

Annex 1. Thematic Sub-Programmes

The NORHED programme aims at building capacity in higher education through North-South-South cooperation. The overall goal of the NORHED II programme is to contribute to sustainable development. The United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) constitute the guiding framework for NORHED II, as for all Norwegian development cooperation, and the sub-programmes all reflect various parts of the 2030 Agenda. Leaving no one behind (LNOB) is a core principle of the 2030 Agenda, and cuts across all six sub-programmes in NORHED II.

NORHED II consists of six thematic sub-programmes:

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The sub-programmes are all thematic, but they are not to be seen as silos. They are connected to the overarching goals of the NORHED II programme, as well as to the SDGs. Just as the different SDGs are considered interconnected and interdependent, NORHED projects should aim to undertake a broad approach which not only addresses individual SDGs, but also the connection between these, contradictions and possible gaps.

Each thematic sub-programme has a rationale for the specific programme and identified priority focus areas. The sub-programmes are all meant to be interdisciplinary and encourage projects to think broadly and across disciplines and sectors. The thematic focus of a project may overlap in different sub-programmes. The applicant should apply for the sub-programme most fitting, but Norad is also free to place a project in another thematic sub-programme if we find it more suitable.

For all Norwegian development cooperation, the cross-cutting issues are a) Human rights, b) Women’s rights and gender equality, c) Environment and climate change and d) Anti-corruption. Development of digital solutions, which can contribute to reducing the digital gap, is also cutting across all sub-programmes.

Sub-Programme 1: Education and Teacher Training

Rationale

The SDG 4 (Quality education) aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The goal takes a holistic approach to education fostering continuity, quality and learning outcomes in all levels of education from pre-school through higher education.

The Millennium Development Goals achieved much in terms of increased access to education. However, the access focus led to a gap in terms of quality of education. In order to deal with the learning crisis, there is an urgent need to strengthen teacher education. Strengthening teacher training colleges for technical and vocational teachers, and closer collaboration with the private sector is important in order to develop skills of relevance to the labour market.

Robust and sound education management systems are necessary for quality education services. A crucial aspect of this is improved administration and management of the education sector and available resources, including the quality of teachers and of teaching.

There is a general agreement by international bodies and agencies (UNESCO, OECD, World Bank, bilateral development agencies, NGOs, etc.) and countries themselves, that higher education is critical in fostering socio-economic and cultural development at national, sub-national levels, and within regions. Higher education is crucial for equipping teachers, administrators, and public servants with the skills and knowledge needed to continuously improve education systems. Education research will contribute to knowledge production and evidence-based decision-making required to build education systems.

Priority focus areas

The following areas are prioritised under this NORHED II sub-programme:

1) Teacher education and training

Development of comprehensive teacher education policies and systems, both pre-service and in-service, with consideration to various socio-economic-cultural contexts, and gender related challenges, aimed at different schooling levels.

With special focus on:

- Improving the quality of teaching to enhance student learning outcomes.
- Reducing inequities in learning outcomes and promoting inclusion.
- Improving teacher training for instructors in technical and vocational education and training.

2) Education sector governance and leadership

Appropriate and effective policies, strategies, budgeting and practices in the education sector may contribute to effective leadership at all levels.

With special focus on:

- Developing leadership in public education administration that promotes quality and inclusion.

- Good governance in the education sector to secure transparency, strengthened accountability and reduction of inequalities in education.

3) Higher education governance and policy

Improved knowledge and management skills of administrators, leaders and policymakers in higher education can improve the extent to which higher education providers fulfil their social and economic mandates.

With special focus on:

- Management of higher education quality and accountability, including pathways to the world of work, gender equality, human rights and equity.
- Higher education knowledge production and social economic development.
- Higher education governance and reform policy management.

Sub-Programme 2: Health

Rationale

The right to the highest attainable standard of health is a universal human right. Good health is a pre-requisite for development and the SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) aims at ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. Healthy people are generally more educated, more productive, earn and invest more, and work longer, all of which positively impact economic and social development. Child health and nutrition, and investment in early childhood development is a basis for children becoming productive adults able to contribute to development of communities and countries.

Yet there are large disparities in full realization of the right to health and health benefits of individuals and communities across the world, both within and between states.

The SDGs are wide and have a strong emphasis on transitioning towards domestic resources and sustainable funding. Data and evidence driven priority setting for equitable service delivery and public health interventions is required. Disease burden and health challenges change as countries emerge economically. Affordable funding and long-term financing strategies based primarily on domestic public and private resources, need to be developed. Reducing wastage and improving efficiencies is crucial for development countries striving towards universal health coverage (UHC). WHO estimates that between 20 and 40 percent of health spending globally is wasted, with wastage figures in poorer countries sometimes even higher.

