

NORHED II



The Norwegian Programme for Capacity
Development in Higher Education
and Research for Development

Programme Document



List of Acronyms

DIKU	Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LMIC	Lower Middle-Income Countries and Territories
LNOB	Leave no one behind
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NOKUT	Norwegian Agency for Quality Education
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORGLOBAL	Norway – Global Partner programme
NORHED	Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development
NORPART	Norwegian Partnership Programme for Global Academic Cooperation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals

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1. Context

The global higher education landscape has changed and evolved dramatically in recent decades. This is partly due to the increasing recognition in national and international development agendas of the importance of higher education for development. Most national higher education sectors have been liberalised, opening up for new types of institutions, including private providers. This has subsequently led to an expansion in the number of higher education institutions (HEIs), and a rapid increase in access to higher education for a larger portion of the population. The number of students in higher education has more than doubled from 100 million in the year 2000, to 207 million in 2014.¹

The massification of higher education, as it is often referred to, has however taken place at the expense of quality in many developing countries. The quality of higher education has been compromised by overfilled classrooms, inadequate teaching facilities, outdated curricula, lack of qualified academic and administrative staff, inefficient systems and management. Inadequate resources seem to pose further challenges in national regulatory frameworks for funding, accreditation, effective quality assurance and monitoring of higher education.

Although more young people are increasingly given access to higher education, there are significant regional gaps. While the gross enrolment ratio for higher education in Europe and Northern America is 75%, it is on average 8% in Sub-Saharan Africa.² In addition, there are significant in-country gaps related to inclusion and equal access for underrepresented or marginalised people and groups. These may include women, rural populations, persons with disabilities, cultural or ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees, and socio-economically disadvantaged people. This inequity in access is particularly apparent at post-graduate level, as well as in terms of representation among academic staff and management. Issues of inequality in higher education are also apparent in student financing, curriculum, geography, composition of teaching personnel, and wider social and cultural aspects of HEIs.

Another significant gap is related to the global distribution of scientific capacity and research production. While the OECD countries have about 3500 researchers per one million inhabitants, the Least Developed Countries have about 66 researchers per one million

1 UNESCO Policy paper 30. Six ways to ensure higher education leaves no one behind. 2017

2 Ibid

inhabitants.³ OECD countries account for more than 70% of the world share of scientific publications, while Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 1.4%, and Least Developed Countries 0.6%.⁴ By prioritising expansion of education at undergraduate level, many universities in developing countries have limited funding and resources for research activities. This creates constraints on researchers' capacity to participate in global knowledge production and networks, as well as a country's ability to produce knowledge-based policies and practices.

High graduate unemployment represents another urgent challenge for higher education across many developing countries. Many HEIs face challenges in providing quality education that equips graduates with relevant knowledge and skills for the 'world of work.' The gap between higher education provided and the needs of the labour market as well as its absorption capacity, contributes towards increasing unemployment rates.

Global challenges and the need to safeguard global public goods calls for common solutions. This requires effective partnerships between government, academia, civil society and the private sector. HEIs play an important and multi-faceted role in national and global development efforts to eradicate poverty by addressing social, economic and environmental issues, such as education, health, social inequality, job opportunities, climate change and food security. Closer cooperation across sectors and actors is required in order to find sustainable solutions to local as well as global challenges.

2. General Overview of NORHED

2.1 WHAT IS NORHED?

The Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED) is Norway's flagship programme on higher education and research. NORHED aims to strengthen the capacity of higher education institutions in Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Lower Middle Income Countries (LMIC)⁵ (hereafter referred to as developing countries) to produce higher-quality graduates, more and higher-quality research, and more inclusive higher education.

3 [Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development. 2019.](#)

4 [UNESCO SCIENCE REPORT towards 2030 UNESCO SCIENCE REPORT: Towards 2030. 2015](#)

5 [DAC List of ODA Recipients 2020.](#)

Higher education and research are priority areas of Norway's development cooperation policy. Sound, strategic investments in higher education and research lay the foundation for development of countries' intellectual resources, competent workforces, visionary leaders, gender equality, human rights and democracy. HEIs also play an important role in ensuring evidence-based policies and practices, which are key for the structural transformation required to achieve the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda).⁶

The first phase of the programme (NORHED I, 2013–2020) included 50 projects in 26 developing countries. These involved 60 universities in developing countries in collaboration with 13 academic institutions in Norway. NORHED II builds on the first phase, taking into account recommendations from the external mid-term review of the programme,⁷ feedback from partner institutions, and a broad domestic and international consultative process.

The EnPe programme (Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development within the fields of Energy and Petroleum) will be integrated as a sub-programme on energy in NORHED II. EnPe has been funded by Norad and managed by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in two programme phases. It included 10 projects in 9 developing countries in phase II (2013–2020).

NORHED II will complement Norwegian support to research (NORGLOBAL programme) through the Research Council of Norway, higher education cooperation and student mobility (NORPART programme) through the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (DIKU), Norad's direct support to research institutions in developing countries (South portfolio), and other mechanisms. Furthermore, the programme seeks opportunities for synergy with other Norwegian sector-based knowledge programmes managed by Norad. Synergies with programmes financed by other donors, countries and/or organisations are also encouraged.

2.2 NORHED AND THE SDGS

As for all Norwegian development cooperation, the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) constitutes the guiding framework of NORHED II. The SDGs call for

6 [United Nations. Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 2015.](#)

7 [Mid-term Review of the Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development \(NORHED\), By Technopolis Group, Norad Collected Reviews 03/2018](#)

deep transformations in order to achieve sustainable development. The three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – are integrated, indivisible and interdependent.

