

CMI REPORT

Bridging Research and Development Assistance

A Review of Danish Research Networks

Arne Tostensen

R 2006: 7

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Acronyms and abbreviations

BFT	Technical Advisory Service (Bistandsfaglig Tjeneste)
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CISU	Centre for International Health and Development
DfID	Department for International Development
DIIS	Danish Institute for International Studies
DKK	Danish kroner
DWF	Danish Water Forum
ENRECA	ENhancement of REsearch CAPacity in Developing Countries
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FIVA	Research School for Water Resources
GAVI	Global Alliance on Vaccines and Immunisation
GEPPA	Research Network for Governance, Economic Policy and Public Administration
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IIED	Institute for Environment and Development
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
KVL	Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University
MA	Master of Arts
MIH	MA degree in international health
MIM	Multilateral Initiative on Malaria
MSc	Master of Science
NIMR	National Institute for Medical Research
NETARD	Danish Network for Agricultural Research for Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ReNED	Research Network for Environment and Development
RUF	Council for Development Research (Rådet for Udviklingsforskning)
ToR	Terms of reference
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
SWAP	Sector-wide Approach
WHO	World Health Organisation

Preface

This assignment was commissioned by Danida, based on the appended terms of reference (ToR). While the ToR were comprehensive, the time available was hardly commensurate with the task. The review of six research networks was made within the time span of merely three weeks. Given these time constraints the consultant was compelled to give only superficial attention to some of the points contained in the ToR. For example, though rather importantly, it was impossible – even if selectively only – to include in a meaningful manner voices from the South, e.g. those of Danish embassy staff, collaborating research institutions and representatives of relevant line ministries in partner countries.

Second, given the diverse nature of the networks and the fact that the review was undertaken by one consultant only, it was beyond the competence of that consultant to assess in any depth the quality of professional work performed by the networks and their constituent institutions. Attempting anything else would have compromised the professional integrity of the networks as well as that of the consultant. A fuller and deeper professional assessment of the networks' activities would have required a broader team of professionals matching the subject matter handled by the respective networks.

Third, assessing in reasonable detail the dissemination strategies of the networks and their effectiveness was similarly constrained both by time and the competence of the present reviewer.

Fourth, the parallel reviews of NGO networks and the ICT-based networks based at DCCD/BFT were difficult to take into account because they were still in an early phase when the consultant visited Copenhagen. Moreover, the time constraint applied to this aspect as well.

The data foundation of this review comprises written material in electronic form and hard copy, plus views and insights communicated to the consultant through personal interviews with network representatives. The majority of the views expressed pointed in the same direction but in some instances they diverged, largely owing to the differing nature of the networks.

Bergen, 12 March 2006
Arne Tostensen

Executive summary

1. The Hernes report of 2001 underscored the need for closer synergy between research and policy/operations and called for more effective application of research findings in reaching the overarching goals of Danish development assistance. Towards that end Danida has provided financial support to various research networks with a view to creating better synergies between research and policy/operations. Six networks are reviewed: (a) Danish Research Network for International Health; (b) Network for Smallholder Poultry Development; (c) Danish Network for Agricultural Research for Development; (d) Research Network for Governance, Economic Policy and Public Administration; (e) Danish Water Forum *Research*; and (f) Research Network for Environment and Development.
2. Changes have recently been introduced in the research council architecture of Denmark. The principal new institutions are the Research Council for Free Research (Det Frie Forskningsråd) and the Strategic Research Council (Det Strategiske Forskningsråd).
3. The management and architecture of development co-operation are also undergoing far-reaching changes. Decision-making authority has been devolved to the Danish embassies located in the recipient countries. The untying of aid is a main principle of the new liberalised aid regime where competitive bidding is the order of the day. Budget support and sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) are considerable and increasing, often through basket funding mechanisms. Danish research institutions and networks have to adjust to these changes which pose formidable challenges.
4. The erstwhile Council for Development Research (RUF) will cease to exist. What is to replace it is not yet entirely clear. The funds set aside by Danida for development research will be handled by the Strategic Research Council, i.e. quality assurance by vetting and assessing applications on professional criteria. Once a list of potential grantees has been compiled, it will be referred to a new research advisory committee to be appointed by Danida for the purpose of making a selection of successful applicants in terms of *relevance* to Danida's priorities.
5. Research relevance is a complex matter and the relevance criterion is extremely difficult to apply. It may be decomposed into three separate elements: (a) usability; (b) actual use; and (c) utility. There is also a time dimension to the relevance criterion. Research findings may be seen to be irrelevant at one point in time if produced prematurely. Yet, the same findings may be considered highly relevant some years hence. Beyond the three elements of the relevance criterion referred to above, a further differentiation is made between: (a) user relevance; (b) societal relevance; and (c) scientific relevance. A too restrictive definition of relevance may prove not to be in the long-term interest of good aid practices in the field.
6. The ENRECA (ENhancement of REsearch CAPacity in Developing Countries) programmes were a novelty when they were introduced and turned into a flagship in Danish development assistance. The new Danish research environment does not mean that the ENRECA programmes will be discontinued. Rather, they will be reorganised to cover larger units, e.g. entire faculties of universities in Denmark and in developing countries. The continuation of ENRECA programmes could be a vehicle for entry into sector programmes.
7. The new aid architecture has three main components: (a) decentralisation; (b) liberalisation and untying; and (c) budget support and sector-wide approaches (SWAPs). Decentralisation has meant devolution of decision-making authority to the embassies. The second element in the new architecture is liberalisation. Competitive bidding is now the catchword. Danish research is expensive by international standards, although not necessarily as pronounced within a Western context. If judged on cost, most Danish research institutions would probably not be competitive vis-à-vis comparable institutions in large middle-income developing countries such as Brazil, India, and South Africa. However, a competitive advantage can be gained to the extent that Danish researchers possess cutting-edge expertise which is rare or unique. The third element of the new aid architecture is budget support and SWAPs. For Danish research institutions it is

exceedingly difficult to break into the budget support agenda. Instead, they have to pin their hopes on the SWAPs. The timing of entry is important. For research input to be effective early entry is critical. For Danish researchers to be brought on board in a SWAP context, they need to see themselves primarily as change agents and secondarily as academics. The new aid architecture is a great challenge to Danish research institutions and networks. They have not quite found their bearings yet.

8. The tasks of research networks in knowledge management can be broken down into four categories which are distinct yet inter-related: knowledge (a) *production*; (b) *dissemination*; (c) *application*; and (d) *impact*. Research is expected to perform all these tasks.
9. It is a fact that the research environment in Denmark is changing and that Danida is committed to the new aid architecture. These points of departure pose challenges. First, the consequences of the discontinuation of RUF will not be as dramatic as expected. Some of its roles will be taken over by the Strategic Research Council although the relevance criterion in terms of Danida's own priorities is likely to be applied more restrictively by Danida's new research advisory committee. The ENRECA programmes will be retained albeit somewhat reorganised. In sum, several support facilities will be in place to maintain the Danish resource base.
10. The new aid architecture is a tougher challenge to tackle than the domestic research scene. Competitive bidding under a liberalised regime will put Danish research inputs at a disadvantage in terms of cost. There are two ways around this problem. One is to excel on quality and be able to persuade the clients that quality is as important as price. The hurdles are not only the Danish embassy staff overseeing sector programmes but also the representatives of local authorities of the relevant line ministries. The latter would be inclined to shop around for inputs closer at hand and at a lower cost. An alternative approach is to link up with local research institutions and face competition in partnership.
11. Overall, the networks have been a success as far as consolidating the Danish resource base is concerned. They have also largely been successful in the dissemination of research findings to Danida. The networks have been less effective in bringing relevant knowledge through to application in sector programmes, in large measure due to the new aid architecture. Little is so far known about impact.
12. The cost-effectiveness of the networks is difficult to assess in precise terms. As one-stop facilities their performance is probably fairly efficient. The outsourcing argument is convincing and adds to their efficiency. For Danida to spend DKK 8–10 million per year on the maintenance of six networks is not excessive.
13. The observations on efficiency must be qualified. The networks have performed below par with regard to the application of knowledge in aid programmes. But they are not alone to be blamed for that. It can partly be attributed to the limbo in which Danida's research policy finds itself, and partly to the decentralisation of the aid administration which has exacerbated the position of research because concomitant guidelines have not ensured the inclusion of research components in sector programmes in the new set-up. The result is erratic at best, largely depending on the inclinations and disinclinations of embassy staff.

Introduction

As from 1 September 2005 Danida's research unit is part of the Technical Advisory Service (Bistandfaglig Tjeneste – BFT). The rationale underlying this move of a largely independent entity to inclusion within the BFT was to forge closer links between research, on the one hand, and policy-making and operations, on the other. The so-called Hernes report of 2001 had underscored the need for closer synergy between research and policy/operations and called for more effective application of research findings in reaching the overarching goals of Danish development assistance.¹ In other words: development assistance must be evidence-based. Within Danida there was a widespread perception – whether reflecting reality or not – that its research unit had previously lived a life of its own largely detached from policy concerns and operations in the field. The Hernes report provided support for these views.

Changes have recently been introduced in the research council architecture of Denmark.² The principal new institutions are the Research Council for Free Research (Det Frie Forskningsråd) and the Strategic Research Council (Det Strategiske Forskningsråd). As a consequence of the new law, the erstwhile Council for Development Research (RUF) will cease to exist, which will thus have a bearing on the future of development research.

Furthermore, the management and architecture of development co-operation is undergoing far-reaching changes. Decision-making authority has been devolved to the Danish embassies located in the recipient countries. The untying of aid is a main principle of the new liberalised aid regime where competitive bidding and contracts are the order of the day. Moreover, within the country programmes the proportion of funds channelled through the modalities of budget support and sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) is considerable and increasing, often through basket funding mechanisms. Danish research institutions and networks have to adjust to these changes which pose formidable challenges.

For a number of years, Danida has provided financial support to various research networks with a view to creating better synergies between research and policy/operations. Partly precipitated by the move of the research unit and partly stemming from uncertainty as to the added value of such networks, the BFT decided to undertake a review conducted by an external consultant.³ The six networks under review are:

- Danish Research Network for International Health;
- Network for Smallholder Poultry Development;
- Danish Network for Agricultural Research for Development (NETARD);
- Research Network for Governance, Economic Policy and Public Administration (GEPPA);
- Danish Water Forum *Research*;
- Research Network for Environment and Development (ReNED).