Health systems are complex and context specific and consist of several different factors. An adequate, skilled and equitably distributed workforce is at the core of health systems' capabilities to provide health and health benefits. Improving the quality and availability of health care services requires focus on front line service delivery, especially for vulnerable groups and populations. Capacity to plan, train, employ, distribute, and retain adequate staff is key.

Capacity for and systems to collect, analyse and use data for priority setting, planning, implementing and monitoring requires leadership, technical skills, managerial and

administrative qualifications at different levels. Surveillance systems for monitoring disease outbreaks and patterns are essential for health security locally, nationally, but also globally. Birth and civil registries are essential, as are registries for mortality and causes of death. Capacity to apply digital technology as well as innovative approaches could enhance this.

Capacity, systems and processes to prevent, detect, and handle life threatening epidemic outbreaks, is increasingly important, as well as systems resilience. Health security locally also affect global health security. The majority of new and emerging diseases are diseases that spread from animals to humans (One Health) and these diseases are of special concern for health security. They pose a public health risk due to epidemic potential, and especially for the new diseases where there are insufficient, or no, countermeasures. Cross-sectorial efforts to strengthen the capacity as well as well-established partnerships across sectors are crucial to be prepared for the next big infectious disease outbreak.

Priority focus areas

The following areas are prioritised under this NORHED II sub-programme:

1) Health challenges (Burden of Disease) and priority setting

Capacity building of institutions and training of health personnel, including enhanced leadership and management, as well as assessing burden of disease and establishing evidence-based priority setting for action to enhance public health and ensure equity.

With special focus on:

- Prevention and treatment of communicable diseases.
- Prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases and injuries, including rehabilitation.
- Sexual, reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health services.
- Public health functions incl. malnutrition and health hazard, and meeting emerging health challenges of the future, e.g. population growth, climate change and epidemiological transitions.

2) Health systems and public health management and administration

With special focus on:

- Universal Health Coverage (UHC) – Health sector leadership and management skills related to capacity to define, plan and/or implement essential health service provision and affordable and equitable financing.
- Human resources – planning, training, employing and retaining staff.
- Data and health information management - civil registration and vital statistics, surveillance systems and health information systems.
- Epidemic preparedness – capacity to detect and handle outbreaks of major epidemics, including but not exclusively transmission from animals to humans locally (health security).
- Cross sectoral interventions - across different sectors such as education, water and sanitation, environment, labour, social services, finance, etc. to meet future challenges requiring interventions that will most often be cross-sectoral in nature.

Sub-Programme 3: Climate Change and Natural Resources

Rationale

It is a paradox that many of the developing countries that have contributed the least to global climate changes are the ones facing the most severe impacts of more variable temperatures and rainfall. Concurrently, many of the same countries hold important keys to reducing global emissions through nature-based solutions. Sustainable natural resource management practices by small-scale farmers, herders and fishing communities have the potential to prevent natural hazards from becoming crises as well as securing vital ecosystem services. A variety of the SDGs address issues related to this sub-programme, in particular SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 13 (Climate action), SDG 14 (Life below water), and SDG 15 (Life on land). Knowledge on how natural resources from land and the aquatic environment are controlled, accessed and managed as well as the resilience of social-ecological systems is thus important.

Maintaining and restoring tropical forests offer an effective means to combat climate changes. Reducing carbon emissions, regional water scarcity, unreliable rainfall and heat extremes, as well as to protect biodiversity are key. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) includes conservation and sustainable management of forests, enhancement of forest carbon stocks, human rights-based governance, improved land tenure systems and protection of the rights of forest peoples, such as indigenous peoples. Value chain approaches to sustainable agricultural production and job creation in forest landscapes are attaining greater focus in several REDD programs.

Food insecurity and under- and malnutrition are on the rise globally, whereby developing countries are hardest hit. The global community is increasingly focusing on the entire food system from food production through markets and diets, recognizing the complex relationship between environmental sustainability and economic, political and social development. In order to enable developing countries to develop and maintain sustainable food systems, knowledge generation and capacity building is needed. Food production can be improved by managing natural resources from land and the aquatic environment in a sustainable manner. For instance, agro-forestry systems have the potential to increase food production while improving soil quality, increasing agrobiodiversity and forest cover, and diversifying farmers' incomes and diets. Furthermore, evidence suggest that effective fisheries management customized to local context can increase fish stocks. Biosecurity management and aquatic animal health research have the potential to enhance sustainable food production, promoting environmental sustainability and protecting biodiversity.