NORHED promotes the important role that HEIs play in realising this transformation. Education provides youth with the skills and mindsets required not only for employment but for addressing key challenges for sustainable societies. Research, grounded in academic freedom and critical thinking by researchers, produces new knowledge, new technologies and solutions, and dynamic ways of understanding how social, political, economic and cultural transformations are generated. Education is hence considered both a goal in itself (SDG 4: Quality Education) and a means for attaining other SDGs. Higher education and research are therefore not only an integral part of sustainable development, but also a key enabler for it.

A fundamental element of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs is the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB). This requires inclusive and equitable quality education, and addressing barriers across geographic, economic and social identity. NORHED promotes inclusion in higher education. It emphasises that higher education should be available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable for all, irrespective of social and economic situation.

While the NORHED programme aims to contribute to the 2030 Agenda as a whole, it has a particular focus on the following SDGs:

SDG 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
SDG 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
SDG 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

2.3 KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF NORHED

The NORHED programme aims to strengthen the institutional capacity and performance of higher education institutions in developing countries to deliver quality and inclusive education and research. This may include capacity development that strengthens institutional environments, including system development, administration and infrastructure.

NORHED is intended to be responsive to the higher education sector priorities of developing countries and should be linked to government policies and priorities at national and/or regional level. Project proposals must be based on partner institutions' identification of needs and contextual relevance, hereunder assessments of knowledge gaps, local community needs, labour markets, opportunities for technological innovations, employment creation etc.

PARTNERSHIP MODEL

The NORHED partnership model supports collaborative partnerships between HEIs in Norway and developing countries. The programme is designed to stimulate long-lasting mutual North-South-South academic collaboration, with a strong emphasis on South-South regional collaboration. This enables partnerships comprising older and more established HEIs together with younger institutions. The programme recognises that capacity development and knowledge sharing take place North-South, South-North and South-South. Eligible partner institutions and geographical priorities are listed in chapter 5 below.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

A key feature of NORHED is that it combines higher education and research. Research based education and teaching using examples from own and others' research, as well as updating curricula with relevant research literature, can help bolster education programmes. Likewise, students' active participation in classes and involvement in research projects can strengthen research programmes. Research and education programmes can thus mutually reinforce each other. Knowledge sharing and capacity exchange among students and researchers across different geographical and disciplinary contexts can produce knowledge of high quality and relevance, which has the potential to influence evidence-based policies and practices.

HOLISTIC APPROACH

NORHED takes a holistic approach to capacity development of HEIs by supporting a range of interventions. This is based on the notion that the different components are interrelated and interdependent, and that it may be needed to work on different dimensions and at different levels of the institution to reinforce change and achieve sustainable capacity. NORHED projects may include a variety of interventions such as joint research, competence building of academic and administrative staff, improved teaching methodology, Master's/PhD study programmes, fellowships, gender mainstreaming, small-scale infrastructure, systems strengthening and outreach activities. NORHED fosters flexibility in project design based on different contexts and needs.

EMPLOYABILITY

NORHED seeks to strengthen students' employability by addressing gaps between graduates' competence and skills, and demand in the 'world of work.' Partnership with relevant industrial companies, government institutions and civil society actors in the country or region of intervention are both useful and necessary in order to ensure that students are equipped with skills that meet the needs of different sectors. Problem-based learning, increased focus on strengthening students' transversal skills, such as communication, teamwork and creativity, as well as technical and entrepreneurship skills, may facilitate the transition to employment. Systematic and strategic involvement of external actors in development and review of curriculum, internships and cooperation with external actors in Research and Development (R&D) can create foundation for long-term mutual benefits and new solutions.

DIGITALISATION

Digitalisation can contribute towards improved access to higher education as well as strengthened quality and relevance of teaching, learning and research. NORHED encourages the development of digital solutions that will reduce the global digital gap and increase digital skills within education and research in developing countries. Digital solutions that are aimed at improving inclusion and increasing access to higher education are especially encouraged. These may include interventions that foster alternative modes of higher education provision, and reduce barriers to access. Incorporation of online and distance learning solutions and tools are encouraged. Digital solutions should be disability sensitive through the use of universal design and accessibility standards.

INCLUSION AND GENDER EQUALITY

Special consideration is given to gender equality, as well as inclusion in higher education in broader terms. Increased diversity and inclusion bolster the social mission of universities and their ability to contribute to sustainable development. This involves enhancing equitable access to higher education, adaptation for students with disabilities to undertake studies, as well as inclusion and diversity perspectives in curriculum and research.

In order to achieve gender equality in society, there is a need for specific interventions to ensure equitable participation of men and women in higher education, and equal opportunities for career development and leadership positions. Increased participation of female students is especially required at post-graduate level.

THEMATIC SUB-PROGRAMMES

NORHED is organised in thematic sub-programmes, reflecting important priorities in Norwegian development policy.

Thematic sub-programmes under NORHED

1. Education and Teacher Training
2. Health
3. Climate Change and Natural Resources
4. Political and Economic Governance
5. Humanities and Social Sciences
6. Energy

See Annex 1 for a detailed outline of each sub-programme.

In line with the SDG framework, the thematic areas are not to be understood as silos or limited to one specific SDG. Rather, NORHED encourages an inter- and multidisciplinary approach to the thematic areas, with cooperation and interventions across disciplines and sectors. The strength of academic institutions lies in their ability to address complex issues through teaching and research, which can contribute in understanding the complexities of sustainable development. Just as the different SDGs are considered interconnected and interdependent, NORHED projects should not only address individual SDGs, but also links between these, contradictions and possible gaps.

