South-South-North Research Partnerships: A Transformative Development Modality?

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Higher Education Theory and Policy Studies Ontario Institute for Studies in Education University of Toronto

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Abstract

This thesis investigates development assistance programming in the research activities of higher education institutions by studying the case of the Norwegian Programme for Education, Research and Development (NUFU) and its activities in two sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations. In this thesis, North-South Research Partnerships (NSRPs) are conceptualized through the construction of an ideal-type based on the historical record of NSRP programming. A conceptual framework and analytical tool are developed in order to present the dominant norms associated with mainstream North-South research programming over the past sixty years, as firmly embedded in exploitative core-periphery dynamics. The main research questions ask to what extent the NUFU model differs from other NSRP programs, including South-South collaborative opportunities, and to what extent the program creates spaces for endogenous research needs and priorities to take precedent over exogenous demands and targets.

A qualitative investigation is used to gather data from textual analysis, participant observation and key informant interviews in order to investigate how the NUFU program establishes demand-driven programs in Southern universities while negotiating the Norwegian and global political economies. A case study of a single NUFU North-South-South project demonstrates how the program framework influences the construction of the partnership
modality. The findings indicate that the North-South component of the model presents significant opportunities for demand-driven research, but that changing trends in Norway are placing pressure on the program and researchers. With regard to the South-South component, the study concludes that the modality is under-conceptualized, lacks clarity of purpose and has failed to generate sustainable collaboration within the SSA region.

The implications of these findings for NSRP programming, the NUFU program in particular, are that historical asymmetries remain firmly entrenched; without a radical reconstitution of the economic and political relations between Northern and Southern states, the most powerful international actors, be they states, private entities or multilateral agencies, will continue to dominate and determine knowledge production capacities and outputs. The study concludes by suggesting opportunities for NSRP programs to augment their support of Southern universities and by reflecting on how ongoing changes in current geo-political configurations could open new spaces for alternative development trajectories.
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Chapter One: Introduction

The Setting

Linkages between higher education institutions (HEI) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and higher education institutions in the historically more industrialized nations of the global North form the longest standing method of institutional and individual capacity building for tertiary education on the African continent (Teferra, 2008). Situated in the legacy of colonial relations, specifically since the early 20th century, universities in various African jurisdictions were constructed with explicit rationales for sustaining and reproducing colonial economic, political and social orders and systems (Ashby, 1964; Ashby & Anderson, 1966; Altbach, 1977, 1981; Arnowe, 1980b; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Court, 1983; Ajayi, Goma & Johnson, 1996; Samoff & Carrol, 2004).

Since the cessation of formal colonial relations in the mid-to-late 20th century, universities on the continent have been variously tasked with endogenous mandates in support of building human capacity in order to address local, national and, at times, regional issues. However, the multi-faceted instability experienced in the majority of SSA nations in their post-independence histories has predicated sustained relations with Northern institutions for support in a wide array of areas. This study focuses on the issue of research capacity in SSA universities in order to analyze how international research linkages, specifically between institutions in the global North and those in SSA, attempt to negotiate global, regional, national and local systems and conditions with the aim of promoting and sustaining autonomous research communities within the global South. The issue of research capacity is situated in broader historical narratives of economic, political and epistemological domination, subjugation and exploitation on the continent, both during and after the formal colonial era, such that the possibility for authentic academic ‘partnerships’ is questioned at its most fundamental level.

For the majority of their varied colonial histories, universities in SSA nations were restricted from partaking in research activities, both basic and applied, and were primarily used as tools for maintaining colonial administrative systems (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Mahmdani, 1993). The particular circumstances and structures of these colonial systems determined the exact nature and scope of the individual higher education institutions, with varying jurisdictional histories determining the extent and form of educational systems and structures. However, the
limited scope of colonial post-secondary training is consistent across all SSA cases (Gifford & Weiskel, 1971; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Mudimbe, 1988; Ajayi, 1988; Mahmdani, 1993, 1996; Wangoola, 2000; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Teferra, 2008). As a result of these circumstances, SSA universities in the post-independence era have been predominantly ill-equipped and incapable of meeting basic domestic post-secondary demand, let alone supporting more advanced research functions so commonplace in countries with mature higher education systems (Mazrui, 1975; Mahmdani, 1996).

In the immediate post-independence decades, SSA universities remained extremely reliant on expatriate professors, lecturers and administrators from the former colonial nations, and the structure, organization and culture of the universities remained heavily rooted in Western structural and epistemological practices (Ashby, 1964; Yesufu, 1973; Eicher, 1973; Mazrui, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1990, 1992; Arnove 1980a, 1980b; Court, 1983; Mudimbe, 1988; Appiah, 1992; Arnove et al., 1992; Hountondji, 1995; Ayaji et al., 1996; Gyeke, 1997; Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg, 2000; Odora-Hoppers, 2002; van Rinsum, 2002; Jamison, 2011). As a result, endogenous and indigenous knowledge production capacities were only possible in a limited number of circumstances, and, even within such cases, Western epistemological and methodological traditions remained the dominant meta-narratives guiding knowledge production processes (Mazrui, 1975; Court, 1983; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Connell, 2007).

The limited presence of formal post-secondary education institutions and systems in colonial SSA spurred a flurry of activity in the post-independence epoch of the 1960s and 1970s. This flourishing often occurred under the broad auspice of Pan-Africanist ideologies, a fluid set of ideas that espoused “African solutions to African problems” and rejected the dominant Western norms, values, social systems, and economic frameworks through the creation of regional, sub-regional and local developmental trajectories (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). Nowhere was this more clear than in Tanzania, where Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania, argued for the creation of developmental universities throughout SSA: “the role of the university in a developing country is to contribute; to give ideas, manpower, and service for the furtherance of human equality, human dignity, and human development” (Nyerere, 1967a, 186).

However, African nations and their nascent universities remained highly dependent on the financial resources, human capital and, of central importance for this study, the epistemological and ideological frameworks developed and imposed by the former colonial rulers and the array of new actors in the post-World War 2 international landscape (Mazrui, 1975; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Mudimbe, 1988; Hountondji, 1995; Amin, 1997). The
development-oriented mission of the mid-20th century international arena was comprised of a new set of international superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and a grouping of transnational actors with significant influence over the hypothetically autonomous affairs of nation states, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations system (Escobar, 1995). The changing geo-political configurations resulted in the continued exogenous construction and legitimization of knowledge processes and institutions throughout SSA, whereby higher education and research became tools for manpower and human capital development under the auspices of Western liberal capitalism and the discourse of ‘development’. This situation explicitly limited the production of substantive alternatives to the dominant development narratives within the broader international arena (Alvares, 1992; Sachs, 1992; Escobar, 1995; Hountondji, 1995; Mkandawire, 1995, 2000; Rahnema, 1997; Nandy, 2003; Kothari, 2005).

The economic, political and social inequalities and dependencies between post-colonial states and their more technologically-advanced and financially powerful counterparts in Western Europe and North America sustained colonial relations in more nuanced forms (Prebisch, 1950, 1981, 1984; Galtung, 1971; Cardosa & Falleto, 1979; Frank, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1981; Arnowe, 1980b; Gillis & Frank, 1990; Wallerstein, 1974a, 1974b, 1980, 1984, 1989, 1988; Escobar, 1995, 2004; Chase-Dunn, 1978, 1995; Rossem, 1996; Arrighi & Silver, 2001). The colonizer-colonized dichotomy was replaced by a system of core-periphery polarizations; the former colonies were almost exclusively situated at the periphery of the international landscape, while the dominant national powers, both the former colonizers and the new Cold War actors, represented the core of the international system, dictating the frameworks of action and the sets of relations therein. This core-periphery dynamic manifested in a variety of formal and informal structures, most forcefully through international markets, international political relations (soft power), military and security based relations (hard power), and the burgeoning multilateral system (Strange, 1988, 1996; Cox, 1981, 1987, 2002; Nye, 1990, 2004; Escobar, 1995).

One horizon of activity that underlies the aforementioned power sub-structures is the global knowledge regime (Strange, 1988; Escobar, 1995; Tooze, 2000; Mytelka, 2000). Under this regime, knowledge is positioned as a structural node of power that has historically been manipulated to sustain asymmetrical relations between core and peripheral actors; the dominance of core nations within the international arena has, to a great extent, been dependent on the construction, legitimization and reproduction of particular forms of knowledge, information and ideology within the knowledge systems of the global periphery, with
universities acting as a primary medium of acculturation (Arnove, 1980b; Alvares, 1992; Escobar, 1992, 1995). The ability of core nations to maintain or extend their dominance within the domestic spheres of peripheral nations required the exportation and subsequent acculturation of foreign ideologies that support internalization of the economic and political goals of actors in the global core. The outcome of these processes often resulted in the establishment of cadres of local elites within peripheral nations who identified with the concerns, interests and ideologies of core actors more than with those of the local citizenry in their home countries (Frank, 1972; Mazrui, 1975; Altbach, 1977; Arnove, 1980b; Mudimbe, 1988; Selveratnam, 1988; Frank & Gills, 1990; Escobar, 1995; van Rinsum, 2002; Okere, Njoku, & Devisch, 2005; Shivji, 2006).

The social construction and dissemination of particular forms of ‘legitimate’ knowledge within the global arena and the manufacturing of educational reform policies in the institutions of the global core primarily targeted the social institutions of the global periphery, particularly the flagship universities of newly independent states (Yesufu, 1973; Eicher, 1973; Carnoy, 1974; Mazrui, 1975; Weiler, 1984; Selveratnam, 1988; Escobar, 1995; Ajayi, Goma & Johnson, 1996; Samoff, 1999a). The processes of neo-colonial epistemological appropriation were operationalized through a variety of means, most forcefully through post-War modernization theories, developmentalist projects, and structural adjustment programs constructed by core governments and core-dominated financial and intellectual institutions (Tipps, 1973; King, 1990, 2000, 2002, 2007; Escobar, 1995; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Kothari, 2005).

The knowledge regime spawned by these processes during the mid-20th century, and persisting into the early 21st century, dictated the structure, organization and mandate of knowledge institutions and theory production in the global periphery, particularly in SSA (Hountondji, 1995; Ellerman, 2005; Connell, 2007). Geo-politically powerful core actors, at both state and non-state levels, promoted themselves as the possessors and disseminators of legitimate knowledge, particularly in relation to economic and political development within post-colonial contexts. Hountondji articulates the implications of this segregation of responsibilities as sustaining a fundamental pattern in the production of knowledge on the continent:

> With respect to modern science, the heart of the process is neither the stage of data collection nor that of the application of theoretical findings to practical issues. Rather, it lies between the two, in the stages of theory building, interpretation of raw information and the theoretical processing of the data collected...The one essential shortcoming of scientific activity in colonial Africa was the lack of these specific theory-building procedures and infrastructures (Hountondji, 2005, 2; in Connell, 2007, 104).
The result of these processes was that both research and knowledge production processes were predominantly relegated to ancillary endeavors in the majority of SSA universities in the post-independence era.

Despite the breadth and scope of the forces attempting to limit the production of alternative knowledges within the global periphery, research at the flagship universities was not extinguished during the mid-20th century; limited paths were left open for exploring local issues through research programs that facilitated encounters between local and global knowledge structures. These programs were often supported by nations nominally attached to the global core due to their advanced levels of technological and economic sophistication, but who can be more aptly considered as a sub-grouping of ‘semi-core/semi-periphery’ nations due to their limited influence in the wider geo-political arena and their mediating role between dominant and weaker states and actors in the international arena (Wallerstein, 1974a). Some of the earliest allies included Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Sweden’s Centre for International Development (SIDA/SAREC), and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) (Weiler, 1984). These bilateral agencies operated under conditions set by their national governments, but offered support to local, demand-driven research agendas and recognized the need to build local research capacities at both institutional and individual levels through context-sensitive programs and modalities (Bernard, 1988; Stokke, 1989; Olsson, 1992; AUCC, 1993; CIDA, 1993; RAWOO, 1995, 2001, 2003; SIU, 1998, 2001; DGIS, 2000; KFPE, 2004).

In response to calls for more demand-driven programming, the rhetoric of ‘partnership’ and ‘ownership’ have risen to prominence in the international development arena over the last 20 to 30 years, including with regard to research support programs (Weiler, 1984, 2001; King, 1985, 1990, 2000; Hirji, 1990; Gaillard, 1994; van Audenhove, 1998; Samoff, 1999a, 1999b; Hauck & Land, 2000; Sorbo, 2001; Box, 2001; Bautista et al., 2001; Tilak, 2001; Ellerman, 2004, 2005; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; King & McGrath, 2004). However, while research partnership programs may be well intentioned in both policy and practice, often adopting the language of demand-driven programming, the historical record indicates that intentions alone have been insufficient to ensure equitable collaborative practices between actors in peripheral and core universities (King, 1985, 2005; Gaillard, 1994, 2003; Mkandawire, 1997; Selveratnam, 1998; Fowler, 1998; Edejer, 1999; Samoff, 1999a; Brock-Utne, 2000; Hauck & Land, 2000; Ogden & Porter, 2000; Crossley, 2001; Sorbo, 2001; Nair & Menon, 2002; Ilon, 2003; Jentsch,
The literature indicates that bilateral research cooperation between higher education institutions and researchers in more- and less-industrialized countries has resulted in asymmetrical benefits and outcomes in favor of the former. However, there is a lack of substantial empirical evidence, particularly in the form of comprehensive studies, examining the contextual conditions and programmatic dynamics that have enabled or inhibited the various bilateral and multilateral research linkage programs from meeting the goals of researchers in the global periphery, particularly SSA. The absence of detailed analyses that consider the impact of domestic political economies on the establishment and current iteration of the various NSRP programs limits the possibility for broad reflections on the ability or inability of individual programs to create authentic demand-driven and sustainable research communities in SSA universities. This is particularly the case in terms of the impacts and consequences of the various modalities on the individual actors involved in such programs, both Northern and Southern.

In the aggregate, the rhetoric of partnership and ownership has failed to establish a critical mass of programs that effectively support context-sensitive, demand-driven research opportunities in SSA universities. This is partially a result of the continued resource dependencies that exist between both periphery and core nations and universities, but it is also a function of more systemic asymmetries in the lower perceived value of Southern knowledge and peripheral knowledge producers in the global knowledge regime, and within individual research networks (Mudimbe, 1988; Mazrui, 1992, 2005; Said, 1993; Rakowski, 1993; Mkandawire, 1995, 1997; Hountondji, 1995, 1997, 2002; Mamdani, 1996, 1999; Escobar, 1995; Odora Hoopers, 1998, 2000; Dei, Hall and Rosenberg, 2000; Okere, Njoku, & Devisch, 2005; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2006; Connell, 2007).

The continued dominance of core-constructed knowledge traditions, paradigms and fora has resulted in the continued systemic repression of epistemic communities in SSA universities, limiting peripheral actors from presenting significant challenges to the dominant modes of thought and strains of research, both development-oriented and ‘blue-sky’, and has restricted the number and depth of open spaces for substantive and sustainable contributions to redressing the core-periphery divide. This is not to say that the NSRP programs have not made valuable contributions to building research capacities in SSA or that intellectual dynamism is wholly absent from or irrevocably limited by the structural parameters. While the world-system operates within a particular superstructure that perpetuates and reproduces significant asymmetries across a variety of horizons, new forms of social and economic organization, and
the disintegration of the late 20th-century bipolar international arena, present room for challenging dominant regimes of knowledge production and creating more context-sensitive alternatives (Connell, 2007). For this reason, it is of great import to highlight, examine and reflect upon programs that empower actors in the global periphery by supporting open, meaningful, and flexible linkage activities in order to determine their potential contributions, both locally and for actors in other jurisdictions. The growing availability of cross-jurisdictional networks and collaboration requires investigation, as new sites and modes of synergy and dialogue are on the precipice of opening new spaces of knowledge construction.

