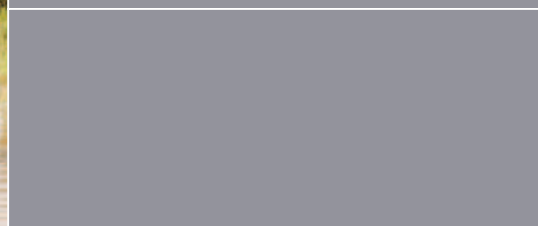
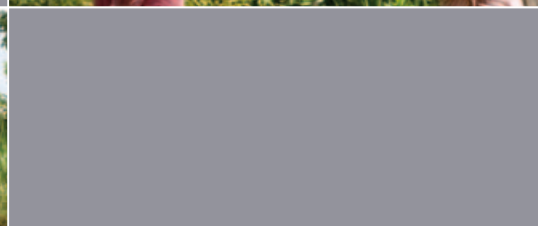
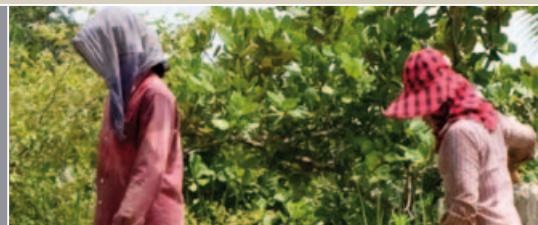
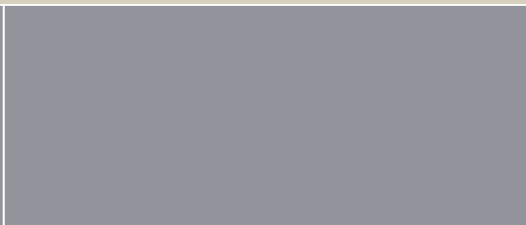
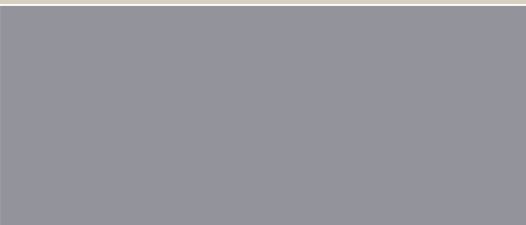




Evaluation of Research on Norwegian Development Assistance

Report 2/2011 – Evaluation



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Evaluation of Research on Norwegian Development Assistance

June 2011

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Preface

Is there too little independent research about Norwegian development assistance, in a way that limits information and an informed debate about the results of aid?

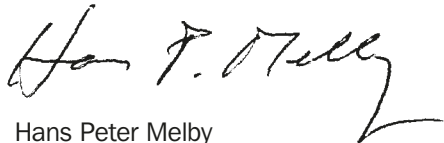
The question is relevant, if only for the sheer size of aid. Official Norwegian development cooperation amounts to 27 billion kroner or approximately 5 billion US dollars per year. The question is also relevant because the voice of the intended beneficiaries of aid is often weak and far away.

Most would agree that the results of such a big investment should be monitored closely. This is actually the purpose of evaluation. But as evaluators, we know its limits. Evaluation can give useful information about the effects of aid and recommendations about how to improve it. But independent research can go further. It can ask its own questions, dig deeper over a longer period of time, and give more information about the aid world and the world without aid.

There is hardly a clear-cut answer to the question above. The present evaluation was commissioned to assess it by collecting and analysing information about research on development cooperation. Specifically, we wanted to know more about the amount, composition, and independence of research on Norwegian development assistance, with a view to recommend ways to strengthen independent research.

SIPU International carried out the evaluation and is responsible for the content of the report, including its findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Oslo, August 2011



Hans Peter Melby
Acting Director of Evaluation

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank the many Norwegian development researchers who have contributed to this report by making themselves available for interviews and providing us with valuable information and insights into the Norwegian development research and policy communities. We also thank the staff members of the Norwegian universities and research centers who completed and returned our questionnaires and the administrators and faculty members of the University of Oslo who, in addition, met with us to respond to our questions. We are especially grateful to the staff members of the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who met with us to provide answers to our questions and corrections to our misperceptions. We would also like to particularly thank the Reference librarians of the University of Oslo, for introducing us to the intricacies of their online databases and helping us to refine our quantitative and bibliographic search techniques.

We greatly appreciated the willingness of NGO representatives and researchers to meet with us to provide feedback on our preliminary results at stakeholder meetings in Oslo. We also thank all those who took the time to read carefully through the draft of this report and provide us with extensive and thoughtful comments and corrections, which greatly contributed to its accuracy and clarity. Finally, we would like to thank the Evaluation Department of Norad for their readiness to meet with us to clarify any questions and their prompt responses to our requests for materials or access to potential sources of information.

Responsibility for the contents, findings, and recommendations of this report lies with the evaluation team. The views and opinions expressed in this report are our own and do not necessarily represent those of Norad.

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Abbreviations

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CICERO	Center for International Climate and Environmental Research
CMI	Chr. Michelsen Institute
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DDC	Dewey Decimal Classification
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECONPOP	Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics (Research Programme)
Fafo	Fafo Institute
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDS	Forum for Development Studies
FORISS	Forskningsrådets informasjons- og styringssystem
FRIDA	Forskningsresultater, informasjon og dokumentasjon av vitenskapelige aktiviteter
FRIMUF	Environment and Development (RCN research programme)
GLOBHEL	Global Health Research (RCN research programme)
GLOBMEK	Global dimension in environment, energy and climate research (RCN research programme)
HR	Human Rights
IADCI	Independent Advisory Committee for Development Impact (UK)
IFS	Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MULTI	The multilateral system in the field of development (RCN research programme)
NCG	Nordic Consultancy Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIBR	Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research
NOMA	Norad's Programme for Master Studies
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORART	Norwegian and Nordic index to periodical articles
NORGLOBAL	Norway – Global Partner (RCN research programme)
NUFU	Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education
NUHH	Norwegian History of Development
NUPI	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance

OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee
POVPEACE	Poverty and Peace (RCN research programme)
PRIO	Peace Research Institute Oslo
RCN	Research Council of Norway
SUM	Centre for Development and the Environment
TOR	Terms of Reference
UD	Utenriksdepartementet (Ministry for Foreign Affairs)
UFISK	Fisheries in developing countries (RCN research programmes)
UiO	University of Oslo
UMB	Norwegian university of life sciences
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNU/WIDER	United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research
UTISØR	Utviklingsveier i Sør

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Background, scope and approach

In 2007, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) undertook a comprehensive evaluation of Norwegian development research.¹ The 2007 evaluation team found that independent research on critical aid issues, which it considered important for policy development, was among the areas largely overlooked. They also found that there was a low proportion of researcher-initiated and long-term research - preventing independent research – and argued that direct financing leads to dependency. The 2007 evaluation team held the view that dependency, whether it is formal or informal, can cause researchers to hold back conclusions that are in conflict with official policy.²

The current evaluation was commissioned to follow up on the 2007 findings. Its immediate purpose is to assess the amount, composition and independence of research on Norwegian development assistance, with a view to identifying ways of strengthening independent research. A secondary objective is to improve the dissemination of knowledge to different target groups within the development community, including NGOs, the general public, the private sector and the international development community.

An underlying assumption in the Terms of Reference for this assignment is that a greater output of independent research is required to ensure that policy-makers have access to impartial, evidence-based analysis of the impact of different aid modalities in different countries and contexts. In drawing lessons from this in-depth review of the current role and situation of independent research on Norwegian development assistance, we have recommended approaches to increasing the independence of development researchers within the existing funding modalities, including open and thematic programmes and commissioned research. In doing so we have drawn on evidence suggesting that increasing the distance between funder and researcher and the heterogeneity of research teams could enhance the independence of research. We also suggest that using intermediaries to separate the exchange of information from the exchange of money could contribute both to researcher independence and improved communication of research results to policy-makers and non-specialist audiences. Finally, we suggest that increasing the volume of comparative research could enhance the effectiveness of Norwegian development assistance.

1 *Norwegian Development Research: An Evaluation (2007)*, Oslo, RCN – Research Council of Norway.

2 Terms of Reference: Evaluation of Research on Norwegian Development Assistance, p.7

Scope

For the purpose of this evaluation, development assistance research is defined as a sub-sector of development research³ that focuses on the programmes, organizations, and policies supported by Norwegian state funding and applied to achieve the goals of Norwegian development cooperation. It includes all parts of Norwegian aid regardless of funding mechanism (bilateral, multilateral, through NGOs, the private sector, or other).

Tasks

The evaluation shall establish a way to distinguish between external, independent as opposed to internal contract development research. Based on this distinction, the evaluation shall give an overview of independent research on Norwegian development assistance during the period 1999-2008, including the major research programmes as well as other relevant research. The analysis shall take into account available results of international research on development assistance.⁴

Methods

Review of documents: The document review included a sample of research publications, the history of Norwegian development cooperation, Norad and MFA documents including previous evaluations and annual reports, policy statements and guidelines, and other relevant written sources. In a series of steps, we then assembled a bibliography of research on Norwegian development assistance, which we analyzed for thematic distribution, funding source and level of independence. (Please see Annex E).

Quantitative methods After analyzing the bibliography of research publications on Norwegian development assistance (above), we identified those publications that could be classified as “independent” (using the definition derived from interviews with development researchers and administrators described below), to assess the frequency of references to independent research on Norwegian development assistance in citation indexes and research library circulation statistics as indicators of usage. *Qualitative methods:* We used interviews, questionnaires and stakeholder workshops to validate our findings: A *questionnaire* was distributed to all potential informants. A sub-set of informants was selected for personal interviews based on the responses. Additional potential informants were identified in the course of the evaluation. We sent a separate *questionnaire* to all of the universities, specialized centres, and research institutes whose staff members produce development research and also sent a short questionnaire to all NGOs active in the area of international development, to journalists who had published on development issues and to members of the political parties active in the area of foreign policy.

Interviews: We conducted several rounds of interviews with policy-makers and researchers who served as our main source of information. We also contacted a sample of members of the Norwegian parliament involved in international development issues as well as journalists who have shown an interest in Norwegian devel-

³ See Section 3.1 and footnote 20 below for definition of “development research.”

⁴ Terms of Reference, Evaluation of research on Norwegian Development Assistance.

opment assistance and representatives of NGOs active in the area of international development.

After consolidating our preliminary findings, we invited all of the academic researchers we had interviewed to a *stakeholder workshop* to discuss our interview and survey results to elicit their feedback. We also held a similar workshop with NGO representatives. Unfortunately, due to a time conflict, staff members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs were not able to attend a scheduled stakeholder workshop.

After validating the qualitative results from the interviews and questionnaires, we cross-checked them with the quantitative results that we derived from the citation searches, literature reviews, and circulation indicators.

Findings and Conclusions

We found broad general agreement among researchers, aid administrators and policy-makers on the definition of research independence and the characteristics of varying degrees of independence. However, their preferences for independent research were diametrically opposed.

Although many researchers recognized the advantages of commissioned research, the vast majority of those interviewed expressed their strong preference for the greatest degree of independence possible. In contrast, the MFA staff strongly preferred, and described themselves as relying almost exclusively on, the least independent and least transparent form -- directly commissioned research. In effect, we found that the basic problem was less the limited supply of independent research, than inadequate demand for it.

Even more problematic, we found considerable evidence that existing research (whether independent or commissioned) on development assistance is not being used effectively by its primary audience. Our informants among policy-makers confirm generally poorly developed links between research and policy and their explanations also tend to coincide with those provided by development researchers. These include structural barriers such as lack of time and generalist training, but also cultural differences. Policy-makers and aid managers tend to be instrumental, forward-looking and reactive, operating within the short cycles created by the political and budget processes. In contrast, researchers are analytical, their work cycles are longer, and they tend to be more reflective, reviewing what has happened to draw lessons for application in the future.

The sense of frustration and disconnection between development researchers and development actors which was described to us by both groups in the course of this evaluation is a serious problem, that is not unique to Norway. Bridging the gap between research and policy-making will require an exploration of alternatives that goes well beyond the scope of this evaluation. In the recommendations below, we propose some initial measures that could be taken to reduce the gap between development assistance research and development policy. On the basis of the interviews conducted in the course of this evaluation, we believe that separating the

exchange of information from the exchange of money is the key factor in promoting the use of research while preserving its independence. However, a review of alternative approaches and in-depth discussions between the research and policy-making communities will be required to find practical mechanisms that satisfy the needs of all stakeholders.

Lessons Learned

Using the findings of the 2007 Evaluation of Norwegian Development Research as a baseline, we can confirm that several of its recommendations have been put into practice. Among them:

- Setting aside long-term funding (5-10 years) is vital to building up capacity and ensuring the researchers' ability to have a long-term focus on development research.
- A stronger funding focus on international collaboration, as well as on domestic project collaborations/staff mobility.⁵

Two current Research Council of Norway programmes in particular incorporate these approaches: the Centres of Excellence Scheme (SFF III) ⁶ which provides 5-to-10 year funding to selected institutions on a competitive basis to support long-term research and expanded international research collaboration and the Norway - Global Partner programme (NORGLOBAL), which consolidates a number of earlier programmes and emphasizes multi-disciplinary selection panels and international research teams.

On the other hand, it does not appear that any action has been taken to expand the scope of researcher-initiated research, identified as one of the most important challenges for Norwegian development research by the 2007 evaluation team.

Funding structures: A larger share of the resources should be allocated through open calls for proposals and be based on academic quality criteria only. This implies that open calls, rather than programme calls, for research proposals should be the main funding alternative offered by RCN.⁷

Nor have more resources been dedicated to research on development assistance; *"it is amazing, for instance, how little research is conducted on the effects of aid and development assistance, even though this topic is crucial to Norwegian foreign policy."* ⁸

Currently only one small program administered by the RCN issues open calls. The same programme, which also accepts proposals on Norwegian development research,⁹ is funded by the Ministry of Education and Research, not the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

5 Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007) p 116

6 <http://www.forskingsradet.no/en/Funding/SFF/1253964991338>. Several universities support Centres of Excellence with core funding provided by the Ministry of Education and Research.

7 Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007) p. 8

8 Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007) p. 110

9 The MULTI programme (1999-2005), which funded research on development assistance (among other topics), was not renewed.

“Independent, researcher-initiated basic development research will not be incorporated under this action-oriented programme, but will continue to be administered under Independent Projects – Environment and Development (FRIMUF). In the report “Evaluation of Norwegian development research”, the international panel recommends that funds be earmarked for independent Norwegian development research. The Research Council currently administers funds for independent environment and development research under the auspices of FRIMUF (Independent Projects – Environment and Development). Approximately NOK 30 million is allocated annually from the Ministry of Education and Research’s budget to projects related to environment and development and also to interdisciplinary research. A small proportion of these funds is allocated to Norwegian development research.”¹⁰

Lesson learned I

The arguments advanced in favor of increasing the independence of development researchers in general and the supply of independent research on development assistance and Norwegian development assistance in particular remain persuasive. However, the preferences of MFA staff for easily actionable commissioned research and the high transaction costs - to both the producers and policy-makers – in terms of the time and effort required to make independent research accessible will have to be addressed before MFA staff will demand and fund it.

Lesson learned II

In addition, in the absence of an increase in the absolute volume of research funding, shifting more resources to independent research would entail reducing funding to current recipients, in particular the research institutes, which already feel themselves under pressure from the shift away from core to less stable and more competitive funding modalities. In the trade-off between the benefits of transparent and competitive allocation of funding and the costs in time devoted to producing proposals which risk rejection, the research institutes understandably resist absorbing more of the cost and risk side of the equation.

In contrast, the recommendations for improving linkages between Norwegian researchers and institutions and international research institutions, supporting inter- or multi-disciplinary team proposals, and providing funding to long-term and basic research faced little resistance because they moved resources in directions welcomed by the established research institutions. Discussions and negotiations will have to be carried out between the institutions which fund research and those which produce it to achieve an acceptable balance among the needs of core, open, thematically focused, and commissioned research for adequate and predictable funding.

Lesson learned III

In addition to potentially greater innovation, an argument advanced in favor of greater independence is that it increases the willingness of researchers to present critical or inconvenient findings that challenge official policy or established practices. However, another key factor is that critical findings must also be received (as

¹⁰ NORGLOBAL webpage Last updated: 09.08.2010

well as presented), in a spirit of constructive engagement to have a positive effect. Based on a number of the interviews conducted in the course of this evaluation, as well as the findings of the 2007 evaluation and some of the responses to the draft of this report, this is not always the case. While there is a general consensus that Norwegian aid institutions are considerably less intrusive than many multi-laterals, and a degree of institutional resistance or individual sensitivity to criticism is to be expected, a defensive reaction reinforces the perception among researchers that an analysis that is too critical or inconvenient could result in the loss of future funding or commissions.

This observation goes beyond the remit of this assignment. We include it for consideration as an issue which could be addressed in professional training for aid administrative staff.

Lesson learned IV

Despite the very high level of transparency maintained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Research Council of Norway and Norad, in the course of gathering quantitative information to support this analysis, we encountered problems in collecting certain types of information. These included: difficulty in establishing the titles and subject areas of all publications resulting from funding administered by the RCN, difficulty in establishing the funding sources of individual publications, difficulty in establishing exactly what proportion of total funding went to different types of research or subject fields, difficulty in evaluating the thematic and other characteristics of unsuccessful proposals submitted to RCN programmes. To facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of NORGLOBAL in the medium term and other programmes in the future, we propose a number of measures below to simplify the collection of this type of indicator.

Recommendations¹¹

Based on the highly positive potential impact of the recently instituted NORGLOBAL programme and its contribution to increasing the independence, innovation, and potential impact of Norwegian development research by encouraging heterogeneity, we recommend that the MFA and RCN:

- a. Continue to support and strengthen collaboration between Norwegian researchers and institutions and international research institutions and networks by encouraging proposals submitted by international teams of researchers, including the graduates of North-South capacity-building programmes, to promote the exchange of ideas and increase the international visibility of Norwegian research.
- b. Continue to support and strengthen the application of multi-disciplinary approaches to the complex issues of sustainable development by encouraging proposals submitted by inter- and multi-disciplinary teams of researchers and by ensuring that selection panel members are familiar with multi-disciplinary programmes and approaches.

¹¹ These recommendations are presented in logical order as a set of mutually reinforcing activities which is not meant to suggest any order of priority. Some are already in progress and only require performance monitoring to determine whether they should be extended and expanded. Others can be implemented at zero or minimal cost, such as those related to data collection. Others are likely to require extended negotiations among the affected stakeholders before they can be implemented and are most likely to be achieved in stages.

- c. Continue and consider expanding support to long-term, basic, and exploratory research approaches.

In recognition of the distinct roles of comparative and independent research on development assistance, as well as the increasing visibility of the sub-field of aid effectiveness research¹², we recommend that the following initiatives be undertaken:

- d. In light of the findings of this report and the strong recommendation of the 2007 evaluation, we encourage the MFA to reconsider its decision not to establish a new RCN research programme focused on development assistance. A public discussion of the costs and benefits and design of such a programme would provide an opportunity to consider a number of alternatives, including whether what is needed is more independence in all types of research, more research on Norwegian development assistance, more comparative research on development assistance, more expertise and research on aid effectiveness, or all of the above.
- e. Support capacity building programmes (scholarships, courses, seminars, etc.) in aid effectiveness, aid evaluation, and development assistance research open to both students and practitioners. We further suggest that a particular effort be made to attract the graduates of prior capacity building support from the Global South to participate in such training.
- f. Support comparative research: encourage proposals to carry out comparative analyses¹³ of recent experiences in applying different approaches to development assistance over time, place and/or by different development actors.

To improve transparency and increase the level of independence in commissioned research, we recommend:

- g. Utilize research contracts rather than consultancy contracts for all commissioned research to better protect the independence of the researchers and research process.¹⁴
- h. Establish an expert roster to formalize and make transparent the process of directly commissioned research in place of the current reliance on individual contacts.
- i. To improve the dissemination of research results and the Interface between researchers, policy-makers, non-governmental organizations, the general public and the media, encourage and provide support to the preparation of popularized versions of research products.¹⁵

12 Aid effectiveness research can be either commissioned or independent. Driven by the needs of politicians to justify aid allocations and policy-makers for empirical evidence on which to base aid allocations, but hampered by the limitations of available data and analytical tools to assess highly complex social and economic processes, the field of aid effectiveness research has been subject to recurring fads. As a result, aid effectiveness research is extensive, but highly contested both ideologically and methodologically. A simple definition of aid effectiveness is: the study of an "Arrangement for the planning, management and deployment of aid that is efficient, reduces transaction costs and is targeted toward development outcomes including poverty reduction." (Stern, E. et al. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness, and Development Effectiveness (2008) Copenhagen*). For an in-depth discussion of aid effectiveness research, see: Cassen, R. and Associates (1994), *Does Aid Work? Report to an Intergovernmental Task Force*, Oxford University Press. For a discussion of some of its limitations, see: Roodman, D. (2007), *Macro Aid Effectiveness Research: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Working Paper Number 134, Center for Global Development.

13 Comparative analyses consist of an item by item comparison of two or more comparable alternatives, processes, products, qualifications, sets of data, systems, etc.

14 To avoid any misunderstandings regarding the differences between these contracts, it is suggested that a standard statement of the protections provided by a research contract is made obligatory for citation in all resulting publications.

