

## **Further information in connection to Danida's decision to reorganise the Building Stronger Universities (BSU) programme from phase II.**

On 12 July 2013 Universities Denmark forwarded two letters from Danida to all our BSU South partner institutions – one general letter and an individual letter to each institution.

In the letters Danida stated that it had decided to redesign the BSU programme. Danida informed that it would reduce the number of South partner institutions from 11 to 7 with effect from phase II and that the platform structure would be abolished. Instead, Danida would delegate the administration directly to each of the institutions in the South, which implies that Universities Denmark will no longer be part of the programme management.

The redesign would take place over the coming months with an expected start of phase II on 1 January 2014. Phase 1 would continue until 31 December 2013 with a number of key activities.

On 12 August the Universities Denmark secretariat hosted a meeting with Ms. Tove Degnbol, Head of Department at Danida, and the Danish BSU platform chairpersons and coordinators to discuss a number of issues in relation to the decision to reorganize the programme.

Based on the information given and the discussion and decisions at the meeting we would like to provide the following information for clarification:

- Tove Degnbol confirmed the plans for reorganising the programme as outlined in the letters, including the **no cost extension of phase I until 31 December 2013**
- Danida is in the process of contracting an external consultant to assist Danida in the formulation of a revised **phase II** programme document in close dialogue with the South partners and with consultations with Danish platform representatives and the BSU project manager
- Danida shall ensure that the **PhD and MPhil students** that have started under phase I will continue to be funded
- Regarding the project Capacity Building within Research Dissemination, Communication and Networking (**the 19 million DKK grant project**, Jan. 2013 – July 2015) it will be ensured that the commitments to all 11 South partners in relation to the implementation of the project will be met

- For the 19 million DKK grant project and the BSU Fellowship programme an administrative setup will be developed to ensure that the original partners may continue to be involved beyond 31 December 2013
- **The no cost extension of phase I** shall enable the following key activities:
  - The four platforms and the central coordination unit will continue to operate until 31 December 2013
  - The PhD and MPhil activities will continue to operate until 31 December 2013
  - The institutions that will terminate cooperation with BSU at the end of 2013 have been offered to formulate and implement relevant phase out activities during the remaining months of 2013 subject to the availability of funds. Such activities should be discussed and agreed with the BSU coordination unit.

In order to get an overview of the amount of unspent funds as of 31 July 2013 all partners will be asked to update their books and make an estimate of the spent funds compared to their budget and to provide details re. their PhD budgets. GEP, EC and PHH will be assisted by financial advisor Christian Gregart, who will make contact to the South partners, while PSDR expects to handle this issue with their own staff.

When we have established an overview of the financial status as of 31 July and budgets for the extra cost to run the platform coordination and PhD and MPhil activities in the period August – December 2013, we hope to be able to approve potential requests for some phasing out activities.

For the partners who will be phased out: We suggest you discuss with your Danish platform chair and coordinator potential ideas for phasing out activities.

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