

Norad's Programme for Master Studies

2006 – 2010

PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

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1 Background

1.1 The Norad Fellowship Programme 1962 – 2005

The Norad Fellowship Programme (NFP) has existed for over 40 years and has undergone changes in line with changing political priorities in Norwegian development cooperation. NFP has provided candidates from Norway's partner countries for development cooperation in Africa, Asia and Latin America with opportunities for higher education programmes relevant for their home countries. The Programme has provided diploma courses as well as two year Master degree courses at Norwegian higher education institutions. Since 1962 nearly 6000 Norad fellows have graduated with a diploma or a Master degree from Norway. Furthermore, NFP has contributed to internationalisation and capacity building in several fields of study, at Norwegian host institutions.

The NFP has been based on a vision that educational opportunities offered at higher education institutions (HEI) in Norway can contribute to increased competence and capacity building in the fellows' home countries. Since the year 2002 a few triangular South-South-North postgraduate courses (also called "Courses in the South") have been established and an expansion of actors and activities has brought issues like good governance, democracy building and poverty alleviation into the cumulative curriculum. Since 1998, the programme has been managed by the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU)¹.

The last five year agreement 2001-2005 was entered between the Norwegian Council for Higher Education (UHR) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). The Norad's Programme for Master Studies Agreement for the period 2006-2010 will be entered with SIU and Norad. Based on policy directions provided by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Norad is responsible for the overall policy and the guidelines to be followed in managing the programme.

1.2 Norad's Programme for Master Studies 2006-2010

Since the launching of NFP, the international scene of higher education has changed considerably in both the South and the North. The critical role of public higher education in national development is being emphasised around the world and internationalisation and cooperation between higher education institutions and across borders are becoming more important.

¹ The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (hereafter referred to as SIU) is organised as a public agency under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Research. SIU promotes international cooperation in education and research.

To assess the contemporary role and relevance of NFP, Norad in 2004, commissioned an external evaluation of NFP. The evaluation report, presented in August 2005 (*1/2005 The Evaluation of the Norad Fellowship Programme*)², recommended that most of the programme activities should take place in the South concentrated to a limited number of countries and academic fields of study. Norad initiated a hearing inviting written comments of the document from all involved partners. The Report, the comments and recommendations received from stakeholders form the basis for political decisions made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norad³ regarding the development of the new programme, Norad's Programme for Master Studies (NOMA). The new programme replaces in 2006 the Norad Fellowship Programme.

The aim of all educational activities of the NOMA will be to contribute to educate staff in public and private sectors as well as NGOs in the South. Master programmes will be established and developed in the South in close collaboration with Norwegian higher education institutions. Needs and priorities of countries in the South will be the basis for the cooperation. It should be noted that the number of countries as well as fields of study will be strictly limited.

The changes from the NFP (1962-2005) to the new NOMA 2006-2010 are to be made gradually over the next years. During this transition phase a variety of models for cooperation between higher education institutions in the South and in Norway will be eligible for programme support. A successful outcome of the partnership, will also depend on the capacity as well as the competence in institutional development.

2 Aim and Objectives

2.1 Aim

The overall aim of the NOMA is to contribute to the education of staff in all sectors⁴ in eligible countries for support by NOMA⁵ and other selected countries⁶ through building capacity at the Master level in higher education institutions (HEI) in the South.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the NOMA are:

² The evaluation report can be found at www.norad.no (under the section Evaluering)

³ Letter of 19.01.06 from the Evaluation Department/Norad by the Director General and Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Section for International Development Policy

⁴ Public and private sectors as well as civil society

⁵ Eligible countries for support by NOMA at present are Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Nicaragua and Bolivia.

⁶ As decided by Norad.