3. Theory of Change

The NORHED theory of change elaborates how and why the programme can be expected to achieve its intended results. It outlines the sequence of change between interventions, and results at different levels (outputs, outcomes and impact).

It also includes relevant assumptions, acknowledging that there are multiple factors, both within and beyond the programme that might influence, positively or negatively,

the achievement of the intended results. While recognising the limits to the programme, the purpose of the theory of change is to establish a probable sequence of change and highlighting possible enablers and barriers to result achievement.

The theory of change is developed based on experience and learning from the first phase of the NORHED programme. The consolidation of learning is extracted from NORHED projects' annual reporting, and external reports commissioned by Norad including the 2014 evaluation series of NORHED,⁸ the 2018 mid-term review report, and the 2019 report on mapping of higher education sector in partner countries.⁹ These evaluations and reviews have largely provided positive assessment of the programme. They have also provided critical knowledge and evidence for rethinking and adjustments of the key factors and pathways of change required to better achieve the objectives of the programme. Building on this evidence basis, the following results chain and interventions constitute the core of the NORHED theory of change.

3.1 IMPACT AND OUTCOME

The overarching goal of all Norwegian development cooperation is to reduce poverty and contribute to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The NORHED programme aims to strengthen capacity in higher education institutions in developing countries to contribute to sustainable development.

NORHED impact

The intended impact (effect on society) of the NORHED programme is to contribute to:

- Better qualified workforce
- Applied sustainable solutions and practices
- Evidence-based policies
- Enhanced gender equality and inclusion

⁸ Evaluation Series of NORHED Higher Education and Research for Development. Theory of Change and Evaluation Methods, Report 4/2014, Norad

⁹ Mapping of the higher education sector in selected partner countries in Norway's development policy, Technopolis Group, 2019

The outcome level refers to effects for the target group. The target group of the NORHED programme is staff and students at higher education institutions in developing countries.

As part of the holistic approach (ref. 2.3), key components of higher education institutional capacity are framed as six broad project outcomes under which project-specific interventions should be combined in the best way possible to achieve programme outcomes and impacts.

NORHED outcomes

The intended Programme Outcome is to enable partner institutions in developing countries to produce:

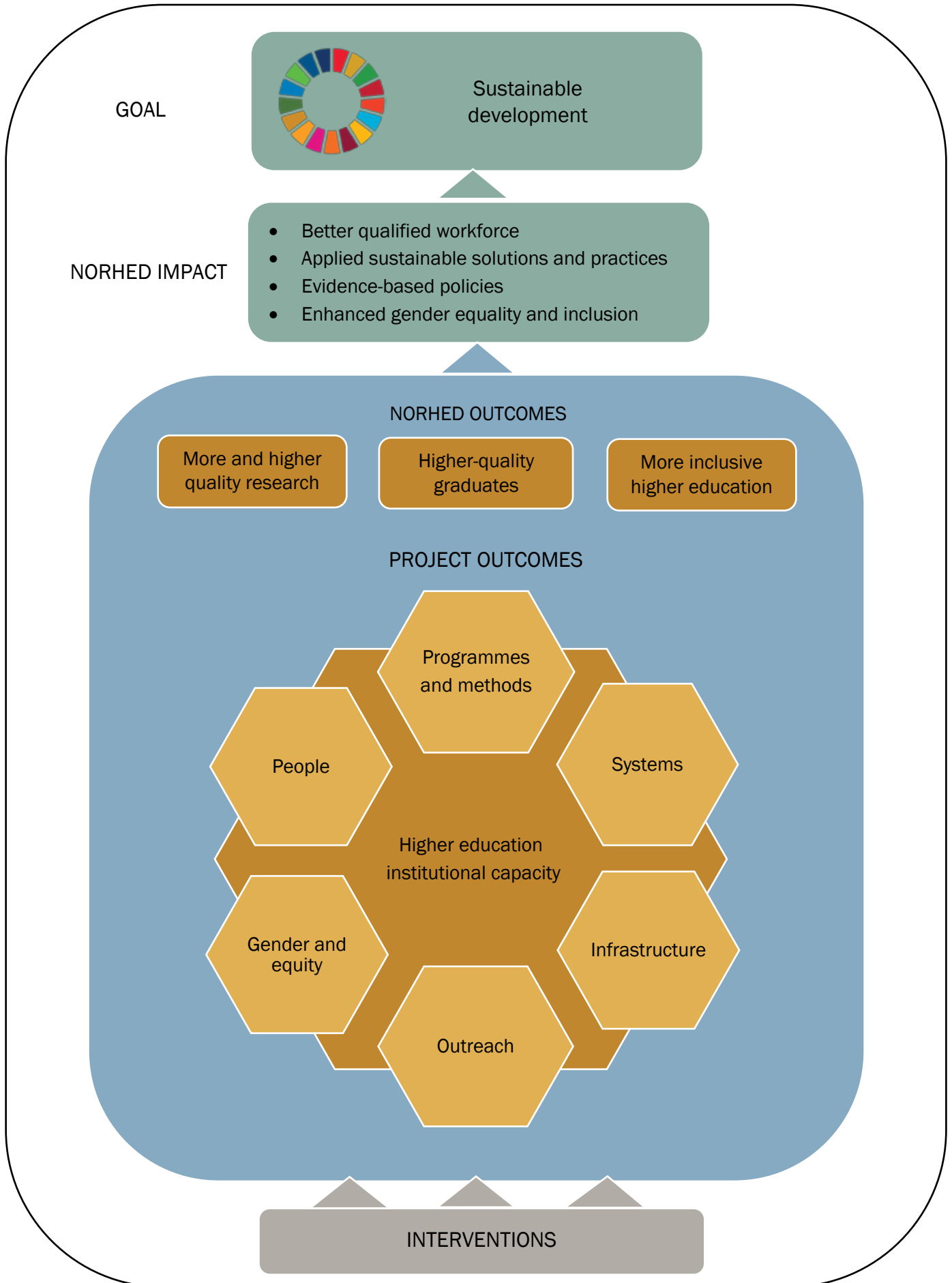
- Higher-quality graduates
- More and higher-quality research
- More inclusive higher education