15 This recommendation is not specifically targeted to independent research on Norwegian development assistance, but all research on development funded by the MFA for public dissemination either through the media or directly from websites to the taxpayers who are ultimately paying for it. This task could logically be assigned to the public information office of either the agency managing the funding (Norad or RCN) or of the MFA in consultation with the authors. In the course of the evaluation we saw examples of publicity briefs presenting research results produced by several of the development research institutes.

- j. To help to bridge the gap between research and policy-making, provide support to third party institutions to organize meetings between researchers, policy-makers and other stakeholders for short presentations and discussion of ongoing and recently completed research. Encourage researchers to participate in moderated discussions of the policy implications and potential applications of their work¹⁶. (See Section 3.6.v. for examples)
- k. Create MFA and Norad in-house research services to track current and emerging issues, prepare briefings, briefing notes, and summaries as needed, and regularly update desk officers and policy staff on available research in their areas of responsibility.

To improve the ability of development funders, researchers and the public to assess the performance of research programmes:

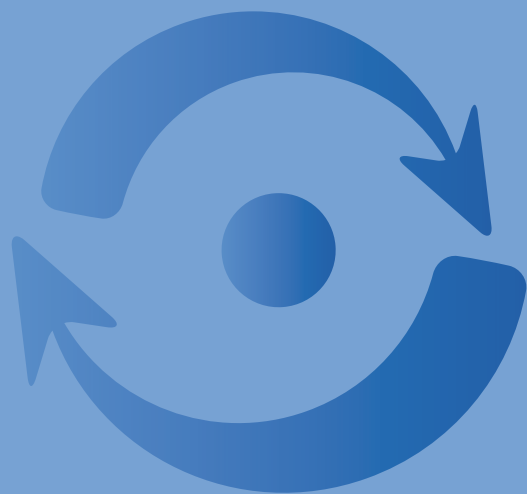
- l. If not already in place institute a system of expanded record-keeping to monitor and report on current and future RCN programs. As the pilot intervention, create a system to register all applications for funding to NORGLOBAL and FRIMUF development research programmes by: author(s), author(s) nationality, author title, academic field, and affiliation(s), title and subject area of project, short abstract, and selection outcome. This would support future assessments of thematic distribution, international collaboration, inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary projects, level of independence, and funding patterns (topic, institutional affiliation, gender, etc). A separate registry should be kept of the names, affiliations, and academic fields of the members of all selection panels.
- m. Improve the tracking of research outputs: If not already in place, we recommend that Norad and the RCN create a tracking system to register all research products wholly or partially supported by the funding they administer, and require that all publications resulting wholly or partially from RCN or Norad support include a standard acknowledgement of the funder and funding programme.
- n. Improve tracking of funding flows: We recommend as a future activity an analytical accounting of MFA research expenditures.¹⁷
- o. Initiate and support impact assessments¹⁸ of a few priority programmes, e.g. programmes identified as of high priority by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, within Norwegian development cooperation.
- p. Strengthen external evaluations managed by Norad and ensure synergy/coordination with long term research efforts.

16 Evidence in the report shows that some of these, such as dedicated one-day research showcase or forum meetings are successful, while others, such as "brown-bag" lunches are not. One conclusion might be that adding informal presentations to a normal work day doesn't work, while external dedicated events may be more successful. More work will have to be done to identify the most effective transmission mechanisms for getting research results to policy-makers and practitioners.

17 What is meant is more in-depth than a standard accounting (do expenditures correspond to budgeted amounts) or auditing (are expenditures properly documented) procedure. This type of review also looks at selection, oversight, and reporting procedures, how funds are being spent and if the results are in line with mandated goals, such as priority issues, gender equity, sectoral distribution, etc.

18 While *Outputs* are the products, capital goods and services which result from an intervention and *outcomes* are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, *impacts* are positive and negative, primary and secondary *long-term effects* produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. An *impact evaluation* tries to distinguish as carefully and reliably as possible between changes that can be attributed to the evaluated intervention and changes that would have occurred anyway. (OECD/DAC Glossary of Key terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management)

Main Report



1. Introduction

Over the past 50 years, as Norway became increasingly active in international development, the field of development research in Norway underwent a parallel process of expansion. In 2007 the Research Council of Norway (RCN) undertook a comprehensive evaluation of Norwegian development research.¹⁹ The RCN evaluation report provides an overview of the institutions in which development research is conducted, the areas of focus and the disciplinary fields of their staff, their sources of funding and the types and quality of publications they produce.

The 2007 evaluation team found that independent research on the critical aid issues which it considered important for policy development was among the areas largely overlooked. They also found that there was a low proportion of researcher-initiated and long-term research - preventing independent research - and they argued that direct financing leads to dependency. The evaluation team held the view that dependency, whether it is formal or informal, can cause researchers to hold back conclusions that are in conflict with official policy. They believed that the shortage of independent research on development assistance is particularly relevant in light of the large distance between the decision-makers in Norway and the intended beneficiaries of Norwegian aid in the South.²⁰

The Terms of Reference for this 2010 evaluation of Norwegian development assistance draw on one of the conclusions of the 2007 evaluation:

“That research that deals directly with Norwegian development assistance remains largely dependent on Norwegian funding and initiatives. Compared with the large increase in funds for development assistance in recent years, the amount of independent research on Norwegian development cooperation seems limited. Such research is important both for general information and the public debate about aid and for aid decision makers.”

Purpose of the evaluation

The ultimate goal of this evaluation is to contribute to improving the effectiveness of Norwegian development assistance. The immediate purpose is to assess the amount, composition and independence of research on Norwegian development assistance, with a view to identifying ways of strengthening independent research. An underlying assumption in the Terms of Reference is that a greater body of independent research is required to ensure that policy-makers have access to

¹⁹ Norwegian Development Research: An Evaluation (2007), Oslo, RCN – Research Council of Norway
²⁰ Terms of Reference: Evaluation of Norwegian Development Assistance 2010

impartial, evidence-based analysis of the impact of different aid modalities in different countries and contexts.

A secondary objective is to improve the dissemination of knowledge to different stakeholder groups within the development community, including NGOs, the general public, the private sector and the international development community, in order to increase the visibility of research on Norwegian development assistance and to enhance its potential to influence policy and practice among national and international development planners and practitioners.

Audience

The institutions responsible for development cooperation and research in Norway are the primary audience of the evaluation.

Scope

For the purpose of this evaluation, development assistance research is defined as a sub-sector of development research that focuses on the programmes, organizations, and policies supported by Norwegian state funding and applied to achieve the goals of Norwegian development cooperation. It includes all parts of Norwegian aid regardless of funding mechanism (bilateral, multilateral, through NGOs, the private sector, or other).

2. Summary of Assigned Tasks and Methodological Approach

Assigned tasks:

“The evaluation shall establish a way to distinguish between external, independent as opposed to internal contract development research. Based on this distinction, the evaluation shall give an overview of independent research on Norwegian development assistance during the period 1999-2008, including the major research programmes as well as other relevant research. The analysis shall take into account available results of international research on development assistance. “

“The analysis of the contribution of Norwegian development assistance research should include possible effects on different levels, including immediate programme implementation, development of policies and more general contributions to debate and reflection around the existing theories that Norwegian aid is built on.”²¹

Our methodological approach was comprised of three parts:

Review of documents: The initial document review included a sample of research publications, the history of Norwegian development cooperation, Norad and MFA documents including previous evaluations and annual reports, policy statements and guidelines, and other relevant written sources. In a series of steps, we assembled a bibliography of independent research on Norwegian development assistance, which we analyzed for thematic distribution, funding source and level of independence.

As described in detail in Annex E, we used a number of different entry points to assemble our bibliography. We applied different combinations or alternatives for “development” and “aid” in English and Norwegian to search library holdings, development agency and institute websites, and academic journal databases, conducted key word global searches, and searched the bibliographies of previously identified publications. We also circulated questionnaires to research institutions and interviewed researchers, requesting the authors and titles of relevant publications. We then evaluated each of the 253 publications on the initial long list to remove those that clearly did not discuss Norwegian development assistance, either exclusively or in connection with other countries, or did not appear to have been

21. Terms of Reference: Evaluation of Norwegian Development Assistance 2010.

independently initiated (we excluded commissioned research, evaluations and annual reports), to arrive at a short list of 82 publications. Each of these publications was then reviewed to confirm i) author nationality; ii) year of publication; iii) type of publication; iv) publisher nationality; v) language of the publication (Norwegian or English); and vi) thematic area focus.

Quantitative methods: We applied quantitative methods including a compilation of references to Norwegian development research in citation indexes and indicators of usage as reflected in research library circulation statistics. The number of times that a publication is cited by other authors can serve as a quantitative proxy indicator for the diffusion and potential impact of the works of Norwegian development researchers. Circulation statistics indicate whether physical copies of research publications are being actively used. We also requested a summary of the hits on and downloads from institutional websites, but were unsuccessful in obtaining this information. We also reviewed the available documentation of the main RCN development research programmes for the period 1999-2008: Development Paths in the South, MULTI, Poverty and Peace, Fisheries, FRIMUF, and Forced Migration. Please see Annex D for a description of the analysis and results.

Qualitative methods: We conducted interviews,²² distributed questionnaires and held stakeholder workshops to validate our findings.

We distributed a *questionnaire* to all potential informants. This was not a survey in the technical sense and our sample was not random, but was targeted to a broad set of identifiable development practitioners. We then selected a sub-set of informants for personal interviews based on the questionnaire responses. As we identified additional potential informants in the course of the evaluation, we added them to the list. The potential informants on the initial list were identified based on the following characteristics (selection criteria):

- Authors of scholarly papers on Norwegian development assistance (either primary or secondary research) or on development issues more broadly, in academic journals or monographs.
- Presentations on Norwegian development assistance at professional conferences and meetings.
- Authors of general readership articles on Norwegian development assistance and related issues in newspapers or magazines.
- Representatives of political parties who serve as speakers or sources on development assistance and related issues.
- Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs.
- Staff members of Norad, National Research Council, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research involved in support to research on development.

22 An effort was made to assemble a broad sample of potential interviewees from the development research community, including individuals from the universities, specialized research centres and the development research institutes. We also compiled a list of relevant informants at the MFA, Norad, the RCN, the Ministry of Education and Research, as well as Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, political party representatives, journalists and representatives of NGOs active on development issues. Due to limited time during team members' visits to Oslo and the difficulty of scheduling interviews with development professionals and Members of Parliament who travel frequently out of the country, we were able to interview only a small proportion of those whom we had contacted with questionnaires. We were also limited in our ability to interview researchers based outside of Oslo, due to bad weather on travel dates. Nonetheless, we believe that we were able to collect a sufficiently wide sample of opinions and found sufficient convergence among the opinions expressed to be reasonably confident of our findings. We apologize to all those with whom we were not able to conduct a personal interview.

- Representatives of non-governmental organizations which are active in the area of development assistance.

We sent a separate questionnaire to all of the universities, specialized centres, and research institutes whose staff members produce development research and also sent a short questionnaire to all NGOs active in the area of international development, to journalists who had published on development issues and to members of the political parties active in the area of foreign policy.

Interviews: We conducted several rounds of interviews with policy-makers and researchers who were our main source of original information. We also contacted a sample of members of the Norwegian parliament involved in international development issues as well as journalists who have shown an interest in Norwegian development assistance and representatives of NGOs active in the area of international development.

After consolidating our preliminary findings, we invited all of the academic researchers we had contacted to a *stakeholder workshop* to discuss our interview and survey results and seek their feedback. We also held a similar workshop with NGO representatives. Unfortunately, due to a time conflict, staff members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs were not able to attend a scheduled stakeholder workshop.

After validating the qualitative results from the interviews and questionnaires, we cross-checked them with the quantitative results that we derived from the citation searches, literature reviews, and circulation indicators.

3. Research on Development Assistance in Norway

I. Purposes and Stakeholders

As specified in the Terms of Reference, the focus of this evaluation is independent research on Norwegian development assistance, which encompasses research analyzing the design, utilization, and effects of budget expenditures for development cooperation. We note at the outset that while research on development assistance is only one part and, as will be argued below, a very small part of the much broader field of development research²³, the contribution that it can make is critical to the success of development aid interventions.

Development research includes research on developing countries, research on the development process, research on development assistance and more broadly on inter-linkages and transition processes at the global, regional and local levels. As a field it encompasses research across a large number of disciplines, including agriculture, anthropology, education, environmental studies, finance and economics, fisheries and forestry, history, international relations, medicine and public health, political science and public administration, and women's studies, among others. Research on the process of development tends to be concentrated in the social science fields, while research on many of the components of development comes from the applied sciences.²⁴

The immediate stakeholders of research on development assistance are the members of the national development community: the members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and other interested political representatives, the policy-makers, managers and foreign service staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the aid analysts and managers of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, the members of the development research community at universities and research institutes, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in the development policy discussion or in the delivery or oversight of development aid in the field, as well as the members of the general public, whom they represent. Although they exert limited influence over development policy decision-making, the recipients of development assistance in developing and transitional countries are also stakeholders in, and frequently the subjects of, research on development assistance. More broadly, the members of the international development community: academics and scholars at universities, founda-

23 See: *Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation* (2007), Research Council of Norway, Oslo, for a comprehensive overview of the Norwegian development research community, its institutions, disciplinary and research foci, funding sources, and publication thematic distribution and quality. This evaluation has been designed not to duplicate the 2007 evaluation, but to follow up on one aspect of its findings.

24 See: *Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation* (2007), Research Council of Norway, Oslo, for the Research Council's definition of development research and supporting commentary.

tions, and research institutes, multi-lateral organizations and bi-lateral development agencies and their associated research communities are also participants in the production and use of development research and research on development assistance.

II. Funding institutions, sources and channels

While the Ministry of Education and Research exercises overall responsibility for the support of research institutions in Norway, each sector ministry, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, or the Ministry of Health, has long-term responsibility, comprehensive sector responsibility, and the responsibility for funding commissioned research serving their own need for policy development and management. The sector principle also means that each Ministry should maintain oversight of the need for new knowledge and research within its sector, provide the funding necessary to produce new knowledge, and support international research cooperation.²⁵

Funding for Norwegian development and development assistance research derives from three main sources:

- The Ministry of Education and Research provides core funding (state appropriations) to universities and research institutes, which is allocated through their internal governance bodies. It also funds programmes administered by the Research Council of Norway.²⁶
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides funding to research programmes administered through the Research Council of Norway (which also administers funds from other ministries for other types of research, including jointly funded programmes involving two or more ministries). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also funds commissioned research, studies and evaluations, either directly managed by the MFA or administered by Norad.
- International organisations, such as the European Union, the World Bank, or the agencies and programmes of the United Nations, fund research grants as well as commissioned research, studies, and evaluations.²⁷

While a considerable amount of research related to development, including development assistance research is conducted by university staff in university facilities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the long-term and comprehensive sector responsibility for funding research related to foreign affairs, including development and development assistance. In practice, the majority of research projects related to developing countries are financed through the second of these three sources, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs aid budget, and administered through Norad and the Research Council of Norway.²⁸

25 Vilje til Forskning, St.meld.nr.20, 2004-2005.

26 A new model for funding research institutions was introduced in 2009. It directed that funding should consist of two components – a strategic allocation to support long term capacity development not possible to fund through other mechanisms and a performance based component based on a set of results indicators in order to stimulate an appropriate balance between quality and relevance (Det kongelige Kunnskapsdepartementet, Retningslinjer for basis finansiering av forskningsinstitusjoner, 2008).

27 An estimate of the relative weights of these different funding sources in the budgets of different research institutions can be found in *Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation* (2007), p.18.

28 A significant amount of development-related research is supported by Ministry of Education and Research through its core funding to the Universities. However, aside from the specialized centers and thematic programmes administered through the RCN, it is difficult to quantify its exact magnitude or to draw a clear line of separation between development-related research as distinct from other University-supported research activities, centres and programmes. The total funding for each RCN administered thematic programme is clearly defined and publicly advertised.

Although not an explicit task included in the TORs of this evaluation, an effort was made to establish the distribution of resources between commissioned research and more independent research funded through the RCN. An initial attempt was made to assess the total amount of the MFA budget that is spent on development research and the relative proportions of funds flowing through these different channels. We found that funding information for the research programmes administered by the RCN was easily accessible and fully transparent. Norad documentation was also easily accessible. The programmatic funds passed to the RCN are clearly spent on research while funding for evaluations (which were not considered to be research for the purposes of this evaluation) were clearly not. However, it was not possible to establish exactly how much of Norad funding went to development research because of several grey areas in which development research mixes with other activities. These include commissioned reports which are research, but are often funded through the consulting budget, and capacity building funds, which may also include support to M.A. and Ph.D. thesis research, for example in the Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) and Norad's Programme for Master Studies (NOMA).²⁹

In interviews with MFA staff members, we learned that there were a number of different channels through which MFA direct funding flowed. These include: tendered commissioned research, research commissioned by or funded in response to proposals made to Norwegian Embassies as well as research funding for developing country institutions or organizations delivered through Norwegian Embassies, funding in response to proposals submitted by Norwegian researchers or research institutes, and departmental funding for research and briefings on emerging issues and other immediate concerns. Although we were provided with a copy of the MFA allocations to research for 2009, we were unable to clearly identify all of these channels and disentangle these and other types of research and research-related work. When we asked whether it was possible to get an authoritative overview of the total amounts expended on development research and its proportional distribution, the response was that it would make an interesting research project, a suggestion strongly supported by other individuals interviewed in the course of this evaluation, including other MFA staff members. (See Executive Summary and Recommendations below).

III. Producers of research on development assistance: Universities and Institutes

There are three different types of institutions carrying out development and development assistance research:

- a. University departments with development research as part of their broader subject area mandate, for example the Departments of Economics, Geography, History or Sociology.

29 "Unfortunately the Evaluation Committee has not been able to obtain any key figures for Norad's and MFA's involvement in development research. However, the Committee has been informed that Norad is presently evaluating its funding measures, including the framework agreements, and that a project giving some overall figures for Norad's research activities is said to be published shortly." *Norwegian Development Research: An Evaluation* (2007), Oslo, RCN – Research Council of Norway, page 22. We requested a copy of this report, but Norad was not able to establish that the report referred to above was, in fact, published. All other requests for publications were promptly responded to by the MFA and Norad, for which we would like to again express our gratitude.

- b. Specialized centers established by the universities which focus on specific aspects of development research, such as the Center for Development and the Environment (SUM) or the independent Center for Climate Research (CICERO) at the University of Oslo and the Center for Development Studies at the University of Bergen.³⁰
- c. Research institutes, some of which work exclusively on international development research, such as the Christian Michelsen Institute (CMI), while others include development research in their mandate. Some institutes, such as the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), were established by the Government to address its mandated needs, while others such as the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) were privately initiated.

Over the past decade, all of these institutions and the researchers who staff them have responded to changes in their core funding by becoming more active in seeking programmatic funds, research grants and external funding.

The universities, including the research centers, are regarded as the sources of long-term and autonomous research and enjoy strategic autonomy in determining how to distribute the funding they receive from the state budget. Over the past decade, they underwent an extended process of faculty competence assessment and priority setting prior to developing a 10 year Strategic Plan, which in turn influences the allocation of resources and the selection of Ph.D. students. As a result of this process, the University of Oslo, for example, decided to prioritize five inter-disciplinary research topics as a means of stimulating long-term research cooperation across disciplinary boundaries. These inter-disciplinary programmes are funded for a five-year period and externally reviewed for extension or replacement.

The research institutes are more focused in their mandates and controlled by the priorities of the sources of their funding, however, they are equally concerned with maintaining their academic standing through publication in international journals and strive to maintain a balance between a policy-oriented focus and academic rigor.

IV. Dissemination paths and audiences being reached

The products of research on Norwegian development assistance are currently disseminated through a number of channels. Academic work tends to appear primarily as articles in peer-reviewed journals, primarily European development journals, as well as in edited volumes and a few monographs brought out by academic publishers. These publications together with a large number of commissioned studies and reports are posted on university and institute websites. Online academic journals and online consolidated websites also provide access to a significant portion of recent research publications. Academic work and some commissioned studies or reports are also presented at university and research institute seminars, at national and international academic conferences, and at global or regional meetings convened by bi-lateral or multi-national development organizations.

³⁰ The Center for Development Studies at the University of Bergen has, however, ceased to exist and has now been replaced by UiB Global, which is more an administrative unit than a research centre (a "meeting place").

The research institutes and specialized centers also make a practice of organizing workshops and seminars to bring together researchers and policy-makers, as well as NGO representatives, for presentations and discussion of current research on topical issues. NGOs also organize both advocacy and fund-raising events which present research findings relevant to their areas of focus and workshops to bring together others addressing similar issues.

Norad makes a practice of launching many commissioned reports and studies at a public event and also organizes presentations of current research for discussion among members of the development community. The MFA provides briefings on issues of immediate concern produced by development researchers for Members of Parliament, Ministry staff members and other civil servants, which may also be open to the press and general public.

Despite this broad array of dissemination methods, there was a surprisingly uniform consensus across all stakeholder groups interviewed: university and institute researchers, NGO representatives, Members of Parliament, MFA and Norad staff members, that cross-group communication was not successful. In particular, there was wide agreement that research on development was not reaching or being utilized by development policy-makers.

