

# ***Norway – A Global Partner***

**A research programme to promote development  
and strengthened research capacity in the South**

## **Work Programme 2009-2013**

### **1. Introduction**

The research programme Norway – A Global Partner (NORGLOBAL) has been established to strengthen Norwegian research on and for development in low- and middle-income countries and to strengthen research capacity in these countries. The programme has a special responsibility to generate new knowledge within the field of development in Norway. A greater level of efficiency, flexibility, visibility and coherence will be achieved by consolidating much of the work being done in the field of development under a single programme. The programme combines a number of existing programmes and activities and will be open to new initiatives. The programme will place importance on accomplishing tasks in cooperation with other Research Council programmes and activities. The programme will encompass a number of thematic priority areas, which will be administered in accordance with their own guiding documents (sub-programme research agendas).

### **2. Background**

#### *History*

At the end of the 1990s the Research Council launched a broad-based development research programme, Development Paths in the South (UTISOR). The programme was wide-ranging in scope, but was nevertheless centred around certain fundamental perspectives. The programme was designed to replace many smaller-scale initiatives, but this did not prevent a number of new smaller-scale programmes from being set up. During the period 2002 – 2005 there was discussion about what should succeed the UTISOR programme, and it was widely agreed that development research needed to be more focused. In line with what was then both politically and scientifically regarded as the dominant thematic orientation of the future, the Research Council sought to establish a large-scale programme targeted towards poverty reduction. However, even before this programme was set up, the focus on conflict-related issues was growing. This provided the rationale for the establishment of the research programme Poverty and Peace Research (POVPEACE) in 2006. In the wake of ongoing large-scale global change and the addition of new areas of focus, new thematic areas have emerged, some derived from the research itself, some from the current political agenda and some from the Research Council itself. Not all of these could be integrated easily into the framework of the POVPEACE programme.

The POVPEACE programme is just one of many initiatives underway at the start of 2008. In addition there is a focus on health, environmental, energy and climate-related issues; gender equality; food production; the effects of development cooperation; Latin America, China, South Africa and measures to strengthen research capacity in developing countries. Many of the thematic areas dealt with under the UTISOR programme are still highly significant and there are many questions that remain unresolved. These will in all probability resurface after the UTISOR programme is concluded.

### *The challenge*

In the light of this, efforts are being focused on the development of a dynamic programme structure which will promote greater efficiency, flexibility and visibility. In addition it must ensure coherence, so that the underlying objectives for which funding has been allocated are not lost.

### **3. Structure of the programme**

In order to meet this challenge the NORGLOBAL programme is being launched as a broad-based action-oriented research programme. The programme will adhere to the general guidelines for such programmes laid down by the Research Council. The programme board will be appointed by the Research Board of the Division for Strategic Priorities. The programme board will work to ensure that programme activities are carried out in accordance with this work programme. There are, however, certain factors which distinguish this programme from other action-oriented programmes:

1. The programme consists of several sub-programmes, some from the time of launch and some to be incorporated as the programme progresses. These may have their own scientific research agendas.
2. Some of the sub-programmes will be implemented in the usual way under the programme, using the normal application procedures, which culminate in the allocation of funds by the programme board. Some of the sub-programmes will be implemented by means of joint funding announcements with other programmes at the Research Council.
3. A key objective of the programme is to integrate researchers in developing countries into research projects under this programme or other Research Council programmes. This will be achieved through calls for proposals issued by the NORGLOBAL programme and through joint funding announcements with other programmes.

### **4. Perspectives and Challenges**

#### *Commitment to Research*

The Government white paper (Report No. 20 (2004 – 2005) to the Storting, *Commitment to Research*) states that “*Internationalisation is to constitute an overall perspective in research policy*”. One of the four main dimensions of internationalisation is that Norway will emerge as a *global partner in research*. This relates to one of the basic arguments for why it is important to invest in research: “*The challenges facing the global community in areas such as health and the environment are examples of tasks that require an increased research effort, where Norwegian research can play an important role.*” The white paper states that national research priorities will in part focus on “*areas where there is a correlation between national and global challenges*”, that “*research will be more actively integrated as an instrument in international development cooperation policy*” and that “*research policy will be concerned with the broader implications of global issues and poverty challenges in developing countries.*”