Norway, a country without a colonizing history, though having been colonized by Denmark and incorporated into a Swedish-dominated confederacy, had no systemic apparatus for dealing with development assistance programs prior to the end of the Second World War and firmly situated as a semi-core nation over the last 60 years, offers a particularly interesting and insightful case for examination. During the modern developmentalist era, Norway has undergone the most significant increase in development-related programming of any OECD nation, in terms of GDP per capita, and is consistently ranked as a top donor country according to this measure (van der Veen, 2000; Stokke, 2005; OECD, 2008). While the quantifiable increase is an extremely important revelation in and of itself, understanding the socially embedded rationales and justifications of Norway’s involvement in such programming is more important in the scope of this study’s analysis. The persistent influence of endogenous humanitarian ideals on Norwegian political support and resource commitment, in conjunction with its historical resistance to many global development-related norms and ideologies and its own history as a colonized state, indicates a unique Norwegian orientation to both the global periphery and the international political arena (Stokke, 1989, 1991, 2005; Norway Report, 1992, 1995; van der Veen, 2000; Tvedt, 2007). As a result, this study focuses on Norway and its primary North-South research program, the Norwegian Programme for Research, Education and Development (NUFU), in order to explore how Norway’s political economy intersects with its high levels of development assistance in the implementation of its knowledge-related development programming (SIU, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c; MFA, 2000; COWI AS, 2010).

This study focuses on North-South research linkage programs within the Norwegian context in order to analyze the NUFU program’s ability to support its purported goals of building and sustaining research capacity in the universities of the global South while negotiating both Norwegian and international pressures. Extensive consideration is also be given
to the South-South component of the NUFU program, both in terms of its intentions and in terms of its implementation within the broader program structure and mandate. This latter examination will occur with an eye towards understanding if or how the South-South modality attempts to leverage regional dynamics in order to support sustainable demand-driven research opportunities within SSA universities.

**Purpose, Rationale and Research Questions**

The purpose of this exploratory case study is to foster a better understanding of the structural and inter-personal dynamics involved in one North-South and North-South-South research linkage program, Norwegian Programme for Education, Research and Development (NUFU), specifically with regard to issues of organization, administration and decision-making processes involved in creating and sustaining equitable research linkages. This study elucidates and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the NUFU program and the decentralized modality that it supports, both in terms of the programs’ organization and operational structure and in regards to the individual Norwegian and Southern researchers involved in NUFU-supported projects. This is facilitated by recognizing and accounting for the array of global, regional, and national actors and pressures that constantly interface in order to construct and sustain inhibiting conditions for knowledge communities situated in peripheral jurisdictions and institutions, specifically public research universities. This type of multi-layered analysis is intended to offer reflections on the state of research in the historically peripheral universities of SSA and the impact that Northern-funded development-related programs continue to have on knowledge production and professional development at both national and regional levels in SSA.

The rationale for this study stems from the increased commitment by the international development community to develop endogenous research capacities at individual, institutional, national, and regional levels in the less-industrialized countries and regions of the world over the last 15 years, particularly through bilateral and multilateral support mechanisms (Gulbenkian Commission, 1996; TFHES, 2000; NEPAD, 2001a; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Boeren, 2004, 2005; King & McGrath, 2004; Stone & Maxwell, 2005; Ellerman, 2005; World Bank 2002, 2009; Teferra & Knight, 2008). Increased financial support to higher education institutions and their research activities has created the potential for meaningful shifts in the ideologies and
rationales driving development-related initiatives, specifically through increased support for building domestic research capacity as a key factor in economic, social, and political development processes in sub-Saharan Africa.

Since higher education systems and institutions in Sub-Saharan African countries have not been able to adequately address many of the major local, national and regional development problems in the post-independence era, there is a need to analyze how the limited economic, social and political resources can be more effectively operationalized. However, while acknowledging shifts in the rhetoric and policies of the dominant international development regime, particularly the increased financial support for research activities in SSA during the early 21st century, the qualitative particularities of the current circumstances remain under-examined at an empirical level, specifically in terms of the extent that changing policies and funding schemes have resulted in increased opportunities for autonomous epistemic communities within the universities of the global South.

Grounded in the historical and conceptual conditions outlined above, and discussed in more detail in the second and third chapters, this study presents the findings of a qualitative case study of the NUFU organization and one of its trilateral research network projects in order to address the following questions:

1) To what extent does the NUFU model support the development of equitable and sustainable research linkages and capacity building programs, specifically autonomous research capacities, methodologies and epistemologies, in the higher education institutions of less-industrialized countries?

2) To what extent does NUFU’s South-South component, operationalized in the program through North-South-South networks, present opportunities for achieving the programs’ goals through the addition of a regional or cross-regional dimension?

These questions will be addressed through the triangulation of data from a variety of sources: first, through an extensive review of the pertinent literature examining the international development architecture since the end of the Second World War, specifically in relation to post-colonial political economy, as well as the role that higher education has historically played in SSA, and the configurations and modalities used to support North-South research linkages over the past 40 years; secondly, through document analysis and key stakeholder interviews at the NUFU organization headquarters in Bergen, Norway; and finally, through in-depth interviews with key administrative and academic stakeholders at one Norwegian university, and
two universities in SSA, one in Tanzania and one in South Africa, involved in a NUFU-funded research network.

**Limitations**

This study suffers from a number of limitations, both in scope and in process, that require a brief overview. First, in terms of the generalizability of the results and findings, the author recognizes and acknowledges that since the qualitative case study examines only a single development-oriented funding agency, and only one project that is supported by that agency, the conclusions presented may be severely limited in their generalizability. This project is meant to draw out and elucidate issues highlighted within the broader literature on both North-South and South-South relations, specifically in regards to higher education and research during the post-independence era of sub-Saharan Africa. The study intends to add to the corpus of work examining and interrogating the fundamental dynamics and structures governing development cooperation programs within the international aid architecture, specifically those that implicate knowledge production functions and epistemic communities in the global periphery. As such, this study explores various lines of questioning and theorizing regarding issues and problems inherent to North-South relations broadly construed.

Secondly, the author acknowledges that the predominance of English as the language of operation with the case study may result in a limited understanding and conceptualization of the culturally embedded meanings behind texts and practices at the various research sites. However, as Kenneth King and Simon McGrath (2004) outline in their analysis of four national and multilateral development agencies, the cultural deficit resulting from linguistic factors can be partially overcome through double-checking the meanings and understandings derived from interviews and textual documents with key informants in order to understand perceptions of if and how discourses and practices were culturally embedded (pg. 6). Despite the attention given by the author to ensuring linguistic and epistemological compatibility within and between the independent sites of research, the author acknowledges that this is an imperfect process.

A third limitation of this study is that higher education institutions represent only one of many knowledge production sites, and the examination of formal bilateral relations between actors in the global core and those in SSA offers only one avenue of investigation into broader systemic processes. While the historical relationship between colonizers and colonized as
mediated by higher education institutions is an important dynamic to discussions regarding the social construction and legitimation of knowledge globally, regionally, nationally and locally, the limitation in space and scope of this dissertation does not allow for an in-depth analysis of knowledge production processes across all levels and sectors of the educational aid architecture, either in SSA or globally. The examination of the broader North-South dichotomy, specifically with regard to the issues surrounding higher education and research in SSA, examines and details many over-lapping circumstances that afflict other sectors of education and other national and regional jurisdictions, and as such, basic and secondary education sectors will only be referred to where specific inter-related issues call for it.

A fourth limitation involves the problematic social constructions of SSA, North and South as discrete units of analysis and a site for theoretical investigation. The author acknowledges throughout this dissertation that constituent political, social and cultural spaces on the African continent and between the areas that have historically comprised the ‘South’ and the ‘North’ possess innumerable particularities deriving from specific historical conditions, and that homogeneity should not be ascribed to their current circumstances. However, as outlined in the second chapter of this study, the processes undergone by the various African jurisdictions in relation to colonization and higher education do allow for comparability at a general level; higher education was used as a means of constructing and reproducing exploitative social, political and economic systems across all SSA colonies. In addition, higher education in post-colonial African states has been similarly impacted by broad macro-level policies supported by a limited number of global institutions. As such, the author argues that there is a relative continuity in the experiences of post-colonial African states, while acknowledging that multi-layered particularities exist within individual African jurisdictions and institutional settings. Therefore, for the sake of coherence in this study, higher education in pre-colonial SSA is referred to in a slightly homogenized manner.

In terms of the practical limitations that arose during the research process, three major issues arose during the data collection, particularly during research visits to the participating Tanzanian and South African universities. The most significant limitation was the limited access to participating researchers and institutional administrators in the Tanzanian case. A number of actors involved in the NUFU case study project were unwilling to discuss their involvement in the project with the researcher, which has significant implications for the triangulation of data. While the number of withholding researchers and administrators as a percentage of the entire
participant population was small, the absence of key stakeholders did limit some of the conclusions that could be drawn from the data collected at the Tanzanian site.

The second major limitation faced by the researcher was the limited time available for study at the three main research sites, and the inability to observe key project decision-making processes, particularly those that occurred at the outset of the NUFU project. As will be discussed throughout this study, the initial stages of an NSRP project, specifically the collaborative processes involved in developing the initial project proposal and research design, are key windows for examining how the Norwegian, Tanzanian and South African researchers co-existed and managed the various decision-making processes. Given that the NUFU program operates on a 5-year project cycle and the case study project was at the end of its second NUFU finding cycle, the timing of this study did not allow for direct observation of key initial meetings, meaning the data collected through participant interviews is limited to potentially biased recollections. While minute notes were kept of the various meetings, they did not include the level of detail required to draw significant or meaningful conclusions.

The final limitation that arose while carrying out the supporting research for this study was the relatively paucity of literature examining North-South research partnerships since the middle part of this century’s first decade. It appears that the majority of the research and analysis on NSRP projects and programs was conducted between 1995 and 2005, and that significantly less attention has been given to the topic by actors in both academia and development agencies. The author could find no guiding rationale for this reduced attention, but it clearly had implications for the study, as current trends, modalities and programs, or at least the most recent manifestations of such processes and activities, may be under-represented within the literature review chapter and in support of the ideal-type construction carried out in chapter three.

**Overview of the Dissertation**

This thesis is organized into eight chapters, including this introductory chapter.

Chapter two situates this study in the context of the inter-twining critical literatures on: the history of post-secondary education institutions in sub-Saharan Africa, both pre- and post-independence; the establishment of the international aid architecture, specifically as it relates to knowledge production, after the end of the Second World War; and lastly, the sociology of knowledge as it relates to the realm of international political economy, particularly as a
structural determinant in the social construction and legitimation of particular epistemological and developmentalist frameworks, with a special focus on the fragmentation of the contemporary core-periphery landscape within the international arena.

Chapter three presents an in-depth explanation of the study’s analytic framework and its theoretical construction. It outlines the creation of an ideal-type for North-South Research Partnerships (NSRPs), based on the empirical record that has been compiled over the last 40 years of research, from both academic and development agency literatures. This process establishes the frame that is used to analyze the NUFU program, its operational modality as constructed in NUFU policy documents, and lastly, the exploratory case study of one of NUFU’s trilateral research networks in SSA.

Chapter four explains the research methodologies and methods used in the study. The study’s research design, ethical protocol, recruitment process, data collection, analysis, and interpretation are all outlined. Consideration is also given to the limitations of the current study, both methodologically and conceptually.

Chapters five, six, and seven present the substantive findings of this study by triangulating data collected through the literature review, document analysis, participant observations and semi-structured interviews. Chapter five offers an overview of the Norwegian political economy in regards to international development-related policies and initiatives. Through this contextualization, the NUFU program is examined in terms of its purported program goals and rationales in order to gain a better understanding of how the Norwegian political, economic and cultural contexts influence the NUFU program and its supported North-South research linkage modalities. Chapter six presents the findings of the exploratory case study of one NUFU-funded research network. It highlights the structural parameters of the particular case study network and evaluates the NUFU modality by applying the analytic tool constructed in the third chapter. Chapter seven takes up the issue of South-South collaboration, examining the impact of the regional dimension on actors situated at the Tanzanian and South African higher education institutions. This chapter elaborates on the historical context of African regionalism and regionalization processes, and situates the study’s case study network within a broader historical framework of South-South or regional collaboration in SSA.

Lastly, chapter eight synthesizes and summarizes the major findings presented in chapters five, six, and seven. This occurs through three sections: the first section synthesizes the Norwegian perspective of the NUFU program and project framework based on program documentation and key stakeholder interviews; the second uses the findings derived from a case
study of one NUFU network project in order to present Tanzanian and South African interpretations of the NUFU program structure and project modality, specifically as they relate to the North-South dynamics and the programs’ support for sustainable demand-driven research; the third and final section explores the South-South mechanism supported by NUFU’s network modality and interrogates how both Tanzanian and South African participants interpret and actualize regional or South-South cooperation within and beyond the scope of the case study project. The chapter concludes with general reflections on NSRP programming and the changing nature of the current world-system, particularly the apparent end of a bipolar international arena and the diffusion of power across multiple state and non-state actors.
Chapter Two: The International Knowledge System and the Global Political Economy

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the existing literature examining the issue of knowledge and power in the international arena. It draws on three intersecting bodies of literature in order to present a relatively comprehensive contextual framework of the pertinent issues. First, the concept of the world-system is introduced, supplemented by an examination of its construction, perpetuation and current manifestation. This literature review presents considerations on the construction of a global relational power structure that has created a stratified international system of labor and production over the past 500 years, specifically through the bifurcation of the international arena into core and periphery groupings with varying productive and consumption capacities. The second section of this chapter focuses on one defining aspect of the world-system that has evolved over the past 60 years, specifically the rise of developmentalism and the institutionalization of a core-dominated development-oriented agenda within the international arena, particularly through the creation of powerful multilateral organizations, such as the Bretton Woods institutions, and associated discursive paradigms, such as modernization theory and developmentalism. The third section of this chapter takes up the issue of knowledge production, particularly in terms of its construction and legitimation, and integrates world-system analysis with critical analysis of the late 20th century international political economy. This conceptual movement facilitates a more complete understanding of how the avenues of influence and structural power within the international arena have become increasingly complex over the past 60 years, and how the construction, mediation and control of knowledge and discourse within the international arena warrants more systematic analysis.

The final section of this chapter situates the issues raised in the first three sections within the historical context of sub-Saharan Africa and examines the literature on the role that higher education institutions and knowledge production processes have played in the construction and reproduction of the dominant configurations of world order within the colonial and post-colonial eras. The literature review establishes a narrative arc that situates higher education institutions in SSA as a primary site of core-periphery exploitation and dependency.
The Evolution of Critical Thought Regarding the World-System

Power legitimates knowledge and knowledge is legitimated by power through a reciprocal process of mutual reinforcement. This claim is neither new nor revolutionary; at this point in the development of social and political critique, there is a wealth of thought illuminating the processes, rationales and implications of the politicization of knowledges across and within domestic, international and global horizons (Foucault, 1980; Weiler, 1984; Escobar, 1985; Said, 1990). However, the rapid expansion of knowledge-based initiatives in both the global economy and development-related programs has resulted in the creation of entirely new dynamics through which to analyze the intersection of knowledge and power at international and global spheres of activity.