3.1 Thematic distribution of research, frequency and prevalence

3.1.1 Size and composition of research on Norwegian development assistance

Several research programmes were initiated in the 1980's to produce knowledge in areas prioritized in Norwegian development cooperation:

- 1984 Women and Development
- 1987 Technology Transfer in Developing countries
- 1988 Population, Health and Development

Programme funding during the 1990's continued to focus on the immediate needs of aid administrators, addressing such topics as multilateral assistance and UN reform, the history of Norwegian development cooperation and international agricultural research.

More recently the large programmes have become increasingly broad and less directly linked to the needs of development cooperation. The programme "Globalisation and Marginalisation: Development Paths in the South" (1998-2008) had six thematic areas: 1) globalization and marginalization; 2) poverty; 3) economic policy and industrial development; 4) political development; democracy, human rights and conflicts; 5) environment and 6) natural resource management, while gender, children, urbanization and development cooperation were included as cross cutting issues. Development Paths in the South was followed by two new programmes, Poverty and Peace (2005-2013) and NORGLOBAL (2009-2013) incorporating Poverty and Peace, GLOBMEK, ECONPOP, CGIAR, West Balkan and Gender.

Some researchers were highly critical of the trend toward broader and less focused programmes in response to intensive lobbying by different stakeholders in the

research community for a share of the funding, arguing that the more broadly defined thematic programs are not used by policy-makers. As a counter-example, they pointed to narrowly defined programs to support fisheries research, which was fed directly into practical application.

The following table presents the major RCN development research programmes conducted between 1990 and 2010:

PROGRAMME	PERIOD	#PROJECTS	TOTAL BUDGET (NOK)in millions
FRIMUF (open calls)	2002 – ongoing		62
CGIAR I (Agricultural research)	2000 – 2006	13	10
UFISK (Fisheries in developing countries)	1996 – 2002	21	28
UTISØR (Development Paths in the South)	1998 – 2008	11	150
GLOBHEL (Global health research)	2003 – 2010	14	88
VACCINATION RESEARCH	2006 – 2011		300
MULTI 1 (The multilateral system in the field of development)	1994 – 1998		16
MULTI 2	1998 – 2004	19	30
NUHH (Norwegian History of Development)	1997 – 2003	3	12
POVPEACE (Poverty and Peace)	2005 – 2013	12	140
NORGLOBAL (Norway Global Partner)	2009 – 2013		?
SOUTH AFRICA PROGRAMME 1	2001 – 2006	46	33
SOUTH AFRICA PROGRAMME 2	2006 – 2010		51
LATIN AMERICA PROGRAMME	2008 – 2018	27	195
NUFU	1991 – ongoing		

Source: Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007)

In reviewing the available documentation for the RCN research programmes most likely to support research on development assistance for the period 1999 - 2008: Development Paths in the South, MULTI, Poverty and Peace, Fisheries, FRIMUF, and Forced Migration, we found that only around five per cent – 74 research projects out of a total of 1.423 applications – had development aid as a focus, based on the title or project abstract. An exceedingly small number – six - had Norwegian development aid as an important theme. (Please see Annex D for a full description of the analysis and results.) Research on development cooperation in general, and Norwegian aid in particular, does not appear to have a high priority among Norwegian development researchers.

Only one application with Norwegian development aid as its focus was approved by the RCN. This sample is, however, far too small to permit any conclusions about the quality of the applications presented. It should be noted that the one programme which had development aid as a major theme, the multilateral programme, attracted much attention. This rather small programme accounted for almost two thirds of all applications related to foreign aid. By comparison, the free programme FRIMUF attracted almost ten times as many applications as MULTI, but only four of these had development aid as a major theme. There is one obvious conclusion from this comparison: if funds are earmarked for research on a theme such as development assistance, the number of applications is likely to increase dramatically compared to a programme in which researchers are free to choose subjects according to their own preferences.

3.1.2 Major areas and elements of the research

Based on bibliographic searches, document review and interview results, well-established areas of Norwegian development research are: oil and development; sustainable fisheries, forestry and agriculture, with some implications for biodiversity; health research; peace and conflict resolution; governance; and public health in development contexts. More recently Norway has become active in the area of MDGs 4 & 5 (under 5 and maternal mortality). In addition, individual researchers in anthropology, economics and political science are internationally recognized as leading experts in their fields.

When we narrow the focus to the subject of this evaluation - independent research on Norwegian development assistance - it becomes clear that the size of our sample is too small to support the type of general conclusions sought in the questions below (drawn from research questions 2, 3, and 4 of the TORs).

As described in Section 2 above and fully in Annex E, we constructed a bibliography of independent research on Norwegian development assistance on which to base our analysis. Although developing and validating a consensus definition of "independence" was a relatively straightforward exercise, the task of developing a comprehensive list of publications over a ten year period which satisfied both the selection criteria of "independent" and "focused on Norwegian development assistance" proved considerably more difficult. After applying multiple search methods, we arrived at a list of 82 publications which we could verify as being consistent with both conditions of the definition. While we are fully aware that we are quite likely to have missed others, we are confident that we did not overlook a significant number of relevant publications.

The 2007 evaluation team concluded that there was very little independent research on development assistance. Our evaluation of RCN programmes indicated that very few proposals for research on Norwegian development assistance were supported. We did find an independent (not funded by the MFA, Norad, or RCN) Fund for Development History at the University of Oslo, which has supported a cluster of critical publications on Norwegian development assistance programmes and policies. Other than the publications of the group of authors associated with this initiative, and the publications of Terje Tvedt, a thematic analysis of the bibliog-

raphy did not produce any significant topical clusters. As described in Annex E, we abandoned our original approach of classifying the publications according to 15 main development topics because too many remained empty sets for the results to be useful. A micro-analysis of the bibliography in an effort to identify any clusters of publications resulted in 28 different topical or geographical areas. Aside from the development history group and Tvedt, no cluster contained more than 5 publications and most held only one or two.

3.1.3 Strengths and weaknesses of different parts/types of research

As described above, the sample of publications on any topic is too small to support any general conclusion as to strengths and weaknesses, other than the observation that independent research is thematically highly fragmented, with the exception of clusters produced by an active individual or group (Tvedt aid skepticism or the Development History group formed around Pharo).

3.1.4 Extent of contribution to international aid debate

Here again, we are unable to draw any generalized conclusions based on the small body of independent research on Norwegian development assistance. About a third of the publications were in Norwegian, suggesting that they are aimed at domestic policy, rather than international debate. On the other hand, well over half were in English, most of which appeared in international publications and clearly represent a contribution to international development discourse, if not to the international aid debate, which is a separate and distinct issue.

3.1.5 Degree to which issues related to globalization are treated as opportunities as opposed to threats

We were able to identify only one publication focused on globalization that fulfilled both the criteria of independent research and addressed the role of Norwegian development assistance. In compiling the bibliography, we found many more publications on globalization by Norwegian authors which could be classified as independent. However, as these did not make any reference to Norwegian development assistance, they fell outside the defined scope of this evaluation. Given the relatively limited amount of research on Norwegian development assistance, this result is not surprising. No generalization regarding the issues treated can be drawn from it.

3.1.6 Extent of exploration of alternative ways of supporting developing countries

Although we found several articles critical of specific Norwegian development programmes, donor-centric approaches, or private interest-driven policies, we did not find broader explorations of alternative support to developing countries. Again, we emphasize that the sample is too small to justify any conclusion. In response to this question, we strongly recommend consideration of targeted support to comparative research on development assistance (See 4.2 Recommendations, below).

3.2 Definitions and Perceptions of independence among researchers and stakeholders

3.2.1 Degrees of independence: metrics – distance from funding source, control of research type, design and products

We initially set out to establish with active researchers and development agency officials a consensus definition of “independent research,” as distinct from commissioned research. In our view, the condition of “independence” is far from clear-cut. No development researcher can be entirely “independent” in an environment which includes multiple actors – funding agencies, academic colleagues, media, government officials, NGO representatives, developing country institutions and individuals, and many others - who may influence such decisions as choice of research topic, design of research programme, selection of methodology, and access to data.

The question is: “Independent of what or whom”? Our preliminary answer was that “independence” in this context should primarily be defined in terms of financial independence. If we take financial independence as the defining characteristic, any research that is funded or directly commissioned by any public or private body to investigate a specific issue or question cannot be regarded as “independent.”

Researchers’ interpretations of independence: quotations from interviews and survey:

- Free of influence from stakeholders.
- Non-commissioned, funded by Research Council or by own institution.
- Independence is a question of having alternatives. If you don’t have alternatives you become more dependent, not least as regards self-censorship. A position from which you can say “No thanks” is fundamental.
- No recommendations at the end and all results communicated.
- Independence in the formulation of research areas and research questions.
- Research done by persons who don’t have any direct interest in the topic other than a purely academic one.
- Where the researcher has no reason to fear that he/she may suffer if the results are critical of those in power.
- Research carried out without a politically defined focus.
- I would like to believe that I am entirely independent, but I suspect it is not the case.

However, the funding agency practice of issuing thematic calls for research provides a borderline case which illustrates the difficulty of drawing a clear line of distinction. Thematic calls for research reduce the academic community’s independence and may offer an incentive to application-driven research which, in order to please the funders may have a biased focus or ask the wrong questions. Here, the question is whether the funding agency is able to influence the methodology applied or the conclusions reached.

Research carried out in semi-academic institutions such as privately financed “think tanks” or by the research departments within ministries or NGOs does not meet this definition of “independence.” However, while research that is carried out within academic institutions and is subject to normal academic quality scrutiny such as peer review would appear to do so, it must be acknowledged that the degree of independence even within traditional academic institutions varies considerably

between, for example, a tenured faculty member and a young researcher with a temporary contract which is entirely dependent upon external grants.

When we put the question to researchers: “What constitutes independent research?” we received relatively consistent responses. In cross-checking the characteristics identified by researchers with other stakeholders, we found a high degree of consensus. The conditions for independent research can be summarized as follows:

1. The ability to initiate research and define thematic priorities.
2. The ability to formulate the research hypotheses – for the researcher to decide what questions research should seek to answer and to define the criteria by which to assess the value of the evidence obtained.
3. The ability to decide which approaches and methods will be applied in seeking answers to the research questions.
4. The ability to analyse data and develop conclusions without any external interference.
5. The ability to utilize and disseminate research findings and conclusions freely and without any external control.

To this we add another more indirect consideration: the ability to present well-supported, but controversial results without fear of being denied future funding or otherwise suffering negative consequences.

A. Four Types of Funded Research

We found that a broad either-or: “dependent” or “independent” distinction was not analytically useful. The level of independence ranges along a continuum from “less dependent” to “more dependent” based on the type of research, as well as the type of institution at which the researcher is based. We concluded that there are at least four types of research with varying degrees of independence:

1. Research initiated exclusively by university-based researchers and funded out of the University budget allocated by the Ministry of Education and Research, or from the open “free” programme in the Research Council of Norway (FRIMUF). This situation provides the best example of “free” research, in which the researchers initiate, define, conduct, and disseminate research without external limitation.
2. Research initiated by university or institute researchers within the framework of thematically defined programmes administered by the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This channel has become arguably the largest and certainly the most visible source of funding for development research. In this case, researchers respond to calls for proposals based on thematic priorities, guidelines and criteria defined by MFA and the Research Council.
3. A relatively large amount of research takes place outside of the RCN system funded directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in response to proposals, submitted primarily by institute-based researchers in response to the perceived needs and priorities of the MFA, such as the peace processes in the Middle

East and Sri Lanka, or country studies on India and China.³¹ A growing number of research projects are financed directly by Norwegian embassies in developing countries. These proposals frequently are developed by Norwegian institutes in cooperation with colleagues in the South.

4. Research commissioned by MFA/Norad/others, such as evaluations, policy studies, or sector reviews based on funder-defined Terms of Reference. The increasingly important “følgeforskning”, i.e. research commissioned to a group of researchers to follow and assess a Norwegian-supported development programme or process constitutes a special case, as this research is typically for a longer-term and is closer in character to research than is a standard monitoring and evaluation assignment. Nonetheless, it clearly falls into the funder-defined category.

B. Perceived level of independence by type of research

1. **Researcher-initiated research:** This type of research meets all of the five criteria of independence listed above. Although researchers may be constrained by the limitations of financial and human resources and their institutional environments, researcher-initiated research funded by core resources or FRIMUF was considered to be as independent as a publicly funded activity can be. It is not surprising that most of the researchers interviewed in the course of this evaluation advocated more core support and increased free funding from RCN as the most desirable future funding model.
2. **Programme research:** This type of research meets four of the criteria of independence, with the exception of the first. On one hand, researchers have considerable freedom and independence. None of those interviewed felt that the MFA or RCN had attempted to influence their selection of methodological approach, their formulation of findings and conclusions, or to manipulate the utilization of their results or publication of reports. On the other hand, it was felt that research funded even from broadly defined RCN thematic programmes was less independent. A number of researchers felt that externally defined thematic priorities were increasingly subject to the influence of short-term foreign policy interests or political fads rather than the demands of long-term development.

Significant efforts have been made in the selection of RCN programme boards to avoid potential conflicts of interest to ensure that projects are selected exclusively on the basis of quality. As an example, the Chairman of the NORGLOBAL board is Norwegian and Norad contributes one member, while all of the other board members are international researchers.

The MFA and RCN define the thematic priorities and determine the limits of qualifying research, but the themes themselves are broad and have become increasingly broader. “Globalisation and Marginalization: Development Paths in the South” was the largest programme of the past decade. Most development researchers agreed that it was or would have been possible to fit his or her research priorities within the

31 Based on the results of inquiries to the MFA, it was not possible to quantify the total amounts or relative proportions of these flows of research funding. Initial analysis of a sample budget document “MFA allocations to research 2009” provided an overview of the major funding pathways and types of work funded, however, a comprehensive accounting of all MFA research-related expenditures is not available. See further: Recommendations, below.

programme definitions. The selection criteria were strictly academic, and the Norwegian board members removed themselves from the selection procedure.

Thus, this programme can be classified as very independent. Nonetheless, it is striking how few of the research proposals funded through the program were directly related to Norwegian development assistance, beyond the tangential relevance for the design and implementation of aid programmes that can be expected of all high-quality development research.

The recent programme “Poverty and Peace” is somewhat narrower in scope, but leaves researchers with considerable independence in defining their research priorities and gives them fully independent control of the research process. The programme for Latin America is entirely open with no reference to relevance and applicability.

While programme research operates within some broad externally defined parameters which limit total independence, such research does not appear to be constrained in its originality or ability to be controversial and critical of official Norwegian policy and practice.

Nonetheless, several researchers argued that programme research is too influenced by the development paradigm – its language, objectives, values and assumptions and not least the rapid shifts in priorities and concerns in the aid milieu. Most researchers interviewed accepted the legitimate responsibility of the MFA to define its own research needs and priorities and agree that the MFA would not be fulfilling its mandate as a Ministry if it did not define national needs for policy relevant data and information in the areas of foreign policy and development cooperation.

Researchers’ views on programme research:

Degrees of independence?

- The aid industry is very cautious of divulging data to researchers who are seen as not being friendly.
- I never experienced any pressure from funders for particular results. The main problem is not at this point, but in the narrow calls for funding.
- I know of several colleagues who have had problems getting data, but also who have lost access to funding because they are known not to accept mainstream views at face value.
- Of course there is an agenda-setting role played by the development cooperation apparatus, which does influence research themes, directly or indirectly.

The complaint is more that, while MFA-funded research programmes have increased in scope, they are funded only by the MFA. Although the level of free researcher-initiated funding has remained stable in absolute terms, it has declined as a proportion of total funding and is outweighed by the large research programmes. As programme support has increased over time, the share of “free funds” from the Research Council declined to about five per cent of available funds, while competition increased. Many of the researchers interviewed saw this as a negative trend and criticized what they see as the increasing influence of political

fads such as climate change, vaccines, alternative energy, peace and conflict resolution, and a few others, to the detriment of long-term essential development research, such as poverty reduction. (“You have to mention climate in your application”). As one of our interviewees commented: “Researchers behave opportunistically – they apply for funds in areas which are ‘in’.” However, aside from funds being channeled to politically defined priorities, no researcher complained about ex-post interventions or censorship in the actual presentation of research financed by the Research Council.

Our informants were largely pessimistic on the question of how to fund independent, critical research on Norwegian development assistance. No one thought it would be easy to finance such studies in an independent way.

3. **Researcher initiated directly funded research:** The third category would meet all five criteria for independence, but the actual level of independence of this type of research is negotiated, in each case subject to the individual approval of the MFA or Embassy funding counterpart based on relevance and utility criteria. It is also un-buffered by any mediating quality control structure.
4. **Commissioned research:** Commissioned research is obviously much less independent than the previous categories. The themes are defined, but the questions are also specified in a Terms of Reference with an outline of the methodological approach. As such, it does not meet the first three criteria of independence. However, the researchers often have considerable freedom in applying the approach and methods. The most serious constraints are often the time and resource limits specified in the Terms of Reference.

To what extent commissioned research fulfills the last two criteria – the ability to develop conclusions and recommendations without any interference and freely disseminate the results is more contentious. Some argue that Norad and MFA respect the researchers’ integrity and in the large majority of cases will not try to influence the conclusions and recommendations of any commissioned study. Several researchers pointed to the culture of openness and willingness to accept criticism in the Norwegian aid bureaucracy which is much higher than in, for example, the World Bank or in most UN organizations.

Researchers’ views on MFA or Norad commissioned research

Degrees of independence of censorship?

- I always write what I think, but many others don’t.
- I have lost funding several times because of being too critical.
- Great pressure was exerted to avoid negative conclusions and use a language sufficiently vague for them to claim that all is well.
- You can be critical. Whether you will ever be asked again is an entirely different matter.
- Sadly, negotiated conclusions are the order of the day. The fight is usually about the executive summary.
- Come on, funders are more sophisticated than this.
- The interference is more sophisticated. If seeing conclusions they don’t like, they demand more ‘evidence’, or else they say it is ‘subjective’ and cannot be part of the report.

The comments above should not be regarded as representative of the entire development research community. Indeed, in response to the specific question in our survey – “When carrying out commissioned research, has it happened that the agency/institution which commissioned the research has tried to influence your conclusions, or put pressure on you to delete or modify critical parts of your study?” – the overwhelming majority of our respondents simply answered “No”. Similarly in personal interviews in which subjects could elaborate on the question of censorship and/or self-censorship, the response was equally negative.

There are limits to openness, however, which is often expressed in the selection of researchers. Some mentioned that they had been unofficially “blacklisted” by Norad/MFA and not awarded a contract because they were perceived as too controversial or critical of the organization or the subject area to be evaluated. It has not been possible for us to verify allegations of this sort or to quantify the frequency of such cases.

Another similar “grey” area is the power of self-censorship – a self-imposed effort to make the conclusions more acceptable in order to secure future contracts. Such self-censorship obviously happens, but it is again difficult to prove or quantify. Hardly any of our informants deny that self-censorship is a problem. Very few researchers admit that they themselves practice self-censorship, while many more believe that it is common among their colleagues.

Several informants also underlined the issue of form, or the importance of how criticism is presented. Radically critical conclusions can often be presented and also accepted if they are not phrased in aggressive language. There are also examples of researchers being kept at a distance more because of their confrontational manner than the substance of their critique.

3.2.2 How much of such research can be classified as independent?

Based on these distinctions, we would classify the research on Norwegian development assistance such as that supported by the Fund for Development History at the University of Oslo, which receives no support from the MFA, as fully independent. We would also classify researcher initiated and programmatic research funded through the RCN as substantially independent. We do not consider researcher-initiated directly MFA-funded research and research commissioned either by the MFA or by Norad, to be independent.

3.2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of commissioned research

Researchers' views on advantages:

- Access to data, informants and policy-makers.
- I enjoy doing commissioned research. It is important to influence policies!
- It can give access to information that would be difficult to get otherwise.
- It is more prone to be of high relevance and used by policy-makers and others.
- It may contribute to relevance and to closer contacts and exchanges between researchers and users.
- Advantages for the policy-makers, yes. Advantages for research, no.
- Generally, you have a unique access to data and decisions-makers which you rarely get if you do basic research only. This is tremendously underestimated.
- Consultants are more dependent, but much more productive.

Researchers' views on disadvantages:

- It contributes to narrowing down research agendas. Research that critically investigates key assumptions of development cooperation will remain unfunded.
- Usually less time, and less room for further theoretical or comparative reflection.
- You never get enough time.
- The amount of research in specific areas may be too influenced by day-to-day topics, current political trends, etc.
- It is based on the funders' needs and interests.
- It is usually short-term and policy-oriented rather than long-term and basic research.
- It can create dependence on certain funders.
- It forces researchers to switch topic as funders' interests change, thereby undermining the long-term buildup of research competence.

3.2.4 Influence of discipline, theory and ideology on perceptions and definitions of independence

We did not find any significant differences of opinion as to what constituted independence or lack of it based on discipline, theory or ideology among any of the professional groups that we interviewed: researchers, primary research users in the MFA, Norad staff, NGO representatives, or political party staff members.

3.3 Structural support or limitations to independence

i. To what extent did the major research programmes encourage independent development assistance research?

We found no evidence that independent research on development assistance received encouragement in any of the major research programmes. In the course of this evaluation, we also learned from researchers that although the RCN had proposed that a thematic programme to support research on development assistance be included in the 2011 budget, which was also supported by Norad, the proposal did not receive funding priority. On inquiry, this was confirmed by MFA staff.³²

ii. To what extent has research that could give unforeseen or inconvenient answers to development aid issues been encouraged?