According to the white paper being a good global partner entails:

- Increased research that can lead to poverty reduction  
“*Norway... has a responsibility for contributing to the global development of knowledge, particularly in areas that could benefit the least developed countries*”
- Increased research collaboration with developing countries and countries with economies in transition:

*“Norway has an obligation to share knowledge and bring developing countries into the global knowledge pool through increased cooperation and the reciprocal exchange of knowledge.”*

The white paper emphasises that efforts towards becoming a global partner are in keeping with the development of a knowledge base and establishment of research collaboration conforming to Norway’s own national interests. It emphasises that what is needed is:

- Increased research on global challenges to Norwegian interests:  
*“Fundamental changes – nationally, in Europe and globally — pose tremendous challenges to Norwegian society. Research enhances our understanding and knowledge of such processes.”*
- Increased cooperation with a wide range of countries:  
*“At the same time research collaboration that started off as a moral obligation may ultimately promote international networks and generate knowledge of benefit to our own national policies as well as for global development.”*

Since the white paper was issued there has been an increase in funding for research on and for development. In 2007 a working group at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended that efforts to strengthen research capacity in developing countries be increased, in part through cooperation with researchers from developing countries on high-quality projects. This presents three challenges:

1. What must be done to ensure that development research is organised within a dynamic and effective framework and reliably receives broad-based allocations?
2. How can research for development be integrated into the relevant scientific activities?
3. How can cooperation with researchers from developing countries be integrated into those areas where Norwegian research is already well developed, while at the same time ensuring that all partners take part on an equal footing?

## **5. Programme objectives**

The NORGLOBAL programme will seek to:

1. strengthen research in Norway on development in developing countries, as well as ensure an effective, flexible, visible and coherent organisation of this research by consolidating much of the effort within the field of development under a single programme, and through cooperation with other programmes;
2. strengthen research for development, through the integration of development perspectives into relevant programmes;
3. strengthen the research capacity of developing countries by enhancing research cooperation between researchers based at institutions in the countries in question and leading Norwegian research projects.

## **6. Thematic priority areas**

No attempt will be made to incorporate all programmes within development-related research under the auspices of the new programme and a joint programme board. This applies in particular to programmes that have a very specialised thematic or geographic focus, or that are administered in collaboration with institutions in other countries. Global Health and Vaccination Research (GLOBVAC), the Latin America Programme (LATINAMERIKA) and the South Africa – Norway Programme for Research Cooperation (SOUTHAFRICA) will therefore not be included here. Independent, researcher-initiated basic development research will not be incorporated under this action-oriented programme, but will continue to be administered under Independent Projects – Environment and Development (FRIMUF).

The NORGLOBAL programme will be flexible when it comes to incorporating new initiatives. At start-up, the programme will incorporate the following initiatives which are either already underway or are currently being established: Poverty and Peace Research (POVPEACE), the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) Fellowship Programme, Research on Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics (ECONPOP), the Research Networks, globalisation of environment, energy and climate research, research on women and gender, research into the impact of development cooperation. Each of these will be administered in accordance with this overall work programme and with any relevant guiding documents.

#### *Poverty and Peace*

Poverty and Peace Research (POVPEACE) (2005-2013): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs/the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and the Research Council have sought to strengthen research on international poverty issues and research relating to war, peace and development, not least in light of the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The POVPEACE programme seeks to generate new knowledge as a basis for strategies to promote poverty reduction and peace-building, thereby strengthening Norway's international involvement in these fields. The programme has an estimated total budget framework of NOK 140 million up until 2013, funded by Norad. In addition the Ministry of Education and Research has allocated NOK 1.13 million to strengthen peace and conflict research. The budget allocation for 2008 is NOK 19.13 million. The POVPEACE programme has its own research agenda (formerly, work programme).

#### *CGIAR Fellowship Programme*

CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) is a strategic alliance comprising several countries, organisations and private research funds. The primary objective of the programme is to provide funding for 15 research institutions conducting fisheries, forestry and agriculture-related research in more than 100 countries. Norad and the Research Council of Norway have entered into an agreement for the period 2007-2012 to provide grants to enable researchers to visit CGIAR institutes. NOK 12 million has been set aside for the period to fund visits of primarily younger researchers from Norwegian institutions to one of the 15 CGIAR institutes. The budget for 2008 is NOK 3 million.