Parallel to, and at times intersecting with, domestic analyses of knowledge, power, and social order, scholars have investigated and conceptualized the international dimension of knowledge production as a mechanism of global system and sub-system reproduction (Altbach, 1975, 1977, 1981, 1987, 1998, 2003; Carnoy, 1974; Mazrui, 1975; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Irizarry, 1980; Armove, 1980a, 1980b; Weiler, 1984, 2001; King, 1985, 1990, 2002, 2005, 2007; Selveratnam, 1988; Mudimbe, 1988; Hountondji, 1995; Samoff, 1999, 2009; Dei et al., 2000; Mytekla, 2000; Odora Hoppers, 2000; Tikly, 2001, 2004; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Tooze, 2004). One avenue of this scholarship situates the investigation of human interaction within a world-system framework, contending that the entirety of human economic, political, social and cultural relations have evolved over time to become components of a singular, all-encompassing global relational structure that is specifically grounded in the processes of economic production and accumulation (Wallerstein, 1974a, 1974b, 1979; Armove, 1980b; Chase-Dunn & Grimes, 1995). Under this theoretical framework, “the modern world-system is understood as a set of nested and overlapping interaction networks that link all units of social analysis – individuals, households, neighborhoods…etc” (Chase-Dunn & Grimes, 1995, 389).

Immanuel Wallerstein, one of the originators of the worlds-system theory (WST), describes this system as a “spatial/temporal zone which cuts across many political and cultural units, one that represents an integrated zone of activity and institutions which obey certain systemic rules” (Wallerstein, 2004, 17). Furthermore, there is a ‘terrestrial division of labor’ that has fragmented global production systems, such that different units, traditionally nation-states but increasingly trans-national or non-territorial actors, take up dominant or dominated roles.
within a global hierarchical power structure. Arnove (1980b) elaborates on this division of labor in terms of the role that education and skill-formation play within the world-system:

The workings of a stratified international system, based on inequities in productive power, further help explain what skills are developed in whom and who benefits from highly skilled talent, what research is conducted abroad and who has access to or consumes that research (p. 50).

However, these roles are not static and the world-system is not an entirely deterministic explanation of social order. As Wolf (1982) contends, “societies are internally heterogeneous, boundaries are permeable and memberships are fluid. They are subject to constant change and redefinition” (p. 387). As such, examinations of the world-system at both macro and micro-levels are required in order to highlight points of autonomy and fluctuation within the broader systemic framework that may allow for sites of resistance and disruption.

According to the leading world-system theorists, the function of WST as an analytic framework is to provide an account of the dynamics of social change at both macro and micro-levels for the entire system and its’ constituent parts (Wallerstein, 1974a, 1974b, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1989; Braudel, 1979, 1982, 1984; Chase-Dunn, 1989; Chase-Dunn & Hall, 1987; Arrighi, 1994; Chase-Dunn & Grimes, 1995; Castells, 2000; Arrighi & Silver, 2001). Despite the possibility of domestic and systemic oscillations, the patterns of interaction and the dynamics of production and accumulation manifest in such a way that national and trans-national actors are generally situated along a ‘core/periphery’ axis; constituents with a greater abundance of power, nominally determined by economic strength, are situated within the core and dominate weaker constituents, the periphery, by penetrating and manipulating their endogenous social systems in order to extract their domestic resources through imposed dependencies or structural constraints. Between these two poles exist an indeterminate array of semi-periphery and semi-core nations, capable of acting as either intermediaries or moderators within the various interaction networks. Wallenstein (1979a) states the following regarding the role of ‘semi’ states in the modern world-system:

This is not the result merely of establishing arbitrary cutting-points on a continuum of characteristics. Our logic is not merely inductive, sensing the presence of a third category from a comparison of indicator curves. It is also deductive. The semi-periphery is needed to make a capitalist world-economy run smoothly… The existence of the third category means precisely that the upper stratum is not faced with the unified opposition of all the others because the middle stratum is both exploited and exploiter. It follows that the specific economic role is not all that important, and has thus changed through the various historical stages of the modern world-system (p. 404-405)
In terms of hierarchical re-adjustment, the standing of a particular nation or jurisdiction within the world-system can ameliorate or deteriorate over time. For the most part, the ascension process occurs over a long period of time and requires a succession of positive intra- and international events to occur, while the collapse of a nations’ position within the core may transpire within a matter of years.

The adoption of a world-system framework for the investigation carried out in this study is meant to frame the landscape within which knowledge production and international development assistance programs and paradigms have historically occurred, highlighting that current geo-political asymmetries are grounded within long-term historical processes. This study’s analysis of a particular aid program, Norway’s NUFU program, is based on the contention that a trans-national or global division of labor has developed over *the longue duree* of history, as Frans Braudel termed it, with an internal logic that is fundamentally and systemically entrenched in centuries of reproduction (Braudel, 1979, 1982, 1984; Arrighi, 1994). This framework is necessary in order to make explicit the structural obstacles that operate within the international development sector, but also for understanding the ideological underpinnings of mainstream development-related programs and research. The author contends that the transformative possibilities of any single program or actor can only be considered through a critical and reflective awareness of the historically embedded and socially constructed system of relations that constitutes the world order. If the scope of analysis remains at radically simplified levels, transfixed on the actions of nation-states and financial markets within limited temporal horizons, then powerful sub-structures will not be accounted for in the detail required for a comprehensive analysis of current and historical conditions, and the entire study becomes an exercise in maintaining the status quo.

In order to outline the conceptual framework implemented in this study, two questions are interrogated: 1) what is the systemic make-up of the capitalist world-system at its most fundamental level and 2) how did the current hegemonic period come into being and what are its defining characteristics? Through a more comprehensive understanding of the geo-political configurations of power in the post-Second World War era and the integral role that knowledge systems play in maintaining the dominant structures of power, this study interrogates the development knowledge regime that has evolved over the last 60 years, specifically focusing on the role that tertiary education systems and institutions have played in sustaining the exploitative structure of the world-system in post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa.
The study’s analysis focuses on the research functions of public higher education institutions (HEIs) in SSA and the core-constructed policy frameworks and ‘assistance’ modalities that have historically structured, and to a great extent determined, both the nature and scope of research within these institutions. The intention of this analysis is to gain a better understanding of the possibility for alternative epistemic communities and outcomes to emerge from such foreign-funded, resource-dependent activities. This analysis is situated within an interpretation of the global capitalist economy as an inhibitor of resistance, whereby, as Samir Amin postulates, “labor, in the periphery, is excluded from the labor market based on advanced scientific knowledge being confined by national barriers that separate central countries from peripheries…the basic economic premise is that a free global market decides better which jobs are located in which country” (Amin, 1996; as cited in Leher, 2004). In other words, research universities in SSA have historically been little more than incubators of classical liberal ideologies as mediated by activities that explicitly support manpower production in service to the global centre, and have failed to carry out one of the definitive functions of universities in the global centre; research.

The first question relates to the general structure of the world-system, it’s historical dynamics, and the ongoing critical investigation present within the academic community focused on understanding it. As articulated by world-system theorists and critical political economists, the international arena is grounded in the idea of a single division of labor within a single world economy (Wallerstein, 1974a). This idea finds its’ roots in the dependency theories of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, that, in response to the failure of post-War modernization initiatives in many Latin American countries, began to envision the world not through the lens of ‘development’ and ‘underdevelopment’, but through a lens of perpetual and immutable exploitation (Prebisch, 1950).

Dependency theory, first articulated by scholars such as Frank (1972, 1977, 1981), Cardoso and Falleto (1979), and Prebisch (1950, 1981a, 1981b), critically engaged the structural dynamics of the international political economy. The central tenets of their argument was that rather than the disingenuous optimism of Walt Rostow’s ‘stages theory of economic growth’, whereby all countries are capable of slowly evolving from traditional, primitive societies to technologically advanced, capitalist states (Rostow, 1962), the international political economy has only ever allowed nations to embody two possible positions: the core and the periphery. Mapping onto the Marxist vision of an international class-based polity, these two positions directly corresponded to the functional roles of the liberal capitalist economy. As Clayton puts
it, “a particular group (the core or the capitalist class) is seen as controlling the means of, and extracting the surplus from, production, while a second group (the periphery or the proletarian class) is seen as having limited control over its labor and as receiving minimal compensation for it” (Clayton, 2004, 279).

The relationship between core and peripheral nations relies on the reproduction of a polarized hegemonic order that not only privileges nations at higher levels of economic development, but maintains and deepens processes of polarization through asymmetries in the systems of accumulation. This occurs in order to ensure the future reproduction of the hegemonic order. The result of this dynamic on the domestic affairs of peripheral countries is the ’disarticulation’ of economic and social activities in response to the “extractive logic of global capitalism” (Clark, 2008, 630). Through the disarticulation process, peripheral economies become outward-oriented, responding primarily to the demands of the global core. Export-oriented economies assume the relatively static role of primary producer, a role that is characterized by narrower linkages to the global economy with fewer higher-order financial spin-offs than a manufacturing-based economy (Frank, 1967; Galtung, 1971; Wallerstein, 1974, 1979; Chase-Dunn & Rubinson, 1977; Delacroix, 1977; Cardosa & Faletto, 1979). This orientation results in the subordination of the nation within the international political-economic system, further reducing the nation’s ability to reorient its economy in autonomous or alternative forms (Hout and Meijerink, 1996). The impact of a disarticulated national economy on domestic affairs is a diminishing of social services, increased levels of unemployment, and deflated wages (Stokes and Anderson 1990), as well as “the coexistence of a relatively modern, export-oriented sector, and a relatively unsophisticated subsistence sector” (Hout & Meijerink, 1996, 51).

This model of economic subordination correlates to political disadvantages in the international political and economic systems, and, as will be elaborated upon further in this chapter, hegemony within the international knowledge system. The expression of dependency and subordination within the political sphere manifests in the disarticulation process, whereby a division within the national economy comes to mirror the global division of labor. A small group of mostly urban elites becomes a “bridgehead” for sustaining the particular configuration of relations between local and foreign actors and processes (Galtung, 1971; Mazrui, 1975). The local elites entrench their privileged positions through political repression and maintain the polarizing economic processes so as to limit social and economic mobility. In this way, the process of capital accumulation experiences two significant bottlenecks, one at the international level that limits peripheral countries from moving into the core and one at the domestic level
that limits the local periphery from challenging local elites. This model will be returned to when analyzing the regulation of knowledge flows in the international knowledge system, as the controlled and restrictive dynamics of international capital are mirrored in the sub-structures of the world-system.

Though radical and influential movements grew out of the dependency school of economic analysis, spilling over into other realms of social theory, its foundational tenets were expanded and honed by the following generation of critical scholars through world-systems analysis. World-system analysis remedied certain conceptual limitations or rigidities in the dependency framework that hindered the theory’s contestation of mainstream ideological orthodoxies. WST sought to more comprehensively map out and interrogate the multi-faceted mechanisms and sub-structures of the global financial and political economies (Chase-Dunn, 1978, 1995). Without going into the details of dependency theory’s particular limitations, as that is well beyond the purview of this study, it is sufficient to highlight that the primary critiques levied at it by both Marxist and non-Marxist scholars were in regard to the comprehensiveness of it’s analysis; dependency theory was situated within an inert form of methodological nationalism that envisioned the primary unit of analysis and catalyst of action as the nation-state, or national entities, and their national markets.

The WST counterargument to the heavily Marxist orientation of dependency theory was that “the fundamental error of ahistorical social science (including ahistorical versions of Marxism) is to reify parts of the totality into such units and then compare these reified structures” (Wallerstein, 1974b, 389). In other words, the misidentification of core actors and systems resulted in both false concepts and false narratives of development, for if all social structures are embedded within the world-system, there can be no stage-skipping progress as advocated by modernists and realists (ibid, 390). The focus of dependency theorists on mini-systems and socialist development overlooks the broader perspective that all national level interactions since the 1500s have occurred within a single all-encompassing capitalist world-system (Arrighi & Silver, 2001). As Rossem (1996) contends, “the world system transcends the simple dependency relation between a single core nation and a single periphery nation. Dependency arises from a system of asymmetric relations between different strata of the world system…a country’s role in the world system is determined by its overall pattern of relationships and not by the identity of its alters” (p. 509: original emphasis). Under this conception, asymmetries between core and peripheral nations occur simultaneously in and between various ‘strata’ or horizons of action. The world-system is not a bilateral exchange
along a limited number of fixed axes, but rather a more fluid and dynamic process that operates on a potentially indeterminable number of sectors acting in unison in order to enhance the domination of the core countries over the entirety of the global system (ibid, 518).

This study adopts the more expansive understanding of the world-system in support of the hypothesis that knowledge, particularly its production, dissemination, and legitimation, represents one of these powerful sub-strata of domination. As with the purposeful bottlenecking that occurs within the global economy, whereby certain core nations are strategically positioned to determine the nature and scope of peripheral economies and the relation of peripheral elites to the wider populace, knowledge processes are similarly mediated by core actors in order to reproduce particular sets of economic, political and social policies and relations both between nations and within nations (Arnove, 1980b, 60-62).

The second question in this overview seeks to explain how the current world-system evolved over time, how it is constituted as a system of economic, political and social hegemony, and how it has been able to maintain itself in the face of massive geo-political dislocations and transformations over the course of its ascension and dominance. These questions need to be answered in order to understand how the make-up of the current era has transposed itself onto both the global aid architecture and knowledge hierarchies.

As can be seen by a cursory review of world history, it is quite obvious that the capitalist world-system has not progressed without the intermittent dislocation and reorganization of international hierarchical arrangements, be it economical, political or social. In fact, one of the defining features of the capitalist world-system is the presence of periods of expansion and contraction, a process that necessitates the assumption of relative dominance by different nation-states as historical circumstances allow or dictate. Arrighi and Silver (2001) contend that it is through periods of hegemonic transition that “new leadership emerged interstitially and, over time, reorganized the system so as to make its further expansion possible” (p. 261). In this regard, distinct systemic cycles of accumulation manifest particular configurations of power that carry forward the world-system project in response to transformational circumstances. However, the circumstances are rarely, if ever, strong enough to transform the system as a whole; the capitalist world-system continues to form the framework of action despite transitory oscillations within and between the constituent agents (ibid, 261-262).

According to the dominant strain of world-system analysis, the most recent hegemonic transition occurred at the end of the Second World War, with British hegemony ceding to that of the United States (Chase-Dunn, 1995; Arrighi & Silver, 2001). Up until the mid-20th century,
specifically the end of the Second World War, this relationship of systemic domination and exploitation remained relatively unchallenged by actors within the core and the periphery, or at least unchallenged in the sense that few significant alterations to the general colonial relationship occurred despite efforts to change particulars within the general colonial project, such as the abolition of slavery, support for human rights frameworks, and movements for increased political, social and economic autonomy. However, as alluded to above, the end of the Second World War finalized the hegemonic transition that had began in the late 19th century with the early expansion of the US regime of accumulation, coalescing around a US-dominated system of financial markets and transnational corporations (Arrighi & Silver, 2001, 266-267).

Building upon this understanding of the hegemonic transition that occurred in the mid-20th century, the latter part of the second question demands an overview of the current world-system context. According to the scope and purview of the current study, this is best expressed through an analysis of development as a core construct of the international political economy in order to interrogate the logic and efficacy of late-20th century discourses and policies constructed by the global core and aimed at the global periphery. The conceptual backdrop of this study is heavily embedded in this interrogation of development and developmentalism, particularly in regard to how concepts of development have been articulated in educational policies over the last 60 years, and how both knowledge and theory production in peripheral jurisdictions and institutions have become subsumed in broader geo-political hierarchies. As such, the history and epistemological underpinning of efforts by the global ‘core’ to first ‘civilize’ and later ‘develop’ the periphery requires elucidation in order to frame how development assistance agencies and programs have been subsumed within these narratives.