We found no indication that research that could give unexpected or inconvenient answers was either encouraged or discouraged. We found some anecdotal evidence

³² We would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Section for Development Policy, for their prompt response and aid in providing confirmation for this information.

that some individual researchers felt that they had suffered negative consequences after presenting critical findings, but were unable to verify any specific cases of reprisal. On the whole, researchers who received support from the RCN administered programmes felt that they were free to present their findings, whether convenient or otherwise. On the other hand, many of those engaged in commissioned research felt that inconvenient findings were discouraged.

iii. To what extent has the aid administration (MFA and Norad) influenced the support given to independent development assistance research through appointed board members of research programs or otherwise? Specific areas favored? Particular issues systematically denied funding?

We found no evidence of any deliberate effort to influence selection decisions through the appointment of board members of research programmes. On the contrary, we found evidence of significant effort having been made to avoid any conflict of interest on selection committees. However, a number of sources both within the administration and among researchers told us that the RCN boards and selection committees were narrowly discipline-based, which had the effect of discouraging (or not accepting) inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary proposals, which are increasingly important in the field of development research. We were also told that “politically strategic” people were aware of this issue, but that it was not clear how long it will take to correct the situation.

iv. Role of implicit, rather than explicit expectations and self-censorship?

In the course of interviews with researchers, we collected a sufficient amount of anecdotal evidence to support a finding of implicit expectations and self-censorship in response. We were unable to verify any concrete cases, but this is clearly a matter of concern. (See Researcher comments, above).

v. Tension between formal structures and informal networks in influencing the flow of funding, information, and assessments of quality and value:

We found clear evidence of tension between highly transparent formal structures, designed to rule out conflict of interest and prejudice in the RCN and the distinctly non-transparent use of informal networks and personal contacts in the selection of researchers directly commissioned by the MFA. We also found a number of indications that assessment of the quality and value of unfamiliar research methods and approaches or “unknown” researchers was susceptible to the influence of informal “old-boy” networks, unacknowledged pre-judgment, or simple lack of familiarity in both programme and commissioned research. (See conclusions and recommendations below) We found convincing evidence that the “revolving door” described by Tvedt is largely an Oslo phenomenon, which does not apply to university and institute staff in the rest of the country.

3.4 If independent research is found to be limited, what are the likely reasons?

We found independent research on Norwegian development assistance to be limited, but neither absent nor insignificant. A small number of publications appeared annually, totaling 82 publications over the ten year period in question. (See Annex E). We were able to verify with the authors that a number of these publica-

tions were produced without any support from the MFA budget. However, we would like to emphasize that the 82 publications included in the bibliography in Annex E are not a comprehensive listing of the independent research on Norwegian development assistance that was produced over the period in question. The bibliography was compiled through several different types of searches focused primarily in the social sciences. (See bibliography process description for details of the search structures). There are very likely to be other independently-funded publications in the natural and health sciences, or in law, as well as in several other disciplines. For example, we are confident of the very likely existence of research on Norwegian engagement in peace-building and conflict activities. Our goal was not to compile a comprehensive bibliography, but to construct a sample and, as these fields use different classification and key word systems, we focused our efforts on those disciplines most likely to produce an applicable result.

As a second caveat, we were unable to obtain from either the RCN or Norad a list of the authors and titles of research publications funded through their programmes over the period in question. As RCN and Norad do not require that recipients report to them all publications resulting from programme funding and there is no formal requirement that the source of funding be acknowledged in the publication itself, we were not able to reliably establish the source of funding for all of the publications that we reviewed (See Recommendations). While we made every effort to rule out anything that appeared to be commissioned research, we cannot definitely state whether RCN-funded publications included in the list were produced with funding from an open or a thematic programme.

i. Lack of interest in the research community: Several researchers suggested that research limited to Norwegian development assistance was too narrow a topic to be of great interest, while others felt that investigation of Norwegian development assistance from the perspective of political history was of both intellectual interest and practical application. Others suggested that comparative research on development aid was more interesting as well of greater instrumental value. We were unable to establish a consistent view on this question, which varied according to discipline and the interests of individual researchers.

ii. Lack of interest in the wider society – politicians, aid agency staff, aid NGOs, academic community, and the general public: This question has less to do with the characteristic of “independence” than with the level of interest in research on Norwegian development assistance, per se. In the course of the evaluation, we gained the impression from both researchers and aid agency staff themselves of a widespread lack of interest in research on development assistance among development policy-makers. The structural and cultural reasons for this are discussed further below, as are some potential measures to encourage more evidence-based policy-making through greater use of analytical work by aid decision-makers and practitioners.

iii. Prejudice in favor of disciplinary boundaries and/or resistance to interdisciplinary research: See above discussion of RCN (3.3.iii) above.

iv. Reluctance to do research on sensitive issues: Again, this question is not related to “independent” research, but research on Norwegian development assistance. Similar to i. above, there was greater interest in the research community for comparative research on development assistance. We received some anecdotal evidence regarding the consequences of addressing sensitive topics, but this did not appear to be a major concern.

v. Lack of high quality applications: It was not possible to determine relative quality. The analysis of RCN programmes in Annex D indicates a lack of proposals, rather than a higher than normal rejection rate.

vi. Lack of funding or limited sources of funding: The dominant role of MFA as the primary source of funding was of serious concern for a majority of the researchers interviewed. In light of its mandated responsibility to anticipate future policy needs and to fund development research to meet them, the recent MFA decision not to prioritize research on development assistance is particularly troubling.

Gunnar Sørbo stated in 2001 that “in the Nordic countries, while foreign aid budgets are not the exclusive source of funding for such research, development research is nonetheless perceived (by both researchers and research-policy makers) as being primarily in the domain of development cooperation rather than within the domain of overall research policy”. He continued by noting that the situation is more or less the same in the other Scandinavian countries: In Sweden, Sida funds the lion’s share of development-related research, while the funding of development research in Denmark is regarded primarily as Danida’s responsibility. It should be noted however, that a considerable share of development research in both Sweden and Denmark is produced by tenured staff at the regular academic institutions, in contrast to the dominant role of independent or semi-independent centers in Norwegian development.³³

Other researchers echoed the same concern:

“Today, almost all Norwegian research on poverty and development in Latin America, Africa and Asia is funded out of the MFA development budget. In a rapidly globalizing world, it is imperative that other Norwegian ministries realize their responsibility for funding and utilizing research in poor countries and regions. Norwegian research is introvert, concentrates too much on Norwegian problems, and far too much on rich peoples’ problems” (Stein Tønnesson, FDS 2001).

vi. Rejection for other reasons? Again, the rejection rate for proposals in this category was no higher than the rate for other categories.

vii. Preference for international rather than Norwegian research/researchers: Several researchers repeated to us a statement made by an MFA staff member suggesting a preference for international rather than Norwegian researchers,

³³ Sørbo, Gunnar and Johan Helland, “Danida and Danish development research: towards a new partnership”. In *Partnerships at the leading edge: a Danish vision for knowledge, research and development*, Copenhagen, 2001.

however, this anecdote referred to high-profile public lecturers, not development researchers. A large majority of the independent publications on Norwegian development assistance that we found were written either by individual Norwegian researchers or teams consisting of only Norwegian authors, suggesting that this does not appear to be a factor. At the same time, the majority of the publications identified as independent appeared in international publications and in English, which is an indication of quality meeting international standards.

viii. Fads and interest-driven focus: A number of researchers pointed to shifting priorities and interests as a negative factor. Several expressed this in terms of an opposition between a “values” based policy intended to serve the needs of the ostensible beneficiaries in the Global South versus an “interests” driven policy in which the needs of the Global South are secondary.

3.5 What are the most important conditions for independent Norwegian development aid research?

On the practical level, the most important conditions are predictable and adequate flows of funding, both of which are required for long-term planning. Research institutions, like developing countries, need to be able to plan over the medium- to long-term and be able to rely on the necessary funding to build their research capacity to meet anticipated needs. If the policy level is driven by short-term interests or popular fads, instead of providing strategic vision and strategic resources, the ability of both the research sector and the policy-makers to function effectively is reduced.

i. Factors perceived as supportive of independent research

What emerged from our inquiries as the key factor is effective demand. That is, aid administrators and other stakeholders who recognize the value of independent research, seek it out, apply it in their own work, and are willing to provide sustained financial support to the researchers and institutions that produce it.

On the part of the researchers, in addition to the training, skills, dedication and insight required for successful intellectual inquiry in any field, the key factors are the ability to present the complexities of social change in language and concepts accessible to a generalist audience and to mediate between the slow pace of both research and social change and the much shorter time-frames of the political, budget, and media cycles. In effect, researchers must educate their audience of potential users to appreciate the practical value of their research products.

ii. Perceived barriers to independent research

On the part of aid policy-makers: Lack of time, lack of readiness to engage with complexity, lack of appreciation of the scientific method as the only way to produce valid evidence, and a resistance to acknowledging the mistakes of the past in order to avoid them in the future.

On the part of aid and research administrators: Multi-disciplinary, multi-national, comparative research on different aid models and donor approaches were of greater interest to researchers and policy-makers than research on Norwegian

development assistance only. In the past RCN thematic calls have not encouraged collaboration across disciplines. The new NORGLOBAL umbrella programme has been designed to support international and domestic collaboration across institutions and disciplinary boundaries. However, measures to explicitly encourage comparative studies have not yet been put in place. (See recommendations below).

iii. Demand: Who uses research on Norwegian development assistance and how is it used by Norwegian policy-makers?

By NGOs: Among secondary users of research on development, NGO representatives were primarily interested in the relevance of research to their areas of interest, such as gender, anti-corruption, or the environment, and in comparative research on practical application in the field. They actively sought out research, would welcome greater access to researchers and more regular and frequent public presentations of research results, and favored a mechanism for contributing field-based observations to researchers for further study and investigation. They were considerably less concerned about the level of independence of the researcher.

By politicians: Similarly, the politicians interviewed were not particularly interested in independence per se, but were selective in their use of research and interested in research and researchers who supported their own political agenda.

By MFA and policy-makers: The primary audience of research on Norwegian development assistance, MFA staff and policy-makers, expressed completely opposite preferences to those of the researchers. Although many researchers recognized the advantages of commissioned research, the vast majority of those interviewed expressed their strong preference for the greatest degree of independence possible. In contrast, the MFA staff strongly preferred, and appeared to use more or less exclusively, the least independent and least transparent form - directly commissioned research. Even tendered commissioned research appeared to be less frequently used. As noted above, time constraints and lack of specialist training contribute to their preference for “tailor-made” directly applicable research products.

Are there any examples of independent research that has had a direct impact on the formulation of development policy or on the choice, design or implementation of development programmes or projects?

Researchers' views:

- Policy-makers are not very interested in research, but they do listen to a handful of researchers.
- Policy-makers are generally not interested in research. They are interested in getting confirmation of what they think they already know... Therefore, in order to influence policies, it is much more efficient to go to the press rather than to policy-makers directly. Because they are sensitive to what the press says.
- Not much interest in the findings themselves. But they (i.e. policy-makers) show an interest in the competence I have built up, which they can draw on through direct contact with me.
- It depends on your own ability to have influence and be seen, e.g. by giving talks, lectures and (being) visible in the media.
- The links between researchers and policy-makers are very weak, in general.
- We, the researchers, are not very good at disseminating our research and making our findings accessible. But policy-makers want 'manuals' with easy answers which we do not like to deliver...Policy-makers are obsessed with quantification. They want figures, concrete results.
- Direct impact of research on Norwegian development cooperation? Yes, there are several. I myself have had such an impact several times. (refers to commissioned research)
- We are very far from Oslo, and from powerful institutions and politicians" (a voice from Bergen)
- The Norwegian development sector is an example of an intellectual ruin... We just import and accept messages from Washington... The Norwegian researchers play a marginal role. (a former scholar, at present policy-maker)
- They lack both time and competence to absorb our findings.
- Policy-makers are less interested in research than earlier. The focus today is on the recipient countries being in the driving seat, and an increasing share of Norway's ODA is multilateral aid. This may explain why there is less scope for planning and policy-making at Norad and MFA than in the past.

3.6 Supply versus demand

Would increasing the supply of independent research be sufficient? Some MFA staff questioned the value of its total investment in research. They agreed that research is not adequately integrated into the design of Norwegian development cooperation, but felt that the problem is that academic research is too often detached from policy processes and practices. The perception of independent research carried out by academics at the universities that prevails among MFA staff is that it is too far removed from the practical needs of policy-makers. Institute-based researchers are considered to be more practice-oriented, and the bulk of commissioned research is carried out by the institute sector or consultants.

Demand – Use of research

- If you want to stimulate research on development assistance, you need to think about it differently. NORAD –NGOs need a systematic interface to bring field practice-based issues to the attention of the research community. (NGO stakeholder)
- We had two meetings to discuss it with the MFA. At first they were defensive, but not blocking the results. There is a tendency to say that problems or issues raised took place a long time ago and we do things differently now. (Independently funded researcher)

Supply of research

- None of the RCN thematic programs were focused on Norwegian aid. There is not great interest in working on Norwegian development assistance and there is no earmarked funding for it. (Researcher)
- At Bergen, the research on Tanzania is very relevant to Norad, but not focused on Norwegian aid. (Researcher)
- For example, the Palestinian Research Institute – there are very good researchers who are not being used and in Sudan, as well. Why are they not being utilized by policy-makers? (Researcher)

Our informants among policy-makers confirm, by and large, the weak links that exist between research and policy. Their explanations also tend to coincide: lack of time and sometimes lack of knowledge – most policy-makers are generalists rather than specialists. When policy-makers need new knowledge, they prefer to commission a study rather than searching through an academic library to see if they can find something useful.

Researchers' views:

- The MFA thinks that “academics” don’t understand: “We, the practitioners, have a better sense of the situation” - but they don’t really. (Researcher)
- There are structural reasons why people in the MFA don’t have time to read and apply research. The staff turnover is also very fast. They read reports only for critical comments to put the lid on them. What comes out in the end often falsifies what actually happened. The MFA staff is forward- looking and impatient and they believe in slogans.
- In the MFA, they are at a loss. They want to use research, but have no idea how to go about getting it. Transaction costs.³⁴ There is no strategic thinking about how to use researchers. (researcher)
- They are in a hurry – difficulty in recognizing cultural change is slow. In principal, they want to understand the recipient culture, but they don’t have time, they are driven by the political cycle and the budget cycle, rather than the absorption and change capacity of the recipient. (Researcher)
- The issue with the MFA is cultural as well as structural. There is a belief that looking backward is useless. Historical research is not too far from being applications-oriented. Past experience tells you what doesn’t work, which is highly useful in designing future work. (Researcher)
- It should be possible to describe what went wrong to avoid others making the same mistakes. (NGO stakeholder).
- They don’t use what is written – they don’t read. From reading archival materials in the Central Archives, I know that there are huge numbers of reports that have never been opened. (Researcher)
- The Norwegian government has been less interested in our anti-corruption work than the private sector. (NGO stakeholder)
- The problem is not really openness, rather a contradiction between openness and lack of interest. We have always felt Norad to be open, but not interested. (Researcher)
- Even people who have a very close dialogue with the MFA feel they don’t have that much influence. This is a fundamental problem with the way research is used or not used in policy- making. (Researcher)
- Norwegian policies are quite innovative (peace-building). However, there is no research-based model of how to incorporate this experience more broadly into Norwegian development policy. (Researcher)

Not surprisingly, policy-makers sometimes also mention the limited relevance and even low quality of Norwegian development research - “Why read a mediocre report from a Norwegian researcher when we can invite big international stars like Paul Collier or Hernando de Soto to our own seminars?” The actual relevance of a Collier or de Soto to the practical issues facing the majority of Norwegian aid policy-makers and administrators may be quite limited and this comment may be a reflection of the influence of political fads, as noted above.

One reason that policy-makers show limited interest in Norwegian independent research is that they seem to be largely unaware of those Norwegian researchers who have conducted critical independent research that is of direct relevance for Norway’s aid programme. In one case that we learned of in the course of this evaluation, when policy-makers became aware of relevant research through coverage in the popular press, their main concern was to suppress a public scandal.

³⁴ By “transaction costs”, the Evaluation team interprets this as referring to the time investment needed to identify relevant research.

While the initial reaction was defensive, what the researchers see as lack of interest, as evidenced by the failure of aid administrators to follow up, may be more the result of the lack of a mechanism to mediate between the different “cultures” of the foreign policy administrator and the academic researcher.

i. Characteristics of current supply of independent research: In the social sciences, a significant amount of the independent research that we found is based in the universities and conducted by economic and political historians. Another sub-group of independent research falls in the area of anthropological and sociological studies. Other areas of independent work include international relations, human rights, and gender studies. As noted in the discussion above, we did not concentrate on the natural and applied sciences, but believe that other clusters of independent researchers and publications are to be found in those fields. Despite the strong focus on governance and public administration reform in Norwegian development policy, we did not find significant numbers of independent publications in these fields.

ii. Mind-sets: The culture of development agencies and policy-making versus the culture of development research: The RCN evaluation (2007) found that commissioned research was not seen as a threat by most researchers. This was confirmed in our interviews in which researchers reported that they were primarily concerned with maintaining a balance between academic research and policy-oriented commissioned research. Commissioned research per se was not regarded as a problem, provided that it fit into the longer term research agenda of the institution. In this case, it can provide access to data and documents that are otherwise difficult to obtain. What was seen as a problem was the difficulty of securing the steady and predictable funding that is required to build sustainable long term institutional capacity.

Development research in Norway has followed quite closely the priorities set by those who make development policy and also fund the largest share of this research. As a result, development research has been obliged to demonstrate both its academic quality and its relevance to policy makers. Close connections between policy-makers and researchers provide Norwegian aid authorities with relevant expertise. At the same time such close connections may contribute to an atmosphere of uncritical consensus and severely limit the independence of research, the critical investigation of aid effectiveness, assessment of the impact of development policy, and thus the broader relevance of development research. While there is an inherent tension between independent research for developing new knowledge and commissioned research for immediate application, this tension does not necessarily constitute a conflict. It does however, require transparency and open discussion of how best to manage the interface between two quite different understandings of the responsibilities and functions of research.

iii. Real pathways of information-seeking and the exercise of influence: A virtually unanimous opinion among our informants, including those who answered our questionnaire, is that policy-makers rarely read studies published by Norwegian development researchers. The problem is not unique to Norway, but can be found

in virtually every development community. Lack of time is often mentioned as a key constraint, but several policy-makers also indicated that they are generalists, not specialists, and that the academic style and content of research publications is a barrier. Aid officials also questioned the relevance – and occasionally the quality - of current research for the design and implementation of Norwegian development aid.

It is also clear that while academic studies have a very limited circle of readers among policy-makers, there are a number of individual researchers who are being listened to. Both formal and informal contacts between a sub-set of researchers and policy-makers play an important role, not least in discussions about Norwegian aid to key countries and regions such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Angola, Sri Lanka, and the Middle East, where Norwegian researchers have built up a wealth of relevant knowledge and networks, or thematic areas (vaccines, climate, energy and others) where Norwegian foreign policy interests and/or high-profile issues are involved. Informal networks involving policy-makers and a few researchers appear to play a more important role than formal, academic contacts.

iv. Alternate models used to promote independence – or multi-variant

research: At present, reliance on one dominant funder, the MFA, tends to promote competition among all of the institutions that conduct development research. An exploration of the positive and negative aspects and suitability of other models for funding research on development assistance could provide useful information. The U.S.A. model of heavy reliance on a large number of private funders with explicit and conflicting political perspectives represents an extreme case and is not easily adaptable to Norwegian society. However, other models could be studied for their potential adaptability. These include: the German approach, in which state funding is distributed to each of the political parties to support a foundation responsible for political education, including development interventions and development research, on the basis of their representation in Parliament, and special tax status for a number of independent and state supported research institutes; the DFID approach, which encourages collaboration among multiple development research institutions through five-year framework agreements; or the French model, which is more highly centralized. A comparative study of national models for development research funding could serve as the basis for a discussion of the available alternatives which may be suitable for Norway. Such a discussion should include the recently proposed initiative to cooperate with Sida and Danida in supporting independent research on aid effectiveness through an agreement with UNU/WIDER in Helsinki. Expanding Nordic cooperation would make sense, however, WIDER currently does not have an established record of publications or expertise in the area of aid effectiveness and would need to develop adequate depth of staffing in this specialized field of research for this to be a viable option.

v. Alternate models to promote broader access to research and to translate research results into forms useful for policy-makers, the aid community, and the public:

The Norwegian academic institutions which conduct development research today have high-quality home pages from which most of their publications can be downloaded. While this is a simple and direct way of providing access to research, there is also a need for more active means of disseminating research to

time-constrained aid officials, politicians, journalists and the general public, who may not know where to look or have the time and skills to find the research that would be most relevant for them.

An illustrative example is the *Policy briefs* produced by CMI which regularly summarize research publications in an easily accessible manner. The four page long U4 Brief, published by the Anti-Corruption Centre at CMI, is said to reach 6,000 subscribers including individuals and institutions in Norway and abroad.