- To support the development of Master programmes at HEI in the South through close collaboration with HEI in Norway in accordance with national needs
- To achieve, in a longer term perspective, sustainable capacity of institutions in the South to provide the national work force with adequate qualifications within selected academic fields of study
- To stimulate South-South-North cooperation through support to the development of regional Master programmes
- To enhance gender equality in all programme activities
- To strengthen and further develop the competence of Norwegian HEI to integrate global as well as developmental perspectives in their professional work

Only a few full-time Master programmes in selected fields of study may be offered in Norway if academic/technological reasons at present hinder a location in the South.

3 Cooperation, commitment and responsibility

3.1 Basic principles of cooperation

The collaboration shall be based on the principle of equality between the partners and characterised by transparency at all levels. HEI that are members of the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) in Norway and nationally accredited Universities and University Colleges from the countries in the South may participate in the programme.

The Master programmes are open for all students, but only candidates from eligible countries, who are employed and receive leave of absence from their employer for the study period, may apply for a NOMA scholarship. Norwegian students should be encouraged to enrol in course modules in the South as well as in Norway as a part of their degree programme. The study programmes may be offered with selected modules in the South and/or in Norway. A plan indicating how the majority of course modules gradually may be anchored in the South should be developed.

Norwegian embassies as well as public and private institutions in the South will be important contributors to the development of NOMA at country level. Based on needs for competence-building under the Norwegian funded development portfolio in their respective countries, embassies may be instrumental in facilitating the participation of HEI at country level in NOMA.

3.2 Institutional and organisational commitment and responsibility

The NOMA is built on a decentralised model for initiation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The leadership of the partner institutions shall be committed to the projects. The selected areas of cooperation should be anchored in strategic plans at institutional and national levels in the partner country.

4 Strategic direction for NOMA 2006–2010

4.1 Relevance

Competence and capacity building in specific areas of strategic importance to eligible countries for support by NOMA are a vital part of Norwegian support to the development of higher education. Successful project proposals should demonstrate that the proposed activities address relevant educational needs of institutions and/or organisations at national level. Socio-cultural and socioeconomic relevance will be further strengthened through design of course curriculum, fieldwork and thesis work.

4.2 Long term commitment and partnership

The programme emphasises the need for a long-term strategy for capacity-building. A gradual development of NOMA supported activities anchored at partner institutions in the South is a core element of this strategy. The NOMA may also give support to activities that contribute to institutional development, included administrative and managerial capacity, at the partner institutions.

4.3 Academic quality

Academic quality of the project proposals will be an important criterion for support under the NOMA. When implementing NOMA Master programmes, participating partners shall seek to increase quality through exploitation of the comparative advantages and skills of Norwegian universities and university colleges.

4.4 Projects stimulating regional cooperation

Projects that stimulate regional cooperation in the South will be encouraged. Establishment of new regional educational ventures at the Master's level or further improvement of existing study programmes anchored in the South⁷, may be eligible for support in this context. A country, other than those listed in this document point 5.1, point 1 and 2 a), may be selected for academic reasons as location for a regional project. In that case it will be considered essential that the partner institutions in a longer term perspective, are enabled to provide Master courses to meet their own national needs for capacity-building where relevant.

⁷ "Courses in the South" already funded by Norad

4.5 Synergy

All NOMA partners have a responsibility to seek synergy for example through project partnership with other relevant Norwegian funded initiatives, such as the NUFU programme, the Quota scheme and Norwegian bilateral activities in the respective country. Collaboration should also be sought with Norwegian embassies / other international donors / actors in the field of higher education.

4.6 Gender

The NOMA programme aims at contributing to gender equality in education and empowerment of women. Master programmes should pursue the enrolment of female candidates in order to reach 50% female student participation in the NOMA. This aim is expected to be realised through active recruitment strategies, gender perspectives, “mainstreaming” and gender relevant Master programmes.

4.7 Sustainability

All proposed projects need to present strategies for ensuring sustainability in a longer term perspective. The academic and administrative responsibilities for the courses supported by NOMA shall gradually be the sole responsibility of partners in the South. The transition process will take place over a period of years.

