



NUFU

2007-2011

## PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

# **1. Background**

## ***1.1 The NUFU Programme***

NUFU is the Norwegian Cooperation Programme for Development, Research and Higher Education. The NUFU programme is a programme for independent academic cooperation based on initiatives from researchers and institutions in the South and their partners in Norway.

The programme is based on the interest and expertise that Norwegian researchers and institutions have in collaborating with partners in the South with an aim, through joint activities and projects, to contribute towards extending the capacity and competence of the institutions in the South. The NUFU programme is administered by the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU).

The NUFU programme was launched in 1991 and the fourth five year period will start in 2007. To date, five-year agreements have been entered between the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Norad. However, the NUFU agreement for 2007 – 2011 will be entered with SIU and Norad as partners.

## ***1.2. Institutional development, projects and supportive activities***

NUFU supports institutional cooperation and projects between Norwegian universities/specialised universities/university colleges and their partner institutions in the South, directed towards building sustainable capacity and competence in research and research-based education in universities in the South.

Project activities include joint research projects, education of Master's and PhD candidates, development of Master's or PhD programmes in the South, training of technical and administrative staff and publication and dissemination of research results. NUFU supports bilateral projects, regional network projects and supportive activities with an aim to contribute to the development of the institutions in the South.

## ***1.3. The fourth phase of the NUFU programme***

The preparation of the fourth phase of the NUFU programme included a seminar held at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda in November 2004. The seminar gathered more than 30 representatives from institutions in Africa involved in the NUFU cooperation, as well as NUFU's Board and representatives from Norad, UHR and SIU. Discussions were held on topics concerning cooperation between institutions in the South and in Norway; and recommendations were made for the next period of the NUFU programme.<sup>1</sup>

The seminar in Kampala, discussions in the NUFU Board and discussions with Norad have concluded in this Programme Document, representing the conceptual framework for the fourth period of the NUFU programme.

---

<sup>1</sup> The seminar report can be downloaded from SIU's website: [www.siu.no](http://www.siu.no)

## **2. Goal and objectives**

### ***2.1. Goal***

The goal of the NUFU programme is to support the development of sustainable capacity and competence for research and research-based higher education in developing countries relevant to national development and poverty reduction, and to contribute to enhanced academic collaboration in the South and between South and North.

### ***2.2. Objectives***

Objectives for the NUFU programme are:

- to contribute to the development of institutions in the South
- to produce knowledge in areas deemed relevant to goals and objectives at institutional and national level
- to educate new researchers
- to develop Master's and PhD programmes in the South
- to promote gender equity in research and academic cooperation
- to establish sustainable environments for research and research-based teaching
- to contribute to the enhancement of quality and relevance in research
- to establish regional academic networks within relevant discipline areas
- to present academic publications and research results
- to contribute to internationalisation of institutions in the South and in Norway

## **3. Cooperation, commitment and responsibility**

### ***3.1. Basic principles of cooperation***

NUFU-supported cooperation projects and activities represent long-term institutional cooperation between one or more institutions in the South and one or more institutions in Norway.

The needs and priorities of the institutions in the South form the basis for building relationships of cooperation between the parties in the South and in Norway. The cooperation is based on the principle of equality between the partners and should be characterised by transparency at all levels.

### ***3.2. Institutional commitment and responsibility***

The NUFU programme is built on a decentralised model for initiation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Even if NUFU-supported projects are initiated by a group of researchers from two or more institutions, the cooperation should be anchored in and committed by the leadership of the participating institutions. The selected areas of cooperation should reflect key areas in the institutions' strategic plans and priorities.

NUFU supports projects with funding for research activities, education of Master's students and PhD candidates, costs of establishing education programmes etc; whereas the institutions themselves cover basic salaries and basic infrastructure.

## **4. Strategic directions for the fourth phase of the NUFU programme**

### ***4.1. Capacity building and institutional development***

All NUFU-supported projects should be directed towards building sustainable capacity and competence within research and research-based education at the partner institutions in the South. Educational activities should be included in all project proposals, i.e. education of Master's and PhD candidates, and/or the development of educational programmes (at Master's and/or PhD level) at the institutions in the South. PhD candidates that are being educated under the NUFU programme should be staff or prospective staff of the participating institution(s), ensuring that the enhanced competence and capacity will contribute to the development of those institutions. Collaborating institutions are encouraged to pursue the establishment of joint degrees, if applicable according to national regulations.