Priority focus areas

The following areas are prioritized under this NORHED II sub-programme:

- 1) Adaptations to climate change as well as mitigation and resilience strategies.
- 2) Control over, access to and use of natural resources with impact on biodiversity and social-ecological systems.
- 3) Development and management of sustainable food systems - including agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries – contributing to food security, improved nutrition and poverty reduction.

Sub-Programme 4: Political and Economic Governance

Rationale

Improving democratic and economic governance is at the core of stability and progress. SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) aims at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Governance is the process through which state and nonstate actors interact to design and implement policies within a given set of formal and informal rules that shape and are shaped by power. Countries with strong, legitimate and transparent institutions prosper by creating an environment that facilitates stability and security, private sector growth, reduces poverty, delivers valuable services, and earns the trust of its citizens. Many governments fail to address governance challenges because of capacity constraints, power asymmetries and lack of a skilled workforce. A competent and accountable public service is crucial for efficient and equitable policies, for preserving the rule of law and as a foundation for democratic governance.

Governments and other public bodies need a workforce with analytical skills to solve complex development problems and design tools to implement effective solutions. Each country is unique with respect to systems and structures and the history of how these have been developed. There is no blueprint for how to support governance in a country. This underlines the need for skilled people who can meet varieties of challenges.

It is a goal to equip students with the skills to serve as public servants on all levels, including as managers, executives and policy analysts. While this sub-programme has a strong focus on improved quality in the executive branch, it will also provide skills that are valuable in the legislative and judiciary as well as at subnational levels of government and in non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Competence on private sector development is important for the quality of economic governance. The pace of economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction are critically dependent on a dynamic private sector. The quality of public policies and public institutions shapes the conditions for entrepreneurship and willingness to invest in the private sector.

Democratic governance based on human rights emphasizes the importance of equal rights, opportunities and individual freedoms for all. The importance of democratic governance implies that development processes must be driven by domestic policies, actors and organizations. A better skilled workforce in public administration with a strong work-ethic and knowledge of democratic values contributes to relationships of trust and better interaction between the government and the public.

Priority focus areas

The following areas are prioritised under this NORHED II sub-programme:

1) Public policy and administration

With special focus on:

- Basic knowledge of principles and methods of modern public policy and management.
- Provide skills to analyse public policies and administration in an independent and critical way.
- Micro- and macro-economics for public policy. Basic concepts, models and methods suitable for appraising policy.
- Public financial management, including budgeting, revenue policy, financial reporting and audit compliance.
- Basic knowledge of core tax administration processes, specialty skills and/or tax law, both internationally and domestic.

2) Democratic governance

With special focus on:

- Democratic institutional design, including: 1) the structure of and relationship between the executive, the legislative, the judiciary and public administration and how election systems impact these institutions, 2) the relationship between these institutions and individual and collective actors like MPs and political parties, 3) the impact of institutions and actors on policy outcomes.
- Strengthening or weakening of democratic processes and institutions such as multiparty elections, rule of law, parliaments and citizens' democratic awareness and participation, accountability and human rights-based and gender equitable service delivery.
- Politics of policymaking and governance: focus on power actors' commitment, cooperation and coordination, as well as clientelism, capture, corruption and exclusion. Threats to democracy, such as government manipulation, polarization in the public sphere, digitalization and the spread of misinformation.

3) Economic policy

With special focus on:

- Theoretical and applied public economics; analyse and evaluate economic policy making.
- Monitoring and assessment of living standards, income inequality and poverty. Design and evaluation of efficient policies to reduce poverty and inequality.
- Tax policy design and implementation, including assessments of efficiency and equity for different types of taxation, with special emphasis on the major tax types in low and lower middle-income countries.
- Debt and revenue management, including size and composition of internal and external debt.
- Management of revenues from natural resources.

- Forms and channels of cross-border economic integration and its impact upon domestic markets and policy making.
- Facilitation of private sector development for better investment-climate and entrepreneurship.

Sub-programme 5: Humanities and Social Sciences

Rationale

Humanities and the social sciences are fundamental in understanding and describing our societies and to address global challenges. In a world of climate change, conflicts, migration and rapid technological changes it is necessary to understand the dynamics, relations and correlations in our societies, including the meaning of culture, religion, identity, democracy and civil society. The possibility to express oneself culturally is fundamental to human welfare, identity and development in all societies. Democratic societies need an enlightened public with access to free and independent media, and the ability of critical thinking.

