

Developing Brains for Development
(Notes for presentation)

Panel Session, 07.Sept.2006:

Achieving Financial and Ecological Sustainability

59th Annual DPI/NGO Conference: Unfinished Business: Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development

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1. Why "Brains for Development"
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1. Why "Developing Brains for Development" ?

The documents on the MDGs do not contain many references to research and higher education as a means to achieve the goals:

2000: **United Nations Millennium Declaration** and the **Millennium Development Goals**

2002 **UN Millennium Project**: - commissioned to develop a concrete action plan for the world to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people.

- Report: **Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals** (2005)
- Handbook: **Millennium Development Goals: Needs Assessments** (2005)
- **10 Task forces**: to carry out the bulk of the analytical work

However, one of the Task forces was very clear:

10: Task Force on Science, Technology, and Innovation

Higher education is increasingly being recognized as a critical aspect of the development process, ... While primary and secondary education have been at the focus of donor-community attention for decades, higher education has been viewed as essential to development only in more recent years. (Page 88)

Universities are vastly underutilized and potentially powerful vehicles for development in developing countries, particularly with respect to science and technology. (Page 99)

(Task force report: Innovation: applying knowledge in development, 2005)

Thus, Universities and institutions of research and higher education have an important role to play in providing the knowledge, ideas, creativity and skilled personnel necessary for achieving the MDGs.

I will below discuss three cases where the University of Tromsø is seeking to contribute according to our field of work - research and higher education.

2. Case: Higher Education for Peace

“Higher Education for Peace” was title of a conference in Tromsø, 4-6 May 2000:

Objectives of the conference

- to encourage and challenge all institutions of higher education...
- to exemplify...
- to develop and share ideas...
- to focus on the interdependence between higher education and research...
- to discuss how such teaching programmes and learning processes may challenge and bridge the traditional divide between theory and practice...
- to highlight the impact of higher education on the education system.
- to combine and share knowledge, experience, values and visions...

The conference

- Gathered 500 participants, 187 of them were speakers
- Chaired by Prof. Ole D. Mjøøs, currently Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee
- It was an international conference with a national focus
- Proceedings: <http://www.peace2.uit.no/hefp/>

What was leading up to the conference ?

- 1989 Concept ‘culture of peace’: Côte d’Ivoire (initiative by UNESCO)
Yamoussoukro Declaration on Peace in the Minds of Men
- 1992 UNESCO’s Executive Board requests a specific programme for a Culture of Peace as a contribution to United Nations peacekeeping efforts
- 1998 The UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) Thematic Debate: Promoting a Culture of Peace. Question: What can universities do to promote a Culture of Peace?
- 2000 International Year for the Culture of Peace (UN)

What happened after the conference?

- 2001–2010 International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (UN)
- 2002 University of Tromsø:
 - Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) established
 - Master’s Degree Program in Peace and Conflict Transformation
 - Students from all around the world.
- 2003 UNESCO Meeting of Higher Education Partners (WCHE+5)
7 appeals by Cristovam Buarque, Minister of Education of Brazil
- 2004 First students passing exams in Tromsø (24 per year)

Thus, it passed 15 years from developing a concept in Yamoussoukro to students passing exams in Tromsø. This may seem a long time, few students, and we don’t know what the candidates will do. Still, it is a contribution to increased knowledge, understanding and skill in that field.

3. Case: Research cooperation programme - NUFU

The University of Tromsø has since 1991 participated in NUFU - The Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Higher Education

What is NUFU

- Programme of academic research and educational co-operation based on equal partnerships between institutions in Norway and in the South.
- Goal: to support the development of sustainable capacity and competence for research and research based higher education in developing countries, relevant to national development and poverty reduction; and to contribute to enhanced academic collaboration in the South and between South and North.
- Contact: <http://siu.no/nufu>

NUFU in detail

- A Norwegian government financing instrument
- Established 1991
- 5-year projects, may run 2 periods (max 10 years, normally)
- Up to now: 225 projects supported - in all disciplines
- 29 Partner institutions in developing countries (2005)
- 11 Norwegian partner institutions

Typical NUFU project activities

- Research - running costs, travel
- Ph.D and Master fellowships
- Establish Ph.D and Master courses
- Publications
- Activities assumed to be part of normal university activities
- No salaries and infrastructure covered
- Joint project board decides on the details of activities
- The institutions evaluate progress

NUFU Project proposals are

- Developed jointly by researchers from each of the collaborating institutions
- Scrutinised and ranked by the institutions to secure
 - relevance to the institution's research activities and staff development
 - acceptable quality