NUFU support may also include other contributions to the development of the institutions, such as administrative and managerial support to institutions, faculties or departments, for instance by organising training of staff members or other supportive activities. These activities may extend beyond a direct relevance to the implementation of the NUFU-supported project.

### ***4.2. Scientific quality***

When implementing the NUFU programme and individual projects, participating partners are to utilise recognised expertise from the university and the university college sector in Norway. Project proposals submitted to NUFU will be evaluated according to the scientific quality of the proposed research and education activities. The evaluation will be undertaken by external evaluators (see 7.2).

The NUFU programme is a programme for capacity and competence building; hence the highest scientific excellence is not initially required for partners in the South. However, it is expected that the quality of research will develop and that research results from the projects will be published in refereed journals.

### ***4.3. Network cooperation***

The NUFU programme 2007 – 2011 will have a stronger focus on stimulating regional network cooperation in the South. NUFU will support networks that contribute to increased academic collaboration between institutions in the South; and between institutions in the South and in the North. The principal partner institutions within the NUFU cooperation are expected to be driving forces in new and ongoing regional research networks.

#### ***4.4. Relevance***

Historically, the NUFU programme has been based on independent research cooperation within scientific disciplines prioritised by the partner institutions, with an emphasis on the priorities made by the South institutions. In the fourth phase of the NUFU programme there is an increased requirement to document the relevance of the proposed projects.

In their applications, the institutions and their researchers need to demonstrate that the proposed project is in accordance with institutional strategies and priorities in the partner institutions. Further, the relevance of the proposed project to national strategies for development and poverty reduction in the country/countries in the South needs to be clarified.

#### ***4.5. Synergy***

All NUFU partners have a responsibility to seek synergies with other programmes, in particular with other Norwegian partners and programmes, such as the Research Council of Norway, the Norad Fellowship Programme, the Quota scheme, and Norwegian bilateral development cooperation in the respective country. Coordination and synergy should also be emphasised in relation to other international players in the field of higher education and research.

#### ***4.6. Gender***

The fourth phase of the NUFU programme will have a renewed focus on gender mainstreaming. NUFU will stimulate participants to increase the number of female researchers taking part in the programme. Gender balance among participants in the NUFU projects should be pursued. This applies in particular to Master's students and PhD candidates. Women recruited for Master's programmes should be encouraged to continue on to PhD level.

Financial rewards will be granted to projects that reach the stated objective of recruiting at least 40% women to PhD education. These grants may include additional financial support to the women involved for measures that can facilitate their participation in and completion of PhD education programmes<sup>2</sup>.

Applicants should present plans for mainstreaming gender into the projects. NUFU will also stimulate gender-related research.

#### ***4.7. Sustainability and termination of projects***

All project applications need to present strategies for ensuring sustainability, and to reflect on and plan for termination of the proposed project. Projects applying for a second period of NUFU support will have to present specific exit strategies and show the probability that capacity developed within the project will be sustainable after 10 years of NUFU support. Strategies for attracting funds from other sources should be included.

---

<sup>2</sup> Further specifications and recommendations concerning efforts to promote gender equality will be presented in the Guidelines for applicants.

## **5. Eligibility**

### ***5.1. Eligible institutions***

Norwegian universities and specialised universities, as well as university colleges which offer relevant PhD degrees, are eligible applicants. University colleges which do not offer relevant PhD degrees and Norwegian research institutions may join as partners of eligible applicants.

Institutions in the South, primarily in Norway's partner countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Central America and the Middle East, are eligible for support from NUFU<sup>3</sup>. The NUFU programme will concentrate its activity on fewer institutions in fewer countries, and hence increase the number of institutions with several NUFU projects. In this respect, institutions in Norway's main partner countries will be given priority.

New institutions in the South may be included in the fourth phase of the NUFU programme on condition that they are conducting research and offering research-based education and are fully recognised/accredited by the national authorities in the country in which they have their campus. An assessment of the new main partner institution will be carried out by NUFU<sup>4</sup>. A general agreement on cooperation must already be established with the Norwegian main partner institution when the application is submitted.

### ***5.2. Eligible academic fields***

All academic fields are eligible for support from the NUFU programme, provided the objectives and content of the project are in accordance with the objectives stated in paragraph 2.2. of this document.

### ***5.3. Budgetary limits for projects within the NUFU programme***

NUFU introduces upper limits for eligible budgets in NUFU's fourth period. For bilateral cooperation projects the upper limit will be NOK 3.5 million. For regional network projects the upper limit will be NOK 6 million.