Humanities and social sciences systematically address social interaction and how various facets of society affects our behaviour, attitudes and values. They foster critical thinking and questioning and enable a deeper understanding of contemporary society. They can equip students with a wide-reaching set of skills that can be applied in many areas of society. Higher education institutions play an important role in providing high quality humanistic and social science research relevant for societal transformation in line with the SDGs. As the labour market is characterised by increasing complexity and technologic advancement, students should also be equipped with transferable knowledge and skills, not limited to the immediate translation to economic growth, but also in order to cope with complex and ambiguous information.

The overarching principles that this sub-programme seeks to address, are the LNOB and a human rights-based approach, addressing issues such as cultural and ethnic identity, gender equality, vulnerability, marginalization, discrimination, inclusion, diversity, democracy, freedom of speech, peace, conflict, migration and modern slavery. This is in line with the SDGs, as illustrated through SDG 5 (Gender equality), which aims at achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls, and SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities), which aims at reducing inequality within and among countries. Higher education institutions are crucial actors, equipping students with mindsets and relevant skills to address sustainable development.

Priority focus areas

The following areas are prioritised under this NORHED II sub-programme:

- 1) Identity, inclusion and rights

With special focus on:

- Cultural and ethnic identity and diversity, including heritage and ancestry, values, traditions, rituals, language, religion and indigenous knowledge.

- Social and economic inclusion, equity and non-discrimination, including marginalised and vulnerable people and groups.
- Gender equality and equity, sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE), including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+), with special focus on rights and inclusion.

2) Freedom of speech, media and democracy

With special focus on:

- Civil society and democratic participation, including freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and freedom of opinion and expression.
- Journalism, media and communication, including free and independent media and press, and safety of journalists.

3) Peace and conflict, modern slavery, migration and mobility

With special focus on:

- Peace and conflict, including post-conflict, security and vulnerability.
- Modern slavery, including forced labour, child labour, forced marriage and human trafficking.
- Migration and mobility, including forcibly displaced persons (refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum-seekers) and stateless persons.

Sub-programme 6: Energy

Rationale

Access to energy is essential to reduce poverty. As the world's population rapidly expands and urbanizes, the need for reliable and sustainable energy supply is greater than ever. This energy is needed to 1) provide modern energy services to the 840 million people without access to electricity and the 3 billion without access to solutions for clean cooking, and 2) drive social and economic development. SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030.

One of the greatest challenges of our time is to meet rising energy demand while at the same time reducing carbon emissions. Reduced emissions will require a transition to a lower-carbon energy system, as the world seeks to move to a pathway consistent with meeting the climate goals outlined in the Paris Agreement. SDG 13 aims to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

How to develop an energy supply system that is sustainable in the long term is a key policy issue in many countries and regions. Human capacity, embedded in strong, efficient institutions is vital to ensuring a well-functioning management system for energy policy planning, where energy supply, climate change, environmental considerations and value creation are properly considered. At the same time, more than 3.5 billion people live in countries rich in oil and gas. With good governance and transparent management, the

revenues from petroleum can have a significant impact on boosting shared prosperity, while respecting community needs and the environment.

Higher education and research and development (R&D) within the energy field is needed to strengthen a country's ability to manage its energy resources. Universities, in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders, have a key role in providing human resources, knowledge and technological innovations within the context of a lower-carbon energy system.

Priority focus areas

The following areas are prioritised under this NORHED II sub-programme:

1) Energy technologies

With special focus on:

- Large scale/grid connected technologies for renewable power generation.
- Electric power transmission and distribution, smart grid technologies, storage systems.
- Energy planning and system analysis.
- Small scale/distributed solutions for energy access, including mini-grids, stand-alone systems, and cooking.
- Energy efficiency and loss reduction should be mainstreamed across all topics
- Land use and environmental effects.
- Efficient utilization of petroleum resources, including optimal depletion technologies and efficient field development.

2) Public management of energy resources

With special focus on:

- Energy sector policy, reform and regulation, power markets, energy economy, emission mitigation, climate resilience and adaptation.
- Energy transition: Preconditions, facilitation and implementation.
- Energy sector financing, investment analysis, project planning, public-private partnerships.
- Productive use of energy, correlations between access to energy, economic growth and social development.
- Environmental and social impact assessments of energy resource developments.
- Efficient systems for capture of petroleum revenues, and knowledge about challenges and solutions to macroeconomic management of large government revenues.
- Economic incentives for a carbon efficient petroleum sector development (taxes and reduction of fossil fuel subsidies), including investment of petroleum revenues to contribute to energy transition.
- It is an aim to contribute to more gender equality in the energy sector.

Projects that include areas where Norway have particular expertise/comparative advantages, are encouraged.