An example of a different kind is provided by Fafo, which in addition to making all of its publications available on demand also invites government officials, NGO representatives, journalists, and other interested parties to “Fafo breakfasts” where researchers are given the opportunity to present a recent study to an interested audience. Such events facilitate informal contacts between researchers and policy-makers, and provide an opportunity for people from different parts of the “development community” to exchange ideas and get to know each other.

The University of Tromsø, Forum for Development Cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, Centre for Sami Studies offers another example, providing a meeting place for researchers, policy-makers and managers (public and NGO), and indigenous peoples, for discussion of how Norwegian development assistance affects indigenous peoples and how it can be improved. The Forum is active in supporting long-term, independent research, comparative research, inter- and multi-disciplinary research, dissemination, popularization, and meeting places.

These examples show that approaches such as these dedicated one-day research showcase or forum meetings can be useful, while others described to us, such as the failure of “brown-bag” lunches to attract an audience, are not. One conclusion might be that adding informal presentations to a normal work day doesn’t work, while external dedicated events may be more successful. More work will be required to identify the most effective transmission mechanisms for getting research results to policy-makers.

4. Findings and Lessons Learned

We found broad general agreement among researchers and aid administrators and policy-makers on the definition of research independence and the characteristics of varying degrees of independence. However, their preferences for independent research were diametrically opposed. As discussed below, these preferences are expressed in current funding modalities.

Although many researchers recognized the advantages of commissioned research, the vast majority of those interviewed expressed their strong preference for the greatest degree of independence possible. In contrast, the MFA staff strongly preferred, and described themselves as relying almost exclusively on, the least independent and least transparent form -- directly commissioned research. In effect, we found that the basic problem was less the limited supply of independent research, but inadequate demand for it.

Even more problematic, we found considerable evidence that existing research (whether independent or commissioned) on development assistance is not being used effectively by its primary audience. Our informants among policy-makers confirm, by and large, poorly developed links between research and policy. Their explanations also tend to coincide with those provided by development researchers. These include structural barriers such as lack of time and generalist training, but also cultural differences. Policy-makers and aid managers tend to be instrumental, forward-looking and operate within the short cycles created by the political and budget processes. In contrast, researchers work cycles are longer term and more reflective, analyzing what has happened to draw lessons from it for the future.

The sense of frustration and disconnection between development researchers and development actors which was described to us by both groups in the course of this evaluation is a serious problem. It is not unique to Norway, but characterizes the relationship between these two professional communities internationally. Bridging the gap between research and policy-making will require an exploration of alternatives that go well beyond the scope of this evaluation. In the recommendations below, we propose some initial measures that could be taken to improve the transmission of development assistance research findings to development policy makers and stakeholders. However, a review of alternative approaches and in-depth discussions between the research and policy-making communities will be required to find a mutually compatible resolution.

Lessons Learned

Using the findings of the 2007 evaluation of Norwegian Development Research as a baseline, we can confirm that several of its recommendations have been put into practice. Among them:

- Setting aside long-term funding (5-10 years) is vital to building up capacity and ensuring the researchers' ability to have a long-term focus on development research.
- A stronger funding focus on international collaboration, as well as on domestic project collaborations/staff mobility.³⁵

Two current Research Council of Norway programmes in particular incorporate these approaches: the Centres of Excellence Scheme (SFF III) ³⁶ which provides 5 – 10 year funding to selected institutions on a competitive basis to support long-term research and expanded international research collaboration and the Norway as Global Partner programme (NORGLOBAL), which consolidates a number of earlier programmes and emphasizes multi-disciplinary selection panels and international research teams.

On the other hand, it does not appear that any action has been taken to expand the scope of researcher-initiated research, identified as one of the most important challenges for Norwegian development research by the 2007 evaluation team.

- *Funding structures: A larger share of the resources should be allocated through open calls for proposals and be based on academic quality criteria only. This implies that open calls, rather than programme calls, for research proposals should be the main funding alternative offered by RCN.*³⁷

Nor have more resources been dedicated to research on development assistance. "It is amazing, for instance, how little research is conducted on the effects of aid and development assistance, even though this topic is crucial to Norwegian foreign policy."³⁸

There is still only one small program administered by the RCN which issues open calls and also accepts proposals on Norwegian development research, funded by the Ministry of Education and Research, not the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Independent, researcher-initiated basic development research will not be incorporated under this action-oriented programme, but will continue to be administered under Independent Projects – Environment and Development (FRIMUF). In the report "Evaluation of Norwegian development research", the international panel recommends that funds be earmarked for independent Norwegian development research. The Research Council currently administers funds for independent environment and development research under the auspices of FRIMUF (Independent Projects – Environment and Development). Approximately NOK 30 million is allocated annually from the Ministry of Education and Research's budget to projects related to environment and development

³⁵ Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007), p.116.

³⁶ <http://www.forskningradet.no/en/Funding/SFF/1253964991338>

³⁷ Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007), p. 8.

³⁸ Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation (2007), p. 110.

and also to interdisciplinary research. A small proportion of these funds is allocated to Norwegian development research."³⁹

Lesson learned I

The arguments in favor of increasing the independence of development researchers in general, and the supply of independent research on development assistance and Norwegian development assistance in particular, remain persuasive. However, the preferences of MFA staff for easily actionable commissioned research are based on institutional and cultural constraints. The high transaction costs -- to both the producers and potential users -- will have to be addressed to reduce the structural barriers to accessible development research findings before MFA staff will demand, and fund it.

Lesson learned II

In addition, in the absence of an increase in the absolute volume of research funding, shifting more resources to independent research would entail reducing funding to current recipients, in particular the research institutes, which already feel themselves under pressure from the shift to less core and more competitive funding modalities. In the trade-off between the benefits of transparent and competitive allocation of funding and the costs in time devoted to producing proposals which risk rejection, the research institutes understandably resist absorbing the cost and risk side of the equation.

In contrast, the recommendations for improving linkages between Norwegian researchers and institutions and international research institutions, supporting inter- or multi-disciplinary team proposals (all of which should contribute to greater independence and innovation), and providing funding to long-term and basic research faced little resistance because they moved resources in a direction welcomed by the established research institutions. Discussions and negotiations will have to be carried out between the institutions which fund research and those which produce it to achieve an acceptable balance between the legitimate need for adequate and predictable funding for core, open, thematically focused, and commissioned research, all of which are necessary.

Lesson learned III

In addition to potentially greater innovation, an argument advanced in favor of greater independence is that it increases the willingness of researchers to present critical or inconvenient findings that challenge official policy or established practices. However, another key factor is that critical findings must be received (as well as presented), in a spirit of constructive engagement to have a positive effect. Based on a number of the interviews conducted in the course of this evaluation, as well as the findings of the 2007 evaluation and some of the responses to the draft of this report, this is not always the case. While a degree of institutional resistance and individual sensitivity to criticism is to be expected, a defensive reaction reinforces the perception among researchers that an analysis that is too critical or inconvenient could result in the loss of future funding or commissions.

39 NORGLOBAL webpage Last updated: 09.08.2010.

While this observation goes well beyond the remit of this assignment, we include it for consideration as an area for potential inclusion in professional training for aid administrative staff.

Lesson learned IV

Despite the very high level of transparency maintained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Research Council of Norway and Norad, in the course of gathering quantitative information to support this analysis, we encountered problems in collecting certain types of information. These included: difficulty in establishing the titles and subject areas of all publications resulting from funding administered by the RCN, difficulty in establishing the funding sources of individual publications, difficulty in establishing exactly what proportion of total funding went to different types of research or subject fields, and difficulty in evaluating the thematic and other characteristics of unsuccessful proposals submitted to RCN programmes. To facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of NORGLOBAL in the medium term and other programmes in the future, we propose a number of measures below to simplify the collection of this type of indicator.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations: More, Better or Different?

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation ask for ways to strengthen and expand independent research on Norwegian development cooperation. As illustrated in **Annex D**, we found few examples of independent research on Norwegian aid among the publications resulting from the major development-related programmes of the Research Council of Norway, e.g. in “Development Paths in the South,” “Poverty and Peace,” and others. The majority of the resulting publications are relevant to Norwegian development cooperation, but they cannot be characterized as research on development assistance. In contrast, as illustrated in **Annex E**, we found a small, but nonetheless significant amount of research on Norwegian development assistance that was and continues to be produced outside of the orbit of MFA funded programmes. We also note the existence of an untapped resource in the developing country researchers who trained through MFA capacity-building programmes administered by Norad, whose work is not collected or published for use outside of their own countries.

Our findings indicate that independent research on Norwegian development assistance is limited in comparison to the much larger volume of development research, and that policy-makers do not seek out the work of independent researchers, but prefer to rely primarily on known researchers and research products commissioned either directly by MFA or through Norad. We were unable to identify any cases in which independent research had a significant impact on the design and implementation of Norwegian development aid, although we did find independent research on Norwegian development programmes which offered well-grounded, serious, and useful critiques.

Throughout this report we have applied a working definition of “independence” based on the financial relationship between the funding source and the researcher, using the degree of proximity (direct versus increasingly indirect linkages) as a metric. In this connection, Tvedt raises an important issue. If “independence” is a function of relative distance from the source of funding, then independence will be limited when funding sources are highly centralized. Many countries acknowledge the practical, application-oriented, or political agenda attached to financial support and pursue balance through heterogeneity. This liberal model assumes that multiple sources of funding, each of which may carry some ideological or philosophical baggage, whether explicit or imputed, will nonetheless produce multiple competing approaches, which can then be evaluated for their degree of logical coherence, evidentiary strength and practical applicability. However, as the liberal model is a

poor fit with the structure of the Norwegian economy, heterogeneity will have to be sought through other means.

The tasks outlined in the TORs for this evaluation are based on the assumption that more independent research on Norwegian development assistance will lead to greater creativity and innovation and produce the fresh thinking required for new and better approaches to development support. Based on past experience, it does not seem likely that more core support or un-earmarked funding from the RCN alone would stimulate interest and motivation among researchers to address issues related to Norwegian development cooperation. However, while earmarked funding for research on development assistance is likely to produce more research on development assistance, there is no guarantee that the research produced would be more innovative than current research, or more independent.

If we reduce the main task in the TORs – how to support independent research – to what we think is its underlying intent – how to support more new approaches to how to do development – then the fundamental issue may not be its funding source (which is unlikely to change in any case), but how to address a different set of issues, which are related to the supply of and demand for research on Norwegian development assistance.

These issues include the relatively small size of the Norwegian development research community and its relatively high level of homogeneity, as well as the limited alternate sources of funding for research on development assistance. On the demand side, Norwegian development actors share a number of characteristics, including a cultural norm of consensus building, an institutional culture based on personal relationships of trust, and a preference for the oral transmission of information, such as briefings, rather than library-based research. There are many positive aspects to these characteristics, but they also contribute to the reproduction or recirculation of practices and beliefs, rather than to creativity and innovation.

Given the likelihood that none of the factors described above can be expected to change in the near term, the recommendations below have been designed to build on existing structures and initiatives, supporting greater independence through measures designed to:

1. Promote heterogeneity in several dimensions among the development research community, and
2. Promote better absorption of heterogeneous ideas about development assistance and approaches among development actors, politicians, and the general public.

The order in which the recommendations are presented below is not meant to suggest any order of priority. They are presented in logical sets of mutually reinforcing activities. Some are already in progress and only require performance monitoring to determine whether they should be extended and expanded. Others can be implemented at zero or minimal cost, such as those related to data collection. Others are likely to require extended negotiations among the affected stakeholders before they can be implemented and will have to be achieved in stages

International and multi-disciplinary cooperation

Based on the highly positive potential impact of the recently instituted NORGLOBAL programme and its potential contribution to increasing the independence, innovation, and visibility of Norwegian development research by encouraging heterogeneity, we recommend that the MFA and RCN:

- a. Continue to support and strengthen collaboration between Norwegian researchers and institutions and international research institutions and networks by encouraging proposals submitted by international teams of researchers, including the graduates of North-South capacity-building programmes. Although many Norwegian researchers are well integrated into the international development research community, encouraging proposals submitted by teams of researchers from different countries would further promote the exchange of ideas, approaches and theories across national as well as disciplinary boundaries and increase the international visibility of Norwegian research.
- b. Continue to support and strengthen the application of multi-disciplinary approaches to the complex issues of sustainable development by ensuring that all open and thematic calls encourage proposals submitted by inter- and multi-disciplinary teams of researchers. Also ensure that selection panels include representatives of the broadest possible range of relevant disciplines and that panel members are familiar with multi-disciplinary programmes and approaches. Just as the establishment of inter-disciplinary programmes at the universities has improved communication and collaboration across disciplinary boundaries, the use of multi-disciplinary panels as a standard practice by the RCN would broaden the perspective of selection panels and increase understanding and appreciation of the innovative potential of inter-disciplinary research proposals.
- c. Continue and consider expanding support to long-term, basic, and exploratory research approaches.

Research on development assistance

In recognition of the distinct roles of both comparative and independent research on development assistance, as well as the increasing visibility of the sub-field of aid effectiveness research⁴⁰, we recommend that the following initiatives be undertaken:

- d. In light of the findings of this report and the strong recommendation of the 2007 evaluation, we encourage the MFA to reconsider its decision not to establish a new RCN research programme focused on Norwegian development assistance. A public discussion of the costs and benefits and design of such a programme would provide an opportunity to consider a number of alternatives, including whether what is needed is more independence in all types of research, more research on Norwegian development assistance, more comparative research on development cooperation, more expertise and research on aid effectiveness, or all of the above.

⁴⁰ Driven by the need of policy-makers for empirical evidence on which to base aid allocations, but hampered by the limitations of available data and analytical tools to assess highly complex social and economic processes, the field of aid effectiveness research has been subject to recurring fads. As a result, aid effectiveness research is extensive, but highly contested both ideologically and methodologically. A simple definition of aid effectiveness is: the study of an "Arrangement for the planning, management and deployment of aid that is efficient, reduces transaction costs and is targeted toward development outcomes including poverty reduction." (Stern, E. et.al. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness, and Development Effectiveness (2008 Copenhagen)*). For an in-depth discussion of aid effectiveness research, see: Cassen, R. and Associates (1994), *Does Aid Work? Report to an Intergovernmental Task Force*, Oxford University Press. For a discussion of some of its limitations, see: Roodman, D. (2007), *Macro Aid Effectiveness Research: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Working Paper Number 134 Center for Global Development.

- e. Support capacity building programmes (scholarships, courses, seminars, etc.) in aid effectiveness, aid evaluation, and development assistance research. We further suggest that a particular effort be made to attract the graduates of prior capacity building support from the Global South to participate in such training.
- f. Support comparative research: There was broad agreement among the researchers and stakeholders interviewed in the course of this evaluation that a narrow focus on only Norwegian development assistance was less attractive. While useful for analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of particular interventions, it was seen as less likely to be the most productive approach to developing alternative approaches to supporting developing countries. In contrast, comparative analyses⁴¹ of recent experiences with different approaches applied over time, place and/or by different development actors, is considered to be far more likely to be both attractive to researchers and to produce results to support evidence-based policy-making as well as help to establish the parameters for aid effectiveness assessments.

Enhancing guarantees of independence

To improve transparency and increase the level of independence in commissioned research, we recommend:

- g. Utilize research contracts rather than consultancy contracts for all commissioned research to better protect the independence of the researchers and research process.⁴²
- h. Establish an expert roster to formalize and make transparent the process of directly commissioned research in place of the current reliance on individual contacts.

Promoting the use of research

The evidence that existing research on development assistance is not being used effectively and the sense of frustration and disconnection between development researchers and development policy-makers described to us in the course of this evaluation reflects serious, but common problems. Their resolution will require in-depth exploration far beyond the mandate of this evaluation. The following recommendations are thus a very preliminary response and remain to be expanded and refined in the future. The key principle to observe in implementing these and other mechanisms is to maintain a separation between the exchange of research products and the exchange of research support.⁴³

- i. Encourage and provide support to the preparation of popularized versions of development research products to improve the dissemination of research results and the interface between researchers, policy-makers, non-governmental organizations, the general public and the media.⁴⁴

41 Comparative analyses consist of an item by item comparison of two or more comparable alternatives, processes, products, qualifications, sets of data, systems, etc.

42 To avoid any misunderstandings regarding the differences between these contracts, it is suggested that a standard statement of the protections provided by a research contract is made obligatory for citation in all resulting publications.

43 We would also like to make clear that conducting independent research and the secondary use of independent research to draw policy applications are two quite different activities. Researchers may present work in progress after their hypothesis and research design have been set and research has begun or draw policy implications from their primary research after it has been completed. Secondary research for policy application is most frequently performed by a different group of individuals (or institutions). On the other hand, it is not unusual for senior scholars, such as Nobel laureates Joseph Stiglitz or Paul Krugman to shift their focus from primary research to policy advocacy later in their careers.

44 This recommendation is not specifically targeted to independent research on Norwegian development assistance, but all research on development funded by the MFA, for public dissemination either through the media or directly from websites to the taxpayers who are ultimately paying for research. This task could logically be assigned to the public information office of either the agency managing the funding (Norad or RCN) or of the MFA in consultation with the authors. In the course of the evaluation we saw examples of publicity briefs presenting research results produced by several of the development research institutes.

- j. To help to bridge the gap between research and policy-making, provide support to third-party institutions to organize regular meetings between researchers, policy-makers and other stakeholders for short presentations and discussion of ongoing and recently completed research. Encourage researchers to participate in moderated discussions of the policy implications and potential applications of their research.⁴⁵ (See Section 3.6.v. for examples)
- k. Create MFA and Norad in-house research services to track current and emerging issues, to prepare briefings, briefing notes, and summaries as needed, and regularly update desk officers and policy staff on available research in their areas of responsibility.

Tracking and Assessment

To improve the ability of development funders, researchers and the public to assess the performance of research programmes:

- l. If not already in place– institute a system of expanded record-keeping to monitor and report on current and future RCN programs. As the pilot intervention, create a system to register all applications for funding to NORGLOBAL and FRIMUF development research programmes by: author(s), author(s) nationality, title, academic field and affiliation(s), title and subject area of project, short abstract, and selection outcome. This would support future assessments of thematic distribution, international collaboration, inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary projects, level of independence, and funding patterns (topic, institutional affiliation, gender, etc). A separate registry should be kept of the names, affiliations, and academic fields of the members of all selection panels.
- m. Improve the tracking of research outputs: We recommend that Norad and the RCN create a tracking system to register all research products wholly or partially supported by the funding they administer, and require that all publications resulting wholly or partially from RCN or Norad support include a standard acknowledgement of the funder and funding programme.
- n. Improve tracking of funding flows: We recommend as a future activity an analytical accounting of MFA research expenditures.⁴⁶
- o. Initiate and support impact assessments⁴⁷ of a few priority programmes, e.g. programmes identified as of high priority by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, within Norwegian development cooperation.
- p. Strengthen external evaluations supported by Norad and ensure synergy/ coordination with long term research efforts.

⁴⁵ The proposal is for presentations of work-in-progress or recently completed studies – i.e. after the research topic and methodology are set and the study is either complete or sufficiently well advanced to produce results. The value of independence is assumed to be broader selection of topic and more innovative research design, both of which would be preserved. The other value, ability to produce critical results at odds with current policy – cannot be guaranteed in any context, however, such results are more likely to be presented in an open forum before peers as well as policy-makers.

⁴⁶ What is meant is more in-depth than a standard accounting (do expenditures correspond to budgeted amounts) or auditing (are expenditures properly documented) procedure. This type of review also looks at selection, oversight, and reporting procedures, how funds are being spent and if the results are in line with mandated goals.

⁴⁷ While *Outputs* are the products, capital goods and services which result from an intervention and *outcomes* are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, *impacts* are positive and negative, primary and secondary *long-term effects* produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. An *impact evaluation* tries to distinguish as carefully and reliably as possible between changes that can be attributed to the evaluated intervention and changes that would have occurred anyway. (OECD/DAC Glossary of Key terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management)

Annexes



Annex A - Terms of Reference

Evaluation of research on Norwegian development assistance

1 Background and rationale

The development cooperation budget has represented close to 1 % of Norway's gross national product for many years, amounting to around 25.7 billion Norwegian kroner in 2009. A large majority of the general public in Norway is supportive of development cooperation. Opinion polls indicate that around half of the population are satisfied with the present level of official aid. Around a third of the population would favour a reduction of some degree, while the remaining part is in favour of an increase.

There is a general perception among people engaged in the Norwegian aid debate, supporters as well as sceptics, that the debate suffers from a lack of knowledge among the general public of the activities, results, challenges and limitations of development cooperation. It is also realised that there is a shortage of robust knowledge about what works, or does not, even among experts and researchers.

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)'s annual reports on the results of Norway's international development cooperation (2007, 2008 and 2009) discuss how difficult it is to obtain solid knowledge about results. According to Norad, it remains difficult to compare the effectiveness of aid across sectors, funding channels and partners.

More fundamental aid critique has also been presented in recent years. Tvedt¹ has argued that many news media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutions are not sufficiently independent of the government and Norad, and that there is too little independent, critical assessment of development cooperation. He emphasises that many NGOs and research institutions are dependent on funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad and that people move frequently ("circulate") between external institutions and the aid administration and points to what he sees as the self-interest of an ever-increasing aid bureaucracy. The result, according to Tvedt, is a widely shared view that aid is fundamentally "good", which holds back much needed independent research about the real results of development cooperation compared to its many good intentions.