Termination of project cooperation should normally be after ten years (two NUFU periods). Further support may only be applied for in order to ensure sustainability of competence and capacity developed during previous project periods. The maximum allocation for such purposes will be NOK 1,5 million. This kind of support will fall under the application category *Supportive measures* (see chapter 6) and will only be allocated to ensure a proper termination of already existing NUFU projects.

---

<sup>3</sup> Norway's main partner countries are: Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Bangladesh and Nepal. Other partner countries are: Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa, Afghanistan, Indonesia, China, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, East Timor, The Palestinian Areas, Guatemala and Nicaragua. This list is valid as of 1 September 2005, but changes may occur due to political decisions. An updated list can at all times be found on Norad's website: [www.norad.no](http://www.norad.no)

<sup>4</sup> Criteria for this assessment will include that the institution should have the above-mentioned recognition/accreditation for its activity; that it is offering research-based education; that it has appropriate systems for accounting and audit and that it can provide plans for monitoring and reporting within NUFU collaboration.

## **6. Application procedures**

### ***6.1. Preparation of joint project proposals***

Interested institutions should prepare and submit joint applications to SIU – signed by the Vice-Chancellor/Rector (at all participating institutions) – based on proposals prepared by the collaborating researchers, in which objectives, activities, work plan, budget requirements, etc., are clearly defined.

All project proposals will have to be filled in and submitted online. Further information, guidelines and application forms will be available at [www.siu.no](http://www.siu.no) no later than 1 February 2006. Deadline for submission of project proposals for projects starting up in 2007 will be 1 June 2006.

### ***6.2. Application categories***

Applications to NUFU will be organised in five different categories:

- Applications for new bilateral cooperation projects
- Applications for ongoing bilateral cooperation projects
- Applications for new regional network projects
- Applications for ongoing regional network projects
- Applications for supportive measures

#### ***6.2.1. New bilateral cooperation projects***

Bilateral NUFU projects are long-term cooperation projects between one institution in the South and one institution in Norway. Applications may cover a period of five years, after which a second five-year period may be applied for.

Several types of activities are eligible:

- Research cooperation organised as joint research projects
- Education and training of university staff candidates and prospective staff
- Support for the development of new Master's- and PhD education programmes in the South
- Training of technical and administrative staff
- Publication and dissemination of research results

A NUFU-supported project will commit institutions for several years. It is important that the cooperation is firm and institutionally based in order to withstand personnel changes at project level.

#### ***6.2.2. Ongoing bilateral cooperation projects***

Capacity and competence building usually develop through different project phases where five years may be insufficient to achieve sustainability. Projects that have obtained support from NUFU for one period of five years may therefore apply for a second period. Support for a second period depends on satisfactory progress and results in the first

period. Proposals in this category are also subject to external assessments, evaluation and ranking by the institutions involved<sup>5</sup>.

The NUFU programme's financial contribution to an individual research group at an institution in the South will in general not exceed ten years. Projects that have obtained NUFU support for 10 years or more are not eligible under this application category.

#### *6.2.3. New regional network projects*

The general objectives of capacity and competence building, relevant in a national and institutional context, are similar for regional network cooperation and for bilateral cooperation. Regional network cooperation in the NUFU programme is guided by the following principles:

- A regional network within the NUFU context is a South-South-North(-North) network
- A regional network project consists of 2 – 6 institutions from at least two different countries in the South and one or more institution in the North
- PhD candidate(s) should be recruited from each of the partner institutions in the South
- Principles for forming a regional network:
  - Clear specification of partner institutions
  - Clear specification of tasks and obligations for each of the partner institutions
  - One main partner institution and coordinator in the South and one in Norway
  - Commitment of the leadership of all participating institutions

Tentatively, one third (1/3) of the total NUFU budget will be allocated to regional network projects.

#### *6.2.4. Ongoing regional network projects*

Regional network projects are also eligible for NUFU support for two five-year periods, provided the project has achieved satisfactory progress and results in the first period. Proposals in this category are also subject to external assessments, evaluations and ranking by the institutions.

Projects that have run as bilateral projects for one NUFU period, may involve other institutions in the cooperation, and hence extend the cooperation to become a regional network project in the second period.

#### *6.2.5. Supportive measures*

Supportive measures have a more limited scope and duration than projects. Some measures support institutions and individual researchers while others support one or more projects. Supportive measures may include:

---

<sup>5</sup> Support from NUFU after 2011 is dependent on the establishment of a new NUFU agreement.

