

# Strengthening research capacity and priorities

EUA

Oslo, 24-26 February, 2010

# My personal experiences with academic cooperation between University of Oslo and universities in South Africa

- First visit: June 1994
- 1995-2007 NUFU Cooperation programmes: University of the North, now: University of Limpopo (UL)
- 2002-2005 Visiting Professor at UNIN
- 2007 – 2010 Research cooperation Programme with University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN)
- Student/staff exchange programmes
- Internships for Norwegian psychology students at UKZN and University of Western Cape
- 5 PhD candidates (4 from SA, 1 from Norway) graduated
- Master programme in clinical psychology at UL

# Problems facing universities in developmental countries

- The history of colonization
- International scholarships
- Weak culture of learning
- Modern racism (lack of awareness, lack of mentoring, Africa as a supplier of "raw materials")
- Insufficient training in research methodology
- Bureaucratic procedures for research management
- Lack of training in academic article writing

# International scholarships

- Brain drain
- Training in Western research techniques, models, and ideology
- Home university does not benefit from the research done during the scholarship period
- Home students do not benefit during the scholarship period

# Purpose of cooperation

- Academic cooperation based on equality, personal relationships, and individual initiatives in the development of research projects
- Aid to institutions of higher education in South Africa through strengthening academic structures
- Education of university employees in South Africa
- Academic capacity building in South Africa through teaching and supervision (especially on applied research methods)
- Mentoring
- Academic capacity building also in Norway

# Important elements in the Norwegian-South African co-operation programme

- Long-term institutional academic capacity building both in South and North
- Shared research interests among participants
- Based on participants' enthusiasm and personal involvement
- Low cost

# Constructive relationship between teaching and research

- Integration of research methodology in teaching on all levels, focusing on applied research
- Integrating data collection/analysis into students' learning/assessment activities
- Students publishing their research as part of their learning experience
- Generate publications based on students' undergraduate/postgraduate projects
- PhD theses in article formate, when applicable

# Practical improvements

- Desentralised and simple procedures for approval of proposals
- Systematic training of supervisors
- Coursework on applied research skills, scientific writing, dissemination skills etc.
- Sandwich models for international scholarships
- Intensive use of mentoring

# Some implications of the academic cooperation between Norway and South Africa

- International scientists' networks of high quality
- Staff exchange (lecturing, supervising, refereeing, external examiners, research visits)
- Student exchange programmes
- Training opportunities for Norwegian students (especially psychologists, medical doctors and dentists)
- Welcoming networks for arriving students/staff in Norway and South Africa
- Increased recruitment of researchers to international research projects

# Financial sources

- The Quota Programme (NORAD)
- The NUFU Programme (SIU)
- The NOMA Programme (SIU)
- The NORGLOBAL Programme (NFR)
- International Summer Schools
- EU