in particular, feedback to the relevant stakeholders could take place in a more systematic way e.g. by requiring researchers to present research findings at regular seminars to policy makers and other stakeholders (see box).

Finally, systematic use of reviews and evaluations of the research modalities described here is necessary to assess their relevance for development cooperation.

# PARTNERS IN IMPLEMENTATION

Researchers and research institutions in selected priority countries are key partners in the implementation of this strategic framework. Capacity development should be directed to these partners and they should produce a major share of the research results.

Researchers in Danish institutions are other important partners in the South- and North-driven cooperation projects and in the Building Stronger Universities II programme where they support capacity development of colleagues and institutions in priority countries.

The international research community is another important partner being supported by Denmark through collaboration with international and regional research institutions.

In addition to researchers and research institutions, important partners are the users and potential users of research. They include stakeholders in the priority countries, such as political leaders, government institutions, the private

sector, civil society organisations, and local communities. The ambition is to enhance the involvement of these stakeholders both in the design of research activities and in the use of results.

Danish stakeholders are also important. Deepening the understanding about development challenges and possible solutions in the Danish private sector and in civil society is important for Denmark's position in a globalised world. It is also important for innovation, commercial cooperation, political cooperation, and cross-cultural understanding between Danes and citizens of other countries.

Finally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and others in Denmark involved in development cooperation are also important partners. As users of research results, development practitioners rely on results being communicated in a clear and targeted form. Conclusions need to be based on evidence, and recommendations should consider the targeted audience's possibilities for influencing decisions.



# MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates all support for development research, and takes decisions concerning grants. The responsible department is Technical Advisory Services (TAS), which prepares new grants, undertakes the dialogue with the various partners, follows up ongoing activities, and has formal responsibility for the management of Danish support including financial management.

Danish embassies in countries with major research activities maintain a dialogue with national research partners and, to the extent possible, also with Danish researchers doing fieldwork in the country. In countries with South-driven research cooperation (presently Tanzania, Ghana and Nepal), embassies are more extensively involved in the dialogue with partners, including the organization of annual research meetings attended by representatives from government, private sector and civil society.

Administration of research grants is managed by the Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC). DFC transfers funds to partners, communicates with partners about all administrative and financial aspects of research grants, follows up progress

and completion reporting and approves final audited accounts.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is advised by several bodies concerning decisions on the allocation of research grants.

The **Consultative Research Committee for Development Research**<sup>12</sup> ('FFU') is appointed by the Minister for Development Cooperation. It acts as a programme committee under the **Danish Innovation Fund**.<sup>13</sup> It is responsible for assessing South-driven and North-driven applications for research cooperation and for recommending to the Minister which projects to fund. FFU draws on assessments by international peer reviews of the research quality of applications, assess-

ments by National Screening Mechanisms regarding quality, relevance and potential effect of research proposals, as well as on assessments by embassies of the relevance of research proposals.

In countries with South-driven research cooperation activities, **National Screening Mechanisms** are established to assess the relevance, research quality and potential effect of research applications submitted by national researchers. National Screening Mechanisms consist of a national body with formal authority to coordinate support for research. In countries where such mechanisms do not yet exist, relevant institutions capable of assuming such a role will be identified.

## THE CONSULTATIVE RESEARCH COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

The Consultative Research Committee for Development Research has nine members, including a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The external members are Danish researchers representing relevant academic fields. One member must also be a member of the External Grants Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while one member must be a member of the Council for Development Policy. Presently, there is one international (Norwegian) member of FFU, and it is expected to appoint members from other Nordic countries and from priority countries when a new composition of FFU takes office from 2015 onwards.

12 Det Rådgivende Forskningsfaglige Udvalg, FFU. For further information, see <http://um.dk/en/danida-en/partners/research/cons-research-com/>

13 For further information, see [http://fivu.dk/en/research-and-innovation/councils-and-commissions/the-danish-council-for-strategic-research?set\\_language=en&cl=en](http://fivu.dk/en/research-and-innovation/councils-and-commissions/the-danish-council-for-strategic-research?set_language=en&cl=en)

National Screening Mechanisms shortlist a limited number of applications for further assessment by the FFU.

The **External Grant Committee** of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs consists of four internal members and four external members. It advises the Minister for Development Cooperation on allocation of all grants for development cooperation above DKK 35 million. The External Grant Committee must approve support to research that is not in the category of grants for South-driven or North-driven research cooperation projects, which falls under the mandate of FFU.

The **Council for Development Policy** advises the Minister for Development Cooperation on overall issues of relevance to development cooperation, including priorities for Danish support for development research.

It has been decided to establish an **Advisory Board on Development Research** which could meet with senior management in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a semi-annual basis for more in-depth discussions about research priorities and monitoring of major activities. This could include discussion of the annual report on Denmark's support for development research, and reporting on progress of the Building Stronger Universities II programme, the South-driven research cooperation, and other major activities. Members of the Advisory Board could include representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Universities Denmark, other major Danish research institutions, and representatives of partners in priority countries.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The evaluation of Danida-supported research on agriculture and natural resource management<sup>14</sup> pointed out the need for strengthening the results framework for support for development research. It recommended that a Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and Results-Based Management (RBM) be institutionalised within the modalities for funding development research and that the approaches be utilised from the overall strategic level down to projects and other funded activities. The evaluation particularly called for the application of well-defined indicators in order to measure results.

These recommendations are followed in the strategic framework by applying an LFA to the presentation of overall and immediate objectives of the support for development research. Whenever it is practically possible, LFA and RBM will be applied more systematically in the formulation of new activities, while a series of initiatives will serve to institutionalise the approach. These include:

- Training in LFA and development of indicators at in-country training workshops on financial management offered by Danida Fellowship Centre in countries with South-driven research cooperation projects.
- Revised formats for annual reports and project completion reports to reflect the increased focus on clear results and indicators.
- Intense dialogue with South partners in the Building Stronger Universities II programme on the need for clearly defined objectives, indicators and follow-up when progress reports are drawn up.
- Encouragement of institutions receiving core support to further develop their results framework.
- Support for the development of a national research strategy with clear objectives in a selected priority country.
- Undertaking regular reviews of specific support to assess progress and results and undertaking joint evaluations with other donors of support provided in the form of core funding to regional and international research organisations.
- Amendment of guidelines for South-driven and North-driven research cooperation projects so they include clear definitions and instructions as to what constitutes an objective, output, outcome and indicator.

To supplement reviews and evaluations of specific support modalities, it may be considered to undertake a comprehensive evaluation at the end of the five-year period covered by the present strategic framework. Such an exercise could take an approach similar to the one used by the evaluation of Danida-supported research on agriculture and natural resource management, though with a different thematic focus.

<sup>14</sup> Evaluation of Danida supported Research on Agriculture and Natural Resource Management. ORBICON & ITAD. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 2013.

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BSU	Building Stronger Universities
Danida	Danish International Development Assistance
DFC	Danida Fellowship Centre
DFID	Department for International Development
DKK	Danish kroner
EU	European Union
FFU	Consultative Research Committee for Development Research
GNP	Gross National Product
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
M.Sc.	Master of Science
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
RBM	Results-Based Management
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
TAS	Technical Advisory services





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FOR DANISH SUPPORT FOR  
DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH  
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