Within BFT and elsewhere in Danida certain notions had added to the justification and urgency of the review. Questions had been raised as to the effectiveness and efficiency of the networks as seen

¹ *Partnership at the Leading Edge: A Danish Vision for Knowledge, Research and Development*. Report of the Commission on Development-Related Research Funded by Danida, Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001.

² See *Lov om forskningsrådgivning m.v.* (Lov nr. 405 av 28.05.2003).

³ See the appended Terms of Reference. Reference to the networks in the subsequent text includes their constituent institutions and members, unless otherwise stated.

from the point of view of the aid administration. Is there a reasonable balance between the resources spent on research administration (including the networks) and the actual conduct of research? How large a proportion of the running costs of the networks would be reasonable for the networking institutions to cover themselves? Do the networks contribute to better knowledge management and more effective aid programmes by feeding research findings into policy and operations? Do they relieve Danida of an administrative burden? Are the networks capable of disseminating research findings to Danida and the embassies in a usable form? Are they demand-driven or supply-driven? These and related questions can only be answered meaningfully within the context of the changing institutional and policy environment of development research.

Given the changing architecture of research funding and management in Denmark and the devolution of decision-making to the embassy level, the research institutions and the networks have found it difficult to gain a new foothold. The changes are fairly recent and it takes time to adapt to new circumstances. The institutional and policy state of flux has produced a measure of nervousness and unease on the part of the networks and their constituent institutions. In addition, considerable frustration has been building up over the perceived lack of progress by Danida in bringing more clarity into the policy and institutional environment as far as development research is concerned.

This review is based on the perusal of a wealth of documents and qualitative interviews with a range of network representatives, Danida staff and other key informants. The views expressed are those of the author and should not be construed to reflect those of Danida or any of the networks under review.

Research networks: rationale and justification

Since the mid-1990s, a number of research networks has been established by Danida. Their purpose has been to promote the use of research-based knowledge in development assistance through closer dialogue between the research milieu and the aid administration at home and abroad. Additionally, they are intended to enhance co-operation between Danish research institutions and counterparts in the developing world. Although some of the networks were established before the publication in 2001 of the Hernes report on Danida's research support, their underlying rationale was reinforced by that report and probably stimulated the establishment of new networks. The Hernes report deplored the weak link between research and operational development activities and suggested networks as a suitable vehicle for creating a closer and more effective interface between the domestic resource base and Danida.

The network concept subsumes a number of organisational forms. In that regard, the six networks under review are not uniform. They represent an array of activities that are quite different in scope and nature. Notwithstanding this variety, their functions have been summed up as follows:

- Promoting the use of new knowledge (research findings) in development assistance;
- Strengthening the contact and dialogue between research and development assistance, and exchanging information about the supply and demand of knowledge;
- Promoting capacity-building in Denmark and abroad;
- Assisting sector programmes in the identification and formulation of research components and in facilitating contact with relevant researchers in the countries concerned;
- Disseminating and facilitating interdisciplinary information exchange between institutions within the relevant field;

- Strengthening and broadening the Danish resource base by incorporating new institutions and researchers with limited experience in research and research collaboration with developing countries;
- Strengthening contacts with relevant international and regional research institutions, with institutions and organisations in developing countries, and with the private sector, consulting companies and civil society organisations.

This review will attempt to assess the performance of the networks in terms of the above functions (see otherwise the appended terms of reference). In doing so, a number of constraints on the networks will be highlighted. In the main these constraints are related to the lack of clarity with respect to the changing research environment in Denmark and the new aid architecture.

A new Danish research environment

The Danish research environment is undergoing major changes that impinge on development research in fundamental ways. In May 2003, a new law was enacted by Parliament to restructure the way in which Danish research is to be managed in the future.⁴ Effective as from 1 January 2004, changes were introduced in the research council architecture of Denmark. The new institutions designed to strengthen the quality, co-ordination and internationalisation of Danish research, as well as the dissemination and application of research results comprise the following: the Research Policy Council of Denmark (Danmarks Forskningspolitiske Råd), the Research Council for Free Research (Det Frie Forskningsråd), the Strategic Research Council (Det Strategiske Forskningsråd), and the Co-ordination Committee (Koordinationsudvalget). The two research councils are the principal actors vis-à-vis the research community in terms of funding, advice and oversight. While the Research Council for Free Research is intended to cater for basic research initiated by the researchers themselves, the Strategic Research Council is responsible for sector-specific research and for servicing the line ministries' research needs.

As a consequence of the new law, the erstwhile Council for Development Research (RUF) will cease to exist.⁵ However, what is to follow is not yet entirely clear, although certain parameters are discernible. The funds set aside by Danida for development research will be handled by the Strategic Research Council, i.e. quality assurance by vetting and assessing applications on professional criteria. Once a list of potential grantees has been compiled, it will thereafter be referred to a new research advisory committee to be appointed by Danida for the purpose of making a definitive selection of successful applicants in terms of *relevance* to Danida's priorities. The intention is to ensure a more strategic use of the funds previously channelled through RUF. The advisory committee of about ten members is yet to be appointed but its composition is likely to resemble that of RUF, albeit with a far more restricted mandate. Although a majority will be nominated by or affiliated to Danida, the membership is expected to have research competence. The bottom line is that the operational needs of Danida would have the upper hand by virtue of the committee's composition and mandate. New terms of reference will be elaborated for the advisory committee, but they are not likely to be as detailed as those applicable to RUF. The available amount is envisaged to remain at more or less the same level as to date: DKK 45–50 million per year towards 2010.

⁴ See *Lov om forskningsrådgivning m.v.* (Lov nr. 405 av 28.05.2003).

⁵ See the speech on 24 November 2005 by Development Minister Ulla Tørnæs at the annual meeting of the Danish Association of Development Researchers.

Relevance

Research relevance is a complex matter and the relevance criterion is extremely difficult to apply, more difficult than that of scientific quality. There exists no well developed methodology for assessing relevance and no method, which would yield hard, quantitative evidence of relevance.

In developing countries the relevance criterion tends to become more important in view of the pressing needs for scientific inputs to the solutions of development problems. The urgency of relevance is thus reinforced. In practical life, however, managers of donor organisations are faced with an imperfect world and have to deal with the grey zones of research, which are neither purely academic of high standard nor applied of high quality. Optimal situations rarely exist. Research may satisfy minimum or above average standards of quality, yet falling short of being excellent, while at the same time being relevant. Similarly, research may match high standards of scientific quality, but falling somewhat short of being as relevant as required. In such situations compelling and unpleasant trade-offs have to be made between quality and relevance.

Should quality be given priority over relevance, or should relevance be encouraged while lowering the scientific quality standards somewhat, though to acceptable levels? The former stresses preparedness in the sphere of knowledge production. It is based on the notion that societies are undergoing rapid change, making it difficult or well-nigh impossible to say today what knowledge will be required tomorrow. The latter, by contrast, stems from the basic view that the development of knowledge is a means to implementing policies for the benefit of users, whoever they may be. This more instrumental philosophy is based on a notion that we are more or less capable of predicting what knowledge will be needed in the future. There is merit to either position but no way of deciding which one is more correct. Danida's preoccupation with maintaining the Danish resource base is an attempt to get the best of both worlds.

The relevance criterion applied to research output relates to the use of research results. It may be instructive to decompose this criterion into three separate elements: (a) usability; (b) actual use; and (c) utility.

Research may be relevant in the sense that it is potentially usable for some purpose, without actually being used or producing utility. Such a situation may arise if the potential users remain unaware of the existence of research results after their publication, in other words, if communication between the researchers and the potential users is poor. Furthermore, potential users may simply ignore usable research results, even when known to them, if the findings are found to be objectionable or repugnant in ethical terms, or politically incorrect, or running counter to vested interests. Research findings may have been dismissed by prevailing knowledge regimes embedded in power structures. In this regard research networks may serve as a bridge to the users.

In conventional thinking, however, research is normally considered relevant when it is actually being used. It is generally presumed that research results, when actually being used, also create utility for someone in one way or another. This rationale underlies most thinking about research relevance, and applies *a fortiori* when particular users commission research institutions to carry out research projects with a view to solving specific problems. But this presumption may not hold in all cases. Research results may be used for purposes other than those intended by the researchers themselves or the commissioning body in question. In the social sciences (and in other fields too, except when patented) research findings become public goods once published, and may be used or 'misused' by any party. Research may also be used tactically, even by the commissioning bodies themselves, to delay decisions or implementation of policy under the pretext that more information is needed to proceed. What is deemed 'proper use' or 'misuse' depends on the eyes of the beholder, i.e. what interests are being served.

In other words, it is a fallacy that actual application of research results will necessarily produce societal utility. This means that there is a conflict perspective inherent in the relevance criterion. No research can be relevant to all stakeholders in an absolute sense. Research can only be relevant (i.e. usable, actually used and/or having utility) to a question/issue/matter for particular actors at a given point in time.

There is also a time dimension to the relevance criterion. Research findings may be seen to be irrelevant at one point in time, and have thus been produced prematurely, so to speak. Yet, the same findings may be considered highly relevant some years hence. By then, the surroundings or the political climate may have matured so as to be more receptive to findings published previously. Basic research or research with a basic orientation – in any discipline – is rarely considered relevant or applicable at the time the findings are published, simply because their application is not immediately apparent. In fact, it is a defining characteristic of basic research that its application is unknown at the time it is conducted. However, that is not to say that basic research may not be relevant. It only requires a period of maturation for it to acquire relevance, either because complementary branches of knowledge need to catch up or because the social, political and economic conditions need to change.

Applied research institutions capable of exercising ‘foresight’ in setting their agendas may be able to predict with some degree of accuracy what knowledge needs will emerge in the future, and start research well ahead of time to be able to meet those needs. Thus, what is often termed relevant rather means timely in the sense that it matches a perceived need at a given point in time.

The relevance of research depends not only on its substance or the way in which research institutions relate to its wider environment of users. It depends equally much on the users themselves – their capability to define research problems and their readiness and ability to absorb results and to tailor them to their needs. Unfortunately, decision-makers in aid agencies are not prone to reading much, especially not books. At the most they absorb executive summaries and briefing papers. Thus a ‘translation’ task arises. Research networks have a key role to play in translating findings into digestible formats: policy briefs and summaries. In this electronic age websites are useful means of communication but they normally communicate electronically only what is available in printed hard copy; they are rarely interactive. Hence the need for systematic, face-to-face dialogue on a continuous basis, adapted to the needs of specific user groups.