**Development and Modernization in the 20th Century World-System**

This contextual overview focuses on the particular geo-political configurations that arose after the end of the Second World War and the formal colonial era. A specific focus is placed on the patterns of relations between the European core and the colonial periphery in order to describe the internal logic of the current world-system and the regime of modernization that formed the crux of the developmentalist project. A central tenet of the modernist narrative is the particular conceptualization of development in regards to the post-colonial nations of the global periphery and the implementation of particular knowledge and policy regimes aimed at
reconstituting post-colonial societies in the structural and cultural images of the global core (Mazrui, 1975; Escobar, 1995). This effort requires an examination of the historical conditions that led to the creation of the modern hegemonic development ideology and its transposition onto pre-existing configurations of power within the world-system at the end of the Second World War. It also requires an understanding of the processes through which this particular construction of development became a norm of social, political and economic activity within the global periphery. The historical moment that saw colonialism give way to development as the *modus operandi* of the core opens an avenue for understanding the transformation of key substructures within the world-system, particularly how processes of knowledge construction and legitimation have mapped onto the global economic and political orders over the last 60 years (Arnove, 1980b, 62).

Similar to how structurally mediated asymmetries within the colonial relationship were predicated on the ability of the colonizers to frame, accumulate and extract material and financial capital from the colonies, the development-based relationship of the late 20th century expanded the colonial project through the targeted extraction, accumulation, and construction of intellectual capital in the periphery (Carnoy, 1974; Mazrui, 1975; Atlbach and Kelly, 1978; Arnove, 1980b; Mudimbe, 1988; Selvaratnam 1988; Sherman, 1990; Said, 1993; Escobar, 1995; Mkandawire, 1997; Odora Hoppers, 1998, 2000; Brock-Utne, 2000; King, 2000, 2005; Houtondji, 2002, 2005; Tikly, 2004; Connell, 2007). The ability of the core to construct and present ideal visions of social, political and economic order for the consumption of the periphery, both its citizenry and its elites, and that tacitly reified systems of dominance under the guise of development and modernization, represents a fundamental refinement of the traditional colonial project and the instantiation of a neo-colonial project. Under this rubric, “modernity and traditional are essentially asymmetrical concepts. The modern ideal is set forth, and then everything which is not modern is labeled traditional” and becomes the object of intervention (Huntington, 1971, 293-294). This was most prominent in Truman’s 1949 Four Point Plan, where post-war reconstruction efforts in Eastern Europe and the colonial nations were conceptualized as a “bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas” (Truman, 1949; as cited in Ponsioen, 1968, 52)

This study is guided by the argument that post-War bilateral and multilateral development-related programs predominantly operated within a core-based logic of modernity, according to which intellectual activities became subsumed under the reductionist logic of
neoclassical Liberalism. In relation to the production and application of knowledge, the
construction of “development” as both a discursive tool and an institutional determinant of
international and domestic policies across all sectors, became a key mechanism for limiting the
imagination and implementation of alternative development-related frameworks informed by
local knowledge models and contestations of core-dominated social and economic orders (Dei,
2000, 72). This conceptual movement, and the proliferation of its advocates within the
dominant institutions of knowledge production, helped to reconstitute the core-periphery
dynamic during the period of hegemonic transition after the Second World War by reframing
the expectations of post-colonial states in a less explicit, though equally pervasive, manner. The
major byproduct of this model was a general de-linking of indigenous knowledge, characterized
as “the accumulation by a group of people…who by centuries of unbroken residence develop an
in-depth understanding of their particular place in their particular world” (Roberts, 1998, 59; in
Dei, 2000, 72), and the search for general solutions to human problems at the micro-social,
macro-national, and inter-national levels (ibid, 72).

While the concept of development remained in its most nascent form until the end of the
Second World War, colonial powers were loosely interested in some level of societal reform for
their newly found protectorates at the earliest stages of expansion and domination. As
articulated in official government documents from the various core nation-states throughout the
colonial era, the idea that the periphery could develop on its own was out of the question. For
example, a book commissioned by the French Ministry of Colonies in 1890 was titled Les
Colonies Francaise: La mise en value de notre domaine coloniale, which can be roughly
translated as ‘the development’, ‘the making into value’ or ‘the exploitation and drawing profit’
from the French colonies (Wallerstein, 2005, 1263). As Wallerstein (2005) opines, “there was
consequently nothing wrong with the fact that, as a reward, the pan-Europeans who exploited
the resources drew profit from them, since a secondary advantage would go to the persons
whose resources were being exploited in this way” (p. 1263). It is during these early stages that
the core-periphery relationship and the dynamic of dependency arose in their crudest forms
between the European core and the non-European periphery.

The process of decolonization and the rise of Keynesian Liberalism at the end of the
Second World War transformed the tenor and form of the colonial project, if not the outcome.
Out of an explicitly exploitative relationship of economic extraction, came a softer and more
nuanced concept of development, supported by the leaders of the newly emancipated states, but
predominately constructed and managed by the policy-makers of the former colonizers
Shortly after the end of the Second World War an array of new international organizations were created in order to construct, implement, manage and evaluate the developmentalist agenda. Supported by broad international legitimacy, these institutions re-imagined the *modus operandi* of peripheral jurisdictions, both as a means of maintaining systemic domination in the international arena and as an ideological system that could facilitate the creation of new mechanisms of production and accumulation (Sherman, 1990; Escobar, 1995; Dei, 2000). Education systems were envisaged as one of the primary avenues for such modernization processes, with studies espousing the socio-psychological effects of schooling on the creation of ‘modern’ and ‘rational’ individuals who were open to new experiences, defiant of superstitions, and capable and willing to assume control of their lives through strategic planning (Inkles & Smith, 1974)

Modernization became the ultimate expression of core dominance within the 20th century world-system. Modernization in development theory, and modernity as a Euro-American philosophical construct, represents the efforts made by the political and economic elites in the core nations of the global North to transfer and reproduce the institutions and ideologies viewed as essential to maintaining the economic and cultural dependency in the global periphery. This is particularly salient when considering the efforts of elites in the core to influence their counterparts within peripheral nations (Frank, 1972; Mazrui, 1975; Frank and Gills, 1990; Escobar, 1995). Dependency theorists Frank and Gills (1990) succinctly outline the relationship as follows:

> The capture by elite A here (with or without its redistribution here) of part of the economic surplus extracted by elite B there, means that there is inter-penetrating accumulation between A and B. This transfer or exchange of surplus connects not only the two elites, but also their ‘societies’ economic, social, political and ideological organization. That is, the transfer, exchange or ‘sharing’ of surplus connects the elite A here not only to the elite B there. Surplus transfer also links the ‘societies’ respective processes of surplus management, their structures of exploitation and oppression by class and gender, and their institutions of the state and the economy. Thus, the transfer or exchange of surplus is not a socially ‘neutral’ relationship, but rather a profound systemic one (p. 27).

Post-colonial critic Arturo Escobar likewise contends that the Western project of modernity “is characterized in terms of the increasing appropriation of previously taken-for-granted cultural backgrounds by forms of expert knowledge linked to capital and state administrative apparatuses” (Escobar, 2004, 211). At the level of epistemology, modernity “is also seen in terms of the triumph of metaphysics, understood as a tendency…that finds in logical truth the
foundation for a rational theory of the world as made up of knowable and controllable things and beings” (ibid, 211).

This section examines how the dominant norms and values operating within the international arena during the post-War era permeated and helped sculpt the rationales and policies incorporated into the international aid architecture over the subsequent sixty years, specifically in the form of development and modernization discourses. Through this analysis, the efforts made by core powers to continue their domination over the periphery under the guise of development are made explicit in order to properly situate the context within which the majority of development assistance programs have historically operated since the mid-20th century. According to this study’s foundational critique, the modernization project of the post-War era represents a drive to bring the economic, cultural, social, and political systems of peripheral or ‘under-developed’ countries, as modernization discourse labels them, into harmony with the systems of the core. It is important to note that in this study, harmony is not defined by the author as being equal to or in mutuality with, but is rather defined as aligned in the cause of increased efficiency, particularly in terms of economic efficiency and the successful integration of the global capitalist economy.

As the colonial configurations of the 19th and 20th centuries waned and independence movements began to destabilize and re-constitute the relationships and geo-political dynamics of the international arena, the core-periphery model underwent a double movement in both thought and action in order to maintain the systems of exploitation and hegemonic reproduction instantiated by core elites throughout the colonial epoch. The first movement of thought worked to disembed the revolutionary ideas of social and economic change promoted by the local leaders of peripheral nations from their moorings in traditional systems of organization and thought, such that ‘change’ and ‘development’ became reframed within Western representations of social and economic order (Mazrui, 1975; Frank & Gills, 1990; Mudimbe, 1988; Escobar, 1995). The second, consolidating movement of action demanded that both economic and political systems and institutions of the world-system, domestic and international, were restructured to reflect and promote the refined, universal vision of social and economic order promoted by the developmentalist ideals produced by the elites of the global core, vis-à-vis the first movement of reconsolidation (Cox, 1987; Escobar, 1995). As will be explained below, the primary enabling vehicle of this double movement was modernization discourse, through which the core was able to create and embed the concepts of ‘development’ and ‘underdevelopment’ as
the rationales for public policy and social order within the political and social milieus of the post-colonial peripheral nations (Frank, 1972, 1977, 1981).

Modernization theory became nominally referred to as a grouping of ideals associated with transformations in economic, political and social order that occurred over the late 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries in conjunction with the rise of industrialization and the construction of the modern nation-state (Tipps, 1973, 199). In his critical review of modernization theory’s historical evolution, Dean Tipps defines the traditional conceptualization of ‘modernization’ operating within mainstream historical sociology in the late 20th century as:

A transition, or rather a series of transitions, from primitive, subsistence economies to technology-intensive, industrialized economies; from subject to participant political cultures; from closed, ascriptive status systems to open, achievement-oriented systems; from extended to nuclear kinship units; from religious to secular ideologies (Lerner, 1958; Black, 1966; Eisenstadt, 1966; Smelser, 1967; Huntington, 1968; as cited in Tipps, 1973, 204).

According to this model, modernization was not just a process of change within various domestic sectors of economic activity. Rather, it was a teleological movement of progress towards higher order social formations, whereby nations and societies were thought to be capable of making quantifiable progress along a hierarchical ladder of development. Advocates of this world-view, such as Walt Rostow (1962), David McClelland (1961), and Alex Inkeles (Inkeles & Smith, 1974) conceived societal development as an evolutionary process, moving from traditional forms to that of mass consumption, industrialization and ‘rationality’ (Rostow, 1962).

Modernization theory, relying heavily on the work of social psychologists, argued that advancement relied primary on differences in cultural and personality styles and systems, with those supporting more entrepreneurial and rational systems of thought possessing the most natural proclivity to advancement (McClelland, 1961). A group of American sociologists constructed a ‘modernity scale’ that advocated the centrality of social institutions in the modernization process, particularly those relating to formal education: “In large-scale complex societies, no attribute of the person predicts his attitudes, values and behavior more consistently or more powerfully than the amount of school he has received” (Inkeles & Smith, 1974, 133). The normative construction of the traditional-modern dichotomy is the catalyst for examining how modernization theory, and its infusion into development assistance programs and initiatives became the vehicle for maintaining and perpetuating the colonial project during the mid-20th century.
Modern sociology and social theorists during the mid-19th to mid-20th century were predominantly invested in the grand narratives of progress and social evolution that became foundational to modernization theory and neoclassical economics. Arthur Todd contended that “sociologists have pretty generally agreed that the only justification for a Science of Society is its contributions to a workable theory of progress” (Todd, 1918, vii; as cited in Connell, 2007, 9), while John Stuart Mill recognized the dangers involved in equating historical change with improvement (Mill, 1843, 596; as cited in Connell, 2007, 9). From Comte to Spencer to Durkheim, the founding fathers of modern sociology either implicitly or explicitly presupposed the reality of progress through various cultural laws of comparative social evolution (Connell, 2007, 10). By the mid-20th century, social theorists had eschewed the nostalgic view of tradition for the self-confident optimism of ethnocentric achievement in regards to the post-colonial societies of Africa (Mazrui, 1968, 52).

The core value of rational progress, technological advancement, became emblematic of the high levels of development witnessed in Western civilization and represented a self-referential proof for domestic and international policy-makers (Escobar, 1995). Nowhere was this more apparent than in post-war America, where the stability and economic growth of the post-war era leant visible credence to the argument that modernity should be “an unmixed blessing and that the institutions and values of American society, at least as they existed in their more idealized manifestations, represented an appropriate model to be emulated by other, less fortunate societies” (Tipps, 1973, 209). This devout confidence in the modernization project, coupled with America surpassing Britain as the hegemonic power within the world-system, led to the rapid diffusion of concepts such as rationality and progress as the dominant values and norms exported by core nations. The emerging Cold War bifurcation of the international arena did little to alter this trajectory, as modernization became a foundational aspect of all forms of conflict, from the arms race to the space race.

While Cold War dynamics are not the central interest of this study, it is important to note that during the Cold War era world-system theorists predominantly contended that peripheral countries remained marginalized within the global order, forced to choose between the geopolitical division of capitalist and socialist factions, while remaining entrenched in an ideology of modernization through industrialization and the diffusion of the values and norms imbued with significance by the global core (Frank, 1981). As early as the 1950s, analysts recognized that the newly decolonized countries of the world were being restricted from establishing autonomous domestic systems and institutions and were quickly becoming a ‘third world’ of
states, subservient to the capitalist democracies and socialist states of the first and second worlds, respectively (Sauvy, 1956; Purvis, 1976; Galtung, 1971; Mintz, 1976; Sachs, 1976; as cited in Pletsch, 1981, 567-573). This recognition affirms the idea that in the 1950s and 1960s, politicians and social scientists operated on the assumption that the countries of the third world had to modernize, regardless of their historical social systems and preferences. This is reflected in the claims made by world-systems theorists that the dynamics of the core, semi-periphery and periphery are structural rather than inherent, and that “modernization theory is not merely some adventitious appendage of the idea of the three worlds, but is constituent to the structural relationship among the underlying semantic terms” (Pletsch, 1981, 576).

In conceptualizing the impact of the modernization paradigm on the international knowledge order, particularly with an eye to the legacy of this period on knowledge production processes within the periphery or directed at the periphery from actors within the core, Dean Tipps (1973) summarizes:

The limited cultural horizon of the theory tends to involve (the analyst) in the subtle form of ‘cultural imperialism’, an imperialism of values which superimposes American, or, more broadly, Western cultural choices, upon other societies, as in the tendency to subordinate all other considerations (save political stability perhaps) to the technical requirements of economic development (p. 210).

Under the umbrella of ‘unified science’, the epistemological criteria and standards of the natural sciences became the validating criteria for all kinds of knowledge, regardless of its object (Weiler, 2001, 27). The political scientist Hans Weiler (2001) elaborates:

The tradition of scientific rationality had constructed specific criteria for determining what did and did not constitute legitimate knowledge, and had devised an elaborate system of institutional mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing adherence to those criteria in universities, academies, publications and research funding (p. 30).