The University of Tromsø has at present 5 NUFU-projects running:

- * **Country-wide Time Use by Gender and Advanced Analysis of Census Data**
University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Time, resources and knowledge to breast-feed and implement other measures of proper child care has time and again been shown to affect the infant mortality rates dramatically

Objectives are to generate information on

- women's welfare
- women's role in community development
- building knowledge about women's situation

* **Maya Competence Building II: Identities, Inter-culturality and the multiethnic state of Guatemala**

Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala

Objectives

- Develop an efficient research unit on indigenous / inter-ethnic affairs
- Focus on aspects of the Mayas' social situation: local leadership, economic situation, psychological well-being and general welfare
 - history and ethnicity
 - identities and interculturality
 - the multiethnic state, power, political and economic structures
 - transitional national affairs
- The project aims at recruiting Mayan students

* **Collaborative Programme for San (Basarwa) Research and Capacity Building**

University of Botswana

Focus: **History and culture** of the indigenous people of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa: San, Basarwa, Bushmen, Khoesan, N/oakwe, or Kwe

Objectives

- Promote San access to higher education and capacity building
- Identify ways in which research make positive contributions to San
- Promote research capacity and competence among University of Botswana staff and students
- Ensure that capacity is reflected in teaching and studies

* **Urbanisation and Gender in Ethiopia**

Addis Ababa University

Objectives

- Research focus on vulnerable groups in fast expanding cities, survival strategies, credit and savings groups, ++
- MA Program in Gender and Development

* **Cultural Revitalization, Environment and Sustainable Productive Systems of Indigenous Peoples in the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua**

URACCAN - Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense

Objectives

- Education of staff through research projects
- Research on local language and natural resources/fisheries
- Recruit indigenous youth as students

NUFU-projects have been implemented at the University of Tromsø for 15 years and have a common focus on:

- Learning together
- Contributing with expertise
- Well defined target groups
- Candidates being responsible to their communities

4. Case: Our UN-finished business - gender equality

The University of Tromsø has, together with a number of partners presented a proposal for a new NUFU project:

NUFU Gender Network 2007-11

Objective

- To work towards gender equality in academia to the clear benefit of teachers and resource persons of coming generations

Planned activities:

- A Doctor School; annual Ph.D.-courses ambulating between institutions and addressing current gendered topics
- Gender specific grants; sponsorship of doctoral and MA/MS students
- Support for gendered sabbaticals for writing and academic focusing
- Disseminate network information
- Strengthening the collaboration between gender focused centres, and the NUFU institutions (40)

Main partners

- **Uganda:** Department of Women and Gender Studies. Makerere University
- **Ethiopia:** Institute for Gender Studies. University of Addis Ababa
- **Ghana:** Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy. University of Ghana Legon
- **Tanzania:** University of Dar es Salaam Gender Centre
- **Norway:** Department of Sociology / Department of Education and Health Promotion. University of Bergen
- **Norway:** NIBR - Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research
- **Norway:** KVINNFORSK - Centre for Women's Studies and Women in Research. University of Tromsø

Based on

- 1999 The NUFU Gender Seminar in Tromsø, Norway

A decision on the proposal will not be made until the end of 2006, so I may not now tell you if it will actually come off the ground. Still, the partners are confident that the planned activities will contribute to development and to the MDGs in the best manner that universities may contribute.

And the 15-year mark is not until 2014.

5. Summary

- The MDGs are to be achieved in 15 years
- 15 years is not a long time
- 15 years was the period for a “short term experiment” - Norwegian forest research
- In experiments you don’t have to succeed - but you have to do your best
- I have displayed three 15-year cases with indications of process and achievements

- The three cases display partnerships in time and space
- Showing that you cannot do everything yourself
- But need to contribute with your capacity and expertise

- The resources of universities are ”brains”
- Brains can not be replaced

- Identity and dignity is reside in brains and are often just as important as money - in terms of poverty

¹ **Centre for environment and Development Studies - SEMUT**

- Established 1989 to follow up the “Brundtland report” on sustainable development
- Promoting environment and development studies on the institution as a whole - no studies are offered at SEMUT
- Special focus on cooperation with developing countries
- Contact: <http://uit.no/semut>

² **University of Tromsø** - the world’s northernmost university, 70° north

- Opened 1972 to “develop that part of Norway”
- During studies, students are early required to do practise in rural areas
- Carrying out research and offering studies within medicine, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, law, fisheries, etc.
- 6-7.000 students
- Special focus on northern areas, fisheries and indigenous studies
- Contact: <http://uit.no>