Project outcomes

Intended capacity development outcomes at the institutional level (department/faculty) supported by NORHED projects are:

Programmes and methods	Strengthened quality and relevance of education and research programmes and methods
Systems	Strengthened education and research systems
People	Increased capacity and competence of staff and students
Gender and equity	Improved gender equality and inclusion of marginalised groups in education and research
Infrastructure	Improved institutional small-scale infrastructure and equipment for education and research
Outreach	Increased engagement with relevant stakeholders, and dissemination of knowledge

NORHED II Theory of Change



3.2 ASSUMPTIONS

There are several contextual factors, at system and institutional level, as well as in the wider country context, that enable or impede capacity building at the university level. When the enabling conditions are not met, they may represent barriers/risks to the achievement of results. The NORHED programme is operating in environments where these enabling conditions are at risk. Such risk factors should be included in project risk analyses, and be considered at different stages in the dialogue between Norad and partners, and in reviews and evaluations.

Based on experience, and assessments of NORHED I,¹⁰ there are certain enabling factors related to capacity development of HEIs. These are underlying assumptions for the causal relations in the programme, critical for the achievement of sustainable results.

Enabling factors	
Country level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political / economic / socio-cultural environment 	
System/sector level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional autonomy and academic freedom • Accountability instruments (including quality assurance and accreditation, assessment of learning outcomes, labour market results, research assessments) • Funding available for teaching and research • Student support, and financial aid for students from disadvantaged groups 	
Institutional level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership buy-in and support • Alignment of the project objectives with the overall strategic plan, and integration into the standard processes of the university • Good institutional governance (including transparent and objective decision-making criteria and processes) • Sound grant management and procurement system 	

¹⁰ Main sources: Norad Evaluation Series Report 4/2014, and NORHED I mid-term review (2018)

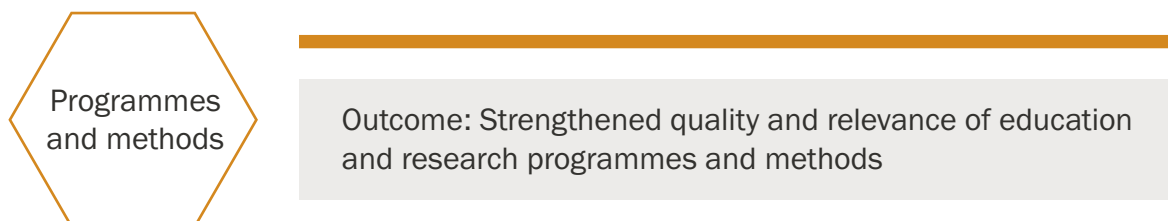
3.3 INTERVENTIONS

The capacity development elements in NORHED projects should be based on a needs assessment at the relevant partner institution. Interventions should be proposed by partners based on jointly identified challenges and opportunities. The programme acknowledges the partners' insight into their own institutions, sectors and contexts, and their various levels of capacity.

As shown above, six broad project outcome components related to higher education institutional strengthening have been identified in the NORHED II theory of change. All are relevant for both education and research. The components are not mutually exclusive, and an activity or output may contribute to several outcomes. The holistic approach to capacity building and strengthening of HEIs presupposes interconnected interventions in different components, albeit of varying degrees and scope based on needs and priorities.

Partners may choose to include all six components in the project results framework, or to concentrate on a few. Planned project outputs should be organised under the selected project outcomes. Outputs are deliverables which result directly from a set of activities, and are intended to lead to the expected effect at outcome level. The range of interventions eligible for NORHED support is flexible, as long as planned outputs are likely to contribute to the intended outcomes and impacts backed by the project's theory of change. Results achieved should be possible to sustain at the institution after NORHED funding has come to an end.

Below is an elaboration of the rationale and some typical interventions and outputs related to each of the six components. (Please refer to the NORHED II budget guidelines for more information on what can be covered by NORHED funding).



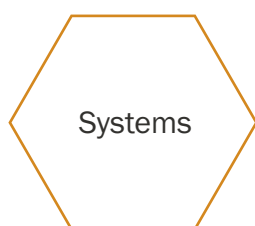
NORHED projects are expected to contribute to strengthening education and research capacities at the partner institutions in developing countries. The combination of these elements in HEIs is likely to be mutually beneficial for the quality of research and graduates.

Improved study programmes and teaching methods are likely to provide more efficient, updated and relevant learning. Interventions in education should be directed towards enhanced institutional capacities to provide quality, relevant and inclusive higher education. This may include curriculum and educational content, teaching methods and pedagogy, mediums of teaching and learning etc. Based on a needs assessment, the NORHED projects can develop new or revise existing Master's and PhD (and if needed Bachelor's degree) programmes that should be possible to sustain at the institutions after the NORHED funding has come to an end. The education programmes should, to the extent possible, enhance graduates' employability by equipping them with the competence and skills to be employable in relevant jobs either in established institutions or through self-employment. These may include soft skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, teamwork, as well as digital and entrepreneurial skills.