The result of this process was the institutionalized and internalized subjugation of certain disciplines or ways of knowing, and the establishment of pro-positivistic hierarchies in the international knowledge order that were rooted in the epistemological traditions of the global core.

In regard to the evolution of development assistance discourse and policy during the post-war era, both at international and national levels, the privileged status of scientific knowledge and its correlative criteria for validity and legitimacy resulted in the professionalization and institutionalization of development as a discipline in the institutions and
government agencies of the core (Escobar, 1998). During the post-war international arena, specifically between 1945 and 1955, development assistance became “articulated around a fictitious construct, under-development, and a discourse was produced that instilled in all countries the need to pursue (the goal of development), and provide for them the necessary categories and techniques to do so” (ibid, 429; author’s emphasis). Through the above construction of development and its unilateral implementation by the funding agencies and institutions of the world’s more industrialized countries, “everything that was important in the social and economic life of these countries…became the object of explicit calculation by experts formed in new sciences developed for that purpose, and the subject of interventions designed by a vast array of newly formed institutions” (ibid, 429-430).

The professionalization of development instilled a set of techniques and disciplinary practices in fields such as economics, health, education, and politics that resulted in the establishment of an empirical social science model of research and a “process by which the politics of truth is created and maintained” (ibid, 431). The institutionalization of development established institutional fields that produced, legitimized and put into operation select development discourses and techniques (ibid, 431). International organizations, bilateral institutions, voluntary agencies, and national, regional, and local agencies, all operating under specific understandings of development, “constitute a network that organizes visibilities and makes the exercise of power possible” at an international level (ibid, 432). As a discipline in the universities of the global core, development studies became a self-sustaining mechanism that constructed and exported core conceptualizations, norms and prescriptions for peripheral economic, social and political issues.

This politically and economically driven professionalization and institutionalization of development knowledge and practice, operating within a hierarchy that reciprocally legitimated power and specific types of sanctioned knowledge, explicitly eschewed the contribution of local actors in the nations of the global periphery, as well as their contextual understanding and historical knowledges, from the very processes of local ‘development’. Thus, even in the realm of development studies, a field that purports to focus on the needs and issues of less-industrialized countries, a center-periphery dynamic was established that privileged and continues to privilege knowledge, epistemologies and methodologies produced by core institutions, researchers, and governments, and that is grounded in limited conceptualizations of power systems and their organization. As such, the origin of contemporary development assistance and its grounding ideologies are central components in this case study examination of
Norway’s NSRP program and modalities. By gaining a better understanding of how the dominant international aid and knowledge structures were constructed, this study is better able to evaluate the differences within NUFU’s program modality and rationales.

In the sixty years since the inception of the contemporary international development architecture, the component practices and rationales have undergone an array of ideologically contingent cycles that have modified the tenor, scope and form of development-related policies, research and initiatives. The systemic structures and sets of relationships initially formed in the post-war era of the mid-20th century, specifically in regard to the post-colonial nations of the world, have undergone variations that can generally be considered significant developments, such as the Cold War era, the collapse of the USSR, and the rise of Brazil, India and China as economic and political powers. However, up until the early 21st century, the international development architecture as a whole has remained fixed in its polarized form (Samoff, 1999; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; King & McGrath, 2004). The individual jurisdictions of the global periphery remain dependent recipients of transfers from the central jurisdictions and institutions of the global core. This dependency continues to be both material and ideological, as the dominant development narratives remain constructs of core-dominated institutions, as expressed through formal and informal policies and interests. From the era of structural adjustment to the construction of the Millennium Development Goals and the establishment of ‘best practice’ mantras, core institutions remain the dominant voice in development and modernization narratives, despite the surface changes that may have occurred in particular policy and implementation processes.

Higher education institutions and epistemological communities in the global periphery have been directly and indirectly impacted by the policy fluctuations that have occurred over the last 60 years. The most direct effects of this has been the substantial decrease in core funding for all forms of periphery post-secondary needs, from basic infrastructure to advanced research capacities, and the establishment of core-dominated institutions, particularly the World Bank Institutions, as repositories of ‘legitimate’ development-related knowledge and managers of domestic educational policies in peripheral countries (Altbach, 1989; Colclough and Manor, 1991; Reimers, 1994; Bennell, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Buchert & King, 1996; Samoff, 1996, 1999; Mazrui, 1997; Mehta, 2001; Klees, 2002; Ellerman, 2002, 2004, 2005). The indirect implications of the 20th century context center around the establishment of transfer-based approaches to development practice, whereby:
Conventional development assistance in Africa typically tries to transplant a "best practice" backed up by conditionality on policy-based lending or aid to motivate the country to implement the best-practice recipes. Yet, this policy reform process is designed to promote neither active learning nor lasting institutional change…The substantial external incentives may temporarily overpower the springs of action that are native to the institutional matrix of the country, but that will probably not induce any lasting institutional reforms (Ellerman, 2004, 10).

The policy-based lending model has created arms-length interventionism in SSA that is in many ways equally restricting as previous colonial models of educational financing. Kenneth King (2004) critiques this active construction:

Whatever the precise contribution of the newer or older aid modalities to this dependency, it seems to be agreed that there are a substantial number of countries – many of them in Sub-Saharan Africa – where external aid is running at between 40 and 50% of the government’s entire recurrent budget…A very tentative conclusion about the conjunction of a global aid agenda with new ways to deliver aid is that, for all the rhetoric about country ownership and autonomy, aid dependency may actually have increased (p. 11-12).

Finally, in terms of higher education and research on the African continent, there is little or no evidence that research produced in the periphery by domestic researchers has had any impact on educational policy within their home jurisdictions (ibid, 12). Furthermore, the economic disparity between core and periphery actors has made “research cooperation inseparable from the wider aid and economic relations between North and South” (King, 1990, 47).

Though the dynamics of core funding to higher education institutions, specifically their research activities, are examined in more detail in the fourth section of this chapter, it is important to understand how knowledge, as a structural node of power, has developed in theorizing about the global political economy in the late 20th century. While theories of dependency and the world-system have established a robust tradition of examining core-periphery dynamics, this study incorporates analysis from critical international political economy in order to create a more comprehensive understanding of how late 20th century globalization has precipitated a more nuanced understanding of how knowledge construction, in all its forms, permeates the power structures that define world order. It is with this in mind that the conceptual overview carried out in this chapter turns to the less formal power dynamics inherent in late 20th and early 21st century knowledge processes, before carrying on with the analysis of higher education’s role in maintaining geo-political and economic power configurations.
As the fields of political science, international relations and globalization studies matured over the later half of the twentieth century, scholarly understandings of power within the international arena evolved to consider previously overlooked or inaccessible areas of inquiry. One branch of analysis that simultaneously intersects with the above disciplines came to be known as International Political Economy (IPE). As this study’s investigation is grounded in a conception of power within international relations that is more nuanced and robust than is evidenced by surface level inter-state political relations, IPE offers a number of insights into how knowledge operates as a major sub-structure of power within the late-20th century political economy, specifically in terms of core-periphery relations and development-related intervention programs.

IPE, commonly referred to as a sub-discipline of International Relations (IR), focuses on the study of power structures that influence or determine international economic and political affairs and negotiations. It does so by asking two key questions: how is the world structured politically and who has systemic power within that structure? (Lawton, et al, 2000, 3)

Traditional conceptualizations of the discipline contend that IPE should focus on “the impact of the world market economy on the relations of states and the ways in which states seek to influence market forces for their own advantage” (Goddard, et al., 1996, 22; as cited in Lawton, et al., 2000, 5). This conceptualization of the international order is grounded in the two dominant streams of analysis in IR theory, Realism and Liberalism, and their late 20th century manifestations, Neo-realism and Neo-liberalism. In regard to dependency and world-system theory, IPE continues to address the fundamental dynamics of the international system with an eye towards system reproduction, but it does so through multi-layered analyses of both the traditional units of analysis, states and markets, and the evolving diversity of actors, such as non-state organizations, security structures, alternative or informal financial systems, and, directly relevant to this study’s analysis, knowledge systems (Strange, 1988, 1996; Cox, 1987).

This study focuses on the efforts of critical IPE theorists to de-link the centrality of states and markets in modern conceptions of the world-system, with a specific eye towards making explicit and interrogating the role of knowledge, knowledge production and knowledge management in the complex sub-structures of power vis-à-vis public and private sector
international relations. Critical IPE goes a step beyond world-systems theory by seeking to make explicit the mechanisms of particular sub-structures of systemic power, and by acknowledging that while the particular world-system in operation is in many ways a self-perpetuating system, whereby locality, historicity and specificity are all fundamental analytic concepts for attempting to understand how particular power structures manifest themselves and operate, the modern world order is constituted by more fundamental layers of power than mere states and markets. The branch of IPE incorporated in this study seeks to eschew the material determinism of previous critiques by making sites, systems and organizations potential locations of epistemological resistance and counter-penetration. The following sections elaborate on the theory and implications of critical IPE, specifically in the context of knowledge as a central sub-structure of systemic power in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Until the late 20th century, the two dominant strands of modern IR theory were Realism and Liberalism. According to both, since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, the modern nation-state structure has been the primary horizon and unit of action within an otherwise anarchic system (Rosenau, 1990, 10; as cited in Strange, 1999). However, they fundamentally disagree over “the extent and thus the degree of independence which powers experience in decision-making within this anarchical international system” (Lawton et al., 2000, 6). The Realist camp argues that states determine their policies based on self-interest, while classical Liberals and neo-Liberals contend that states cannot make decisions based solely on national interest and that broader factors, specifically market mechanisms, limit the ability of nations to negotiate and act independently of one another (ibid, 7). However, a group of IR/IPE scholars has coalesced over the latter half of the 20th century which contend that relying solely on states and markets to understand complex, multi-layered economic, political and social systems under-estimates a wide array of structural power nodes that impact decision-making processes at local, national, regional, and international levels (Cox, 1987, 2002; Strange, 1988; Hettne, 1995; Sklair, 1999).

As a result of the divergence from Realist and Liberal streams, multiple branches of IPE have developed since the early 1980s that argue for a more nuanced understanding of historical and contemporary global systems and their co-constructed hierarchical orders. The branches, collectively characterized in this study under the term ‘critical IPE’, call for a more holistic understanding of the global political economy (GPE). GPE is differentiated from IPE in that it acknowledges that the ‘inter-national’ dynamic is no longer the primary relation within the worlds’ political and economic arenas; transnational corporations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and regional bodies have all added to the complexity
of political, economic and social systems (Sklair, 1999). As a result, critical IPE scholars envisage traditional international political and economic systems and mechanisms as mere surface layers to a more complex configuration of power, influence and agency, and incorporate non-state actors in their interrogation of assumptions regarding the various loci of power that ground international hierarchies and structures (Strange, 1996, x). As Lawton, Rosenau and Verdun (2000) summarize, “international power reside(s) not with or in states per se but rather in a set of global power structures” (p. 3).

In regard to the intersection of development theories and IPE, the examination of power structures incorporated by critical IPE studies allows for the displacing of state-centric, methodological nationalism that underlies mainstream IR theories (Robertson, 2008). Through the application of critical IPE to development studies, “an analysis of, let us say, the aid phenomenon…rather than in terms of expressed official national objectives, could reveal new dimensions of its actual role in the international political economy; for instance, as a mechanism of stabilization and further global diffusion of crucial hegemonic world order values” (Hettne, 1995, 227). The removal of the state-centered lens allows for more attention to be placed on global transaction systems and the rules that govern them (ibid, 227).

A major distinction between the two main camps of IR and the critical ‘third wave’ theories is in regard to the nature of research and the role of the researcher within the investigative project itself. This has direct implications for the epistemological framework that grounds social analysis of the world-system. Traditional IR theory operates under the assumption that not only is it possible to stand outside the phenomena under investigation, but that it is imperative to do so in order to achieve a stance of evaluative-neutrality, or value-free social science, that effectively articulates the world ‘as it is’ (Rengger & Thirkell-White, 2007, 4). As Robert Cox argues throughout his works, this orientation turns IR into nothing more than a positivistic problem-solving theory that, in conjunction with the rationales of the capitalist world-system, ensures an era of absolutist thinking that “rejects the idea of process once and for all. It is certain about right and wrong on a universal plane and determined to impose the right. It is impatient with the idea of historical development and change” (Cox, 2007, 519-520).

According to Cox (2002), it does so through:

the collection and classification of data. The analyst, pursuing what is considered to be a ‘scientific’ method by analogy with the physical sciences, takes a position as an independent external observer of the data. The knowledge produced is regarded as ‘objective’ and ‘positive’, which means the analyst allows observation of the object (data) to determine the conclusions (p. xxii).

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Cox and critical IPE theorists incorporate the constructivist assertion that “concepts such as knowledge and ideology do not have meaning outside society, and as such, come to us as part of the historically constituted reality that we have to deal with” (Tooze, 2000, 177). At a basic level, knowledge is contested and political, and social analyses are situated within broader political systems or projects. This epistemology is the antithesis of the neutral and objective observer; it is the expression of knowledge as a specific manifestation of power in a particular historical context, political order and, most importantly, the capitalist world-system. Realists and positivists assert that human nature is predictable, whereby foreign policies of the state are explicitly and unilaterally pro national interest, and the international system, through balance-of-power mechanisms, is a constraint on power maximizing states. In response, Cox’s line of critical IPE embeds the world-system and its structural nodes within a socially constructed and contestable meta-narrative of power (Leysens, 2008, 41). This conception of knowledge and power forms a fluid link with critiques raised by critical development scholars regarding the construction of modernization and underdevelopment as a value-free teleological paradigm for economic growth in the worlds’ less-industrialized nations of the global periphery.

Distinguished from mainstream problem-solving approaches, Cox’s analysis “does not take institutions and social power relations for granted but calls them into question by concerning itself with their origins and whether they might be in the process of changing” (Cox, 1981, 129). One of the key limitations of traditional IR theories is the conversion of events into data that is abstracted from context, linkages, affiliations, and antagonisms that give it meaning (Cox, 2002, 59). In response, Cox seeks to imbue ‘objective’ events and processes at the transnational level with inter-subjective meaning in order to understand the conditions and cognitions that helped bring the events and processes about, and, equally significantly, that limited other possibilities from coming into reality. This is particularly useful when analyzing social crises and conflicts involving how societies should be ‘made’ or structured, as it helps to highlight the divergent meanings that individuals and groups give to ideas and institutions when confronting the same events. Through this type of analysis, it elucidates how societal norms and relational power hierarchies have come about and persist in spite of opposition and resistance (ibid, 59).

In order to gain a better understanding of how knowledge processes intersect with the structural dynamics of the late 20th and early 21st century world-system, the work of Susan Strange is particularly useful. Issues of knowledge production, construction and legitimation
within the international political economy all intersect with the narratives contested by early critics of developmentalism and modernization movements. In response, Strange contends that broader conceptualizations of power are required when examining international relations, including structural and relational power, and the power to influence the ideas of others (Strange, 1988, 171). This conception of the world-system involves:

The power to shape and determine the structures of the global political economy within which other states, their political institutions, their economic enterprises and (not least) their scientists and other professional people, have to operate; structural power, in short, confers the power to decide how things shall be done, the power to shape frameworks within which states relate to each other, relate to people, or relate to corporate enterprises (ibid, 24-5; emphasis added).

According to this interpretation of the world-system, while states and markets remain central units of analysis and actors in terms of public policy and economic transactions, they are primarily positioned as mediums of transformation that express or channel more fundamental power structures. To Strange, finance, security, production and technology represent the four basic structures of international power, and each must be examined as such in any consideration of international systems and relations (ibid, 23). While finance and security are implicit in parts of this study, particularly finance through the analysis of resource dependency dynamics in development assistance programs, production and technology reflect the core structures that will be interrogated.