#### *Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics*

The relationship between reproductive health and economic growth has long been a challenge to researchers as well as policy-makers, while their empirical connection has been difficult to establish. A lack of reliable demographic data is another limiting factor demanding attention. The new sub-programme, called ECONPOP in short, will focus on economic growth, poverty reduction, reproductive health, and population dynamics in cooperation with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, which will provide half of the funding. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ Norad and the Research Council of Norway's (RCN) matching funds will provide the other half of the funding for a total of NOK 26 million. The programme aims to inform policy debates centring on economic growth and poverty reduction in low-income countries about the role of reproductive health and population dynamics, with emphasis on the essential role of gender equality and women empowerment in this process.

#### *The networks*

Thematic and geographical networks to enhance contacts between researchers and users have been a vital part of development research. Norad's budget provides support for a number of networks. These networks have been operational over a number of years. For 2008 a total of NOK 4.8 million has been set aside for the networks (Comparative Research Programme on

Poverty (CROP), the Network for Asian Studies, the Network for African Studies, the Childwatch International Research Network). In 2009 an assessment of the research networks will be undertaken with a view to reorganising their administration and funding.

#### *Globalisation of environment, energy and climate research*

NOK 11 million has been set aside for 2008 to strengthen the global dimension in environment, energy and climate research and to increase opportunities for researchers from developing countries to participate in research on these issues. Up to NOK 6 million may be used to encourage Norwegian researchers to take a more global approach and to enhance their status within this thematic area. The remaining NOK 5 million will go towards promoting research collaboration with developing countries and may be allocated to the NORKLIMA, RENERGI, MILJØ 2015 research programmes and “a relevant development-related programme”. The funds will go towards strengthening the knowledge base of the partner countries as well as their capacity to cope with long-term environmental concerns and fulfil their international obligations in accordance with the Norwegian Action Plan for Environment in Development Cooperation. The funds may be used to cover the costs of participation and day-to-day activities of **researchers from the South**, partly or in full. To be eligible for funding, grant applications must be drawn up jointly by Norwegian researchers and their partners in the South.

The NORGLOBAL programme will issue calls for proposals in cooperation with relevant programmes. Funding will be awarded to projects ranked according to the quality of the applications. The projects will be followed up under the relevant thematic programme. The programme will coordinate the reporting process relating to this funding in order to ensure that the various activities can be viewed in an overall context.

#### *Research on women and gender*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has asked Norad to strengthen efforts aimed at reaching the target set out in Proposition No.1 to the Storting (the Fiscal Budget) (2007-2008) on strengthening the participation of women in research and knowledge development. This refers to both increased participation by women researchers and to the need for a greater focus on thematic areas related to women’s issues. This focus should be an integral component of the design of new programmes and the allocation of funding to new projects. The MFA/Norad has pledged NOK 14 million for 2008 and 2009 to research on women and gender, but it remains unclear whether there will be funds allocated to this in the 2010 budget. However, the funds can be carried forward, so it will be possible set up projects for a three-year period. According to the MFA/ Norad 60 per cent of the funding (NOK 8.5 million) is to be used for cooperation partners in the South, while 40 per cent (NOK 5.5 million) is to be used on research groups in Norway. The objective is to strengthen research groups in the South.

The participation of Norwegian research groups in projects with the South is necessary in order to achieve optimum capacity building in the South. External funding is therefore needed to strengthen the Norwegian effort. This will also ensure a higher level of quality in the projects. The NORGLOBAL programme may issue calls for proposals in cooperation with other programmes at the Research Council.

#### *Research on the impact of development cooperation*

The report on the evaluation of Norwegian development research called attention to how little research has been conducted on the impact of development cooperation. Given Norway’s considerable investment in development assistance, funds should be set aside for research into the impact of these efforts. The budget proposal for 2009 recommends that NOK 20 million

be set aside, over and above the Research Council's designated priority growth areas, for research on the impact of development cooperation. If such funds are made available, they should be administered by the NORGLOBAL programme.