Jul-Larsen and Suhrke argue that much of the more internal aid research is useful². Although commissioned and funded by the aid administration, this research benefits from the combination of a close relationship to the same administration and a

1 Terje Tvedt. Utvikingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og makt. Den norske modellen. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk.

2 Pengekrav hindrer bistandskritikk. Kronikk Aftenposten 16.7.07. Eyolf Jul-Larsen og Astri Suhrke, Chr. Michelsens Institutt.

high degree of freedom. They agree with Tvedt, however, that there is a lack of external, independent aid (fundamental, not based on a general “aid is good” approach) research. They believe that the lack of such research is not due to shortage of money or qualified researchers. Rather, they contend, the problem lies in how research in Norway (increasingly) is organised, with emphasis on short-term products over longer term research.

Development research has been supported with funds both under the Research Council of Norway and the aid administration (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad). Although most of the increase in funds in recent years has been for commissioned, short-term research, funds have also been available for research about development cooperation. The amount of such research has, however, been limited. The Research Council of Norway commissioned an evaluation of Norwegian development research in 2007³. The evaluation team found that independent research on critical aid issues, considered important for policy development, was among the largely overlooked areas. They found that there was a low proportion of researcher-initiated and long-term research - preventing independent research – and argued that direct financing leads to dependency. They held the view that dependency, whether it is formal or informal, can cause researchers to hold back conclusions that are in conflict with official policy.

The shortage of independent research of development assistance is particularly relevant when realising the large distance between the decision makers in Norway and the target population in the south. Compared with public interventions in Norway, the voice of the natural controllers of development assistance - the target population itself - is remote and weak. This is an aspect of the principal agent problem, the concern that the aims of the commissioners of aid are crowded out by the internal incentives of the different intermediaries between, say, the Norwegian parliament and the south village.⁴

The programme Development Paths in the South was the largest single development research programme in Norway during most of its existence (1999-2008), although it represented not more than approximately 15 % of the Norwegian funds for development research. The Programme's main objective⁵ was to help building expertise and improving decision making in Norwegian foreign and development aid administration, including through better understanding of globalisation and marginalization, and by increased capacity with emphasis on independent, critical research to enhance diversity and competence.

The programme board, while appreciating that the programme had reached out to a large part of development research, acknowledged that research on development cooperation had received only limited support⁶. The board concluded that it was not possible to tell whether the programme had been able to strengthen research of relevance to development cooperation. The board recommended that funds for

3 The Research Council of Norway. 2007. Norwegian Development Research – An Evaluation.

4 Elinor Ostrom et al: Aid, Incentives and Sustainability, Sida Studies in Evaluation 02/01. Executive Summary, Background to the Report.

5 Translated from the programme document, 1998

6 Programstyrets rapport “Development Paths in the South: What are the results of 10 years of research?”

thematic priorities should be better balanced against an increase of free funds for long-term research in the future.

In an article in 2008⁷ Ofstad og Dybdahl discuss the future of Norwegian development research in connection with the conclusion of the Development Paths in the South Programme. They argued that globalisation means a new framework for all science, also development research, and that competition across borders increases the need for quality. Broad thematic research coverage in Norway is less important since it has become easier and less expensive to obtain research results abroad. At the same time, Norwegian development research can be highly relevant for other countries. They argue that increased weight on quality requires more integration of development and other research, and that this will make the research more relevant for the developing countries as their need for high quality research increases.

2 Rationale

It has become easier to share research results across countries in recent years and hence for Norwegian development policy makers and practitioners to obtain valuable information from international research.

Research that deals directly with Norwegian development assistance, however, remains largely dependent on initiatives and funding in Norway. Compared with the large increase in funds for development assistance in recent years, the amount of independent research on Norwegian development cooperation seems limited. Such research is important both for general information and the public debate about aid and for aid decision makers.

3 Purpose, Audience and Scope

Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the amount, composition, and independence of research on Norwegian development assistance, with a view to assess ways to strengthen independent research in this area. To meet this purpose, the evaluation should identify lessons learned and suggest recommendations.

Audience

The primary audience for the evaluation are the institutions responsible for development cooperation and development research in Norway.

Scope

For the purpose of this evaluation, development assistance research is defined as a sub-sector of development research that deals with development assistance and comprises research on programmes, organisations and policies supported by and used to achieve the goals of Norwegian development cooperation. It includes all parts of Norwegian aid regardless of funding mechanism (bilateral, multilateral, through the private sector or NGOs, or other).

⁷ Arve Ofstad og Ragnhild Dybdahl: Development Research in Norway: Well Established - Time to Move on? Forum for Development Studies, NUPI, June 2008.

The evaluation shall establish a way to distinguish between external, independent as opposed to internal contract development research. Based on this distinction, the evaluation shall give an overview of independent research on Norwegian development assistance during the period 1999-2008, including the major research programmes as well as other relevant research. The analysis shall take into account available results of international research on development assistance.

The analysis of the contribution of Norwegian development assistance research should include possible effects on different levels, including immediate programme implementation, development of policies and more general contributions to debate and reflection around the existing theories that Norwegian aid is built on.

4 Evaluation Questions

To fulfill purpose of the evaluation, at least the following questions should be answered:

- To what extent do different perceptions and definitions of independence for development assistance research exist among researchers and other interested parties? To what extent are such differences related to discipline, scientific theory and ideology?
- What have been the major areas and elements of the research, and what have been the main strengths and weaknesses of its different parts?
- To what extent has the research been able to bring forth new issues of importance to the international aid debate? To what extent has research that could give unforeseen or inconvenient answers related to development aid been encouraged?
- To the extent that the research includes issues related to globalisation, to what degree was it concerned with development aid opportunities as opposed to threats to the aims of development assistance? To what extent did the research investigate alternative ways of supporting developing countries?
- To what extent did the major research programmes encourage independent development assistance research?
- To the extent that the amount of independent development assistance research is found to be limited, what are the likely reasons for this (lack of interest of the research community or the wider society, reluctance to do research on sensitive issues, few applications of sufficient quality, lack of funding, rejection of applications for other reasons, other)?
- What are the most important conditions for independent Norwegian development aid research?
- To what extent has the aid administration (MFA and Norad), through appointed board members in research programs or otherwise, influenced the support given to independent development assistance research?

5 Methods and data collection

It will be part of the assignment to develop a methodological and conceptual framework to ensure objective, transparent, evidence-based and impartial assessments as well as ensuring learning during the course of the evaluation.

- The following methods (as a minimum) and guiding principles should apply:
- Document analyses and interviews with interested parties and other informants

- Data analysis using specified judgment criteria and suitably defined qualitative and quantitative
- indicators. Triangulation and validation of information.
- Assessment of data and information quality (strengths and weaknesses of information sources), highlighting data gaps that may threaten the evaluation.
- Validation, interpretation and feedback workshops shall be held, involving those that have provided information, and others who are relevant.

6 Organisation and requirements

6.1 Composition of Team

The evaluation team will report to Norad through the team leader. All members of the team are expected to have relevant academic qualifications and evaluation experiences. In addition the evaluation team should cover the following competencies:

Competence	Team Leader	The evaluation team
Research competence	Higher relevant degree (preferably PhD or equivalent).	Higher relevant degree, at least one team member with PhD or equivalent
Discipline	Relevant discipline	Relevant disciplines, at least one member with a higher degree in social sciences.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven successful team leading; the team leader must document relevant experience with managing and leading evaluations. • Advanced knowledge and experience in evaluation principles and standards in the context of international development. 	Competence/experience in evaluation and/or research of similar topics
Development Cooperation, including mechanisms for support to development research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive knowledge
Language	English - written, reading, spoken	English - written, reading, spoken Norwegian – ability to read

Quality assurance shall be provided by the company delivering the consultancy services, including a person that is external to the evaluation team.

The team will be responsible for collection of data. Access to archives will be facilitated by Norad.

6.2 Organisation

The evaluation will be managed by Norad's Evaluation Department. An independent team of researchers or consultants will be assigned the evaluation according to the standard procurement procedures of Norad (including open international call for tenders). The team leader shall report to Norad on the team's progress, including any problems that may jeopardize the assignment.

The team is entitled to consult widely with stakeholders pertinent to the assignment. All decisions concerning these ToR, the inception report and other reports are subject to approval by the Evaluation Department.

The evaluation team shall take note of the comments from stakeholders. In case of significant divergence of views between the evaluation team and stakeholders, this should be reflected in the final report.

6.3 Budget

The tender shall present a total budget with stipulated expenses for fees, travel and other items. The evaluation is budgeted with a maximum of 1600 consultant person hours. The team leader is expected to participate in the following three meetings in Oslo: a contract-signing meeting, a meeting to present the work in progress, and a meeting to present the final report. The team is not supposed to travel to developing countries.

The consultants may be requested to make additional presentations, in which case the cost will be covered by Norad outside the tender budget.

7. Reporting and Outputs

The Consultant shall undertake the following:

1. Prepare an inception report providing an interpretation of the assignment. This includes a description of the methodological design to be applied and suggested selection of program components to be subjected to particular studies. The inception report should be of no more than 7 000 words excluding necessary annexes.
2. Prepare a draft final report not exceeding 30 000 words plus necessary annexes, presenting the findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned. The report should contain an executive summary of not more than 2000 words.
3. After receiving comments, prepare a final report.

All reports shall be written in English. The Consultant is responsible for editing and quality control of language. The final report shall be presented in a way that directly enables publication. Report requirements are further described in Annex 3 Guidelines for Reports.

The evaluation team is expected to adhere to the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards as well as Norad's Evaluation Guidelines.⁸ Any modification to these terms of reference is subject to approval by Norad. All reports shall be submitted to Norad's Evaluation Department for approval.

⁸ See. http://www.norad.no/items/4620/38/6553540983/Evalueringsspolitikk_fram_til_2010.pdf

Annex B - Inception report activities conducted and completion dates

- Establish and validate with active researchers and with development agency officials a definition of “independent” research and compile a set of examples of independent and semi-independent research models in current international development practice. *Conducted 15.09 – 31.11.2010; Completed 03.12.2010*
- Establish and validate with active researchers and with development agency officials a clear distinction between commissioned and independent research. *Conducted 15.09 – 31.11.2010; Completed 03.12.2010.*
- Collect and systematize information on the volume, amount and organizational structure for research on Norwegian development assistance. *Conducted 02.07 – 30.12.2010; Completed 10.01.2011*
- Compile and evaluate a bibliography (as described below). *Conducted 02.07 – 30.12.2010, Completed 10.01.2010*
- Evaluate the diffusion of internal and independent research via citation index searches. *Conducted 06.12.2010 – 31.12.2010, Completed 31.12.2010*
- Collect and systematize information on the attitudes and practices of international development organizations and national development agency staff and officials regarding development research, with a focus on research on development assistance, using survey questionnaires and follow-up interviews. *Conducted 15.09.2010 – 15.12.2010, Completed 31.12.2010.* Note: preliminary efforts to survey research staff at UNDP and UNICEF suggested that a very low response rate could be expected. After discussion with the Norad Evaluation Department Task Managers, it was agreed to focus this activity on Norwegian respondents.
- Identify the barriers to independent research on Norwegian development assistance. *Conducted 15.09.2010 – 10.01.2011; Completed 10.01.2011.*
- The following research tools were applied to obtain the information required to accomplish the tasks and sub-tasks outlined above.

Review of documents:

- Review and close reading of Norad and MFA documents, including policy statements, programme descriptions and prior evaluations, including those cited in the TOR. *Conducted 01.07 – 15.11.2010; Completed 15.11.2010*
- *Compile a bibliography of national and international research published between 1999-2008 on Norwegian development assistance and cooperation; Conducted 10.07 – 31.12.2010, Completed 10.01.2011*
- Evaluate the sample publications (see quantitative methods) for funding source and author’s affiliation(s); Note: We were able to establish author’s affiliation for all publications in the sample, however, we were unable to develop a reliable

method for clearly establishing the source or sources of funding for the majority of publications.

Quantitative Methods:

- Classify a random sample of research publications by type of research and topic and calculate the comparative prevalence of different types and topics of research (for example, programme design, cost/benefit analysis of interventions; comparative policy effectiveness, development theory, etc.) *Conducted 06.12.2010 – 06.01.2011; Completed 06.01.2011*
- Search for references to Norwegian development research in the Publish or Perish Database. *Conducted 06.12.10 – 20.12.10; Completed 20.12.10*
- Library statistics (availability of research reports in Norwegian libraries together with a sampling of circulation data for research reports and relevant scientific journals. *Conducted 06.12.10 – 18.01.11; Completed 18.01.11*

Surveys, interviews and workshops:

- Survey a sample of officials at Norad and MFA, selected Norwegian national and international NGOs, and UN organizations regarding their use of and attitudes toward different types of development research. *Conducted 28.10.10 – 15.11.10; Completed 15.11.10.*
- Conduct semi-structured interviews with selected Norwegian aid agency officials about their use of *Norwegian and international research and their relative reliance on and valuation of different types of research.* *Conducted 20.09 – 30.09.2010*
- Conduct semi-structured interviews with selected non-aid agency staff researchers to establish funding sources and options for independent research. A key issue is how independent researchers select research topics and themes. To what extent are those choices conditioned by views about the receptivity of funders to honest, possibly highly critical, evaluation of their work. *Conducted 20.09.2010 – 10.01.2011*
- Conduct semi-structured interviews with selected international development organization staff to ascertain their assessment of Norwegian development assistance and their awareness of Norwegian development policy and programmes, research or publications. *Omitted*
- Conduct preliminary workshops with non-aid agency interview subjects to discuss interview and survey results and seek feedback. *Workshops conducted with development researchers and with NGO representatives 01.12.2010, Political Party stakeholders were unable to attend when a Parliamentary hearing was rescheduled to conflict with the Workshop session. As a result, it was only possible to meet at lunch-time with representatives of the Progressive Party.*
- Conduct preliminary workshops with national agency stakeholders to discuss interview and survey results and seek feedback. *Comments from Norad, MFA, Ministry of Education and Research and several university and research institute staff members on the draft report were submitted and responded to in writing. Comments received 08.03.2011 – responses submitted 31.03.2011.*

Subject to the availability of time we also proposed to assess stakeholder perceptions of the openness of the implementers of Norwegian development aid to

stakeholder engagement in the programme and project design process and the available pathways for stakeholder feedback on design, impact and effectiveness. We initiated this by identifying countries which experienced sustained Norwegian engagement, and then searched for PhD and M.A. dissertations (using dissertation index and the online academic library catalogue) and articles in development journals (using key word searches), for the results of field work conducted with these impacted communities.

Bibliographic searches were initiated in early September 2010, which identified a set of M.A. and Ph.D. theses which address these issues. In addition, we were able to interview the author of a Ph.D. thesis and several subsequent articles on this topic and the author's post-doctoral adviser, who led us to an independent group researching Norwegian and non-Norwegian development assistance. The information thus obtained is included in this report.

Annex C - List of references consulted

Academic publications

Monographs

Alsaker Kjerland, K.; Rio, K. (ed.): *Kolonitid. Nordmenn på eventyr og big business i Afrika og Stillehavet*, Oslo, Norway, 2009

Alsaker Kjerland, K.: *Nordmenn i det koloniale Kenya*, Oslo, Norway, 2010

Liland, Frode (ed): *Norsk Utviklingshjelps historie 3. 1989-2002. På bred front*, Oslo, Norway, 2003

Ruud, Arild Engelsen(ed): *Norsk Utviklingshjelps historie 2, 1975- 1989. Vekst, velvilje og utfordringer*, Oslo, Norway, 2003

Nustad, K.: *Gavens makt – Norsk utviklingshjelp som formynderskap, Makt- och Demokratiutredningen*, Oslo, Norway, 2003 (U-hjelp og forskning, p. 262-64)

Simonsen (ed): *Norsk Utviklingshjelps historie 1. 1952-1975. Norge møter den tredje verden*, Oslo, Norway, 2003

Stokke, O.: *Utviklingsforskningen i Norge gjennom 50 år: Rammevilkår, diskurs og praksis*, Internasjonal politikk, Nr 4 2010, Årgång 68, 2010

Tvedt, T.: *Utviklingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og makt. Den norske modellen*, Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk, Oslo, Norway, 2003

Tønnessen, A.: *Kirkens Nødhjelp: Bistand, tro og politikk*, Oslo, 2007

Articles in edited volumes and conference volumes

Engh, S.; Pharo, H.: *Nordic cooperation in providing development aid*, in Götz, Norbert and Haggrén, Heidi (eds), *Regional cooperation and international organizations: the Nordic model in transnational alignment*, 2009

Articles in reviewed journals

Court, J.; Maxwell, S.: *Policy entrepreneurship for poverty reduction - bridging research and policy in international development*, in *Journal of International Development*, J. Int. Dev. 17, 173 – 725, 2005

Articles in open or online journals

Gornitzka, N: *Interdisciplinarity – still a challenge for development research*, Forum for Development Studies, December 2003

Gornitzka, N.: *New Realities, New Strategies*, Forum for Development Studies, December 2003

Havnevik: *The research programme 'Globalisation and Marginalisation - Development Paths in the South'- some reflections*, Forum for Development Studies, June 2008

Helland, Johan: *Development Research: Can it be good research?*, News from the Nordic Africa Institute, no 1, 2002

McNeil, D.: *The Critical Role of Development Research*, Forum for Development Studies, NUPI, No. 2, 2003

McNeill, Desmond,: *The Diffusion of Ideas in Development Theory and Policy*, Global Social Policy, December 2006

Mehta, Haug, Haddad: *Reinventing Development Research*, Forum for Development Studies, June 2006

Ofstad and Dybdahl: *Development research in Norway: Well established – Time to move on?*, Forum for Development Studies, June 2008

Secher Marcussen, H.: *Rejoinder to Gunnar M. Sørnbø*, Forum for Development Studies No. 2, 2001

Secher Marcussen, H: *The Aid and Academia Controversy: Lessons Learned from Recent Evaluations*, Forum for Development Studies No. 2, 2001

Simensen, J.: *Writing the history of development aid - A Norwegian example. Some reflections on methods and results*, Scandinavian Journal of History, Volume 32, Issue 2, 2007

Sørnbø, G.M.: *Aid and academia: an un-easy relationship*. NUPI December 2001, Forum for Development Studies No. 2, 2001

Sørnbø, G.M, *Confusion and ambiguity, A response to Henrik Secher Marcussen*, Forum for Development Studies No 2, 2002

Tvedt, T.: *International Development Aid and Its Impact on a Donor Country: A Case Study of Norway*, The European Journal of Development Research, Volume 19, Issue 4, December, 2007, pages 614 – 635, <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=t713635016~tab=issueslist~branches=19 - v19>

Tønnesson, S.: *Norwegian research on development: A comment on Johan Hel-land's article*, Forum for Development Studies, December 2001

Tønnesson, S.: *Studies of Development: No Impasse, But a Long Way to Go*, Forum for Development Studies, No 1, June, 2002

Törnquist, *Rejoinder to Stein Tønneson*, Forum for Development Studies, June 2002

Törnquist, O.: *Development studies between fashion and reality*, Forum for Development Studies, June 2002

Wohlgemuth, L.: *The History of Norwegian aid: a case for contextualisation*, Forum for Development Studies, No 2, 2003

Non-academic publications

Newspaper articles

Hultgren, J.; Moe, I.: *Ble forsøkt diktert av departement*, Aftenposten, November 14, 2010

Hultgren, J.; Moe, I.: *Staten klipper og limer i forskning*, Aftenposten, November 16, 2010

Hultgren, J.; Moe, I.: *Krevde klimatvil fjernet fra rapport*, Aftenposten, November 29, 2010

Hellesoy, C.: *UDs makt sprer seg*, Aftenposten, August 27, 2010

Jul-Larsen, E.; Suhrke, A. (Chr. Michelsens Instituttet): *Pengekrav hindrer bistandskritikk*, Aftenposten, July 16, 2007

Lonnä, E.: *Der svenskerna har IKEA och finnene Nokia, har Norge fredsskapning*, Klassekampen, August 20, 2003

Osterud, O.: *Lite land redder verden*, Aftenposten, June 7, 2006

Tvedten, I.: *En kjetters bekjennelser*, Aftenposten, May 25, 2007.: *En kjetters bekjennelser*, Aftenposten, May 25, 2005

Tvedten, I.: *En anvendt forskers bekjennelser*, Morgenbladet, April 29, 2010

Blog posts, internet articles

Birkeland, E.; Langfeldt, L.: *Norsk utviklingsforskning er evaluert: For lite uavhengig forskning*, http://nifu.pdc.no/index.php?seks_id=9682, April, 2007

"Manglende debatt innenfor 'det sørpolitiske prosjekt'", <http://www.rorg.no/Artikler/646.html>, August 23, 2003

"Udemokratisk norsk modell", <http://www.forskning.no/artikler/2003/august/1061203680.39/print>, August 19, 2003

Policies, publications by agencies and organizations

Policy papers, strategies

Commission on Development-Related Research: *Partnerships at the leading edge: a Danish vision for knowledge, research and development*, Copenhagen, 2001.