Beyond the three elements of the relevance criterion referred to above, a further differentiation should be introduced between: (a) user relevance; (b) societal relevance; and (c) scientific relevance.

User relevance refers to situations where the users are fairly well defined, e.g. an agency, a government, an NGO, a local community, a company, etc. In the case of commissioned research the user is clearly defined and is also paying for the results. In other instances, the users may be more diffuse, making it less clear for what purpose the findings are to be used.

Societal relevance refers to situations in which researchers conducting research have some notion of their activities being relevant to broad sections of society, albeit not necessarily to all of them. Typically, this kind of research is not induced or paid for by identifiable actors or users. The prime mover behind such endeavours may be the normative stance of the researchers. Findings emanating from such research may contribute to ongoing public debates on topical issues, raise new issues for debate or add new perspectives to an old problem. Once results are published and available it is for anyone to *make* them relevant to her/his situation.

Finally, research may be scientifically relevant when it contributes to furthering the development of a scientific field in an epistemological sense. Examples include generation of new theory, elaboration of new methods of investigation, and empirical contributions to the body of knowledge.

Danida's new research advisory committee, once established, would be well advised to take into account the above reflections on relevance in its application to tangible projects. A too restrictive definition of relevance may prove not to be in the long-term interest of good aid practices in the field. For their part, the research networks ought to be more accommodating towards time-constrained aid managers. It is a principal task of the research networks to contribute to policy-formulation and implementation of aid programmes. Effective policy research and analysis depend on the ability to identify and measure the impact of various policy options, to assess trade-offs, and to present thought-out choices in a well prepared manner to policy-makers and managers. Policy researchers and analysts need special abilities to analyse and synthesise; to weigh various alternatives for solving complex problems under conditions of uncertainty, inadequate data, competing interests, and limited time; to explain persuasively and clearly to policy managers the strengths and weaknesses of various options; and to recommend a specific course of action in keeping with the economic and socio-political realities of the area in question. Persuasive policy advice must be founded on technical and research competence, but also requires insights into and sensitivity to political and bureaucratic conditions, creativity and imagination, as well as effective communicative skills.

This is a tall order for anyone. Generally, researchers have received little training in such skills. It would be worth while, therefore, for the networks to engage in such training if they have not done so thus far, and to do more of the same if some measures have already been taken. It holds great promise for a more fruitful interface between researchers and users.

ENRECA programmes

The ENRECA (ENhancement of REsearch CAPacity in Developing Countries) programmes were a novelty when they were introduced in 1990. Comprising joint research and capacity-building within a long-time horizon made them special in the world of research aid; they were turned into a flagship – or a 'crown jewel' as one respondent put it – in Danish development assistance. A recent evaluation concluded that, overall, the ENRECA programme is a creative and effective vehicle for building research capacity in developing countries with the expenditure of modest means. The new Danish research environment does not entail that the ENRECA programmes will be thrown out with the bathwater. Rather, they will be reorganised to cover larger units, e.g. entire faculties of universities in Denmark and in developing countries. These programmes will continue to be assessed and managed by the organ replacing RUF under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An amount of roughly DKK 50 million per year is envisaged as an appropriate allocation for the ENRECA programmes towards 2010.

The continuation of ENRECA programmes could very well be a vehicle for entry into sector programmes. If Danish research institutions develop long-term collaborative ventures with counterparts in developing countries based on the ENRECA concept, preparedness could be created for contributions to SWAPs at the appropriate time. Such preparedness might even create a basis for contributions to the design and conceptualisation of SWAPs and the inclusion of a research component. It is a challenge, therefore, for the networks to endeavour to access the sector programmes at an early stage, preferably through a consultancy mechanism during the inception and design phases.

The new aid architecture

The new aid architecture has three main components: (a) decentralisation; (b) liberalisation and untying; and (c) budget support and sector-wide approaches (SWAPs). Decentralisation has meant devolution of decision-making authority to the embassies. The ambassadors and their advisors have become the real decision-makers, which means that the road to the centres of decision-making has become much longer, not just to Copenhagen but rather to Hanoi, Kampala or Managua. Secondly, experience shows that in the best of worlds research is facing a challenge of persuasion vis-à-vis those who expect quick results. The embassy staff appreciation of research input into aid programmes is highly variable, to say the least. There is a certain amount of distrust of the research community within Danida and at the embassies. Many perceive researchers as selfish actors out to secure funds. In fairness, it must be said, however, that this is not a uniform perception; the degree of resentment varies and a number of individuals takes a positive attitude. But aid officials in the field are under pressure to produce results and preoccupied with meeting targets. Often they see research as slowing down progress. Owing to the vagaries of personal preferences and dispositions of embassy staff, therefore, the new decentralised mode of operation has sometimes created bottlenecks as far as research input is concerned. It has also introduced a new element of arbitrariness.

Some networks have started adapting to the new situation by making travels abroad 'to market their product' among the potential 'clients', to use commercial expressions. The clients in the field are two: the embassies and the relevant institutions in the host countries, principally line ministries overseeing SWAPs but also relevant research institutions, with which partnerships might be developed. Basket funding of SWAPs and budget support complicates the matter even further because Danish researchers then have to relate to multiple donors whose research policies diverge. This marketing option is costly but unavoidable. While there may be some irritation by the embassies over these marketing efforts, embassy staff are often ignorant about the resource base at home, largely attributable to high turnover that undermines continuity. It is banal to say that for managers and practitioners abroad to request research inputs, they will have to know what the Danish resource base can offer. As knowledge filters down the ranks, the pendulum of acceptance of the resource base in Denmark may, over time, swing back to stimulate greater demand.

The second element in the new architecture is liberalisation. Competitive bidding is now the catchword. Contracts above a certain amount, regardless of sector or activity, can only be awarded in accordance with agreed tendering procedures. In the research field, Danish research is expensive by international standards. If judged mainly on cost, therefore, most Danish research institutions would not be competitive in the international market place. However, a competitive advantage can be gained if Danish researchers possess cutting-edge expertise which is rare or unique. In such cases the cost element may be relegated to second spot. On the other hand, it may be difficult to persuade potential users that Danish expertise is better than that of others or on a par. Some Danish research institutions do possess cutting edge expertise in specific fields and many others satisfy high standards. The former is obviously better placed to be persuasive than the latter. A possible entry point to the sector programmes for both – although more pressingly so – is through local institutions. In doing so, the comparative advantage could be enhanced by combining Danish competence with local expertise and insight. Thus, the combination of local and Danish competence would constitute the comparative advantage. This appears to be the only viable avenue for meeting the challenges of liberalisation.

The third element of the new aid architecture is budget support and SWAPs. Budget support means that an increasing share of the aid flow is channelled directly to the ministries of finance of the countries in question. The conditionality is generally lenient with respect to earmarking in terms of

substance, sector or activity, although mechanisms of monitoring, evaluation and accountability are put in place to ascertain that the funds are used in accordance with the pre-agreement dialogue. Generally, budget support is extended through a basket funding mechanism and intended to meet the cost of the recipient's own priorities and programmes, typically Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), or equivalent documents for others. Budget support as a form of aid is premised on a high level of trust in the recipient's ability to perform. SWAPs are another form of support, although at a somewhat lower level of trust; they may be seen as sector-specific budget support. As the term suggests, specific sectors, e.g. agriculture, health, education, are the focus of attention but the degree of detail is not as great as that of regular projects and programmes and the involvement of expatriates is minimal. Both budget support and SWAPs are supposedly demand-driven in the sense that the policies and priorities of the host countries form their bases. It is also documented that the impact of research is greater when requested by decision-makers and practitioners rather than being superimposed.

For Danish research institutions it is exceedingly difficult – or well-nigh impossible – to break into the budget support agenda. Instead, they have to pin their hopes on the SWAPs, which may include research components if deemed necessary. The entry strategy most likely to succeed is not directly but through an alliance or partnership with local research institutions. If such partners with relevant competence suggest themselves the problem is largely solved. Unfortunately, such potential partners are sometimes lacking altogether or are weak in terms of relevant competence. If that is the case, a relationship of long-term institution- and competence-building is inescapable, potentially through an ENRECA programme. It would take time but could run parallel to a SWAP.

The timing of entry is important. For research input to be effective early entry is critical with regard to defining the nature and magnitude of the problem to be addressed; assessing needs and priorities; establishing minimum knowledge requirements to make a difference; and determining the resource requirements in terms of personnel and material inputs. For Danish researchers to be brought on board in a SWAP context, they need to see themselves primarily as change agents and secondarily as academics. That is not to say that academic merit is discounted. On the contrary, a solid foundation in the relevant discipline is needed to be able to make a sound contribution in applied work. But academic publishing cannot be the overriding goal. Yet, academic and other publishing *can* be possible, just not to the detriment of knowledge application.

A further complication, although not new, is the frequent use of the logical framework approach to the design of programmes. The blue-print thinking inherent in the logframe approach is not conducive to the inclusion of research elements. Research is an innovative pursuit which does not fit in a logframe context where the parameters are presumed to be known at the start of a programme. A blue-print approach is not amenable to adjustment *en route*.

Evidently, the new aid architecture is a great challenge to Danish research institutions and networks. They appear not quite to have found their bearings yet.

Danish Research Network for International Health

Established in 1996, this network is the oldest of the six under review. Its objectives are to strengthen health research in Denmark and to build bridges between research and development assistance. This is sought by enhancing research capacity and promoting the use of research results in international health as a means of improving health in low-income societies. Approaches include facilitation and promotion of information exchange between researchers and development aid agencies, universities and research institutions in the North and the South, Danida-supported sector

programmes, NGOs, private firms, and relevant international and regional organisations and networks.

The health network grew out of a series of ENRECA programmes with emphasis on capacity-building in the South and the North. It was, in effect, an amalgamation of more than a dozen ENRECA programmes that had much in common. Until November 2004 the health network had existed rather informally, although with a secretariat funded by Danida, when a constituent general assembly was held at the behest of Danida. The network currently has a board which meets twice a year and an executive committee whose meetings are more frequent. Network members comprise both research institutions (including consulting companies) and individuals (researchers and practitioners) who take an interest in development and health research. The secretariat is hosted by the Department of International Health at the Centre for Health and Society [Kommunehospitalet]. Currently the secretariat has three employees: one full-time position as research co-ordinator; one half-time position as network co-ordinator; and one half-time position handling finance and accounts. This adds up to two person-years. Danida's contribution to the maintenance of the network was DKK 4.3 million for the period 2001–2004.