NORHED projects should demonstrate a clear research agenda and strategy in their proposals. Interventions within research should be directed towards generation and use of knowledge that is of relevance to partner countries in addressing sustainable development challenges. Perspectives related to gender and inclusion should be systematically considered. Establishment of research teams within the project is encouraged, which could prove useful arenas for comparative analysis across geographical areas and/or disciplines. The research teams could consist of researchers in different stages of their career. It is considered that involving both junior and senior researchers in a joint research project, will lead to increased academic competence at different levels in the institutions. There is also a potential for utilization of data collected by the different research group members, including from Master's students and PhD candidates, as well as co-publication.

Improvements in research capacity and methods increases the quality of research outputs and the potential for research contributions to innovations and evidence-based policies and practices. Diversity and interdisciplinarity in research and education is likely to strengthen quality and relevance through a multiplicity of perspectives. Research capacities shall be emphasised both for postgraduate programmes (Master's, PhD and Post Doc), and the research staff. Research collaboration with other relevant stakeholders is also encouraged in order to increase relevance and uptake. Interventions may focus on capacity increase in data collection skills, methodology, production and publication of high-quality research.

Outputs and activities can for example be related to curriculum development for new or revised study programmes (Master's and PhD, and if needed Bachelor's degree programmes), innovative teaching methods, staff and student exchange, scholarships, fellowships at post-graduate degree level, small research grants, supervision, mentoring, interdisciplinary work, joint research projects (with students and staff), digital training, data collection and analysis, seminars, entrepreneurship training programmes and accelerators, business courses etc.

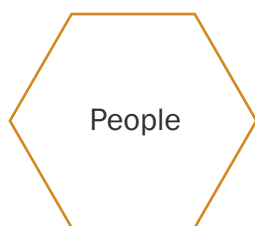


Outcome: Strengthened education and research systems

Producing quality research and graduates require institutions with robust managerial and administrative support systems. This is considered important to enhance HEIs' abilities to develop and sustain quality education programmes, recruit, train and retain competent staff, and conduct research relevant for society. Systems for knowledge management and dissemination of results contributes to improved documentation, access to information and knowledge uptake.

Inclusive HEIs calls for strong governance structures and policies that endorse equitable access and non-discrimination, removing structural barriers for participation of underrepresented or marginalised groups, including socio-economically disadvantaged people, cultural or ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, etc.

Outputs and activities can for example be related to quality assessment /quality assurance systems, recruitment management, knowledge management, procurement procedures, policy for gender equality and inclusive higher education, improvement of monitoring data, creation of knowledge/resource hubs, Learning Management Systems (LMS), information management systems, information technology (websites, internet and e-services), and systems for on-the-job training.



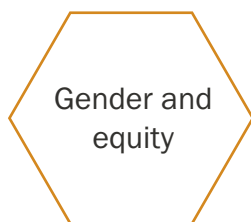
Outcome: Increased competence and capacity of staff and students

Increasing the competence and capacity of human resources is a key element of institutional strengthening. Qualified, experienced and motivated academic and administrative staff at HEIs reinforce institutional performance, increase staff retention and influence the institutional environment for quality teaching, learning and research. The importance of life-long learning is recognised in the 2030 Agenda.

NORHED encourages projects targeted at strengthening the competence and capacity of young academic scholars and senior academic researchers. This may include strengthened interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in research, as well as dissemination within and outside their disciplines. Academic staff shall be supported in advanced, research-based postgraduate degree studies in order to enhance the quality of sustainable research-based education programmes. The NORHED partnership shall serve as an additional mechanism for capacity sharing and competence building in education and research. Interventions shall be directed towards ensuring enabling working environments and career prospects for the retention of competent staff. Interventions may also include capacity development of administrative staff that coordinate and sustain systems for quality education and research.

Although female participation in undergraduate education has counterbalanced in developing countries in the last decades, there is still a large discrepancy with regard to participation in post-graduate education, especially at PhD level. Similarly, the proportion of women among faculty members and in leadership positions at HEIs is still low. Women should be encouraged to lead research projects, to apply for post-graduate degrees, and to take up other senior positions. Projects should make efforts to promote women rights and equality by recruiting at least 50% female students at all levels.

Outputs and activities can for example be related to Master's, PhD and Post Doc fellowships for staff, joint research and education activities, staff and student exchanges, short-term courses, laboratories training, internships, financial and administrative capacity, project management capacity, technical training etc.



Outcome: Improved gender equality and inclusion of marginalised groups in education and research

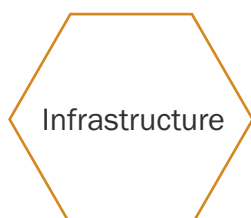
NORHED seeks to enhance equal access to quality higher education for underrepresented and marginalised groups. More inclusive higher education is needed in order to enhance equal opportunities for different groups in society.

In order to reduce gaps related to equal access, NORHED has a focus on equity, taking into account that special support and measures may be required to facilitate access, progress and successful graduation of students from certain groups. Projects are encouraged to apply inclusive practices towards indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and other vulnerable or marginalised groups, and to promote increased access and inclusion of disadvantaged groups in partner institutions' policies and practices. The need for additional support and mentoring for staff and students from underrepresented or marginalised groups should be systematically considered.

Social norms, legal rights, and social and economic institutions define the opportunities and barriers women and men face in different societies. These often discriminate against women. The power relations between women and men are often unequal and are limiting the opportunities and self-determination of women and girls. Measures should be taken to achieve a balanced representation and active participation of men and women in education and research, as well as in the project itself (participants, coordinators). Educational programmes and research activities which explicitly address issues related to gender equality and inclusion in broader terms are encouraged.