Haugsvaer, S.: *Den norske samaritan og maktspørsmålet*, Makt-og demokratiutredningen 1998 - 2003

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Strategi for styrking av forskning og høyere utdanning og forskning i tilknytning til Norges forhold til utviklingsland*, MFA, 1999

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *UDs forskningsstøtte – 2006*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *UDs forskningsstøtte – 2007*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *UDs forskningsstøtte - total 2006 og 2007*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *UDs forskningsstøtte – 2008*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *UDs forskningsstøtte – 2009*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Notat: Kartlegging av UDs forskningsstøtte*, September 2008

Ministry of Education and Research: *Vilje til forskning*, St meld. 20, March 15, 2005

Sørbo, G.; Helland, J.: *Danida and Danish development research: towards a new partnership*, 2001, in *Partnerships at the leading edge: a Danish vision for knowledge, research and development*, Copenhagen, 2001.

Evaluations, studies, reports

Birdsall, N., Kharas, H.: *Quality of Official Development Assistance Assessment*, (Center for Global development), Washington D.C., October 2010

Castro, R.; Hammond, B.: *The Architecture of Aid for the Environment – A Ten Year Statistical Perspective*; Concessional Finance and Global Partnerships, October 2009

FAO: *Assessing the impact of development assistance in fisheries and aquaculture*, May 2008

FORISS, Norges forskningsråd Informasjons- og prosjektstyringsystem, TPRO4, 2010

- U-landsrelatert fiskeriforskning
- Det Multilaterale systemet
- Globalisering klima-, miljø- og energiforskning
- CGIAR fellowships
- Women's Rights and Gender Equality
- Poverty and peace

Gulrajani, N.: *Re-imagining Canadian Development Cooperation: A comparative examination of Norway and the UK*, Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, Toronto, Canada, 2010

Halvard, Borchgrevink, Græger, Melchior, Stamnes, Øverland: *Norske selvbilder og norsk utenrikspolitikk*, NUPI, 2007

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Jones, N.; Young, J.: *Setting The Scene: Situating DFID's Research Funding Policy and Practice in an International Comparative Perspective. A scoping study commissioned by DFID Central Research Department*, June 2007

Norad: *Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation in the Fisheries Sector*, Norad, Oslo, Norway, 2008

Norad: *Mid-Term Review of the Norwegian Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (2007-2009)*, Norad, Oslo, Norway, 2009

Norad: *Evaluation of the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) and of Norad's Programme for Master Studies (NOMA)*. Evaluation Report 7/2009, Norad, Oslo, Norway, 2009

Norad: *Annual reports 1999-2009*

Ostrom, Elinor et al: *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability*, Sida Studies in Evaluation 02/01. Executive Summary, 2001 (Background to the Report)

Picciotto, R.: *Evaluation independence at DFID. An independent assessment prepared for IADCI*, August 29, 2008

Research Council of Norway: *Norwegian Development Research – An Evaluation*, RCN, 2007

Research Council of Norway: *Norsk utviklingsforskning – utviklingstrekk og utfordringer*, RCN, 2001 (the previous evaluation)

Research Council of Norway: *Development Paths in the South: Ten years of research*, February 2008

Research Council of Norway: *Norwegian Development Research – an Evaluation*, September 2007

Research Council of Norway: Årsrapport 2009, Forskningsinstituttene, Delrapport for de samfunnsvitenskapelige instituttene, RCN, 2010

Master Thesis

Reinertsen, H.: *Norge til verden eller verden til Norge, Konklusjon*, May 2008

Tumyr Nilsen, T.: *Landscapes of Paradoxes – The Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative*, Oslo, Norge, 2010

Presentations

Havsforskningsinstituttet: *UNEP Large Marine Ecosystems Report – A perspective on changing conditions in LME's of the World's Regional Seas – Orientering on norsk vurdering av rapporten*, August 2010

Annex D - RCN Summary of applications from various programmes 1997/98 – 2008

Full name of programme and period covered:

Name of Programme	Period covered
Development Paths of the South	1997 - 2008
The Multilateral System in the Field of Development (MULTI)	1999 - 2005
NORGLOBAL, Norway-Global Partner	2008 - 2010
Poverty and Peace	2005 - 2010
Fisheries in Developing Country Programme	1995 - 2003
FRIMUF, Free Projects within Environment and Development Research (<i>contains many applications which do not relate to developing countries</i>)	2002 - ongoing
Forced Migration Programme	1996 - 99

Total number of applications:

Programme	Number of applications	Of which approved	Per cent approved
Development paths	665	129	19 %
MULTI	52	19	37 %
NORGLOBAL*	-	-	-
Poverty and peace	141	23	16 %
Fisheries	57	19	33 %
FRIMUF	451	115	25 %
Forced migration	57	25	44 %
Total	1.423	330	23 %

Note: Although the evaluation should cover the period 1999-2008, earlier applications have also been included in a few programmes (most of these projects that were approved continued until 1999). All applications presented in 2009 and 2010 have been excluded.

Number of applications with a focus on development assistance**

Programme	Number of applications	Of which approved	Per cent approved
Development Paths	20	2	10 %
MULTI	46	19	41 %
NORGLOBAL*	-	-	-
Poverty and Peace	2	0	0 %
Fisheries	0	-	-
FRIMUF	4	1	25 %
Forced migration	2	1	50 %
Total	74	23	31 %

Number of applications with a focus on Norwegian development assistance***

Programme	Number of applications	Of which approved	Per cent approved
Development paths	5	1	20 %
MULTI	0	-	-
NORGLOBAL*	-	-	-
Poverty and peace	1	0	0 %
Fisheries	0	-	-
FRIMUF	0	-	-
Forced migration	0	-	-
Total	6	1	17 %

* Since we have not been able to get access to data on the number and titles of rejected applications, we cannot make an assessment of the distribution between approved and rejected applications. Almost all applications of relevance for this evaluation are, however, considered under the “Poverty and Peace” programme, which was integrated into NORGLOBAL as of 2008.

** All applications which contain – in their titles or in abstracts provided by the RCN - words like “development aid”, “development assistance”, “development cooperation” or “donors” are included. In addition, certain other applications which reveal that foreign aid will be discussed are also included. Many other projects may, of course, be of direct or indirect relevance for Norwegian development cooperation.

*** As above. In addition, applications must have an explicit reference to Norwegian aid, or Norwegian NGOs involved in international cooperation, or something similar in order to be included here.

As can be seen, only around five per cent – 74 research projects out of a total of 1.423 applications – have development aid as a focus, to judge from the title or project abstract. An exceedingly small number – six - have Norwegian development aid as an important theme. Research on development cooperation in general, and Norwegian aid in particular, does not appear to have a high priority among Norwegian development researchers.

Altogether, only one application with Norwegian development aid in focus has been approved by the RCN. The sample is, however, far too small to permit any conclusions about the quality of the applications presented.

It may be observed that in the one programme which had development aid as a major theme, the multilateral programme, attracted much attention. This rather small programme accounted for almost two thirds of all applications related to foreign aid. By comparison, the free programme FRIMUF attracted almost ten times as many applications as MULTI, but only four of these had development aid as a major theme. One conclusion from this comparison appears obvious: if funds are earmarked for research on a theme such as development cooperation, the number of applications is likely to increase dramatically compared to a programme in which researchers are free to choose subjects according to their own preferences.

Annex E – Compilation of a bibliography

The task was to compile a bibliography of independent research on Norwegian development assistance during the 1999 – 2008 period of time.⁴⁸ The Team used a mixed methods approach to identify relevant publications for inclusion in the bibliography.

The initial step was a search for relevant publications through the Bibsys library system, using the Dewey categorization. Bibsys is a shared library system for all Norwegian university libraries, the National Library and a number of research libraries. The BIBSYS database contains approximately two million bibliographic records. Searches were conducted in the Bibsys database through the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC, also called the Dewey Decimal System).⁴⁹ The DDC attempts to organize all knowledge into ten main classes. These ten classes are each further subdivided into ten divisions, and each division into ten sections, giving ten main classes, 100 divisions and 1000 sections. The Dewey code for Norway and development assistance is 338.91481. All publications published between 1999 and 2008 and categorized under this code were included into the list. At this stage, the list included in total **90 publications**.

As it was obvious that many relevant publications were missed in this first search, we expanded our searches through the Bibsys library database using a number of key words, identified in consultation with the Norad Evaluation Department.⁵⁰ We identified 62 additional publications relevant for inclusion but not categorized under the Dewey code for a total of **152 publications**.

However, not all of the Norwegian research institutes relevant to this evaluation use Bibsys. As a result, of the books and reports produced by these institutes, only those that are owned by Bibsys member libraries can be found in Bibsys. We therefore undertook a review of the publication lists posted on the institutes' web pages for relevant publications. Although the institutes informed us that these lists, in some cases, might be incomplete for the earlier part of our time span (1999), we were able to identify 27 additional publications through this search, resulting in a total of **179 publications**.

48 The ToR for this evaluation specifies that the bibliography should include research on Norwegian development assistance, hence Norwegian authors writing on development assistance in general – not treating Norwegian development assistance in particular – falls outside the scope of this bibliography.

49 Dewey Decimal Classification is a proprietary system of library classification developed by Melvil Dewey in 1876; it has been greatly modified and expanded through 22 major revisions, the most recent in 2003.

50 Key Words used: **Development aid, Aid evaluation, Development agencies, Aid impact, Norad, Technical aid, Utviklingshjelp, Utviklingsforskning, Norge-Utviklingsland: Økonomisk politikk, Bistandspolitikk.**

In addition, the Bibsys library database does not contain information on articles in academic journals, per default. To address this potential gap, we also searched the NORART⁵¹ and FRIDA⁵² indexes using the same key words as for the Bibsys database search, identifying 24 journal articles from these databases, raising the total to **203 publications**.

To complement these rather static searches, the questionnaires included a request for the names of one to three authors that, in the respondent's view, had produced relevant publications. Also, team members included this question to all persons interviewed for the purposes of this evaluation. While, in the majority of cases, we found that these authors had already been included – with their most relevant publications - a number of additional publications could be integrated into the list through this pathway. Using basic searches in Google, we identified several more relevant publications produced by these authors. These were added to the list, which at this stage amounted to a total of **231 publications**. As a final step, we applied a snowball methodology by reviewing the bibliographies of the identified publications, which turned up a number of publications not previously identified. The final – rough – list included a total of **253 publications**.

Since our purpose was to create a list of independent research on Norwegian development assistance, the next step consisted of a thorough review of each publication for its relevance. All publications that were clearly not treating Norwegian development assistance were deleted from the list. Also, publications that appeared to have been commissioned - that is, not been independently initiated – were also removed from the list. Evaluation reports and similar assessments, by their very nature falling into this category, were deleted from the list. This resulted in a final bibliography of a total of 82 publications which discussed either Norwegian development assistance exclusively or in conjunction with other countries.

Each publication in the bibliography was then reviewed to determine i) author nationality ii) year of publication, iii) the type of publication, iv) publisher nationality, v) language of the publication (Norwegian or English), and thematic area focus.

The total bibliography is presented in the table below:

51 Norwegian and Nordic index to periodical articles: <http://www.nb.no/baser/norart/english.html>

52 Frida is a system for documenting research results, information and academic activities: <http://wo.uio.no/as/WebObjects/frida.woa/wa/default?la=en> The Team has been informed that, from 2011, Norway will have a joint research documentation system; "Cristin".

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
ARTICLES						
Eng, Sunniva	Y	Worlds Apart? Scandinavian Aid Agencies and Women in Development	2007	N	0	
Jones, Peris Sean	N	Why is it alright to do development 'over there' but not 'here'?	2000	N	0	
Jones, Peris Sean	N	When "Development" Devastates	2004	N	0	
Kragelund, Peter	Y	The embedded recipient and the disembodied donor: private-sector development aid in Ghana	2004	N	4	
McNeil, Desmond	N	The Diffusion of Ideas in Development Theory and Policy	2006	N	11	
Pharo, Helge	Y	Altruism, Security, and the Impact of Oil: Norway's Foreign Economic Assistance Policy, 1958-1971. Contemporary European History	2003	N	4	
Pharo, Helge	Y	Fredstanken i norsk utenrikspolitikk i det 20. århundre	2004	Y	0	
Pharo, Helge	Y	Norge i verden - en utenrikspolitisk tradisjon under press?	2005	Y	0	
Pharo, Helge	Y	The Norwegians are coming: Donor urgency and perceptions of the recipients in the Indo-Norwegian Fisheries Project, 1952-1972. Managing the Post-colonial Experience	2006	N	4	
Pharo, Helge	Y	International and Norwegian Development Aid since World War II.	2006	N	6	
Pharo, Helge	Y	Entrepreneurship and development aid. The case of the Indo-Norwegian fisheries project The Aid Rush. Aid regimes in Northern Europe during the Cold War Volume2	2008	Y	0	
Pharo, Helge; Fraser, Monika Pohle	Y	Introduction. I: The Aid Rush. Aid Regimes in Northern Europe during the Cold War Volume 1.	2008	Y	0	
Pharo, Helge	Y	Norwegians in East Africa - How to Call the Tune or How not to? Foreign Aid in a Historical and Comparative Context	2008	Y	0	

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
Pharo, Helge	Y	Reluctance, enthusiasm and indulgence: the expansion of bilateral Norwegian aid. I: The Aid Rush. Aid Regimes in Northern Europe during the Cold War Volume 1.	2008	Y	0	
Schou, Arild	y	Demand-driven Poverty Programmes and Elite Capture in Malawi	2007	N	2	
Selbervik, Hilde	Y	The Norwegian-Tanzanian Aid Relationship in the 1990s: Still Trapped in a Samatarian's Dilemma?	2008	N	0	
Simonsen, Jarle	Y	Aid symbioses and its pitfalls. The Nordic/Norwegian-Tanzanian aid relationship, 1962-1986	2008	N	0	
Stokke, Olav	Y	Norwegian aid policy: Continuity and Change in the 1990s and Beyond	2005	N	0	
Strand, Arne	y	Aid Coordination : Easy to Agree on, Difficult to Organise	2005	N	0	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Det nasjonale godhetsregimet. Om utviklingshjelp, fredspolitikk og det norske samfunn	2005	Y	3	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Development NGOs Revisited: A New Research Agenda	2007	N	0	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	International Development Aid and Its Impact on a Donor Country: A Case Study of Norway	2007	N	0	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Utviklingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og den norske modellen	2006	Y	0	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Perspektiver på norsk utviklingshjelps historie	1999	Y	2	
BOOKS & MONOGRAPHS						
Andersson Göran, Isaksen Jan	Y	Best practice in capacity building in public finance management in Africa : experiences of NORAD and Sida	2002	N	5	
Banik, Dan	N	Poverty, Politics and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives	2006	Y	3	
Cremer, Georg	N	Corruption and development aid : confronting the challenge	2008	N	0	

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
Engelsen Ruud, Arild; Alsaker Kjerland, Kirsten	Y	Norsk utviklingshjelps historie 2: 1975-1989: Vekst, velvilje og utfordringer	2003	Y	0	
Folke, Steen; Nielsen, Henrik	Y	Aid impact and poverty reduction	2006	N	5	
Henriksen, Jan Olav	Y	The Moral Rationale for Aid – a qualitative study and critical discussion of the normative basis for Norwegian international aid (2005-2007)	2008	y	0	
Hoebink, Paul; Stokke, Olav	N	Perspectives on European development co-operation : policy and performance of individual donor countries and the EU	2005	N	2	
Jerve Alf Morten, Shimomura Yasutami and Skovsted Hansen Annette (Eds.)	N	Aid Relationships in Asia. Exploring Ownership in Japanese and Nordic Aid	2008	N	0	
Kieding, Vibeke	Y	Norsk utviklingshjelps historie	2003	Y	0	
Lafferty, William; Nordskog, Morten; Aakre, Hilde Anette	Y	Utviklingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og makt	2002	Y	0	
Lange, Siri; Spissøy, Arild Brudvik, Marie	Y	Fra motstander til medspiller: partnerskap mellom norske frivillige organisasjoner og norsk næringsliv	2002	y	0	
Le More, Anne	N	International assistance to the Palestinians after Oslo : political guilt, wasted money	2008	N	11	
Neumayer, Eric	N	The pattern of aid giving : the impact of good governance on development assistance	2003	N	91	
Omoruyi, Leslie O.	N	Contending theories on development aid : post-Cold War evidence from Africa	2001	N	6	
Pohle Fraser, Monika	Y	The Aid Rush: Aid Regimes in Northern Europe during the Cold War Volume I	2008	N	0	
Pohle Fraser, Monika	Y	The Aid Rush. Aid regimes in Northern Europe during the Cold War Volume 2	2008	N	0	

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
Sørbø, Gunnar M. Tostensen Arne	Y	Aid for Human Rights and Democracy: Challenges of Design, Management and Evaluation	2005	N	2	
Tungodden, Bertil; Stern, Nicholas; Kolstad, Ivar	Y	Toward pro-poor policies: Aid, institutions, and globalization	2004	N	7	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Verdensbilder og selvbilder : en humanitær stormakts intellektuelle historie	2002	Y	4	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Bilder av "DE ANDRE" Om utviklingslandene i bistandsepoken	2002	Y	0	
Tvedt, Terje	Y	Utviklingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og makt : den norske modellen	2003	Y	30	
Tønnessen, Aud	Y	Kirkens Nødhjelp: Bistand, tro og politikk	2007	Y	0	
MASTERS						
Aam, Pål-Arne	Y	Norsk bistand og Noremco : eit samarbeid i spenningsfeltet mellom altruisme og egeninteresse	2008	Y	0	
Bergland, Trygve	Y	Hvilke utfordringer møter kristne bistandsorganisasjoner i forhold til korrupsjon, og hvordan bør disse utfordringene håndteres?	2008	Y	0	
Blystad, Kristoffer	Y	Aldri så galt at det ikke er godt for noe: en analyse av det norske ordskiftet om utviklingshjelp	2007	Y	0	
Eng Kielland, Tryggve	Y	Norsk bistand og næringslivet : fra motkonjunkturtiltak til konjunkturuavhengig samarbeid	2008	Y	0	
Kvamme, Renate	Y	For mykje eller for lite er ikkje godt for noko: - eit skrått blikk på forsknings- og utviklingspolitikken og økonomisk vekst i Noreg	2005	Y	0	
Næss, Åsmund Kliskar	Y	Norsk bistand til frigjøringsbevegelsen SWAPO, 1973-1989	2007	Y	0	
Nordstrand, Ingvild	Y	Democracy as a part of Norwegian development aid	2008	Y	0	

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
Reinertsen, Hilde	Y	Norge til verden eller verden til Norge? : utviklingsforskning, ikke-europeiske studier og bistandsforvaltningen s kunnskapssyn i Norge, 1960-1980	2008	Y	0	
Richter Eriksen, Ellen Marie	Y	Demokratibestand i norsk utviklingspolitikk : analyse av et givperspektiv	2006	Y	0	
Ruazol, Daniel	Y	Nulltoleranse mot korrupsjon i bistandssammenheng : om Norads nulltoleranseprinsipp og hvorledes utvalgte frivillige organisasjoner opplever tilnærmingen i praksis	2005	Y	0	
Sandvand, Heidi	Y	Friends and interests : a comparison of Chinese and Nordic aid to Tanzania	2007	Y	0	
Smiseth, Linda	Y	Non-governmental organizations and implementation of Human Rights-based approach to development: a descriptive case-study of how Norwegian NGO's implement a HRBA to development in practice	2008	Y	0	
Visnes, Kjetil	Y	Suverenitet og stat i norsk bistandsdiskurs	1999	Y	0	
PhD						
Eng'h, Sunniva	Y	Aid and population policies in the 20th Century: Scandinavian Aid to the Indian Family Planning Programme'	2006	N	0	
Fretheim, Kjetil	Y	Rights and riches : exploring the moral discourse of Norwegian development aid	2007	N	0	
Maurits van der Veen, Anne	N	Ideas and interests in foreign policy : the politics of official development assistance	2000	N	7	
Rolandsen, Øystein H.	Y	Development interventions, illusions and narratives : the case of Norwegian church aid in Eastern Equatorial Africa 1974-86	2000	Y	1	
Selbervik, Hilde	Y	Power of the purse? : Norway as a donor in the conditionality epoch 1980-2000	2003	Y	7	

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
Tjeldflaat, Therese	Y	Educational development and state withdrawal : changes in local policies and administrative practices in times of crisis : a case study based on the educational sector in Ngaoundéré, North Cameroon, 1960-1998	2008	Y	0	
Villanger, Espen	Y	Fighting poverty: company interests and foreign aid policy, and an impact analysis of natural disasters	2003	N	0	
REPORTS, DISCUSSION PAPERS, e-BOOKS						
Böås, Morten	Y	Public attitudes to Aid in Norway and Japan	2002	Y	3	
Eng, S; Pharo, H.	Y	Scandinavian Aid Co-operation - Promises to Keep?	2006	N	0	
Forster, Jacques; Stokke, Olav	Y	Policy coherence in development co-operation	1999	N	36	
Mavrotas George, Villanger Espen	N	Multilateral Aid Agencies and Strategic Donor Behaviour	2006	N	15	
Pharo, Helge.	Y	Foreign Aid, Peace and Stability: The Case of the 1952 Norwegian Initiative for Aid to India. Norwegian Nobel Institute Research Seminar	2001	Y	0	
Rønning, Elisabeth	Y	Holdninger til og kunnskap om norsk utviklingshjelp 1999	2000	Y	0	
Selbervik, Hilde with Nygaard, Knut	Y	Nordic exceptionalism in development assistance?	2008	Y	3	
Selbervik, Hilde; Nygaard Knut	Y	Nordic exceptionalism in development assistance? : aid policies and the major donors : the Nordic countries	2005	Y	3	
Skaar, Elin; Samset, Ingrid; Gloppen, Siri	Y	Aid to judicial reform: Norwegian and international experiences	2004	Y	3	
Tjønneland, Eiling	Y	Norway and security sector reform in developing countries	2003	Y	2	

BIBLIOGRAPHY – WITH CITATION STATISTICS						
Author	Norw. author Y/N	Title	Published	Norw. Publ. Y/N	All citations	
Tjønneland, Eiling N., Isaksen Jan, le Pere Garth	N	SADC's restructuring and emerging policies options for Norwegian support	2005	Y	7	
Tjønneland, Eiling N.	Y	China in Africa : implications for Norwegian foreign and development policies	2006	Y	15	
Tjønneland, Eiling N., Dube Nobi	Y	Aid Effectiveness: Trends and Impacts of Shifting Financial Flows to Civil Society Organisations in Southern Africa	2007	N	0	
Tostensen, Arne	Y	Supporting East African integration : assessing the potential for Norwegian support to the EastAfrican Community	2001	Y	0	
Tostensen, Arne	Y	Regional dimensions of Norwegian country programmes in East Africa	2006	Y	0	
Vågane, Liva	Y	Holdninger til og kunnskap om norsk utviklingshjelp 2001	2002	Y	0	

Further, all publications were reviewed in order to determine what thematic category⁵³ the publication belongs to. The following table presents the thematic distribution by year:

Research theme	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	TOTAL
Norwegian development assistance	3	2	2	7	5	2	5	5	7	12	50
Development assistance (wider than Norwegian)	1	1	1	0	4	1	3	4	4	4	23
Social development		1			1			1			3
Legal reforms/HR					1	1	1			1	4
Development assistance and the private sector						1				1	2
TOTAL	4	4	3	7	11	5	9	10	11	18	82

Table I: Thematic distribution by year

As can be noted from the table, 50 out of 82 publications were addressing issues related solely to Norwegian development assistance.