It should be noted, however, that the members make considerable contributions in kind (time and material support), although these contributions are difficult to value in monetary terms. It was forcefully argued – with some justification in the view of this consultant – that many of the activities (organising conferences, seminars, workshops, documentation, discussion and dialogue fora, MA and PhD courses, website maintenance, etc.) in which the network is involved can be seen as the *outsourcing* of tasks that Danida or other institutions would otherwise have to do. It is very unlikely that Danida would be able to carry out those tasks as efficiently and cost-effective as the networks. The opportunity cost would probably be very high.

Activities seek to engage researchers and students in research and development-related matters which are a prerequisite for stimulating, inspiring and updating the Danish resources base to embark on research and other programme activities in partner countries. Without such facilitation it is doubtful that the network would be capable of making contributions to the South. All activities of the network are planned and implemented in conjunction with Danida and universities.

No guidelines exist as to how the network may interact with Danida's sector programmes in the partner countries.⁶ Hence, the network has adopted a trial-and-error approach. The health sector programme in Tanzania provides an example of success in terms of the inclusion of a research component. It was the unanimous view of the health network interviewees, however, that this success resulted largely from the efforts of the Dar es Salaam embassy health sector advisor at the time. He saw an opportunity for testing out a 'model' or good practices that might be replicated elsewhere, once he returned to headquarters as chief technical advisor for health. Another contributory factor was the fact that the network was commissioned in 2004 to develop an outline of research needs in collaboration with health programme counterparts in the South. The purpose was to integrate research in policy, strategy and practice. Recently the network has also facilitated the involvement of a Danish research centre (Centre for International Health and Development – CISU) in the health sector programme on a project investigating child mortality and the treatment of children by the national health care system. The Tanzanian partners include the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) and Ifakara. The project will also contribute to institution-building in the use of research methods and tools.

Although some consider the collaborative ventures with Tanzania a model or a 'best practice' to be emulated elsewhere, the two successful examples document that much hinges on the attitude and

⁶ See *Guidelines for Programme Management*, 4th Edition, Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005.

competence the sector advisors at the embassies and the BFT consultants. They have no incentive to include research elements in the sector programmes and hence their responsiveness varies widely. Some of them keep a distance to research while others assume an outright hostile attitude. Very few appreciate the potential contribution of research to successful aid programmes. This fact, in turn, illustrates a somewhat accidental mode of operation, leaving the inclusion of critical research components to the whims of the embassy sector advisors.

It was claimed by the network that a major problem is Danida's personnel policy which creates bottlenecks at the embassy level in terms of competence and capacity to handle research matters. The high staff turnover inherent in the foreign service is partly to blame for the state of affairs, which is further compounded by the lack of procedures and guidelines in research matters. It was furthermore asserted – as an expression of considerable frustration – that Danida's expectations are based on suppositions that simply do not hold. The reality is that research is given low priority in most aid contexts. Lip service is being paid to the importance of research, but little direction is given as to how research could be incorporated. The government's policy is based on contractual relationships, but it does not seem to apply to research. Danida was criticised scathingly for having no research policy at the moment, but moving the research unit to the BFT was seen as a positive development because it is thought to facilitate better integration of research into aid activities. Pending the elaboration of a clear research policy by Danida, however, the somewhat haphazard mode of operation is likely to continue.

The Tanzanian experience is probably an exception. In other countries the network has not been as successful in bridge-building between research and development assistance. Again, it must be reiterated that this limited success across the board is partly attributable to the new aid architecture.

There is no doubt that the health network has contributed considerably to consolidating the Danish resource base in this field. Different means of networking through physical meeting places and electronically through websites and e-mail newsletters have contributed to forging closer links between members from different sub-disciplines with the medical profession but also with the social sciences. Not least have the seminars and conferences been useful in pulling the private sector, principally consulting firms, into the network, thereby creating a public-private linkage. For interested parties the network provides a one-stop facility which saves much time in information searching.

The external linkages are not only with partners in the South. The health network maintains contact with a range of international institutions within the health sector. Principal among them are WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF, Multilateral Initiative on Malaria (MIM), Global Alliance on Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Global Forum on Health Research, etc. These links are important means of making Danish health expertise known internationally and of conveying impulses to Danish professional milieux.

The health network's resource base has been instrumental in establishing an MA degree in international health (MIH) at the University of Copenhagen. It caters for Danish and foreign students alike. PhD courses have also been designed and run by the network, with 50–60 per cent student participation from the South (including ENRECA students). Two major workshops, combined with PhD courses, have been held in Tanzania and Uganda. These courses, which are cross-disciplinary in scope and development orientated, thus contribute to competence-building in Denmark as well as in partner countries. It would probably not have been possible to establish these PhD courses without the network as a facilitator. Twice a year the network is responsible for the screening of health-related travel grant applications to RUF.

The network operates an excellent website – <http://www.enrecahealth.ku.dk> – which conveys a wealth of information and links to related institutions and activities. It is updated regularly and serves as a useful means of information dissemination about research findings and activities.

Network for Smallholder Poultry Development

Established in 1997, the overall objective of the poultry network is to contribute to poverty reduction and improved welfare of the moderately and extremely poor in rural areas. To achieve this objective the network is initiating and co-ordinating the building up and strengthening of institutional and human capacities related to promotion of village poultry production as a vehicle for poverty reduction. The members comprise a number of Danish research institutions and the network collaborates with consulting companies in Denmark and with Danish and international NGOs. Internationally the network collaborates with the World Bank, FAO, IFAD, and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), including the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

Technical project support offered by the network seeks to integrate the poultry concept into Danida's agricultural sector programmes and to ensure that the experiences gained and new knowledge acquired inform programme activities. This involves incorporation of the poultry concept into the sector programmes in close collaboration with Danida staff; professional support to programming missions to new countries, including the preparation of terms of reference; the establishment of procedures for project monitoring in order to document experiences for later utilisation in new programmes; and technical support to ongoing programmes. Project support has been a predominant activity in recent years.

Research co-ordination related to project implementation is aimed at enhancing the total research capacity in the partner countries, based on the concepts developed by the network.

Apart from research, the network's portfolio comprises education and training of foreign and Danish students in poultry production. This includes drawing up educational and training plans and securing their funding; establishing network relations with partner countries with a view to designing appropriate training and educational programmes tailored to local conditions; co-ordinating the education of MSc and PhD students; following up and evaluating the educational plans; developing and supporting the MSc programmes in poultry development in Bangladesh and Tanzania; and exploring possibilities for developing ENRECA programmes. In particular, the network has facilitated the design of an internationally acknowledged Master of Science programme in poultry production and health. It is to the credit of the network that this degree programme was mounted. The MSc programme has now been mainstreamed into the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University (KVL) teaching programmes. However, in the process the social science dimension was unfortunately lost. At the local level, a participatory training model has been developed under the rubric of 'Farmer Training Schools'.

On the face of it, the poultry network is rather narrow in scope and therefore different from the other broader networks. Although its niche is small, the interviewees felt that broadening the scope would cause it to lose focus and credibility. If the network is to survive as one of excellence, its professional foundation should not be expanded unduly. Although its professional base may be narrow, its approach is broad-based. It was asserted that one of the comparative advantages of the network is its mode of operation, maintaining professional contacts at top-notch research institutions and applying the knowledge right down to the women at the village level.

The steering functions are entrusted to the board whose members represent the institutional membership. It meets twice a year. A smaller executive committee meets about ten times a year and handles day-to-day matters.

The co-ordination unit is hosted by the KVL in Copenhagen. In early 2005 the unit consisted of the director and five other employees: one co-ordinator and a secretary, plus three research assistants. Danida has granted a total of DKK 4.78 million to fund the co-ordination unit for another two years as from 1 March 2005 until 1 March 2007, albeit with a reduced personnel complement of two persons funded by Danida. The network was considered to have fulfilled most of its tasks and would only need funds for consolidation during a transition phase. Funding for this third and last phase, therefore, was granted on the understanding that the network in the future would secure funding from other sources and become independent of Danida, e.g. through user fees and consultancy services. The network is currently earning DKK 500,000–1,000,000 in consultancy fees per year. It should also be mentioned that the institutional members of the network contribute in kind (time and personnel). Young researchers often get their professional debut through the network.

Similar to the health network, the poultry network interviewees expressed dismay at the lack of interest in poultry development by embassy staff who are reluctant to integrate research components in the sector programmes. Hence, to the extent research is incorporated it is not demand-driven, although this has changed in recent years. The network sees both constraints and opportunities in the new aid architecture. The challenge in seizing the opportunities lies above all in developing good communication with the embassies, with which the network has had some success already. The network regretted, however, that the devolution of decision-making authority to the embassies appears to have led to loss of institutional memory.

An evaluation conducted in 2002 concluded that the network had achieved considerable results. The inter-disciplinary approach was highlighted as an eye-opener for the participating institutions. In this regard, it should be emphasised that the poultry network was not confined to technical issues of poultry production and health. Inter-disciplinary collaboration was gradually secured and is a more distinct feature of the profile now than only five years ago. Apart from the agricultural sciences a social science component has been included, e.g. social anthropology.

In the field of information dissemination the network has established a website – <http://www.poultry.kvl.dk> – with links to other relevant milieux. It contains a wealth of information. Msc theses have been uploaded in fulltext pdf format and so is a lot of grey literature which is otherwise difficult to come by. An electronic newsletter is distributed twice a year. As a reflection of this network's heavy involvement in project support and implementation, manuals have been produced in village poultry production. These are useful tools for rural households in improving their livelihoods.

Danish Network for Agricultural Research for Development (NETARD)

Established in 1998, this network is very broad in scope in that it covers the entire agricultural sector. Its main purpose is to facilitate research-based knowledge inputs into Danish development co-operation and to ensure that research findings are utilised in agricultural sector assistance. NETARD is set on playing a facilitating role in linking agricultural research with advisory services and development work, and thereby creating a better balance between supply and

demand in agricultural development programmes with a view to meeting the challenges of the developing countries.

Six research institutions in the field of agriculture and development form the core of NETARD as an institutional network. However, the network is also open to NGOs, consultancy firms and about 400 individuals who work within agriculture and development in Third World countries. Apart from research and development institutions located in developing countries, NETARD maintains links with many international centres involved in agricultural research, principally the CGIAR system.