## **7. Programme organisation and strategic instruments**

The NORGLOBAL programme will be administered by a programme board with members from a wide range of disciplines. The programme board will have the authority to allocate funds. For those thematic priority areas where more specific expertise is needed the Research Council will appoint referee panels to provide the board with relevant input on which to base its decisions.

### *Internationalisation*

International cooperation is crucial to meeting national needs for competence building and for capacity building in the South. Norway is an active partner in the EU framework programme for research. The framework programme provides Norwegian research groups with a range of opportunities to cooperate with partners from third countries, especially through Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICAs). These activities are focused on a number of thematic areas that are also relevant to the NORGLOBAL programme.

An effort should be made to continue cooperation established through activities from the NORGLOBAL programme under the EU framework programme. Networks established through the EU programme can be further developed through the NORGLOBAL programme, where appropriate. The programme should be kept informed of the EU's scientific activities as well as the more research policy-related instruments, such as the regional INCO-NETs (Bi-regional coordination of S&T cooperation including priority setting and definition of S&T cooperation policies) and the ERA-NETs (European Research Area Networks) and the opportunities these afford.

The NORGLOBAL programme will promote joint funding announcements with relevant programmes in other countries and participants in the ERA-NET scheme.

Norwegian research groups have successfully established broad-based cooperation with a number of international organisations, which, in general, play an active role in terms of capacity building in the South and which, in particular, work to facilitate cooperation between researchers from the North and researchers from the South. The NORGLOBAL programme will play an important role in promoting such cooperation and in further developing the networks. Norway has bilateral research agreements with a number of countries that could be potential partners for projects under the NORGLOBAL programme. In addition the programme will promote and strengthen the focus on global activities within climate, energy and environment research and will enhance opportunities for researchers from the South to participate in this research. Several of the international global change programmes incorporate clear perspectives from the South. The NORGLOBAL programme can cooperate with these programmes in order to encourage capacity building in the South within these thematic areas.

### *Dissemination*

The NORGLOBAL programme will have an important part to play in the dissemination of information about the various activities under the programme and the research findings. Cooperation with other programmes at the Research Council in relation to activities that enhance research on and for development and capacity building in the South will be vital. It is particularly important to maintain and develop a good dialogue with the users. The results of

the research as well as information about processes in the programmes must be communicated in such a way that the information can be applied in practical terms. The programme should also take on the task of helping to ensure that the results of other Research Council activities associated with cooperation with the South or about the South are communicated to the users.

#### *Recruitment*

Recruitment is an important topic in general and is especially relevant to the NORGLOBAL programme in the context of efforts to support capacity building in the South. Some of the funds to be administered by the programme have been earmarked for use by partners in the South, and the programme should assume responsibility for educating doctoral students within the thematic priority areas.

#### *Coordination with other Research Council activities*

The NORGLOBAL programme has been established to consolidate research for, on and with developing countries and to promote development-related activities. The programme will enhance synergy with other relevant activities at the Research Council and will, where appropriate, play a key role in initiating joint activities, such as workshops, seminars or scientific conferences.

In the report “Evaluation of Norwegian development research”, the international panel recommends that funds be earmarked for independent Norwegian development research. The Research Council currently administers funds for independent environment and development research under the auspices of FRIMUF (Independent Projects – Environment and Development). Approximately NOK 30 million is allocated annually from the Ministry of Education and Research’s budget to projects related to environment and development and also to interdisciplinary research. A small proportion of these funds is allocated to Norwegian development research. Close cooperation between FRIMUF and the NORGLOBAL programme both on the dissemination of results and on the reporting process is important. Independent development research projects should be coordinated with activities under the NORGLOBAL programme in connection with scientific seminars and conferences to achieve synergy between the activities.

Close cooperation with a number of thematic programmes that administer projects related to research for, on and with developing countries is vital. This is particularly relevant in cases where activities are allocated to a thematic programme following a joint call for proposals with the NORGLOBAL programme.

### **8. The programme board**

The NORGLOBAL programme will be administered by a programme board with members from a range of disciplines. The programme board must have a broad-based, overall level of expertise and will focus on strategic issues as well as on sound management of the programme’s funds.