Outputs and activities can for example be related to mainstreaming of gender and inclusion perspectives in the design of curricula and research projects as well as in recruitment, teaching and monitoring and evaluation, provision of scholarships for disadvantaged groups, digital tools to reach students off campus, special teaching material/equipment/personal assistance for students with disabilities, assessments and institutional policy development on gender equality and inclusion, workshops or specific courses on inclusion and rights, measures to include women in formal and informal research networks, gender studies,

development of inclusive recruitment strategies, career mentoring schemes for female students, secure working environments, incentives targeted at female students etc.



Outcome: Improved institutional small-scale infrastructure and equipment for education and research

Enabling physical conditions, such as access to equipment, updated textbooks, scientific laboratories and libraries, and digital tools is necessary for quality teaching, learning and research. A conducive physical infrastructure increases the opportunities for effective teaching/learning, problem-based learning and skills development. Better research infrastructure may facilitate innovation and testing of new solutions, and enable HEIs to contribute to sustainable solutions to the challenges facing society, and towards achievement of the SDGs. NORHED can support investments in small-scale infrastructure that gives better access to education and research facilities at partner institutions in developing countries. Special focus should be placed on infrastructure and equipment that facilitates equitable access and inclusion, including equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

Outputs and activities can for example be related to internet connectivity, laptops and computers, digital technologies, improvement of laboratory and library facilities, renovations and equipping of lecture rooms, adapted infrastructure for access to teaching facilities, offices and washrooms for students/staff with disabilities, special teaching equipment etc.



Outcome: Increased engagement with relevant stakeholders, and dissemination of knowledge

HEIs have a social responsibility to bring science to policy makers, and to society in general. In order for education and research to meet the needs of society, collaboration between academia and stakeholders in the public and private sector and civil society is needed.

Communication with different stakeholders is important in the design phase of education and research activities, and throughout the implementation phase. Collaboration with stakeholders provides universities with access to updated information about challenges, as well as opportunities that can increase the relevance and quality of education and research. Systematic and strategic involvement of external actors in the development of curriculum, in teaching, as well as internships and research collaboration, can create a foundation for mutual benefits and new solutions. Strong links between universities and their surroundings increases opportunities for testing, new solutions and practical application of research, and for the employment of graduates in relevant positions in society. Research collaborations with relevant stakeholders including communities, civil society organisations (CSOs), industry and government institutions are encouraged in order to increase relevance and uptake.

Targeted dissemination of research-based knowledge is essential to ensure uptake in policies and practices. Project shall demonstrate a clear strategy for dissemination of research results and possible uptake in policies and practices. Joint publications (South-South, South-North) are encouraged. Dissemination of results from education and research activities should be directed towards a variety of target groups such as policy makers, governments, the public and private sector, civil society, local communities as well as the scientific community. Articles, papers and books produced under the auspices of NORHED should as far as possible be published in open access journals/sources.

Outputs and activities can for example be related to networking and MoUs for strategic partnerships, engagement of external actors in curriculum development and teaching/training, community outreach, development of knowledge hubs, facilitation of student internships, connecting students with accelerators/incubators, short-term / part-time modules for government staff, publications and policy briefs, seminars/workshops/conferences, use of digital technologies and platforms, courses for government staff, study visits, research partnerships and networks, publication in peer-reviewed journals and books, seminars and other dissemination efforts.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

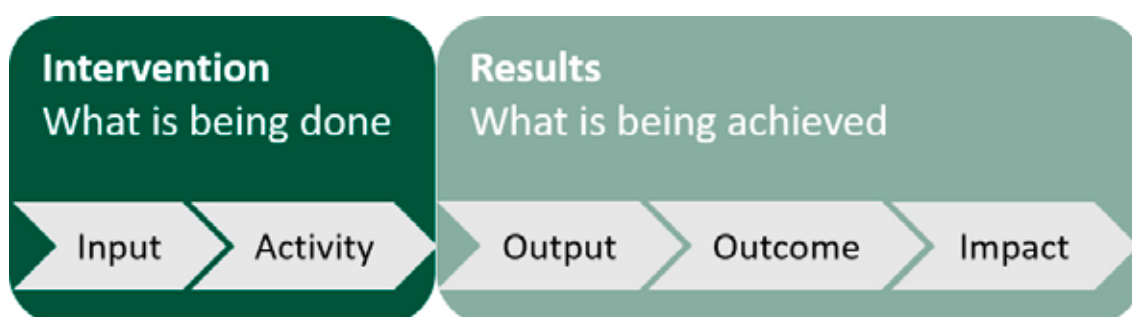
As in all Norwegian development cooperation, the principle of results based management (RBM) will guide the NORHED programme management. Central to RBM is access to evidence from monitoring and evaluation to determine the effects of interventions and understand enabling factors and barriers. Such evidence must come from both project level and programme level monitoring and evaluations.

4.1 TRACKING RESULTS

Partners are expected to manage for results at project level, that is, have a results framework and a plan for monitoring and evaluation of results against planned objectives. Progress towards results shall be reported on annually, and will feed into Norad’s project management and programme level monitoring of programme progress.

Results chain

Impact	Effects on society
Outcome	Effects on the target group
Output	Products and services delivered within the project
Activities	Concrete tasks that project personnel undertake
Inputs	Financial, human and material resources used for the project



NORHED projects should have a project-specific theory of change and results framework¹¹ that clearly show how the project will contribute to the achievement of the planned outcomes

¹¹ A template for project results framework will be provided, and a reporting template will be shared with grant recipients.

and impacts of the NORHED programme, outlined in chapter 3. Each project's theory of change should be supported by existing knowledge or evidence, such as research, evaluations or previous experience. There should be close alignment between the expected results formulated in the results framework and the processes of change described in the theory of change.