The network does not implement projects; that is the task of the member institutions. This feature is not peculiar to NETARD; with the exception of the poultry network it is a common characteristic of all networks. The bulk of the activities is concerned with information management and dissemination. NETARD maintains a website – <http://www.netard.dk> – which is a goldmine of information with an array of links to other relevant websites. Some reports have been uploaded in fulltext pdf format while Master theses are listed with abstracts. The latter is related to NETARD's task of vetting travel grant applications on behalf of RUF (a function performed by all networks). An electronic newsletter is distributed regularly to some 400 subscribers, of whom about 40 per cent are in the South. The network does not maintain a database of members' profiles and e-mail addresses, owing to the spam problem. Besides, updating such a database would be very demanding. Nor does NETARD maintain a central database of substantive nature as a one-stop facility. However, the co-ordination unit provides services of that nature when called upon.

Apart from electronic means of information dissemination, NETARD has organised dialogue meetings with Danida and larger thematic meetings which have been resource-demanding. Towards the same end, the network is currently rather piggy-backing on its member institutions and other stakeholders. It may be argued that the work put into organising these events is a form of outsourcing; the network has in effect taken over task previously handled by Danida.

Increasingly, outreach conferences and focused workshops are held in the South, often in collaboration with local organisations. Inroads have been made especially with regard to agricultural sector programmes in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Mozambique, Uganda and Nicaragua. In the latter case the endeavour was undertaken jointly with ReNED which provide an encouraging example of collaboration between related networks. While local partner organisations have provided inputs in kind to these events, they have generally been co-financed with the relevant sector programmes or the Danish embassies in the countries concerned.

NETARD is governed by a board with representatives of the institutional core members elected by the annual general meeting. The secretariat, hosted by the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen, consists of a co-ordinator and a technical secretary. They are in charge of executing the tasks of the network, as well as attending to the daily administration of network assignments. Danida's grant for the period 2005–2007 is DKK 4.4 million, essentially to cover the running of the secretariat. Substantial contributions in kind are received from the core institutions, e.g. the board meets on a *pro bono* basis and staff otherwise make their time available for activities and inputs.

In the same vein as the other networks, NETARD laments that there are no Danida guidelines as to how the relationships with the sector programmes are to be initiated, developed and maintained. The fact that it depends on the inclinations of individuals is reiterated. Furthermore, Danida's research policy, to the extent it exists, has been in a continuous process of change ever since NETARD was established. In some cases research components have been integrated into sector programmes but the financing and organisational models have varied. Generally, however, the funds emanate from donors – either from Danida or from basket funding. To some extent the sector

programmes support local research endeavours but they are generally inadequately integrated as a knowledge foundation. In the absence of guidelines, NETARD has opted for a flexible approach rather than one fixed model of operation. Emphasis is put on knowing the country context with regard to capacity and competence. These contexts differ and change over time. NETARD has summed up its experiences in this regard in an insightful paper that discusses factors enabling and hindering success.

Research Network for Governance, Economic Policy and Public Administration (GEPPA)

Established in 2003, GEPPA's overriding objective is to contribute to the strengthening of Danish development research within the spheres of governance, economic policy and public administration, and to ensure that research is increasingly utilised in development efforts. This objective is being sought through various means: promotion of an active dialogue between the research milieu, the private sector, Danida and other stakeholders with interests within GEPPA's mandate; encouragement of research and education within GEPPA's field of study and the systematic accumulation and utilisation of research findings and practical experiences; contribution to improved competence in and utilisation of new research findings in development aid; strengthening Danish research, knowledge accumulation, multi-disciplinary co-ordination and information exchange concerning the interface between GEPPA's field of study and poverty/development in poor countries; expansion of multi-disciplinary and long-term research co-operation with international research milieu, including those in developing countries, for the purpose of mutual utilisation of research findings.

GEPPA's members are individual researchers, consultants and students, currently numbering 260. There is no membership fee. Typical activities include seminars and conferences on specific themes, with participation by researchers and stakeholders in Denmark, and occasionally with international participation. A special feature is the so-called "Master Thesis Inspiration Meetings" intended to stimulate young researchers. Otherwise, GEPPA engages in outreach activities to many groups of stakeholder: Danida; the private sector; NGOs; and the research community. The GEPPA secretariat has established a database of ongoing research projects undertaken by researchers based in Denmark. Keeping the database on the Danish resource base updated is a major task as not all members readily submit new and timely information on research projects in which they are involved. It appears that GEPPA to some degree is known by the Danish embassies; altogether 45 embassies took part in the network's conference on "Accountability and Development" in January 2005.

GEPPA is governed by a board – elected at the annual general meeting. It meets approximately six times per year to discuss and decide upon policy and activities. The secretariat is hosted by the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) in Copenhagen. It consists of a co-ordinator and a student assistant and manages the day-to-day affairs of the network. A grant by Danida to the tune of DKK 4 million for the period 2003–2006 goes towards defraying the cost of the secretariat and various activities.

GEPPA took the initiative to call the first joint meeting of network boards in March 2005. Previously only network co-ordinators had met regularly to liaise. Although the meeting revealed divergence of view on a number of issues, a common denominator was frustration over not knowing what Danida really wants. Danida's research policy is perceived to be in limbo at the moment. It is not clear what Danida's success criteria are with regard to the networks. If the networks do not know what Danida's needs are it is difficult to assess their effectiveness.

The needs identified by the embassies are often too general and therefore difficult to relate to. At that, they are as a rule context-specific. Notwithstanding the general nature of the needs, they are communicated to research milieus in Denmark to see if pilot projects can be formulated with a view to defining the research problems more precisely. In that regard, working with local research institutions is important. They are probably the key to the sector programmes. Joint efforts in that vein are recommendable, therefore.

GEPPA maintains a website – <http://geppa.dk> – with links to other resource centres in the same field. It contains a membership roster and a database of ongoing projects. This gives search opportunities by name, region, country and institutional affiliation. The entries, however, are no more than extensive business cards. The ambition is to upload papers in fulltext pdf format, but it is not yet a reality. As a one-stop facility the website contains a catalogue of all courses at Danish universities within GEPPA's area of responsibility. The website is one of the network's most important means of dissemination of information. GEPPA does not know who uses the website only that it is being used extensively.

Danish Water Forum (DWF) *Research*

DWF *Research* was established at the end of 2003 as a knowledge network for water and development. It is affiliated to the Danish Water Forum (established only in 2002) which was set up to build bridges to non-water sectors that touch on water-related issues, e.g. health, agriculture and the environment. The DWF has only institutional members, comprising stakeholders across a broad spectrum within the water sector: NGOs, ministries, authorities, private companies and universities. DWF *Research*, on the other hand, which is run in co-operation with the Research School for Water Resources (FIVA), is a forum for co-ordination, sharing and dissemination of knowledge and research results related to water issues.

The network's objective is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge in the water sector, create synergies and support the technical quality of Danish development aid. It is geared towards Danida's water sector programmes as well as other programmes where water is an important element, e.g. agriculture, environment, and health. The network promotes research as an element in the sector programmes through contact with Danish embassies and research institutions in the South, as well as participation in Danida missions in programme countries. Other means towards better application of research findings in development assistance include courses, seminars, exchange of researchers, etc. Ten of Danida's 15 partner countries have water sector programmes and 20–25 per cent of total Danish aid goes to the water and sanitation sector.

DWF *Research* has had a measure of success in getting access to the water sector programme owing to its persistence which apparently met a responsive chord. Participation by the network at the formulation stage of the programme is encouraging as far as a research component is concerned. Although the network has had a breakthrough in Zambia due to persistent efforts it would have been much easier if the aid management guidelines had referred to the role of research in sector programmes. The Zambia experience should be documented and disseminated so as to convey lessons learned to other networks.

Although the water and sanitation sector is dominated by technical disciplines, the network is conscious of the need for inter-disciplinary collaboration. Its membership reflects this ambition. A special working group on integrated water management has been set up for this purpose, where the interface between water and poverty is highlighted.

Knowledge sharing on all aspects of water management is the core activity of the Danish Water Forum and DWF *Research*. Therefore, information and knowledge concerning international water issues, policies, programmes, activities and technological developments are published on the website – <http://www.danishwaterforum.dk> – distributed through electronic newsletters on average once a month, and shared at thematic meetings. The website contains a wealth of information, including links to other actors in the water sector in the North and in the South. The website contains documents produced by the network, but not databases of projects and publications produced by the member institutions; the links serve that purpose.

DWF *Research* aims to act as Denmark's window to the world on water issues. The network participates in international strategic meetings and exhibitions, has direct contact with water sector decision-makers, and facilitates communication between its members and the international community. The Council for Development Research (RUF) has delegated the vetting and administration of travel grants for Master students to DWF *Research* in conjunction with the other networks.

Activities include providing support and advice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in water matters; promoting research inputs as an element in Danida's sector programmes and the better application of new knowledge and research in development assistance within the water sector; representing Denmark and participating in international organisations dealing with water and sanitation such as UNESCO's International Hydrology Programme, the World Water Council, the Global Water Partnership, the European Union Water Supply and Sanitation Technology Platform, as well as contributing to the formulation of the 7th Framework Programme of the EU. Through these international linkages DWF *Research* is able to bring home valuable knowledge that can be applied in development work through the sector programmes in developing countries.

Like the other networks, DWF *Research* acknowledges that the untying of aid has made entry into the sector programmes more difficult, especially because of the emphasis on price at the expense of quality. The network considers that the Danish resource base in water and sanitation satisfies international standards and can compete commercially worldwide. One example is the computer models developed by DHI, which are used throughout the world.

The network board consists of the DWF board members plus two representatives each from the International Research School of Water Resources (FIVA) and Danida. The secretariat has the strength of two person-years, distributed among four part-time employees – one secretary, two employed at DHI, and one employed at FIVA. The latter serve as a link to the research community. The secretariat is located at DHI Water and Environment outside Copenhagen. Danida's grant to support the secretariat amounts to DKK 4.5 million for the period 2003–2006. Without Danida support the DWF would probably not on its own have been as development orientated as it is today. The one-stop facility that DWF *Research* provides makes access to the resource base easy and efficient.

Research Network for Environment and Development (ReNED)

The Research Network for Environment and Development (ReNED) was established in 2003 at the behest of Danida. Its overriding objective is to assist Danida with the integration of research findings into Danish development assistance. It thereby aims at building bridges between research, consultancies and development activities, with the ultimate goal of solving problems confronting developing countries. The network covers both the green and the brown aspects of the environment.