Knowledge, particularly knowledge production and management, in conjunction with technological innovation, holds a central place in Strange’s ontology of IPE, at times acting as the grounding structure from which all other structures derive potency and legitimacy (Mytelka, 2000). Strange’s critical political economy of knowledge is one of the first IR theories to identify and give ontological status to the ‘knowledge structure’ that “determines what knowledge is discovered, how it is stored, and who communicates it by what means to whom and on what terms” (Strange, 1994, 121; as cited in Tooze, 2000, 186). The development of a structural analysis of knowledge that positions it as a tool of power legitimating processes within a given societal milieu is not new. However, what is novel about this approach, and of central importance to this study in lieu of traditional sociology of knowledge and education frameworks, is the incorporation of knowledge as a structural basis of power in its own right in international transaction systems, be they economic, political, or cultural (Mytelka, 2000, 32).

Strange (1994) argues that the development or imposition of international transactional and systemic arrangements rely on changes in the basic belief systems that underlie or support
‘acceptable’ arrangements in the hierarchy of total options, rather than merely altering public and/or private policies (p.127). As such, the four main structures of power (security, production, finance and technology) ultimately rely on the ability of certain types and systems of knowledge to legitimate manifestations and activities that stem from the core structures. As a techno-rationalist ideology continues to hold sway through positivist social science and knowledge economy discourses, alternative ideologies are continually obfuscated and/or limited. What this means is that “existing structures of power are themselves already constructed by and through social, including academic, adherence to a specific set of principles of the construction of reality” (Bourdieu, 1997, 165).

The implication of this limiting construction of reality is that as power systems increasingly operate beyond the purview and control of nation-states, and as knowledge becomes a more explicit and tangible form of capital, an increasing number of barriers continue to be developed that limit and control entry into knowledge-based industries, economies, and academic systems, specifically for peripheral societies and their endogenous knowledge systems. While much can be written on issues of access to international capital markets and foreign direct investment for less-industrialized countries, this study focuses on the production orders of knowledge vis-à-vis the global knowledge economy. Increased barriers to world markets, rapid changes in international financial markets, and the increasingly marginal role of peripheral nations, particularly those in SSA, over the structure of international financial institutions have maintained asymmetrical relations between the global core and periphery in the majority of transnational economic transactions, including knowledge-based activities. The ability of peripheral actors to access, ascend and impact mainstream knowledge structures and hierarchies has been equally restricted, and frustrates their ability to present resistant or alternative frameworks within mainstream academic spaces.

Adapting Strange’s argument that ideological constructs and knowledge legitimation processes underly other core international structures and sub-structures, the restriction, or more often the exclusion, of developing country institutions, researchers, and businesses from international knowledge orders represents an equally crippling limitation on structural power and its effect on development processes. As such, this study takes the efficacy of NSS partnerships to affect the ability of Southern actors and institutions to interface equitably with and impact the international knowledge structure, specifically using universities and academic hierarchies as the entry-point for analysis, as a point of departure for analysis. Questions to be asked are: whether or not Norway intends to promote alternative and/or transformative research
trajectories in developing countries through their incorporation of South-South research partnerships? To what extent are peripheral actors empowered and/or legitimated to contribute to international discipline-based dialogues and debates? To what extent do the dominant global knowledge structures, articulated through academic capitalism and knowledge economy discourses, frame the opportunities available to peripheral researchers, despite the efforts made to facilitate capacity building in peripheral institutions? These questions, informed by critical IPE, are expressions of the conceptual framework that guides the investigation regarding the place of knowledge in the global political economy.

What the above sections outline is an understanding of knowledge as more than just the accumulation, management and implementation of information and technology. This is not a novel approach to the issue of knowledge; anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers and critical thinkers in other disciplines have long investigated the nuances of knowledge in the construction, intersection and interpretation of social reality. That being said, the critical branches of IPE re-invest basic constructions of knowledge within a global production framework specifically in regard to the current world-system of capitalist production and accumulation. Researchers must interrogate knowledge production and the legitimation of knowledge production as foundational processes of creating and sustaining dominant world-systems.

Theories, as lenses used to understand and frame political, economic and social systems, are revealed as essentially political. As Biersteker (1992) asserts, “theory is context bounded and emerges either consciously or unconsciously in the service of (or driven by) particular interests” (p. 7). As socially constructed products, theory and knowledge have a purpose and are subject to criteria of legitimation, inclusion and exclusion that result in a hierarchical ranking within an ordered structure. This construction of ‘knowledge production’ presents this study with a framework capable of investigating NSS research partnerships as a part of a broader global political economy that relies upon the creation and maintenance of various types of knowledge producing activities; economic, developmental, and theoretical.

The result of this contested process is a ‘gatekeeping’ phenomena, whereby different knowledges are manipulated and dispersed into artificially created tiers by relationally controlled networks. “Once properly endorsed with the unwritten certification of the invisible network, then you may be considered for publication in the recognized journals and find peers from among the members of the group” (Cox, 1996, 178). In terms of a world order that seeks to maintain a status quo of domination, the essentially political nature of knowledge acts as a
grounding structure from which all other activities find legitimacy and makes knowledge production a core dynamic in the GPE. The production, possession, control, communication and legitimation of knowledge is a prime structure of political economy. As Strange (1994) argues, “structural analysis suggests that technological changes do not necessarily change power structures. They do so only if accompanied by changes in the basic belief systems which underpin or support the political and economic arrangements acceptable to society” (p. 127). Thus, in any attempt to understand social changes and the historical structures that have precipitated those changes, knowledge production is a key determinant in how dominant systems arise, self-legitimize, and neutralize resistant and oppositional systems or narratives.

The incorporation of elements drawn from critical IPE into the framework and narrative of this study allows for a more nuanced integration of three distinct facets of knowledge in NSRPs and NSS research units: education and knowledge as contested, re-productive processes, as outlined above; the embedding of education, with all its inherent tensions, within higher education systems in ex-colonial nation-states, as will be examined in the following, and final, section of this chapter; and knowledge production as a core structure in a global political economy that is interrelated with national foreign policy, yet is no longer solely defined by national governments and markets.

African Higher Education in the World-System: From colonialism to dependency

As outlined in the previous sections of this review, knowledge is a primary sub-structure of the world-system and the global political economy. This manifests both through the mechanisms and ideologies that determine the shape and tenor of formalized knowledge systems and in the role that knowledge and theory play in establishing, maintaining and perpetuating dominant social, economic and political systems and institutions. Formal education institutions, such as universities and colleges, originally established under the auspice of creating and distributing knowledge to the citizenry and professional classes of a nation (Newman, 1873; Flexner, 1930; Kerr, 1982), are inexorably tied to issues of power, equity and socio-economic mobility. As previously mentioned in this study, the role of knowledge production and formal educational institutions in the reproduction of social, economic and political orders within national jurisdictions have been analyzed at great length within various strands of social theory (Boudon, 1974; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1976; Bernstein, 1977; Bourdieu
& Wacquant, 1992). This study seeks to address the role that knowledge, and the institutions implicated in knowledge politics, play in reproducing the same orders within the international arena. It does so with consideration to the recent history of sub-Saharan Africa, the region of the world that has historically experienced the most repressive foreign interventions in the higher education sector, that trains the lowest number of researchers per million population, and produces the least science and engineering publications, as well as scientific patents, of any region in the world (World Bank, 2010, 55). At the sub-regional level, South Africa alone constitutes between 25% and 66% for each of the above metrics (ibid, 55-57).

Before examining how geo-political configurations and systems have historically intersected with the higher education sectors of sub-Saharan African nations, it must be stated that this review walks a fine line on the issue of generalization. To subsume the various histories of an entire continent of societies, peoples and, most recently, nations within one review threatens to overwhelm very real cultural and historical differences. However, given the synchronicity that does exist between the distinct colonial experiences on the continent, particularly acute when it comes to the formation of higher education systems and institutions, this review cannot avoid a degree of homogenization in terms of the themes, issues and debates that surround the role of universities within the SSA region. Additionally, due to limitations in both space and scope, it is not possible to adequately reflect upon the variances between particular colonial experiences in this study. All of that being said, the robust empirical record on universities and knowledge in sub-Saharan Africa supports the contention that the history of ‘modern’ knowledge production and consumption in SSA intersects with mainstream international political economy and dominant development discourses and ideologies. As a result, this review presents a broad picture of how knowledge systems have been a central avenue for colonial processes within the SSA region.

As characterized by world-systems theorists, critical development scholars and international political economists, referenced in the above sections of this review, the ability to control or determine both the production and epistemological framing of knowledge directly impacts the maintenance of broader social, economic and political asymmetries. This review extends the implications drawn from the three analytical traditions by framing higher education within the international development architecture as a conduit for sustaining these asymmetries. In this regard, the aid system functions as a structural inhibitor of autonomous knowledge production within the periphery and is in many ways an extension of earlier colonial projects aimed at creating a global underclass that is restricted to tasks of primary production, in the
forms of both underdeveloped national economies and domestic higher education systems (Carnoy 1974; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Arnove, 1980b).

Though the history of formal higher learning institutions and centers in SSA predates the colonial experience, the traditional centers of higher learning were destroyed and replaced with foreign models during the colonial era (Altbach & Teferra, 2003). As a result, the original structure, organization and mandate of modern higher education institutions and systems on the continent were predicated on the systems of the particular colonial powers in control of the various jurisdictions (Ashby, 1964; Altbach, 1977, 1981; Altbach & Kelly, 1978). While disparities existed between the levels of support offered by the various colonial powers, overall, there was a consistent unwillingness to develop more than the most basic institutional capacities; universities were subject to absolute colonial control (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Mudimbe, 1988; Wangoola, 2000; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Teferra, 2008). As one French policymaker stated in 1917:

> We need interpreters to make ourselves understood by the natives…we need intermediaries, belonging to the native milieu by their origin and to the European milieu by their education, in order to have these civilizations understood and adopted by local populations whose hostility to anything foreign is beyond comprehension (Delafosse, 1917; as cited in Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 76).

Higher education was seen as a medium for controlling social relations and shaping social norms in conjunction with the political and economic systems of European states and markets. There were no legitimate alternative or parallel systems, and there was a complete reliance on the importation of external organizing structures, ideas, epistemologies and educational resources.

This situation was a direct superimposition of the broader world-system framework, whereby interventions and support within the colonial territories were directed at maintaining economic and political systems that privileged the accumulation of capital by elite metropole powers, and where a country’s “world system role refers to the structure of a country’s relations with the rest of the world and to the international division of labor” (Rossem, 1996, 508). Just as peripheral countries were relegated to primary production activities within the global economy in the pre- and post-independence period of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, higher education institutions in the former colonies of Africa were constructed as consumers and reproducers of foreign knowledge; only the most basic functions of formal education systems were permissible in periphery nations (Altbach, 1981; Shivji, 1993, 119). The result of these movements was the suppression of African knowledge systems under the guise of ‘reformist
modernity’, whereby non-European knowledges were labeled as ‘indigenous’ and placed at lower levels within the hierarchical scale and removed from the formal institutions of higher learning (Dei, 2000; Okere et al., 2005, 1). As Mudimbe (1988) contends, Africa was invented out of the minds of the colonizers.

A few examples from the historical literature: Portuguese Africa did not support higher education in its’ colonies until the early 1960s, while French Africa was considered a province of France and thus the development of indigenously controlled institutions was deemed unnecessary by the French authorities (Lulat, 2003; Teferra, 2008). Higher education in Belgian Congo focused exclusively on technical education, largely influenced by the Catholic Church, in order to produce local missionaries who were familiar with indigenous cultures (Ajayi, 1988). This approach resulted in the establishment of the Louvanium University Centre in the Congo, operating under the sponsorship of Louvain University in Belgium. Ali Mazrui comments on the institutional framework established at Louvanium:

Like the universities in Francophone Africa, Louvanium was designed to follow Louvain in curriculum, standards, and in its constitution. At the same time, the commitment to a practical education and the need for missionaries familiar with local culture combined to create a larger space for the study of African languages and culture (Mazrui 1975; as cited in Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 76).

The French colonial governments were equally restrictive in their approach to higher education, whereby only one teacher training institution was established for the whole of French West Africa (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 75).

While France and Belgium remained passive or reactionary in their tertiary training policies, invoking new policies only as situations on the ground dictated (Gifford and Weiskel, 1971), Britain took a more proactive approach to the use of formal education institutions for training a competent pool of local low-level administrators (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). Before the First World War, the majority of Britain’s colonial higher education operations were administered by missionary societies. However, after the war, British colonial governments began to develop official policies for the provision of higher education (ibid, 74). This became a more pressing need throughout the early 20th century, as the Currie Report of 1933 indicates; “the absence of any African institutions for adequate higher training... cripples... the recruitment of properly trained natives for higher posts where they are wanted for Government and Private Service and in Native Administration and Judicial Systems” (reprinted in Ashby and Anderson, 1966, 477).
It was only after the Second World War, and the pressing call for independence emanating from many jurisdictions in colonial Africa, that Britain expanded its higher education policy through the establishment of six higher education institutions, collectively termed the Asquith Colleges in response to the 1945 Asquith Commission (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 75). However, these colleges remained dependent on the British higher education system, specifically the University of London and the British Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas, for their curricular construction, examinations, and evaluation (Mazrui, 1975; Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 75). Similarly, in post-War investment French Africa colonial administrators increased investments in order to establish a number of higher education institutions throughout the Republic (Gifford & Weiskel, 1971, 694). However, “during the decolonization period, these higher education institutions were linked to universities in France, and they often were considered French universities abroad. Similar to the Asquith Colleges, they were governed by French university statutes” (Ajayi, Goma & Johnson, 1996; as cited in Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 76).

The result of these colonial systems, characterized by the limited training of locals in administrative or professional capacities, is what Mahmood Mahmdani (1996) refers to as ‘decentralized despotism’ (p. 73). In all of the various African territories, colonial administration occurred through ‘indirect rule’, whereby a small cadre of Europeans administrators were present on the ground and relied heavily on local rulers or intermediaries to carry out various functions, including tax collection, military recruitment, requisition of labor and compulsory crop cultivation. Table 2.1 provides estimates of the disproportionate representation of European administrators to local populations, not including military personnel. While not the focus of this study, it must be noted that the system of centralized judicial authority and institutions with exclusive jurisdiction over particular areas as dictated by the European powers was a foreign system of social organization. It has been argued in the literature that by creating and placing so much unchecked power in the hands of select local leaders, European powers sowed many of the roots of modern despotism on the continent (Mahmdani, 1996), and a portion of this systemic failure rests on the unwillingness of the colonial powers to create adequate higher education institutions to train competent and diverse local bureaucracies.

Table 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Officials</th>
<th>Indigenous Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colony</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Nigeria (1939)</td>
<td>1,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian Congo (1939)</td>
<td>2,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Equatorial Africa (1939)</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French West Africa (1939)</td>
<td>3,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British India (1893)</td>
<td>889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Mahmoudi, 1996, 73; Fieldhouse, 1982, 276.