5 Eligibility

5.1 Eligible countries

The following geographical areas are eligible for support by NOMA:

1. Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Nicaragua, Bolivia
2. Other developing countries may also be included as decided by Norad. For the current programme period the following country categories are considered eligible:
 - a) Countries that can further Norwegian contribution to peace and conflict resolution and have relevance for rebuilding of society after conflict such as Afghanistan and Sudan
 - b) Countries whose competence and capacity within higher education and research enable them to assist and cooperate with countries within the region meeting the criteria in point 1 or 2 a).

5.2 Eligible institutions

HEI in the South from eligible countries which are fully recognised/accredited by the national authorities in the country where they have their campus, and have appropriate systems for accounting and audit and can provide plans for monitoring and reporting according to the NOMA requirements, may qualify for participating in NOMA. Regarding the Norwegian institutions, only those which are members of the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) and offer accredited degrees at Master level are eligible.

The main contract partners in the South are expected to actively collaborate with relevant public and private organisations in their respective countries to develop the proposed study programmes.

5.3 Eligible academic fields

Based on current Norwegian development priorities and identified needs of the various cooperating countries, the following are eligible academic fields for the NOMA for the programme period 2006-2010:

- Education
- Environment, economic development and trade
- Gender
- Good governance, democratic development, human rights and migration
- Health
- HIV/AIDS
- Oil and energy
- Peace and Conflict resolution

6 Project content and budgetary framework

6.1 Project plan and its components

All applications for NOMA support should develop a project plan. If a study programme (wholly or partly) initially starts in Norway, indications of strategies/actions for a gradual move to the South should be provided. The content of a NOMA project may consist of the following components⁸:

- institutional development
- curriculum development
- study modules which may be run in different combinations at partner institutions in the South as well as in Norway
- study visits
- student scholarships
- staff exchange
- seminars/workshops
- development of teaching methodology
- staff development at the higher education partner institution in the South. Scholarship for PhD study may be granted if deemed necessary for the sustainability of the study programme. Requests for staff development at this level should be approved by the NOMA Programme Board
- joint studies/research on selected issues of high relevance/importance for further development of the study programme

⁸ This list does not claim to be exhaustive

6.2 Budgetary framework

Budget support will be divided in two, namely start-up funds and project funds. Start-up funds will cover activities needed for the preparation of a joint project proposal from the partner institutions. Expenses related to study visits, workshops for proposal writing including curriculum development, as well as limited staff and administrative support, may be eligible. The budgetary frame for start-up funds will be maximum NOK 200 000 of which administrative costs should not exceed 7,5%.

Project funds to cover fellowships for NOMA students, visiting teachers (travel and salary expenses), institutional development, staff development as well as administrative support, will be limited to a total of NOK 4,5 millions per project (depending on the character of the project as well as the project period), of which administrative costs should be maximum 7,5%.

For regional projects increased financial allocations for start-up funds as well as project funding may be considered.

It should be noted that the financial regulations in NOMA are different from those in NFP. Student scholarships for students from the South will be harmonised with scholarship in the Quota scheme for studies in Norway, but will be adjusted to national costs of living when studying in the South.

Other project expenses to be financed will be generated from the list in section 6.1.

Further details concerning financial regulations will be found in the *Programme Guidelines*.⁹ These guidelines will be further developed and finalised before the first main NOMA announcement in August 2006 and, if needed, eventually adjusted in connection with future announcements.

7 Application and selection procedures¹⁰

7.1 Preparation of joint project proposals

Eligible HEI institutions should prepare and submit joint applications to SIU – under the signature of the Vice-Chancellor/Rector of the partner institutions, in which objectives, activities, work plan and budget requirements are clearly stated (see paragraph 6.1).

7.2 Application categories

Applications to the NOMA 2006-2010 will be organised in two phases and will consist of different categories:

⁹ See *Guidelines* at www.siu.no

¹⁰ Further information, guidelines and application forms will be available at www.siu.no

Phase one:

- Category 1: Start-up funds to support projects aimed at developing new Master programmes.