Towards achieving the overall objective ReNED is endeavouring to:

- contribute to enhanced interaction between researchers and practitioners, and improved knowledge underpinning Danish environmental assistance;
- improve the information flow from the Danish resource base into planning, programming and implementation of the Danish environmental assistance;
- strengthen and expand the Danish resource base by enlisting new researchers with limited research experience in developing countries;
- contribute to the maintenance and development of Danish research capacity by promoting interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration;
- strengthen contacts with relevant international and regional research institutions, the private sector and NGOs;
- strengthen contacts to and collaboration with institutions and organisations in Danish partner countries, with special reference the environment sector.

ReNED members are mainly individual researchers from the environmental and development research community, representing a large number of Danish institutions and research groups within most fields of environmental studies. The network also has members from the private sector, NGOs and government agencies, mainly Danida. No membership fee is charged. The membership number stood at about 400 in mid-2005 and has been increasing steadily. International contacts include the Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Department for International Development (DfID) in the UK, as well as the World Bank.

ReNED is governed by a board of directors who are elected at the annual general meeting. It meets 3–4 times a year, but an executive committee is in touch more frequently by telephone. The secretariat is hosted by the Institute of Geography, University of Copenhagen and consists of a co-ordinator in an 80 per cent position and an assistant co-ordinator on a half-time basis. Danida granted DKK 3.7 million for the period 2003–2006 to defray the costs of the secretariat and various activities. It should be noted, however, that institutional and individual members contribute in kind material resources, travel costs, and personnel time. The interviewees made the point that many of the network activities can be seen as outsourcing by Danida. The opportunity cost to Danida of doing these activities would probably be greater than Danida's grant to the network. Typical activities include conferences and workshops in Denmark and developing countries, as well as the preparation of thematic and country-specific overviews of research findings. The network also manages travel grants in the environmental field on behalf of RUF. This function was rationalised in mid-2004 as a joint facility for all research networks.

ReNED's activities are geared towards networking in Denmark and with developing countries. Some success has been achieved in reaching sector programmes through missions and workshops in Nicaragua, Thailand, Malaysia and Tanzania. An all-Africa seminar held in Zambia for Danida advisors was a useful vehicle for reaching environment programmes on that continent. In Africa, collaboration has been close with programmes in Mozambique and South Africa. ReNED claims that all contacts with sector programmes have been positive.

ReNED maintains a web-based database of members' competence profiles: <http://www.rened.dk>. The website contains comprehensive thematic pages related to the conferences held, information on research funding and all Danida-supported environmental programmes. It also provides an inventory of PhD and master courses in the environment field at Danish universities. Although the website lists all projects to which members are affiliated it does not maintain a comprehensive database of projects and publications. The field is too large and diverse for continuous updating to

be feasible. Links to the relevant institutions are seen as more expedient. An electronic newsletter is circulated once a month to the members.

ReNED claims to have contributed to bringing research onto the aid agenda with regard to the environment – at home and abroad. As a one-stop facility, ReNED co-ordinates hearing responses of the network members to Danida, e.g. with regard to Danida's environment strategy.

Conclusion

At the level of general policy there is agreement across the board that Danida's policies and operations must be evidence-based to be effective and successful. In a diffuse manner the research networks are intended to contribute to providing the evidence foundation required. However, on account of the policies and notions being vague, their operationalisation is wanting.

The tasks of research networks in knowledge management can be broken down into four categories which are distinct yet inter-related: knowledge (a) *production*; (b) *dissemination*; (c) *application*; and (d) *impact*. Research is expected to contribute to performing all of these tasks.

With regard to knowledge production the constituent institutions of the networks are doing fairly well; some even possess state-of-the-art knowledge. Admittedly, Danida may not be entirely satisfied that the required knowledge is available across the board. After all, there is a limit to what the Danish resource base can handle. But at least the resource base would have a capability to import knowledge that is not readily available in Denmark. It should also be noted that research takes time and that domestic production processes may lag behind international developments in certain fields.

In knowledge dissemination to the users (principally Danida in this case) the institutions themselves and not least the networks come into the picture with full force. Dissemination is arguably the most important task of the networks. My examination of the networks' activities suggests that they are doing a good job as far as dissemination is concerned. Thus, they are an efficiency-enhancing mechanism for Danida as well as other stakeholders in public, private and civil society circles. Despite an unclear research policy by Danida and notwithstanding the challenges presented by the new aid architecture, the networks have been an overall success with regard to knowledge dissemination.

But again, there is definitely scope for improvement. In the knowledge dissemination process there are senders, means of communication, and recipients. Assuming that senders have an important message to convey, the means of communication they choose might determine whether it actually reaches the intended recipient. In this particular case it is obvious that voluminous academic reports written in inaccessible jargon are not the appropriate means of communication. Not only must the means of communication be brief and to the point but also in a lay language that aid managers can understand and digest. Policy briefing papers are probably much better alternatives. Arguably, however, direct personal communication in focused fora is probably even better because it would allow dialectic exchange of views and instantaneous feedback. Furthermore, it should be noted that the networks provide one-stop facilities for interested parties when searching for information.

Suitable means of communication are not likely to be enough. They assume that the recipient of the message is in a receptive state of mind, which may not always be the case. In other words, the main problems arise in the interface between researchers and operational managers. Network representatives without exception have complained that many, though by no means all, of the embassy advisors are unappreciative of the positive role that research can play in sector programme

implementation. In extreme cases there may even be a total blockage. The import of this observation is that embassy staff responsible for sector programmes must – through various means – be made aware of relevant research inputs and at a minimum be put in a dialogue mode with researchers. Only when both senders and recipients assume accommodating positions – in combination with appropriate means of communication – will the communicative chain work.

The next phase – application of knowledge – is more challenging. Even if senders and recipients understand each other, it is not a straightforward matter how the communicated knowledge can be applied in the circumstances obtaining within the sector programmes on the ground. The first precondition is, of course, that research components are included in sector programmes as integral parts. Then the foundation would be laid for applying the knowledge. As long as the attitudes of the two parties are amenable, the nitty-gritty of application should be possible, adapted to the specifics of the programmes.

Successful application of research findings do not necessarily lead to intended impacts. Between a specific, research-based intervention and the intended outcome there is an array of intervening variables that may seriously distort the final result. Programme managers are often unable to control those variables which may be political in nature. To understand the intervention process – with or without research inputs – careful monitoring is required. The concept of formative process research [‘følgeforskning’] has been launched towards that end.

Most research undertaken to evaluate an activity or a programme is summative, i.e. *ex post* assessments of the performance or the outcome of a process after completion in terms of tangible outputs, effectiveness and efficiency. Establishing causal relationships is part of that endeavour. The ambition is to produce findings expressed in quantitative, hard (statistical) data, although that is not always possible. By contrast, formative process research is orientated towards learning *en route* to improve modes of operation and performance through feedback mechanisms while the process itself is unfolding. The ambition is to gain an understanding of the processes and the behaviour of the stakeholders involved. In other words, it involves the monitoring of given interventions by way of scientific methods. Typically, the methods applied are quantitative although often triangulated with quantitative techniques. The greatest methodological challenge is to determine what outcome is attributable to the specific interventions and what impacts are the result of ‘spontaneous’ developments or other factors. The insights gained along the road of implementation might be used to adjust, correct and redirect the course of events or the trajectory of a programme. In this sense this research is formative. This kind of research, however, is difficult, not least because one is studying an object in motion. Furthermore, the findings may be disputed by certain stakeholders or programme managers who object to changes suggested by the researchers.

The above problems of production, dissemination, application and impact of knowledge are not unique to the problematique of the research networks and Danida’s operational work. They are general and apparently perennial problems of bridging research and policy/operations. In the case of Danida and the networks, however, the problem is compounded by additional structural problems and anomalies. These need to be removed.

It is a fact that the research environment in Denmark has changed and is changing. Furthermore, as a donor Danida is committed to the new aid architecture. These points of departure pose challenges and bear on the Danish resource base in several ways. First, the consequences of the discontinuation of RUF will not be as dramatic as one might have expected. Some of its roles will be taken over by the Strategic Research Council although the relevance criterion is likely to be applied more restrictively by Danida’s new research advisory committee in terms of Danida’s own priorities. The ENRECA programmes will be retained albeit somewhat reorganised. In sum, several support facilities will be in place to maintain the Danish resource base.

Second, the new aid architecture is a far tougher challenge for the Danish research community to tackle than the domestic research scene. The days of earmarked funding of Danish inputs to aid programmes abroad are over. Competitive bidding under a liberalised regime will put Danish research inputs at a disadvantage in terms of cost levels. However, there are two ways around this problem. One is to excel on quality and be able to persuade the clients that quality is as important – if not more important – than price. Anything less than cutting-edge expertise would probably fail to make a difference. The hurdles in this regard are not only the Danish embassy staff overseeing sector programmes but also the representatives of local authorities of the relevant line ministries. The latter would be inclined to shop around for inputs closer at hand and at a lower cost. Another approach is to link up with local research institutions and face competition in partnership. Such a partnership could prove beneficial both in terms of pricing and persuasiveness vis-à-vis local authorities to whom the sector programme money belongs anyway.

Partnership with local research institutions is feasible in *ad hoc* consortia set up for the sole purpose of submitting a bid. But partnerships evolving out of longer term relationships of research collaboration are likely to be more effective. Forging such long-term partnerships through ENRECA programmes is preferable. ENRECA collaboration has the potential of creating a preparedness that could be exploited at short notice when opportunities arise for entry into Danida-funded sector programmes. In my view the ENRECA programmes are the key that might unlock sector programmes for Danish research input.

A third possible option around the competitive bidding procedures might be so-called formative process research. This would involve earmarking of some funds for Danish research interests in collaboration with local institutions. Although this might – in the face of it – go against the grain of alignment and harmonisation of aid policies with those of the recipient, a case can be made for engaging Danish researchers in such an endeavour because Danish aid policies bear so decisively on the design of the sector programmes. In that context Danish research milieu would have a comparative advantage if they are pro-active. One of two pilot projects of this nature might be worth contemplating.

Overall, the networks have been a success as far as consolidating the Danish resource base is concerned. They have also largely been successful in the dissemination of research findings to Danida through dialogue and other means of communication. However, the networks have been less effective in bringing relevant knowledge through to application in sector programmes, in large measure due to the new aid architecture. Beyond that, little is known about impact so far.

The cost-effectiveness of the networks is difficult to assess in precise terms. As one-stop facilities their performance is probably fairly efficient. The outsourcing argument is convincing and adds to their efficiency. Similarly, in a long-term perspective, if research were neglected more consultancies would be required, probably at an even higher cost. For Danida to spend DKK 8–10 million per year on the maintenance of six networks is not excessive. Besides, that money is not deducted from the resources available for conducting research. It is taken from a different budget vote. Hence, the argument that the networks are eating into money that could otherwise be used for research proper, does not apply.