Bereft of important institutional capacities, such as basic research functions and advanced or innovative pedagogical practices, universities in the colonies became mediums for importing and reproducing the knowledge, norms and values of the core nations. The literature examining the subversion of indigenous knowledge in Africa through the colonial and neo-colonial projects is robust, comprehensive and bears witness to the processes of peripheral exploitation as enacted through higher education institutions and knowledge processes related to social and economic order (Ashby, 1964; Yesufu, 1973; Mazrui, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1992; Mudimbe, 1988; Appiah, 1992; Hounoundji, 1995; Ayaji et al., 1996; Gyeke, 1997; Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg, 2000; Odora-Hoppers, 2002; van Rinsum, 2002).

The core-periphery dynamic perpetuated by formal education and knowledge structures is two-fold in SSA; not only were domestic institutions peripheral within the global knowledge order, but select domestic institutions were positioned as an exogenous core within the social, economic and political systems of the colonial states. In this way, cohorts of local elites were constructed in the image of the core powers, indoctrinated in the ideologies, epistemologies, methodologies and linguistics of the dominant knowledge producers, and resistant or opposed to local intellectual traditions. In this regard, education became a significant dimension of foreign policy for the core nations, and the establishment of university structures and inter-university relations during the mid-20th century became a powerful arms-length means of influencing social thought in post-colonial Africa (Frank, 1972; Mazrui, 1975; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Frank and Gills, 1990; Escobar, 1995).

Despite the transparent reproductive mission and the explicit manipulation of African higher education systems and institutions by the colonial powers, upon achieving independence in the mid-20th century, many African nations continued to envisage the imposed structures of education, particularly higher education, as the optimal mechanisms for growth, self-sufficiency...
and sustainability (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). As a result, colonial models and systems were primarily left intact after independence, and the construct of higher education maintained a powerful place in African societies. This general support resulted in the creation of “developmental universities” throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Mazrui, 1975, 1992; Samoff & Carrol, 2004). As Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere commented in 1967, “the role of the university in a developing country is to contribute; to give ideas, manpower, and service for the furtherance of human equality, human dignity, and human development” (Nyerere, 1967a, 186). In this regard, despite the use of education as a repressive institution during the colonial era, limited criticism was levied at foreign educational models and paradigms in the post-independence era. The cessation of formal political and economic colonization on the continent was supplemented by the continued domination of educational and, more importantly, epistemological and ideological systems within the elite cadres of the newly independent nations, maintaining direct avenues of influence for core elites over their peripheral counterparts (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Mazrui, 1975, 1992; Mudimbe, 1988; Mamdani, 1996, 1999).

Contextualizing the continued reliance on the imported models of formal higher education in terms of quantifiable data, a UNESCO survey of higher education activities within 34 African countries between 1950 and 1962 recorded a massive explosion in both institutions and enrollment. The number of countries with universities rose from 11 to 28, the number of universities nearly tripled from 16 to 41, and the number of students enrolled on the continent rose from 2,270 to 16,580, an increase of over 600 percent (UNESCO, 1963, 273). In addition, a series of conferences devoted specifically to the expansion of higher education capacity across SSA supported the idea that higher education was a major vehicle for social and economic development. In 1962, UNESCO held a conference in Madagascar to discuss the role of universities in national progress and the issues associated with adapting curricula and administrative structures to the specific conditions of African life (Yesufu, 1973). Ten years later, in 1972, the Association of African Universities (AAU) held a conference in Ghana entitled Creating the African University, at which time the role of African identities in university life was explored, with the hope of creating a ‘truly African’ university with a fundamentally different mission from the inherited institutions (ibid).

A primary reason for the continued belief in higher education during the post-independence era, despite the explicit use of education as a repressive mechanism during colonialism, was the perceived need to industrialize the African workforce in order to meet new manpower demands and spur economic expansion. Samoff and Carrol (2004) contend that
“once colonial rule ended…the new leadership increasingly charged higher education with the development of high-level skills, particularly for the civil service. "Relevance! became the watchword” (p. 79). At the 1963 meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and again at the 1972 Accra meeting of the Association of African Universities, a general desire was put forth by both national and international actors to see African universities prioritize work related to African concerns and train human resources in order to produce African industrial solutions (Ajavi, 1973).

Though the rationale for higher education expansion was based on African concerns over manpower supply and endogenous policy formation capacity, the means of development for African universities remained inextricably tied to the interests of governments, agencies and organizations in the global core, primarily the ex-colonial powers. As a result, the social, economic and political networks that pre-existed the independence movements in most SSA nations remained active and powerful in the post-colonial era. Despite calls for autonomous intellectual and economic development, the general trend in the mid-to-late 20th century was one of reform rather than transformation. Yann Lebeau (2008) frames these processes as “ongoing remedial policies” that “tended to result, everywhere on the continent, in the reforming and restructuring processes of already inherited systems of higher education along similar patterns to those observed in the Western world and the Pacific Rim” (p. 150). The economic and political realities of a fragile post-independence stability robbed legislators of the capital, in all senses of the term, to enact radical transformation platforms in their higher education sectors, and were relegated to mechanisms of manpower production (Mkandawire, 1995). In her historical case study of the University of Dar es Salaam, Jamison (2011) contends that “the governments who declared that their intention was to make the universities more responsive to public needs were themselves far from responsive to those needs” (p. 30).

While the seeds of African higher education were borne from Europe in the latter portion of the 19th century and the early 20th century, the concepts of ‘cooperation’ and ‘partnership’ ascended to prominence in global discourse and activities in the latter half of the 20th century, and their definitions are both contested and evolving in light of the failures of modernization theory and the developmentalist project. The transition from colonial control to developmental support continues to follow a highly politicized, circuitous route, and to a great extent the dependencies of colonialism have been co-opted under the guise of cooperation and partnership, not necessarily with the same direct intent, but with many of the same trappings and outcomes (Samoff, 1996, 1999, 2009; Brock-Utne, 2000; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Ellerman, 2005).
way, traditional transfer models that focused on the explicit adoption of the core’s educational systems and ideologies have been replaced by ‘softer’ and more nuanced mechanisms of appropriation and imposition that perpetuate unequal funder-recipient relationships that privilege the agenda of the resource-supplying agent (Ilon, 2003).

This study’s conceptual framework contends that foreign interventions in SSA higher education have significantly extended a number of asymmetries between the higher education institutions and systems of the global core and periphery. It also contends that the structures and ideologies behind the global aid architecture have deepened the dependence of SSA higher education institutions on foreign funding agencies, both structurally and epistemologically. As Samoff and Carrol (2004) argue:

The rhetoric of aid has always focused on assisting African countries to develop their own higher education systems. In practice, of course, most of the aid-providing organizations explicitly and implicitly have been guided by and seek to promote national interests. Indeed, that is the institutional mandate of governmental foreign aid institutions (p. 86).

Implicit in this argument is a perpetuation of the original Realist model of foreign aid, whereby development-related agencies are tools of broader foreign policy agendas that seek to further enrich actors within the resource-providing nation, either explicitly through the influence of resource-dependence or tacitly through the re-colonization of foreign academics, policy-makers and citizens. In the research sector, SSA universities remain dependent on foreign governments and organizations not only for funding and resources, but, more importantly, for the driving rationales and parameters of sanctioned research. As Teferra (2008) asserts, “compounded by serious financial and economic constraints, Africa remains at the bottom of the knowledge production ladder, rendering it virtually dependent on knowledge generated in the ‘center,’ i.e., the North” (pg. 59).

This is most acutely observed in the context of foreign funding for African research activities. According to a study done by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, as of 2005 there were a total of 239 development projects in operation in African universities totaling close to 587 billion US dollars (Kubler, 2005; in Teferra & Knight, 2008, 50), and those statistics do not count the work of private foundations, such as Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie, who have been heavily invested in African education initiatives across all levels since the 1950s (Arno 1980b, 55-58). Some further examples: in 1995, more than 70% of research grants in Africa were externally supported (Enos, 1995); a 1996 AAU survey of SSA universities found that no university spent more than 3.78% of their recurrent budget on research (Sawyerr, 2004),
with similar levels produced by a 1996 survey conducted by Shabani; in 2003, university
research funding in Ethiopia was almost exclusively funded by foreign donors (Wondimu,
2003); Between 1999 and 2004, close to 90% of all research funding at Tanzania’s flagship
research university, the University of Dar es Salaam, was derived from donor funding
(Ishengoma, 2004), and nationally this number was close to 50% (World Bank 2009, 57).

It must be noted that given the lack of transparency and cooperation between the various
multilateral, bilateral and private funding agencies, as well as national ministries and agencies,
cumulative and comprehensive data on domestic research expenditures and foreign-funded
programming is for the most part unavailable, making broader quantitative measurements and
comparisons at national and regional levels only approximate estimations. Additionally, total
funds reported may not include African domestic students completing degrees abroad via
foreign scholarships or fellowships. However, these snapshots of financial dependency across
the continent and particularly at national flagship research universities support the critique that
SSA higher education and research institutions remain enmeshed in dependency traps similar to
their post-independence predecessors.

The various funding schemes have left African higher education institutions and
government Ministries disproportionately beholden to external donors in major institutional and
systemic decision-making processes. As Teferra (2008) argues, “international funding
institutions have played a visible role in (the exercise of strategic approaches) by encouraging
and supporting national and institutional strategic planning schemes” (pg. 49). The most
significant result of these external directives is the continued internalization of global norms and
educational platforms within African higher education policies and structures, an indirect system
of penetration and reproduction similar in outcome to the more direct means of colonial control
pre-independence (Samoff, 2009, 126-7), which replicates the asymmetrical relations described
by world-system theory.

The historical reliance on foreign resources, research expertise, and research training has
had two devastating consequences for broader society-building processes in many SSA
jurisdictions. First, the lack of endogenous development paradigms, trajectories, modalities, and
practices has undermined the ability for many African policy-makers and academics to
adequately engage with and contest the global aid architecture and its self-perpetuating
mechanisms (Mazrui, 1975; Samoff, 2009). Second, the lack of endogenous research capacity,
particularly in technological fields, has resulted in the inability for many SSA countries and
institutions to interface adequately with the global knowledge-based economy, leaving them de-
linked from significant drivers of economic growth such as international markets, global research networks, and foreign direct investment (King and McGrath, 2002, 21; World Bank, 2000, 2009). As a result, African higher education institutions and research units are ill equipped or professionally unprepared to connect with, let alone penetrate, global knowledge structures and hierarchies.

While many scholars have hoped that African universities would stimulate critical inquiry into African development processes, over the last 50 years the practice has rarely embodied the more positive rhetoric. As Samoff and Carrol (2004) contend, “for the most part, efforts to develop higher education in Africa have focused on more rather than different” (pg. 93). The development of domestic higher education and research institutions and capacities has resulted in the creation of new institutions rather than new missions or alternative ways of knowing (ibid, 93). Critical scholars have echoed this sentiment for over forty years, reinforcing the critique that development assistance has failed to stimulate and support more robust and nuanced higher education and research institutions in SSA. As Ali Mazrui contended over 35 years ago, “in the social sciences there have been changes in what is studied but not in how it is studied. More and more courses on Africa and on the economics of development have been initiated, but few methodological innovations…have been introduced” (Mazrui, 1975; as cited in Altbach & Kelly, 1978, 344). The inability and lack of opportunity for SSA scholars to develop innovative or alternative research cultures has undermined the potential for ‘subaltern intellectual traditions’ to emerge within Southern higher education institutions that are capable of challenging foreign prescriptions and conditionalities (Escobar, 2004, 210).

While the qualitative examination of research in SSA implies a systemic failure of both domestic stakeholders and the international system, the quantifiable metrics of research capacity indicates a continent in acute crisis over the last 30 years. According to the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report, between 1980 and 1990, the gap in research and development spending between countries in the North, nominally those in the OECD, and those in the South, nominally SSA, Southern Asia, and Latin America, was 170% (Brock-Utne, 1996, 336). SSA lags significantly behind all other global regions in the core metrics of research productivity established by mainstream academic and development communities. In terms of the relative presence of researchers within the population, SSA hosts a mere 48 researchers per million persons (rpm), while North Africa hosts 160, Latin America hosts 261, China hosts 459, and for the sake of a broader comparison, the United States hosts 4103 (World Bank, 2009, 55). In specific countries, the situation is even more acute, with Uganda hosting 25 researchers per
52

million persons (ibid, 55). In 2005, Ethiopia produced only a single PhD in a nation with 71 million individuals (Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, 2005, in World Bank, 2009, 55). In terms of research output, SSA produced 3,563 scientific publications in 2005 and residents filed for 16 patents in 2004. For comparison, South Asia produced 15,429 publications and 6,795 patent applications, while the Middle East and North Africa produced 6,354 publications and 486 patents (ibid, 56). Africa’s share of the world output for science and engineering publications was 1.37% as of 2005-2006, with South Africa alone counting for nearly a third of the output (ibid, 56).

The stagnant nature of SSA research can be traced to three dominant trends in the higher education and knowledge sectors: dependency on external funding, colonial and neo-colonial epistemological conditioning, and the emigration of large portions of the continent’s most accomplished scholars (Teferra, 2008). While the fiscal and ideological ties that have historically influenced African higher education have been described above, mirroring many of the critiques aimed at the broader core-periphery dynamics, the problem of emigration and the ‘brain drain’ is equally acute in the African context. Marked by African students and researchers leaving the continent to be trained or hired by foreign institutions or corporations, the brain train has resulted in a de-linked or absent educated class in many SSA nations. Predictably, the impact of this on research in Africa, particularly in the social sciences, has been the institutionalization of cautious and conventional topics and methodologies (Mazrui, 1975; Gulbenkian Commission, 1996; Gibbons, 1998).

Over the past 10 years, the knowledge-based economy (KBE) has become firmly entrenched in global economic, political, and social discourses, policies and practices. Briefly considered, since it is not the primary purview of this study to engage in economic-based discussions, the KBE is the result of systemic and substantive shifts in global production practices, the result of which has placed knowledge, knowledge production and knowledge management as “the only source of long-run sustainable competitive advantage” (Thurow, 1996, 74; as cited in King & McGrath, 2002, 28). The World Bank positions this issue in its 1998/99 World Development Report, titled Knowledge for Development:

Knowledge is critical for development because everything we do depends on knowledge…For countries in the vanguard of the world economy, the balance between knowledge and resources has shifted so far towards the former that knowledge has become perhaps the most important factor determining the standard of living, more than land, than tools, than labor. Today’s most technologically advanced economies are truly knowledge-based (World Bank, 1999, 130).
The implication of this movement for research and higher education is that knowledge and knowledge-based skills have attained more mainstream prominence in economic discourse and policies, resulting in renewed interest in higher education systems as key institutions for economic development. This renewed interest was apparent even at the World Bank, the leading global education research institution, which had for almost two decades downplayed investment in higher education due to the low public rates-of-return it produced in developing countries (Jones, 1992, 1997, 2002). The 2000 joint UNESCO-World Bank Task Force on Higher Education articulated, “as knowledge becomes more important, so does higher education. Countries need to educate more of their young people to a higher standard and a degree is now a basic qualification for many skilled jobs. The quality of knowledge generated within higher education institutions, is becoming increasingly critical to national competitiveness” (TFHE, 2000, 9).

One outcome of the increased salience of knowledge in the global economy is the global knowledge worker; individuals with the necessary skills to innovate, produce, and manage the resources of the new KBE, or as former United States Secretary of Labour, Robert Reich describes them, a growing class of “symbolic analysts” that form an increasingly large and significant layer of high status, high wage, and high-skill employment (Reich, 1991; as cited in King & McGrath, 2002, 28). These individuals are valued due to their ability to access, analyze and use knowledge along increasingly complex and inter-disciplinary lines. While the increased reliance on high-skill workers is a significant issue for the creation of high-level research capacity in SSA, this study is primarily interested in the epistemological and ideological implications of the historical dearth of research capacity on the continent and the asymmetries that have accompanied bilateral assistance to higher education and research sectors. Because of this, the economic implications will be dealt with only as a background contextual issue. The case study examination of the NUFU program and modality does not actively engage or interrogate issues and implications associated with this economic perspective, and will focus on the salient issues associated with SSA’s economic, epistemological, and professional dependency on the core, as well as the added implications of the brain drain phenomenon for the creation of more robust academic communities.