The next table presents the thematic distribution type of publication:

Research theme	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Norwegian development assistance	14	8	6	0	15	11	1	1	56
Development assistance (wider than Norwegian)	5	3	1	1	3	1	3	0	17
Social development			1		1		1		3
Legal reforms/HR	1				1	1		1	4
Development assistance and the private sector					1		1		2
TOTAL	20	11	8	2	20	14	5	2	82

Table II: Thematic distribution by type of publication. A) Monograph or book; B) Article in edited volume; C) Peer reviewed journal article; D) Non-peer reviewed journal article; E) Report; F) M.A. thesis; G) PhD Thesis; H) Other

53 Initially, the Team was using the following thematic categories: 1. Research on Norwegian development assistance, 2) Research on development assistance, 3) Research on trade and development, 4) Research on global finance and development, 5) Research on development economics, 6) Research on social development or social welfare in development context, 7) Research on gender and development, 8) Research on culture and development, 9) Research on health services, disease, medical intervention in development context, 10) Research on environmental issues in development context including climate change, 11) Research on conflict and development, 12) Research on education in development context, 13) Research on natural resources and development, 14) Research on Legal reforms/ HR, 15) Research on development assistance and the private sector. While these categories proved to be too narrowly defined, the Team opted to simplify the definition of categories. This resulted in the categories presented in Table I and Table II below.

Out of the 82 publications, 20 consisted in monographs or books and 20 could be categorized as reports. Further, the bibliography contains 14 M.A. theses and 11 articles in edited volumes. While eight publications could be classified as peer reviewed journal articles, five consisted in Ph.D. theses, two in non-peer reviewed journal articles and two were classified as “other” types of publications.

The following table provides a breakdown of the bibliography by categories:

Characteristic	Number of publications 1999 - 2008	Total publications 1999 - 2008
Norwegian development assistance	51	82
Development assistance (wider than Norwegian)	24	82
Other development related topics	9	82
Norwegian authors only	69	82
Norwegian authors and/or other nationality	13	82
Norwegian publication	34	82
International publication	48	82
Norwegian language	25	82
English language	57	82

Table III: Breakdown of bibliography by categories

The majority (51 out of 82) publications could be categorized as focusing solely on Norwegian development assistance, while 24 are treating development assistance in a wider sense. Out of the 82 publications, 69 were written by Norwegian authors and 13 by Norwegian authors and/or authors of other nationality than Norwegian. The majority of all publications (57 out of 82) were written in English. While 34 of the publications were published in Norway, 48 have been published abroad.

Annex F – Citation index search results and dissemination statistics

To determine the number of times each publication in the bibliography was been cited by another author in another publication between 1999 -2008, each publication was run through the Publish and Perish programme.⁵⁴ The results of this search are first presented in a table summarizing relative citations per type of publication:

Type of publication	Average number of citations
BOOKS & MONOGRAPHS	166/20= 8.3
ARTICLES	36/21= 1,44
REPORTS	87/20= 4.35
MASTERS	0
PhDs	15/5= 3
Other	0

Table IV: Average citation per type of publication

We then calculated the average number of citations per year for the publications in the bibliography:

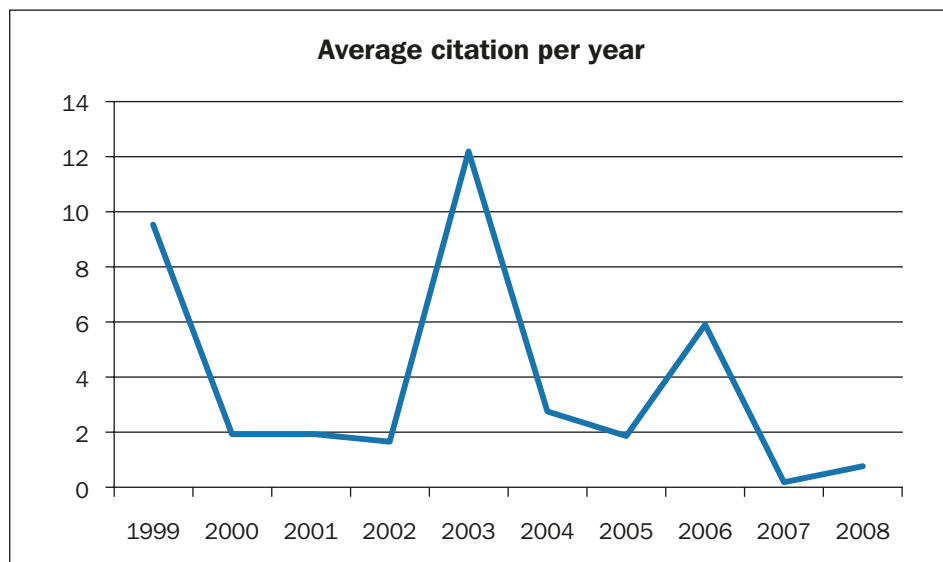
Publication year	Number of publications	Number of citations	Average citations
1999	4	38	9.5
2000	4	8	2
2001	3	6	2
2002	7	12	1.7
2003	11	134	12.2
2004	5	14	2.8
2005	9	17	1.9
2006	10	59	5.9
2007	11	2	0.2
2008	18	14	0.8

Table V: Average number of citations per year for the publications

⁵⁴ The Publish and Perish is a software programme that retrieves and analyses academic citations. It uses Google Scholar to obtain the raw citations, analyses these and calculates a series of citation metrics.

The results of these calculations are also presented in the line graph below. While the graph shows that publications produced in 2003 were cited much more frequently than publications produced in other years, this peak is due to one very heavily cited publication that year.

Picture 1: Average citations per year. X = average number of citations, Y= Year



Another measure of publication relevance was provided by circulation statistics from Bibsys. The purpose was to identify the number of times each publication in the list has been lent out from Norwegian libraries subscribed to the Bibsys system during the time span under review (1999 – 2008).

A random sample was drawn from the bibliography list, ensuring a fair distribution between the different types of publications. The final sample consisted in 27 publications, containing nine monographs or books, six articles, five M.A. theses, three Ph.D. theses and four reports. The table below summarizes the total number of loans during the 1999 – 2008 period of time for each type of publications, together with the average number of loans per type of publication. As can be seen from the table below, monographs and books were by far the most frequently borrowed type of publication:

Type of publication	Number in the sample	Total number of loans	Average number of loans
Monographs or books	9	504	56
Articles	6	0*	0*
M.A. theses	5	43	8.6
Ph.D. theses	3	10	3.3
Reports	4	26	6.5
Total	27	583	21.6

Table VI: Total and average number of loans during the 1999 – 2008 period of time. *) Articles are not included in the Bibsys system.

Annex G – List of informants

Name	Institution	e-mail	Date of interview
Scholars			
Aasen, Berit	NIBR	berit.aasen@nibr.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Alsaker Kjerland, Kirsten	University of Bergen	kirsten.kjerland@hi.uib.no	October 2010
Ask, Karin	CMI	karin.ask@cmi.no	October 2010
Benjaminsen, Tor A	UMB	torbe@umb.no	October 2010
Berge, Gunnvor	UMB	gunnvor.berge@umb.no	October 2010
Bøås, Morten	Fafo	morten.boas@Fafo.no	September 20, 2010
Engh, Sunniva	University of Oslo	sunniva.engh@iakh.uio.no	November 30, 2010
Grønnevet, Lidvard	Institute of Marine Research	lidvard.gronnevet@imr.no	October, 2010
Haug, Marit	NIBR	marit.haug@nibr.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Haug, Ruth	UMB	ruth.haug@umb.no	October
Jerve, Alf Morten	CMI	alf.m.jerve@cmi.no	October
Liland, Frode	IFS	frode.liland@ifs.mil.no	September 21, 2010
McNeill, Desmond	SUM	desmond.mcneill@sum.uio.no	September 21, 2010
Melchior, Arne	NUPI	arne.melchior@nupi.no	September 21, 2010
Nustad, Knut G.	NUPI	knut.nustad@nupi.no	September 21, 2010
Stokke, Olav	NUPI	olav.stokke@nupi.no	September 21, 2010
Sundby, Johanne	University of Oslo	johanne.sundby@medisin.uio.no	September 21, 2010

Name	Institution	e-mail	Date of interview
Sørbø, Gunnar	CMI	gunnar.Sorbo@cmi.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Talle, Aud	University of Oslo	aud.talle@sai.uio.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Tjønneland, Elling	CMI	elling.tjonneland@cmi.no	October 2010
Toje, Asle	Oslo Management College	asle.toje@vr-crisis.com	October 2010
Tostensen, Arne	CMI	arne.tostensen@cmi.no	October 2010
Tvedten, Inge	CMI	inge.tvedten@cmi.no	October 2010
Østerud, Øyvind	University of Oslo	oyvind.osterud@stv.uio.no	October 2010
Politicians and Journalists			
Egner, Marit	University of Oslo	marit.egner@admin.uio.no	November 29, 2010
Fone, Wenche	Norwegian Church Aid	wef@nca.no	October 2010
Høglund, Morten	Stortinget (the Parliament) ⁶³	morten.hoglund@stortinget.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Daidsen, Pål Arne	Political advisor, Stortinget	pal-arne.daidsen@stortinget.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Dybdahl, Ragnhild	Norad	ady@norad.no	September 21, 2010
Haakonsen, Jan M.	RCN	jha@rcn.no	October, 2010
Hansen, Stein	NCG	stein.hansen@nccg.no	September 21, 2010
Hasle, Lena	MFA	lena.hasle@mfa.no	September 21, 2010
Hem, Tore	Norad	tore.hem@norad.no	September 22, 2010
Løkken, Geir	MFA	gel@mfa.no	September 21, 2010
Løvbræk, Asbjørn	Norad	alo@norad.no	October, 2010
Philipsen, Birgit	ADRA Norway	post@adrarnorge.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Roland, Kjell	Norfund	kjell.roland@norfund.no	September 21, 2010
Sanders, Samuel J	Plan Norway	samuel.sanders@plan-norge.no	December 1, 2010 (Seminar)
Sogner, Ingrid	University of Oslo	ingrid.sogner@admin.uio.no	November 29, 2010

Name	Institution	e-mail	Date of interview
Wetlesen, Anne	Norad	anne.wetlesen@norad.no	September 22, 2010
Ödegård, Kristian	MFA	kristian.odegaard@mfa.no	October, 2010
Interviewees at the Ministry of Education and Research			
Interviewees outside Norway			
Fellessen, Måns	Swedish MFA, Department for development policy	mans.fellessen@foreign.ministry.se	December 10 th , 2010
Havnevik, Kjell	Nordic Africa Institute	kjell.havnevik@nai.uu.se	December 10 th , 2010
Kjellqvist, Tomas	Sida	tomas.kjellqvist@sida.se	December 10 th , 2010

Annex H - Questionnaire to Norwegian development researchers

1. Do you agree with the proposition that there is little research directly related to Norwegian development cooperation compared to the much large volume of research on development issues in general?
 - YES
 - NO
 - Comments:

2. Which is, in your opinion, the leading institution carrying out general development research in Norway?
 - University of Oslo
 - University of Bergen
 - Norwegian University of Science and Technology
 - University of Tromsø
 - Norwegian University of Life Sciences
 - SUM (affiliated with the University of Oslo)
 - NUPI
 - Fafo
 - CMI
 - PRIO
 - Others, please specify:

3. Which is, in your opinion, the leading institution carrying out research on Norwegian development assistance?
 - University of Oslo
 - University of Bergen
 - Norwegian University of Science and Technology
 - University of Tromsø
 - Norwegian University of Life Sciences

- ✓ SUM (affiliated with the University of Oslo)
- ✓ NUPI
- ✓ Fafo
- ✓ CMI
- ✓ PRIO
- Others, please specify:

4. According to an international evaluation of Norwegian development research in 2007, development research is conducted in 76 different institutions, many very small.

Do you think that it would be better to i) create fewer “centres of excellence”, or, ii) to maintain the current situation, e.g. by encouraging small institutions to conduct development research?

- ✓ Create fewer “centres of excellence”
- ✓ Maintain the current situation and encourage small institutions to conduct development research
- ✓ No opinion
- Comments:

5. How would you evaluate the current balance between i) core funding for research institutes development research programmes, compared to ii) funding for specific research projects ?

➔ *Scale 1 – 6 : 6=perfect balance, 1= no balance at all*

- Comments:

SELF-INITIATED AND INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

6. Have you ever initiated your own research on Norwegian development assistance?

- ✓ YES
- ✓ NO
- Comments:

7. (If having answered Yes to Q6) How frequently have you initiated your own research on Norwegian development assistance?

- ✓ At several occasions each year
- ✓ In average, once a year
- ✓ In average, once every second year
- ✓ More seldom than once every second year
- Comments:

8. In your opinion, where is self-initiated research (on development?) more common?

- ✓ In university institutions
- ✓ In independent research institutes
- ✓ Other (please specify)

9. How would you define “independent research?”

Open space answer

10. What do you see as the limits of independent research? What are the barriers to independent research?

Open space answer

11. What is your perception of your level of independence?

➔ *Scale 1 – 6; 6=entirely independent; 1= not independent at all*

– Comments:

12. Have you ever chosen a particular research area related to Norwegian development assistance at the expense of something more interesting because you thought it would be easier to fund?

- ✓ YES
- ✓ NO
- Comments:

13. Are there certain issues or areas related to Norwegian development assistance which you would hesitate to study because of their sensitive nature?

YES

NO

– Comments:

14. Are there certain issues or areas related to Norwegian development assistance which you would hesitate to study because you think that your findings might have a negative impact on public opinion on Norwegian development aid and international solidarity?

YES

NO

– Comments:

15. Have you ever felt that you have encountered problems - such as difficulties in getting access to data, access to policy-makers, negative attitudes among Norwegian foreign aid officials or funding agencies - as a result of critical or sensitive issues related to your research?

YES

NO

– Comments:

16. Do you know of any colleagues who have encountered such problems?

YES

NO

– Comments:

17. Do you think that the fact that Norway is a small country where “everybody” knows each other, and where researchers move in and out between academic institutions, NGOs, research councils, ministries, Norad, etc., impacts on the independence of critical research?

YES

NO

– Comments:

18. What are, in your opinion, the expectations of external research funders: i) hands-off after an agreement on the tasks, or, ii) negotiated conclusions?

- Hands-off after an agreement on the task
- Negotiated conclusions
- No opinion
- Comments:

19. Do policy-makers often show an interest in your research?

- YES
- NO
- Comments:

20. According to your experience, how directly can criticism be made when presenting research results?

- ➔ *Scale 1 – 6: 6=Direct and straight-forward; 1= Not at all*
- Comments:

21. Do you think that the views and perspectives of Norad and MFA are present in working decisions even when they are not direct funders of research, perhaps through their roles in the appointment process for board members of research programs?

- YES
- NO
- Comments:

COMMISSIONED RESEARCH

22. Have you ever carried out commissioned research?

- YES
- NO
- Comments:

23. When carrying out commissioned research, has it happened that the agency/ institution which commissioned the research has tried to influence your conclusions, or put pressure on you to delete or modify critical parts of your study?

YES

NO

– Comments:

24. When having carried out commissioned research, has your finished report ever been edited to make its conclusions less critical before it was published or made public?

YES

NO

– Comments:

25. Do you think that the exertion of influence (censorship or self-censorship) in commissioned research is a common experience among researchers?

YES

NO

No opinion

– Comments:

26. Do you think there are any advantages to commissioned research compared to independent research?

YES

NO

If yes, please specify:

27. Do you think there are any disadvantages to commissioned research compared to independent research?

YES

NO

If yes, please specify

EVALUATION REPORTS

- 12.98 Evaluation of the Development Cooperation between Norway and Nicaragua
- 13.98 UNICEF-komiteen i Norge
- 14.98 Relief Work in Complex Emergencies
- 1.99 WID/Gender Units and the Experience of Gender Mainstreaming in Multilateral Organisations
- 2.99 International Planned Parenthood Federation – Policy and Effectiveness at Country and Regional Levels
- 3.99 Evaluation of Norwegian Support to Psycho-Social Projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Caucasus
- 4.99 Evaluation of the Tanzania-Norway Development Cooperation 1994–1997
- 5.99 Building African Consulting Capacity
- 6.99 Aid and Conditionality
- 7.99 Policies and Strategies for Poverty Reduction in Norwegian Development Aid
- 8.99 Aid Coordination and Aid Effectiveness
- 9.99 Evaluation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- 10.99 Evaluation of AWEPA, The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa, and AEI, The African European Institute
- 1.00 Review of Norwegian Health-related Development Cooperation 1988–1997
- 2.00 Norwegian Support to the Education Sector. Overview of Policies and Trends 1988–1998
- 3.00 The Project “Training for Peace in Southern Africa”
- 4.00 En kartlegging av erfaringer med norsk bistand gjennomfrivillige organisasjoner 1987–1999
- 5.00 Evaluation of the NUFU programme
- 6.00 Making Government Smaller and More Efficient. The Botswana Case
- 7.00 Evaluation of the Norwegian Plan of Action for Nuclear Safety Priorities, Organisation, Implementation
- 8.00 Evaluation of the Norwegian Mixed Credits Programme
- 9.00 “Norwegians? Who needs Norwegians?” Explaining the Oslo Back Channel: Norway’s Political Past in the Middle East
- 10.00 Taken for Granted? An Evaluation of Norway’s Special Grant for the Environment
- 1.01 Evaluation of the Norwegian Human Rights Fund
- 2.01 Economic Impacts on the Least Developed Countries of the Elimination of Import Tariffs on their Products
- 3.01 Evaluation of the Public Support to the Norwegian NGOs Working in Nicaragua 1994–1999
- 3A.01 Evaluación del Apoyo Público a las ONGs Noruegas que Trabajan en Nicaragua 1994–1999
- 4.01 The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Cooperation on Poverty Reduction
- 5.01 Evaluation of Development Co-operation between Bangladesh and Norway, 1995–2000
- 6.01 Can democratisation prevent conflicts? Lessons from sub-Saharan Africa
- 7.01 Reconciliation Among Young People in the Balkans An Evaluation of the Post Pessimist Network
- 1.02 Evaluation of the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM)
- 2.02 Evaluation of the International Humanitarian Assistance of the Norwegian Red Cross
- 3.02 Evaluation of ACOPAMA ILO program for “Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives” in Western Africa 1978 – 1999
- 3A.02 Évaluation du programme ACOPAMA Un programme du BIT sur l’« Appui associatif et coopératif aux initiatives de Développement à la Base » en Afrique de l’Ouest de 1978 à 1999
- 4.02 Legal Aid Against the Odds Evaluation of the Civil Rights Project (CRP) of the Norwegian Refugee Council in former Yugoslavia
- 1.03 Evaluation of the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund)
- 2.03 Evaluation of the Norwegian Education Trust Fund for Africa in the World Bank
- 3.03 Evaluering av Bistandstorgets Evalueringsnettverk
- 1.04 Towards Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together. Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of the Peace-building. Norwegian Peace-building policies: Lessons Learnt and Challenges Ahead
- 2.04 Evaluation of CESAR’s activities in the Middle East Funded by Norway
- 3.04 Evaluation of CESAR’s activities in the Middle East Funded by Norway
- 4.04 Evaluering av ordningen med støtte gjennom paraplyorganisasjoner. Eksemplifisert ved støtte til Norsk Misjons Bistandsnemda og Atlas-alliansen
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