In order to allow for programme level overview of progress and results, and inform learning and RBM of the programme, partners will be asked to integrate some standard elements into their respective results framework and monitoring plans.

It is acknowledged that not all projects are likely to achieve results at impact-level during the lifetime of the project. However, the standard impact indicators listed below should be applied and reported on by those projects that are able to document impact-level results by the end of the project period. In order to enable aggregation of key outcomes and outputs across projects, partners are required to report on the standard indicators listed. A more detailed explanation of the standard indicators, intended to enhance a standardised reporting, can be found in Annex 2.

Partners are expected to integrate the standard indicators into their project-specific results framework and data collection plan. In the design of the results framework partners should also establish project-specific indicators, selected based on the focus of the project, to inform partners' learning and project management. A menu of indicators is provided in Annex 2. The project may choose indicators from this menu, use it for inspiration, or add other indicators not listed.

Assessment of results at impact and outcome level should also be included in reviews or surveys carried out by partner institutions or Norad across projects.

REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS

In addition to the regular monitoring, a project mid-term and/or end-review shall be carried out during the implementation period in order to assess the outcomes and possibly impact of the project. Timing and Terms of Reference shall be decided upon by the project partners.

A programme mid-term and/or end review of NORHED II will be conducted by Norad.

NORHED II standard indicators

Impact level
<p><i>To document impact, projects that are likely to see results at impact level during the project period are asked to track/log and report on any evidence of such achievements. The following are standard indicators at impact level:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake/influence of NORHED-supported research in public policies • Uptake/influence of NORHED-supported research findings, new technologies/innovations/solutions by local communities/civil society/private sector • Graduate employment rate by education programme in relevant labour market, disaggregated by gender • Employers' rating of quality and relevance of graduates
Outcome level
<p><i>To document effects of the NORHED projects at the outcome-level, grant recipients will be asked to report on the following standard outcome indicators:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of peer reviewed scientific publications by NORHED project • Graduation rate in NORHED supported study programmes, disaggregated by gender • Number of academic staff with strengthened qualifications (Master/PhD/Post-Doc) by relevant institutional level (department/faculty) supported by NORHED • Evidence of inclusion and diversity in education and research by relevant institutional level supported by NORHED
Output level
<p><i>For the programme to trace deliverables and progress annually, grant recipients will be asked to report on the following standard output indicators:</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of dissemination activities • Number of new, and number of revised Bachelor/Master/PhD programmes/modules supported by NORHED • Number and type of NORHED scholarships for staff and students, disaggregated by gender

4.2 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an integral part of results management. Risk assessment and mitigation shall be conducted at all levels within NORHED

Risks

Risks are defined as circumstances or events that could have a negative effect on results or surroundings. Risks are closely related to results and should consequently be analysed against the results framework of a project.

There are both internal and external risk factors:

- *Internal risks* are factors under the control of the project that may hinder success, such as corruption, human and financial capacity, management capabilities, incentive structures, accountability and transparency, ownership and motivation of staff.
- *External risks* are conditions outside the programme which could have a negative influence on the achievement of results. External risks could be related to political, institutional, economic, environmental, social or technological conditions.

The core of risk management is to identify, analyse and react to internal or external factors that might impede implementation or have a negative influence on the achievement of results. The purpose of risk analysis is to assess the level of threat to the development intervention. The next step is risk response, or risk mitigation. Actions may be needed to reduce the probability that a risk factor will occur by changing the design or the implementation plan, or introducing mitigating measures to reduce the consequences if the risk factor should occur. Risk assessment shall be performed, and risk management plans developed by project partners prior to start-up. Being better informed about risks and how to deal with them increases the likelihood of a successful project.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Four cross-cutting issues are mandatory in all Norwegian development cooperation, and considered to be fundamental for sustainable development.

The cross-cutting issues are

- Human rights
- Women's rights and gender equality
- Environment and climate change
- Anti-corruption

These must, as a minimum, be included in the risk management of all grants. The objective is to minimise the risk of projects having unintended negative effects on these issues. It is important to know the context when assessing possible negative effects. Projects are expected to identify substantial risk factors caused by the project and analyse and manage these risk factors throughout the project cycle. In case potential negative impacts are identified, mitigation measures must be included in the plan.

In regards to the cross-cutting issue of Human Rights, particular attention should be given to the following key human rights principles: non-discrimination (the right not to be discriminated against based on ethnicity, religion, sex, disability, etc.); participation (the right to freedom of expression and access to information, freedom of assembly and association, the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect people's lives etc.); and accountability (equality before the law, mechanisms to hold duty bearers accountable etc.).

4.3 REPORTING

Partners shall submit annual plans and budgets as well as annual progress and financial reports for the project, as outlined in the agreement with Norad. NORHED reporting and budget templates shall be used.

In addition, an annual external audited report, including management letter, will be mandatory for the South partner's share of expenditure. Project audit of the Norwegian partner's share of the expenditure is not required since they are audited by the Office of the Auditor General of Norway. However, depending on a risk assessment Norad may request agreed upon procedures by the Auditor General to review / verify consolidated financial statements.

Progress, plans and risks will be discussed in annual consultations with Norad.

5. Eligibility and Project Management

NORHED invites collaborative North-South-South partnership between higher education institutions in Norway and developing countries with the aim to build capacity in LDCs and LMICs registered on the OECD/DAC list of ODA Recipients.¹²

5.1 GEOGRAPHICAL PRIORITIES

Norway's development efforts are designed to contribute to eradication of extreme poverty, ensuring inclusive and sustainable development and promoting prosperity, peace and justice throughout the world. To ensure good, lasting results, efforts need to be concentrated in selected partner countries and priority areas.