- Institutional contact visits to explore potential for collaboration and establish links between institutions
- Short term visits for guest researchers to Norwegian institutions
- Regional seminars for PhD candidates in bilateral projects with training and supervision in specific aspects of a PhD study or programme
- Network of external examiners
- Activities with the purpose of securing sustainability after NUFU project termination (see chapter 5.3.)

Up to 15% of the total NUFU budget may be allocated to supportive measures.

## **7. Selection procedures**

### ***7.1. The selection process***

The selection process for the fourth period of NUFU programme will be as follows:

1. Project proposals for the NUFU programme are submitted online.
2. External evaluators will assess the scientific quality of the proposals.
3. The institutions - in the South and in Norway - will make their assessments of all proposals submitted from their own institution specifically related to relevance, in an institutional and a national context.
4. Prioritised lists of applications will be submitted from each institution.
5. The final selection of projects that will be granted support from NUFU will be done by the NUFU Board.

### ***7.2. External evaluation***

The NUFU Board will apply a system of external evaluations by impartial evaluators of all eligible proposals for long-term cooperation to NUFU.

In the NUFU programme, each institution is responsible for assessing and prioritising their proposals submitted to SIU. The use of external evaluators should not undermine that responsibility. Rather, it is expected that judgements and comments from the external evaluators are to support the assessments and rankings made by the institutions. Hence, the results of the external evaluations are to be available for the institutions as input to their own process of assessment and ranking of the proposals.

The evaluators should have a strong academic background in the discipline areas into which the proposals fall. They should have knowledge of the part of the world in which the southern partner(s) is (are) located.

Each proposal will be assessed by two evaluators, one from the South and one from the North. All evaluators should have experience with North-South academic collaboration. The evaluators will be recruited by SIU.

Specific Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluators will be drawn up by NUFU. The evaluators will be asked to comment on the following issues:

- Scientific achievements in previous period (if applicable)
- Scientific quality of proposed research and teaching programme
- Merits and capability of proposing researchers
- Expected achievements vs. costs (effectiveness and efficiency)

### ***7.3. Institutional assessment and ranking***

Every institution – in the South and in Norway – from which proposals have been submitted to NUFU, will have to undertake an assessment of all proposals submitted by their own institution and present a prioritised list of applications from their institution.

The aspects that should be considered by the institutions are:

- Relevance in relation institutional strategies and priorities
- Relevance in relation to national strategies and priorities
- Project quality and feasibility in an institutional context
- Expected output in relation to the priorities of the institutions

The rankings performed by the institutions from the South will be given more weight than the rankings made by Norwegian institutions<sup>6</sup>.

### ***7.4. The NUFU Board***

NUFU's Board will make the final decision on which applications will be granted support. The Board will look into all aspects of the application and the assessments made, and will make decisions based on these elements and with the overall composition of the NUFU project portfolio in mind.

In order to secure a legitimate process, procedures will be developed for selecting independent external evaluators and for Board Members' participation in meetings where these decisions are made.

## **8. Indicators of success**

National capacity within research and higher education is of vital importance for the development of nations. The NUFU programme is based on long-term cooperation between institutions. The success of the NUFU programme will be characterised by development of capacity and competence at the institutions in the South, reflected in increased capacity and production of knowledge, and the dissemination of relevant research results with the potential of playing a significant role in the long-term economic, social and cultural development of the countries in the South.

---

<sup>6</sup> Selection criteria and further information about the selection process will be announced together with the Call for proposals.

However, the success of the NUFU programme can also be measured against the quantitative targets that the project coordinators aim at in their project proposals. Reports on these indicators will be presented annually during the programme period, and at its end. Specific indicators can only be presented after the final composition of the project portfolio is made.

Such quantitative indicators are:

*Capacity building:*

The number of students and candidates educated through the NUFU programme

The number of study programmes established at the institutions in the South

*Scientific quality:*

The number of articles published in refereed journals.

The number of other publications produced within the programme.

The number of other dissemination activities that have been organised, nationally and internationally.

*Gender balance:*

The number of female researchers and male researchers participating in the programme

The number of women and men recruited to Master's and PhD education.

## **9. Reporting procedures**

Institutions taking part in the NUFU programme are responsible for implementing and monitoring the activities and projects. Annual progress reports are submitted online to SIU, and SIU is responsible for the overall reporting on the NUFU programme to Norad.

Reporting procedures are updated continuously on [www.siu.no](http://www.siu.no), and instructions are forwarded every year to the institutions and project coordinators.