The above observations on efficiency must be qualified, however. The networks have performed below par with regard to the application of knowledge in aid programmes. But they are not alone to be blamed for that. It can partly be attributed to the limbo in which Danida's research policy finds itself at present and in the recent past, and partly to the decentralisation of the aid administration without concomitant guidelines to ensure the inclusion of research components in sector

programmes. The result is erratic at best, largely depending on the inclinations and disinclinations of embassy staff.

Recommendations

1. All networks are dissatisfied and frustrated with the present state of affairs as far as Danida's research policy is concerned. It is a matter of great urgency, therefore, that Danida clarify its policy in operational terms and determine the institutional framework within which it will be pursued. To this end a working group should be appointed urgently within BFT (and/or more broadly within Danida) and the views and experiences of the networks solicited in that regard.
2. Pending the clarification of Danida's research policy in operational terms, it is recommended that the networks continue more or less as to date, provided their substance is still considered relevant to Danish aid programmes. New networks may even be considered in light of new emerging needs. Others may be phased out if they have fulfilled their role.
3. Danida should revisit the aid management guidelines with a view to amending them to include reference to research and the need for evidence-based practices. There is a case for including research components in all major programmes, in particular the sector-wide endeavours such as the SWAPs. Cynics will have it that it does not matter whether the guidelines are amended or not; the scales are tilted against research anyway and expectations must be realistic. While there is a grain of truth in that claim, it would be defeatist not to try to amend them. If the current guidelines are left as they are there would be no lever for inserting research components into the sector programmes. At present only a few of the 60 sector programmes have budget lines for research.
4. Danida should make it a mandatory requirement to include a research component in country strategies and SWAPs, though not fixed at a specified percentage. Alternatively, scope should be created for mainstreaming the inclusion of research by way of a flexible in-built mechanism for using funds for research purposes.
5. Danida should take internal measures to raise the awareness of its staff at home and abroad about the need for evidence-based aid policy and practice. The networks should be used to organise seminars for embassy staff on how to create a more conducive environment for integrating research and knowledge into sector programmes. Induction courses before posting to embassies is preferable.
6. The networks should continue and strengthen existing efforts to market their expertise vis-à-vis the embassies and relevant sector programmes as well as in relation to national research organisations and departments of line ministries. The networks should be instrumental in facilitating meeting places for researchers and practitioners to interface. Such arenas are critical in matching individual Danish researchers and research institutions with their counterparts in developing countries.
7. Formative process research ['følgeforskning'] should be tried out on a pilot basis, linked to one or two sector programmes. The lessons learned could be used as a basis for formulating a future policy on research inputs in sector programmes.
8. The networks should devote more energy to communicating research findings in a form that is easily digestible for aid managers and policy-makers. Research policy briefs are but one vehicle; face-to-face encounters between researchers and aid managers are probably more fruitful. Part of this endeavour might also be preparing consensus reports with local researchers on specific topics with a view to guiding local decision-makers in the often confusing knowledge fields where researchers tend to espouse diverging opinions.
9. The networks, in interacting with aid managers, must lower their academic ambitions (attention to detail and publication in refereed journals) and rather assume an empathetic attitude to the users' realities on the ground. These realities include serious time constraints and uncertainty which do not allow for time-consuming, in-depth data collection and analysis.

10. Researchers have received little training in such skills. It would be worth while, therefore, for the networks to engage in such training if they have not done so thus far, and to do more of the same if some measures have already been taken. It holds great promise for a more fruitful interface between researchers and users.
11. In view of the relative weakness of capacity on the recipient side in terms of knowledge and systems for handling knowledge through policy formulation, prioritisation, and allocation of research grants, the networks should explore the possibility of entering into capacity-building programmes with research units in the ministries and countries concerned.
12. All networks are disseminating knowledge and seek to apply relevant knowledge to enhance the quality and efficiency of aid programmes. The membership of most networks includes consulting companies which are important purveyors of knowledge. Hence, the networks should stimulate consulting companies to accept and improve their roles in knowledge provision by drawing on the knowledge depositories of the networks' constituent institutions, e.g. through the inclusion of researchers as team members when bidding for contracts. However, care should be taken to avoid conflict of interest and the impolitic or inappropriate exploitation of knowledge for commercial gain.
13. On an annual basis, the networks should map and highlight the top ten research results in their respective mandate areas and point out the linkages not only to Danida's global programme but also to the activities of multilateral organisations such as FAO, the UNFPA or the WHO. With the assistance of BFT these Danish state-of-the-art research findings could then be promoted through appropriate international fora on the basis of a plan of action.
14. At the international level, the networks should become more pro-active in promoting Danish expertise in project identification, design and appraisal, especially in fields where Danish competence is top-notch in terms of quality. This is already being done to some extent but there is scope for strengthening such efforts.
15. All networks should write up their experiences in trying to access the sector programmes, in the same vein as the memo produced by NETARD. Such memos should list factors facilitating and hindering access and preferably suggest ways of overcoming the problems. Success and failure stories could help in providing guidelines in that regard. If all the networks took the cue from NETARD, the six resultant memos would provide a good basis for drawing out some general conclusions.
16. With regard to a closer relationship between the networks three options have been mooted:
 - (a) Business as usual, i.e. the continuation with six (or more or fewer) networks as discrete entities with their respective mandates. The best argument in favour of this option is that the networks function fairly well as they are: do not change a winning team.
 - (b) At the other extreme, it has been suggested that some networks be merged because they handle similar or related subject matters, e.g. NETARD, poultry and ReNED. Economies of scale underlie this proposal in addition to better synergies. The argument against is that although these networks look similar on the face of it, they are in fact quite different in scope and mode of operation. The expected economies of scale could easily be turned into diseconomies of scale if a new umbrella would be constructed on top of the three and the existing networks were to continue as sub-entities, probably at extra cost.
 - (c) A compromise solution would be to formalise a liaison forum that already exists informally. The network co-ordinators could meet fairly frequently to exchange experiences while the board chairs of the respective networks could meet at longer intervals.The latter compromise option is recommended.

Appendix 1: Terms of reference

Review af forsker- og vidensnetværkene

Baggrund

Udenrigsministeriet har i en årrække ydet støtte til forskningsnetværk i Danmark. Udover forskningsnetværk yder Udenrigsministeriet også støtte til NGO netværk og faglige netværk under DCCD.

De tre ældste af de nuværende seks forskningsnetværk blev oprettet i perioden 1996-99. I Forskningsredegørelsen 2004 blev det foreslået at ”gennemgå støtten til netværkene med henblik på at vurdere effektiviteten og eventuelle behov for tilpasninger af ordningen.” Udover at indhøste erfaringer fra de forløbne år er gennemgangen også foranlediget af de omlægninger, der er sket i administrationen af udviklingsbistanden i de senere år. Bl.a. har decentraliseringen af bistanden til ambassaderne og afbindingen af den bilaterale bistand påvirket samarbejdsformerne i forhold til netværkene.

Review’et vil foregå i perioden fra 24. oktober 2005 til 15. december 2005.

Formålet med støtten til netværkene er at fremme brugen af forskningsbaseret viden i udviklingsbistanden gennem styrket kontakt og dialog mellem forskning og udviklingsbistand, herunder med forskningsinstitutioner og samarbejdspartnere i udviklingslandene. Netværkene kan assistere sektorprogrammer med kontakt til relevante forskere og formidle og styrke tværinstitutionel og tværfaglig informationsudveksling mellem forskningsprojekter på det pågældende område. To af netværkene administrerer en pulje af RUF-midler til rejsestipendier til specialestuderende koblet til bistandsaktiviteter.

Oversigt over Forsker og Vidensnetværk finansieret af Udenrigsministeriet:

Dansk Forskningsnetværk for International Sundhed blev etableret 1996 med henblik på ENRECA-sundhedsprojekter og med en vægning af kapacitetsopbygning i Syd og Nord inden for ENRECA-samarbejdet. Fra 2004 blev netværket udvidet og formaliseret med en bredt sammensat bestyrelse og åbnet for alle interesserede i udvikling og sundhedsforskning. Bevillingen fra 2001 på 4,3 mio. kr. er forlænget til 2005.

Fjerkrænetværket blev etableret i 1997. Den nuværende bevilling dækker perioden og er på 4,8 mio. kr. Fjerkrænetværket adskiller sig væsentligt fra de øvrige netværk og har bl.a. en mere omfattende rolle i forhold til implementering. Fjerkrænetværket har tidligere haft en væsentligt større bevilling.

Netværk for Jordbrugsrelateret Ulandsforskning (NETARD) blev etableret 1998 på basis af en arbejdsgruppe bestående af forskere og medarbejdere i Danida med henblik på at fremme tværfagligheden, dialogen og anvendelsen af forskningen i bistanden. Bevillingen for perioden 2005-07 er på 4,4. mio. kr.

Netværk for god regeringsførelse, økonomisk politik og offentlig administration (GEPPA) blev etableret 2003. Bevillingen løber fra 2003 til 2006 og er på 4 mio. kr.

Netværk for vand og udvikling (DWF) blev etableret i 2003. Bevilling fra 2003 til 2006 på 4,5 mio. kr.

Netværk for miljø og udvikling (ReNed) blev etableret i 2003. Bevilling 2003 til 2006 3.7 mio. kr.

Formuleringen af netværkenes opgaver og etableringen af de nyeste netværk har været påvirket af anbefalingerne i Hernes rapporten (2001), der gennemgik forskningsstøtten og fremkom med en række anbefalinger. Rapporten konstaterede, at dansk udviklingsforskning generelt er af høj kvalitet og ofte udført i tæt samarbejde med kolleger og studerende i udviklingslandene. Derudover noterede rapporten, at forskningsnetværkene har bidraget til bedre koordination og vidensformidling. Rapporten konstaterede dog også, at dansk udviklingsforskning kun i begrænset omfang er indarbejdet i Danidas prioriteringer i bistandssamarbejdet. En stor del af forskningen er bestemt af udbud frem for af efterspørgsel. Rapporten foreslog, at der etableres en struktur, der kan skabe tættere og mere effektive forbindelseslinier mellem ressourcebasen og Danida.