NORHED II will give priority to countries identified as partner countries in Norway's development policy.¹³ These include the countries categorised as partner countries for long-term development cooperation, and a few selected countries categorised as partner countries for stabilisation and conflict prevention.

Priority countries for NORHED II

Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

Norway also gives priority to other Least Developed Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Regional South-South collaboration is strongly encouraged. Collaborating partners can be institutions within one country, or within/across region(s). Geographical proximity, potential for mutual academic benefits, and prospects for sustainability should guide the formation of such collaboration. Examples of regional collaboration are joint research, development of joint curricula, student/staff exchange, and capacity development of technical and administrative staff.

Collaboration with HEIs in other developing countries than the prioritised countries is welcome, when justified based on a South-South capacity building objective. Countries

¹² [DAC List of ODA Recipients 2020](#)

¹³ [Partner Countries in Norway's Development Policy, Executive Summary, Meld. St. 17 \(2017-2018\) Report to the Storting \(White paper\)](#)

listed as Upper Middle Income Countries and Territories (ref DAC list of ODA recipients) are first and foremost relevant as regional partners for building capacities in other LDCs and LMICs. The role of each partner must be specified in the proposal. The role and objectives for each participating partner institution may differ between the institutions depending on needs and priorities.

5.2 ELIGIBLE PARTNERS

Eligible partners must be HEIs accredited/recognised by in-country national authorities.

Eligibility requirements for prospective partners

- Partners from developing countries must be HEIs accredited/recognised by in-country national authorities in countries registered as OECD DAC official development assistance recipients.
- Norwegian partners must be HEIs accredited by NOKUT (Norwegian Agency for Quality Education) and offer accredited degree programmes.

Other relevant actors (both in Norway and developing countries) can be included as project partners in partnership with an accredited HEI as listed above.

NORHED projects shall consist of minimum one partner institution in a developing country and minimum one Norwegian partner institution. Projects with more than one partner institution in a developing country (North-South-South partnerships) are preferred, in order to create and strengthen regional South-South academic networks. More than one Norwegian partner institution is also possible. The benefit of involving multiple partner institutions must be balanced with the objective of the specific project, operational feasibility and considerations of the overall impact of the project.

A NORHED project may be established at various levels in the participating institutions, depending on the nature and the scope of the proposed project. The operational level of a NORHED project will normally be the department/faculty level. The project should as far as possible be established at a level that is consistent across the participating institutions in a project.

5.3 PROJECT ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

NORHED projects should be based on mutual partnerships that ensure that partner interventions are locally owned and locally driven, with local accountability for achievement of results and management of risks.

The agreement frameworks for NORHED collaborative institutional partnerships will be based on the following principles

- Transparent partnerships based on mutual trust and shared decision-making and responsibilities
- Local ownership and capacity development
- Effective and efficient project management, including management of risks associated with compliance with the Norad's zero tolerance for financial irregularities.
- Clear division of roles, responsibilities and budgets between the cooperating partners that is enshrined in a contractual agreement.

Requirements for all NORHED partnerships

- *One joint plan* that specifies commitments, roles and responsibilities of each participating institution with regards to expectations, deliverables and budget needs.
- *One Partnership Committee* with representation from all institutions to ensure partner dialogue, monitoring and adjustment of implementation.
- *One coordinating institutional partner* (including a named individual as project investigator, PI) responsible for overall liaison and coordination of partnership reporting.

Norad's agreement partners in NORHED II shall be Norwegian HEIs. The project shall ensure that each partner is responsible for implementing and quality-assuring activities taking place at the respective institutions according to the agreed plan, and the principles mentioned above.

The agreement partner will act on behalf of the project and will assume overall responsibility for the planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring. This includes ensuring that the grant is used in accordance with approved work plans and budgets, as well ensuring that

adequate routines and systems are in place (e.g. ethical guidelines, routines for financial management, procurement, etc). Financial transfers will be effectuated to the agreement partner, which is responsible for disbursements to South-based partners (and other Norway-based partners if relevant) in accordance with agreed plans.

For Norwegian institutions with more than one NORHED project, the portfolio will be consolidated into one joint agreement with Norad. This will imply larger agreements and more flexibility in managing project portfolio within the agreement, including budget allocation between projects (within thresholds), scaling and capacity sharing across projects, and more overall reporting to Norad. This is expected to ensure more efficient and effective grant management. It may also position the partners for more strategic academic and institutional collaboration, and strengthen institutional buy-in.

To strengthen administrative capacity and systems at partner institutions, capacity development interventions at institutional level (and associated budget) may be added to the consolidated agreement in dialogue with Norad once it is clear which projects have been approved.

Projects should always be embedded within the regular management structure of the institution. Each participating institution shall identify a project coordinator to handle the day-to-day running of the project as well as the contact and collaboration with the other project partners. A Gender Focal person shall be identified at each partner institution to ensure that all efforts are made to integrate gender equality in the project components. A suitable organisation and management structure of the project should be established at each participating institution, and between the partner institutions. Sufficient administrative and financial capacities must be provided for the smooth and transparent running of the project.

DUE DILIGENCE of partners may be required prior to project implementation. This might be performed jointly under the consolidated agreement for optimal cost efficiency and effectiveness.

FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES

Norad has a zero-tolerance policy for corruption and misuse of funds. Accordingly, zero-tolerance is applied for all NORHED funding. Institutions that apply for NORHED funding must document adequate financial management systems and capabilities to handle NORHED funds. Transparency and anti-corruption measures shall be implemented at all levels.