Phase two:

- Category 1: Projects which have received start-up funds and have developed Master programmes
- Category 2: Master programmes by HEI in the South in close collaboration with HEI in Norway. Institutions without start-up funds
- Category 3: Master courses, regional¹¹ as well as country specific, already anchored in the South
- Category 4: New regional Master courses
- Category 5: Master programmes in Norway that at present for scientific/technological reasons cannot be offered in the South

Partner institutions can apply for the funding of Master programmes for a period of maximum two student cohorts. Projects that have obtained support from the Norad Fellowship Programme in 2001 – 2005 and that have a cohort in 2006 will be phased out according to their respective plans, and at the latest by 2008.

7.3 The Governance of NOMA

Norad is responsible for the overall policy of NOMA and the guidelines to be followed in managing the programme according to directions given by the MFA. Norad governs and monitors NOMA through the Joint Consultative Meeting (Samrådsmøte) between Norad and SIU, the appointment of one representative in the Programme Board as well as observing the Board meetings. Norad reports on NOMA to the MFA.

The activities of NOMA will be governed by a Programme Board. The Board consists of representatives from HEI in Norway and HEI in the South, student representative, social partners and a representative appointed by Norad.

The NOMA Programme Board will ensure qualitative aspects regarding the Programme and the project applications granted funding, assess all applications and distribute funds according to the stated aims of the NOMA, monitor on-going activities, have a consultative role as to further development of NOMA.

The total budget, annual plans, annual budgets and reports for the NOMA activities will be approved in the Joint Consultative Meeting (Samrådsmøte) between Norad and SIU.

¹¹ Included “Courses in the South”

8 Indicators of success

The success of the NOMA will be characterised by development of relevant competence and capacity at the institutions in the South as outlined in the objectives of the programme. This can be measured both qualitatively and quantitatively and will be reflected in the increased capacity and knowledge production at the respective institutions. The projects should be reported on both quantitative and qualitative indicators, in which the following elements should be included:

Capacity building:

- The number of Master programmes established at institutions in the South, including regional Master programmes, of direct relevance for the workforce.
- The number of candidates educated through the NOMA Master programmes.
- The number of candidates educated through the NOMA and employed in institutions in the South.

Gender balance:

The proportion of female and male students participating in the programme.
The proportion of female and male academic and administrative coordinators in the programme

Regarding qualitative indicators as well as additional quantitative indicators of relevance, the partner institutions will have to develop these as an integrated element of the individual project as well as the ability to monitor the institutional development.

9 Time schedule and milestones of the programme period 2006-2010

To monitor the progress of NOMA a time schedule with milestones is developed as a separate document. From the first year NOMA should gradually approach a stage where there is a portfolio of Master courses at the partner institutions with students from both the South and Norway pursuing their Master degree by combining a variety of modules.

The first group of NOMA students will begin their studies in 2007 and graduate by 2009.

The last NFP students will pursue their Master studies from August 2006 till June 2008. From the autumn term 2008 NOMA will be in full operation.

In 2009 a review will be conducted to assess the programme development and to initiate the preparation of a possible new programme period 2011-2015. The report should be submitted no later than 31 March. Programme preparations should be finalised by November 2009.

10 Reporting procedures

Collaborating institutions taking part in the NOMA are jointly responsible for implementation and monitoring of activities and projects. Annual progress reports are to be submitted to SIU¹². These reports will be used for further strengthening the NOMA portfolio. All reports will be publicly available at www.siu.no.

When NOMA and its projects are presented in media and/or in seminars/conferences it should be informed that Norad is the responsible agency and the financier of the programme and its projects/activities.

¹² Reporting procedures are continuously updated at www.siu.no, and instructions are forwarded to the institutions and the project coordinators on a yearly basis.