Der er variationer i de formål der er anført for de enkelte Netværk. Men beskrivelsen af Netværkenes opgaver omfatter som regel (se også UDV's beskrivelse af formål og aktiviteter for Netværkene fra april 2004):

- Fremme brugen af ny viden (forskningsresultater) i udviklingsbistanden
- Styrke kontakt og dialog mellem forskning og bistand og udveksle information om udbud og efterspørgsel af viden
- Fremme forskningskapacitetsopbygning
- Assistere sektorprogrammer med identifikation og formulering af forskningskomponenter og med kontakt til relevante forskere
- Formidle og styrke tværinstitutionel og tværfaglig informationsudveksling mellem forskningsprojekter på det pågældende område
- Styrke og udvide den danske ressourcebase ved at inddrage nye institutioner/forskere med begrænset erfaring i forskning i og forskningssamarbejde med udviklingslandene
- Styrke kontakten til relevante internationale og regionale forskningsinstitutioner, til institutioner og organisationer i udviklingslandene og til den private sektor, konsulentfirmaerne og NGO'erne

Netværkene varetager således en bred vifte af roller. De har fungeret som en platform for markedsføring af den danske ressourcebase i forhold til danskstøttede sektorprogrammer, de har bidraget til at opdatere ressourcebasen og skabe mere offentlig opmærksomhed omkring internationale udviklingsspørgsmål. De har deltaget i opbygningen af transnationale netværk, bidraget til forskningskontakt og samarbejde, og til kapacitetsopbygning i Syd og Nord, optrådt som formidlere mellem det danske forskningsmiljø og Udenrigsministeriet og har været til rådighed som konsulenter ved løsning af konkrete rekvirerede opgaver.

Udover forskningsnetværkene er der også etableret 5 netværk under NGO bevillingen⁷ og en række faglige IT baserede etværk under DCCD/BFT⁸. Samspil og afgrænsning i forhold til disse netværk vil indgå i de fremtidige overvejelser om anvendelsen af de forskellige netværk. Parallelt med

⁷ Børn – og unge netværk, Oprindelige folk, køn og ressourceforvaltning netværk, HIV/aids netværk, Uddannelsesnetværk og Kaffenetværk.

⁸ Miljø, Sundhed, Good Governance, Vand og sanitet, Uddannelse, Privatsektor udvikling, Landbrug og Transport og energi.

gennemgangen af forskningsnetværkene vil der blive foretaget en gennemgang af både NGO-netværkene og de IT-baserede netværk hos DCCD/BFT.

Formål

Review'ets formål er:

- At foretage en gennemgang af, hvorvidt netværkene fungerer hensigtsmæssigt og effektivt.
- På basis af gennemgangen af netværkene at komme med forslag til evt. justeringer i netværkenes funktionsmåde.

Arbejdsopgaver

Følgende aspekter vil som udgangspunkt skulle indgå i review'et af netværkene:

- De produkter og tjenesteydelser netværkene leverer til egne deltagere og eksterne partnere, samt i hvilket omfang netværkenes ydelser anvendes. Datagrundlaget for denne del af analysen vil være oplysninger fra netværkenes sekretariater. Et særligt aspekt er, hvorvidt netværkene er lykkedes at tiltrække yngre forskere og studerende
- Samarbejdet inden for de enkelte netværk, herunder organisationsform, aktivitetsniveau, tværfagligt og tværinstitutionelt samarbejde
- Samarbejdet mellem netværkene og Udenrigsministeriet, herunder gensidig information, deltagelse i møder etc.
- Samarbejdet mellem netværkene og internationale forskningsmiljøer
- Samarbejdet mellem netværkene og institutioner og aktører i modtagerlandene
- Arbejdsdelingen mellem forskningsnetværkene og de IT-baserede netværk og NGO-netværkene. Denne del af analysen vil basere sig på møder med DCCD og Udenrigsministeriets kontor for Humanitær bistand og NGO-samarbejde
- Netværkenes omkostningseffektivitet i forhold til Udenrigsministeriets behov for at få tilført forskningsfaglig viden i bistandssamarbejdet. Konsulenten vil foretage en overordnet vurdering af netværkenes ressourceforbrug i lyset af de ydelser og produkter, netværkene har.

Metode

Gennemgangen baseres på gennemlæsning af relevante baggrunds- og netværksdokumenter, samt interviews med netværkssekretariater, bestyrelser, brugere og relevante enheder i Danida i København. Der vil i forbindelse med review'et blive gennemført et besøg i København (foreløbigt planlagt til at finde sted i begyndelsen af november måned). Endelig vil relevante forskningsmiljøer i Syd og Nord, der har haft direkte kontakt og samarbejde med specifikke netværk, kunne blive inddraget i gennemgangen.

Planlægning af interviews, identifikation af kontaktpersoner etc. vil finde sted i samarbejde med BFT-Forskning.

Konsulent

Reviewet vil blive foretaget af Arne Tostensen, CMI, Bergen, Norge.

Bente Ilsøe, BFT-Forskning, vil bistå konsulenten under besøget i Danmark med arrangement af møder samt med relevante dokumenter.

Rapportering

Konsulenten vil udarbejde en kort rapport på maks. 15 sider plus evt. bilag. Udkast til rapport vil blive sendt til Danida senest 15. december 2005. På basis af udkast til rapport vil der blive holdt et

møde i København med repræsentanter fra netværkene i starten af januar måned 2006 med henblik på at indhente evt. kommentarer til rapportudkastet fra netværkene. Endelig rapport vil indsendt til Danida senest 2 uger efter afholdelsen af dette møde.

Bistandsfaglig Tjeneste den 10. oktober 2005

Ole Winckler Andersen

Litteratur og henvisninger

Danida (2001): Partnerships at the leading edge: A Danish Vision for Knowledge, Research and Development. (Authors: Hernes, Maxwell, Ndiritu, Rwegasira, Streefland, Brylle). Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (The Hernes Rapport).

Danida-DCCD (2003): Årsberetning.

Danida-DCCD (2004): Handlingsplan for etablering af 9 internetbaserede faglige netværk.

Udenrigsministeriet, UDV (2004): Forskningsredegørelsen 2004

Udenrigsministeriet, UDV (2004): Formålet med Netværker

Warwick Thompson: "The need for and role of a network in relation to Danida's Agriculture Sector Programmes: The Uganda ASPs' point of view"

Årsrapporter, årsplaner, rejserapporter og andre centrale netværksdokumenter erhverves fra de respektive netværk eller fra følgende hjemmesider:

Research Network for Governance, Economic Policy and Public Administration:
<http://www.geppa.dk/>

Network for Environment and Development: <http://www.rened.dk/>

DWF - Research: http://www.danishwaterforum.dk/newdwf/dwf2/frames/index_research.htm

Network for Agricultural Research for Development: <http://www.netard.dk>

Network for Smallholder Poultry Development: <http://www.poultry.kvl.dk>

Danish Research Network for International Health: <http://www.enrecahealth.ku.dk>

Danida Network on Environment and Energy:
<http://environment.dccd.cursum.net/client/CursumClientViewer.aspx?CAID=138604&ChangedCourse=true>

Danida Network on Water and Sanitation:
<http://water.dccd.cursum.net/client/CursumClientViewer.aspx?CAID=87800&ChangedCourse=true>

Danida Network on Health:
<http://health.dccd.cursum.net/client/CursumClientViewer.aspx?CAID=109051&ChangedCourse=true>

Danida Network on Good Governance:

<http://governance.dccd.cursum.net/client/CursumClientViewer.aspx?CAID=157465&ChangedCourse=true>

Danida Network on Education:

<http://education.dccd.cursum.net/client/CursumClientViewer.aspx?CAID=138604&ChangedCourse=true>

NGO Network on HIV/Aids: <http://www.aidsnet.dk>

Appendix 2: Persons consulted

Alban, Anita, Consultant, Ease International, Danish Networks for International Health
Andersen, Ole Winckler, Technical Advisory Services, Danida
Birch-Thomsen, Associate Professor, Institute of Geography, University of Copenhagen
Blegvad, Lene, Co-ordinator, Danish Networks for International Health
Boesen, Jannik, Senior Research Fellow, Danish Institute for International Studies
Bybjerg, Ib, Professor, Institute of Public Health, University of Copenhagen
Christensen, Anne, Danida
Christensen, Finn Normann, Technical Advisory Services, Danida
Englvold, Director, Danida's Centre for Competence Development
Fich, Lisbeth, Katalyst ApS, Copenhagen
Frandsen, Flemming Normand, Professor, Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University
Hansen, Bernt Holger, Professor, Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen
Hansen, Per Kirkemann, Nordic Consulting Group
Henriksen, Jørgen, Seniro Rural and Agricultural Development Adviser, Henriksen Advice
Hesbjerg; Bjarke, Co-ordinator, GEPPA
Høgh Jensen, Karsten, Professor, Geological Institute, University of Copenhagen
Ilsøe, Bente, Technical Advisory Services, Danida
Jensen, Andreas, Chief Consultant, Danida's Centre for Competence Development
Jensen, Jørgen G., Chief Technical Adviser, Technical Advisory Services, Danida
Kiærskou, Helene, Danish Network for Agricultural Research for Development
Kryger, Karsten Nellemann, Co-ordinator for Project Support, Network for Smallholder Poultry Development
Larsen, Henrik, DHI Water & Environment
Lindqvist, Torben, Chief Technical Adviser, Technical Advisory Services, Danida
Mertz, Ole, Co-ordinator, Research Network for Environment and Development
Nielsen, Ivan, Professor, Institute of Biology, Aarhus University
Pedersen, Jørgen, Associate Professor, Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University
Percy-Smith, Alex, Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences
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SUMMARY

Danida has provided financial support to research networks with a view to creating better synergies between research and policy/operations. Six networks were reviewed in the fields of health; poultry; agriculture; governance, economic policy and public administration; water; and the environment. The task of research networks in knowledge management is four-fold: knowledge (a) production; (b) dissemination; (c) application; and (d) impact. Research is expected to perform all these tasks. The effectiveness and efficiency of the networks were adversely affected by two main factors. First, the changing aid architecture has involved decentralisation; liberalisation and untying; and budget support and sector-wide approaches, all of which have posed formidable challenges with regard to funding mechanism for research components. Second, the incomplete restructuring of the research council design in Denmark has left the development research community in limbo. Overall, the networks have been successful in consolidating the Danish resource base. They have also largely been successful in disseminating research findings to Danida. The networks have been less effective in bringing relevant knowledge through to application in sector programmes, in large measure due to the new aid architecture. Little is so far known about impact. The cost-effectiveness of the networks is difficult to assess in precise terms. As one-stop facilities their performance is fairly efficient.

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