*Summary and Contextualization of the Dissertation Study*
This chapter has taken up the issues of knowledge production, construction, reproduction and legitimation, moving from the broadest layers of understanding via world-system analysis to the particular manifestations within sub-Saharan Africa in both the pre- and post-colonial eras. While the literature review is sweeping in its scope, it synthesizes the interrelated strands of the historical contexts in order to set the stage for this study’s examination and analysis of the NUFU program. It is the author’s contention that the current study’s examination of foreign-funded development-oriented research linkage programs requires a broad contextual understanding of the forces and factors that have co-constructed higher education in SSA as a tool for social and economic reproduction, particularly over the past 60 years.

World-system and dependency theories help form a foundational conceptual layer for understanding how the colonial territories of SSA were integrated into the international economic order by the ruling European states. This explication presents a comprehensive overview of the current world-system configuration of power, focusing first on the core-periphery dichotomy and moving towards a more multi-layered matrix of structural relations. Essentially, since the colonial project began in the 16th century, a large-scale project of economic manipulation and exploitation has been undertaken by European nations, and recently a more diverse array of actors, and that has been aimed at the territories of the global periphery. This process has established a world-system of inter-dependencies whereby the nations of the core have become reliant on the resources of the periphery, while simultaneously marginalizing the periphery’s productive capacities, such that actors in peripheral nations have been unable to achieve the necessary independence in order to challenge the hegemonic orders established either on their behalf or with the complicit assistance of cadres of local elites.

A key component in the perpetuation of this symbiotic exploitation was the construction of developmentalist ideologies after the Second World War, particularly through the formulation and implementation of the modernist agenda via the newly formed international organizations. The dominance of neo-classical Liberal capitalism in the major post-war international organizations became a key legitimizing tool for particular narratives, ideologies and discourses regarding the ideal construction of social, economic and political order. The critical development scholars referenced in the above literature review critique the production and institutionalization of these ideas as a primary determinant of dependency in the post-colonial era. The newly independent nations of SSA not only suffered from catastrophic human resource deficits, but their few remaining highly trained professionals were thoroughly inculcated in
foreign epistemological paradigms that became further entrenched by the continent-wide failure to de-link from the former colonial rulers.

Critical IPE literature expands upon these issues and situates them within a structural analysis of power according to the emergence of late 20th century globalization. Recognizing that the frames of reference for the international political economy are no longer rooted in the entrenched systems of states and markets, critical IPE hypothesizes a multi-layered framework of structural power that envisions knowledge and the processes associated with its construction as a core structural determinant. This analysis builds on the work of dependency and world-systems theorists by highlighting the increasingly fragmented nature of structural power in the international arena, or the global arena, since nation-states are no longer seen as the sole engines of cross-jurisdictional engagement. As a result of this fragmentation, the construction, legitimation and reproduction of powerful, self-referential narratives have become increasingly important for maintaining hegemony within the global order. Universities, as central sites of knowledge production, are necessarily implicated in these processes, particularly in terms of their research activities.

The cumulative context of the above circumstances has directly and indirectly impacted the nature, scope and function of higher education in SSA. Over the past one hundred years, African jurisdictions have moved from being the vassals of an explicit colonial order to the targets of more sophisticated economic, political and social relational patterns. Throughout this transition, education, particularly higher education, has been constructed as a site for the hegemonic reproduction of particular values, norms and ideas regarding the nature and framework of social, political and economic order. While the core global powers originally established higher education institutions in order to train a limited number of administrators capable of maintaining the various colonial bureaucracies across SSA and to facilitate the proselytization of Africans, post-independence academic relations have been characterized by similar marginalizing patterns of influence, if under more nuanced and politically sensitive guises.

This study incorporates the above narratives as the conceptual framework for the current state of mainstream core-periphery academic relations. Any examination of such relations requires considering the historical circumstances that have lead to the current state of affairs and an acknowledgement that these circumstances have helped create various structural conditions that either determine or limit the viability of various courses of action, for better or for worse. This study takes up the issue of North-South research linkage programs in order to question how
Northern actors, not only governments but also academic and epistemic communities, have influenced the establishment of research programs in the higher education institutions of SSA jurisdictions. It does so through the examination of a particular program, the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU), in the hopes that an in-depth analysis of one particular program will facilitate a better understanding of how the various conceptual frames highlighted above play out in the actual implementation of a particular program and project.
Chapter Three: North-South Research Partnerships as a Development Modality

Introduction

As outlined in the second chapter of this study, relations between higher education institutions in the global core, traditionally referring to the industrialized countries of Western Europe and North America, and the global South, referring to the world’s less-industrialized nations, and with special reference in the scope of this study to former colonial territories, played an integral role in the development of colonial education systems in the 19th and 20th centuries, and continues to play a determining role in the growth of post-independence higher education institutions and systems. While the objectives of colonial era support and transfer modalities were to populate low-level positions in colonial administrative bureaucracies, after independence many of the pre-existing institutional relations were maintained and became a medium of continued foreign influence within the domestic affairs of African nations (Ashby, 1964; Yesufu, 1973; Ajayi, 1973; Mazrui, 1975; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Court, 1983).

During the colonial period, African higher education institutions were almost completely deprived of essential research functions, both basic and applied, and as a result, research was highlighted as a key area of post-independence development (Ajayi, 1973; Shivji, 1993; Mkandawire, 1997, 2005; Falola, 2001; Anyidoho, 2006). One modality implemented in order to build research capacity in the higher education institutions of the global South has been a ‘partnership’ model, characterized by one institution, department, or group of researchers from a Northern jurisdiction collaborating with counterpart Southern institutions through technical assistance, knowledge transfer or human capital development programs (King, 1985). In both academia and development sectors, this intervention modality has taken on the abbreviated term North-South Research Partnerships (NSRPs) and forms the empirical foundation for this study’s examination of the NUFU program. In relating NSRPs to the contextual framework of the study, the “North” and “South” are conceptualized as interchangeable with the concepts of the global core and periphery.

Situated in public research institutions, most often universities, Northern government-funded development-related agencies have considered NSRP interventions and programs effective means of building institutional and individual research capacities for close to 40 years, despite significant critiques of their efficacy and both their socio-economic and geo-political
implications (Arnowe, 1980b; Weiler, 1984, 2001; King, 1985, 1990, 2002; Lewis, 1987; Olsson, 1992; Gaillard, 1994; Nwauwa, 1997; Nair & Menon, 2002; Ellerman, 2002, 2005; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Bradley, 2007a, 2007b). These linkage programs have been primarily directed at the realization of multiple capacity-building goals, consisting of a variety of research and training activities, and have been implemented across departmental, faculty, school, and institutional levels (Bradley, 2007a).

Though the patterns of influence and support offered by Northern agencies and organizations have varied over time, often in synch with changing global circumstances and dominant social, economic, and geo-political patterns and ideologies, NSRPs have traditionally operated under a linear assistance model that operates primarily through the transfer of resources, knowledge and technologies from Northern to Southern or core to peripheral educational jurisdictions and institutions (Gaillard, 1994; Samoff, 1996; Box, 1999, 2001; Baud, 2001; Stokke, 2005; McFarlane, 2006a). Critics of dominant intervention practices and rationales contend that the linear model has further entrenched rationalist and positivist conceptions of knowledge that are grounded in the modernization paradigm and that support frameworks that conceptualize development purely as the accumulation and implementation of objective, universal and instrumental information and data, a conceptualization that homogenizes the array of contextual differences present across and within the global periphery by constructing one-size-fits-all short-cuts to complex, multi-layered social, economic, and political issues (Craig, 1990; Fuller, 1991; Jones, 1992, 2002; Reimers, 1994; Enos, 1995; Bennell, 1996a; Samoff 1996; Cheng, 1997; Odora Hoopers, 1998; Hauck & Land, 2000; Brock-Utne, 2000; Hickling-Hudson, 2002; Mbabazi et al., 2002; McFarlane, 2006a; Connell, 2007; Mamdani, 2007).

Considered broadly, the linear model of knowledge production has resulted in the dominance of a transfer paradigm in mainstream development assistance agendas up until the late 1990s, a methodology that critics argue operates on the assumption that knowledge from one place can be transposed to different contexts with equal efficacy. Under this rubric, and despite contestations by development experts and practitioners, knowledge is unproblematically framed as the source of universally applicable technical solutions and ‘best practices’ (Box, 2001; Baud, 2001; Mehta, 2001; Escobar, 1995 and 2004; Tikly, 2004; Ellerman, 2005; McFarlane, 2006a; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009; Samoff, 2009). The World Bank’s 1999 World Development Report articulated this belief as follows:
Knowledge is like light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere. Yet billions of people still live in the darkness of poverty, unnecessarily…Poor countries, and poor people, differ from rich ones not only because they have less capital but because they have less knowledge (World Bank, 1999, 1).

This depiction of knowledge is highly contentious within both academic and practitioner communities, as examined in previous sections of this study. This study operates on the understanding that the transfer framework has had significant deleterious effects on the construction and maintenance of autonomous and sustainable national higher education systems and institutions across the nations of the global periphery, particularly in SSA. The transfer rhetoric falls squarely within a world-system framework that situates core-periphery interactions and relations as explicitly homogenizing and colonial; technical assistance is used as a means to neutralize alternative conceptualizations of economic and social order and to incorporate the intellectuals of the global periphery into a paradigm of neoclassical Liberal capitalism.

The idea that the transfer of knowledge can and, more importantly, should take place without context-specific reforms has been problematized in the earliest articulations of comparative education as a field of research. As Michael Sadler wrote in his 1900 study *Can We Learn Anything of Practical Value from the Study of Foreign Systems of Education?*:

> We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant (Sadler, 1900/1979, 49).

While the convergence and homogenization of different cultural knowledge systems has been questioned for almost 100 years by comparativists (Arnove, 1980b; Weiler, 1984), this has not prevented the hegemonic expansion of particular models of formal schooling and conceptions of legitimate knowledge from being dispersed by the global core to the periphery, particularly during the post-war era (Meyer et al., 1977; Arnove, 1980a, 1980b; Altbach, 1987, 1998). For development initiatives in the 1950s and 1960s, this resulted in interventions that predominantly sought to export Western knowledge, technologies, and systems to countries at ‘lower’ stages of development, and continued the colonial project of legitimatizing certain types of social systems, values, and knowledges, while relegating others to the status of being traditional and inherently incapable of meeting modern domestic needs (Patel & McMichael, 2004, 235).

The academic and development agency literatures examining and evaluating NSRPs highlight the disabling effect that mainstream knowledge and power structures have had on
higher education institutions in less-industrialized countries, particularly as mediated by development assistance programs. Over the last 25 years, there has been a consistent call for more researcher autonomy within peripheral universities, as well as more opportunities to explore and promote ‘subaltern intelligent communities’ (Escobar, 2004, 210) that are capable of resisting or mediating dominant global ideologies and forces in national contexts (Crossley, 2003; Escobar, 1995, 2004; King, 1985, 1990, 2001; Mazrui, 1992; Samoff, 1996, 1999). This call has also come from actors within some of the largest and most influential bilateral donor agencies such as: the British Department for International Development (DFID, 1997, 2005), the Swedish International Development Agency (Olsson, 1992; SIDA, 2005), the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC, 1993; Vehlo, 2003.), and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD, 1995; SIU, 1998, 2004, 2009b; COWI AS, 2010). The problem that requires examination, and which this study takes up in its analysis of the NUFU program, is the extent to which positive funding agency rhetoric has been in sync with the actual implementation of their respective programs.

The following sections draw upon the relevant literature in order to construct an ideal-type of dominant NSRP dynamics with the purpose of comparing rhetoric and reality in the case of the NUFU program and its decentralized modality. The following literature review facilitates the construction of an ideal-type, labeled as Coercive and whose methodology is explained in detail in the fourth chapter, whereby the mainstream forms of supporting NSRP programs over the past 40 years have resulted in the entrenchment of neo-colonial patterns of influence, control and marginalization of peripheral actors by core institutions. First, this section interrogates some of the basic concepts incorporated in early 21st century development discourse, terms such as partnership and ownership. This is done so as to adequately situate the NSRP modality within the broader milieu of development-related aid discourse. While these terms form the theoretical bedrock of the development literature, their application is often so broad and generalized that they are robbed of any concrete meaning or purpose (Lister, 2000; Crossley, 2001; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Samoff, 2009). Additionally, and more importantly, the terms have become so loaded and politicized that they threaten to obfuscate rather than clarify intervention dynamics and policies. The second phase of the ideal-type construction synthesizes the academic and development agency literatures in order to establish five categories of analysis for individual NSRP programs and projects. The categories established are: Program and project selection criteria and processes, project agenda setting processes, resource management, knowledge management, and sustainability and capacity building.
Interrogating ‘Partnership’

The notion of partnership is itself an elusive target. Today, everything is a "partnership." Aid is a partnership. Technical assistance is a partnership. Faculty and student exchanges are partnerships. Developing and selling curricula and instructional materials are partnerships. Even the institutional tutelage and apprenticeship arrangements that were the norm decades ago are now relabeled partnerships. Notwithstanding this widespread conversion to the partnership faith, systematic studies of partnerships are few. While those involved periodically report on their activities and occasionally commission evaluations, careful and documented analyses of academic partnerships are nearly nonexistent. There are no central registers or comprehensive lists of academic partnerships. Even within particular institutions it is frequently difficult to develop a clear picture of partnership activities (Samoff and Carrol, 2004, 71-72).

The above quotation from Samoff and Carrol (2004), drawn from their comprehensive study of American technical assistance to, and influence over, African higher education institutions, systems and developmental frameworks since the end of the Second World War, succinctly frames the prevalent tensions of NSRP programming. The elusive nature of partnerships and the saturation of development and government policies and literatures in partnership rhetoric have together acted as obfuscating forces in the evaluation of research support programs flowing from universities in the core to their peripheral counterparts (Lister, 2000; Crossley & Holmes, 2001, 400; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Harris, 2008). Rosenau (2000) similarly articulates how the rhetoric of partnership predominantly differs from its manifestation on the ground, primarily as a byproduct of contextual differences amongst linked actors. He states:

Partnering is not a contract that brings rational, utility-maximizing individuals together, but a complex organization that draws upon the organizational structure of partners, their institutional opportunities, constraints and history, their expectations for the future, and interaction in the present (Rosenau, 2000; in Marra 2004, 152).

If partnerships are considered to be an iterative process based on particular manifestations of local histories and complex social, political and economic processes, then the abstraction of a partnership model at a broad theoretical or conceptual level in development-related policies is a thoroughly loaded process (Morse, 2006, 324), whereby peripheral actors often reject conceptualizing their donor relations as partnerships at all (Lister, 2000; Harris, 2008).
Many critics and analysts in the field of comparative and international education have noted that partnership terminology and concepts have been increasingly co-opted by powerful development-related actors over the last 40 years, such that “development initiatives have been initiated by the North and accepted (by the South) under financial pressure” (King, 1999, 15-16; see also: Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 104; Nair & Menon, 2002, 7; Ellerman, 2005; Bradley, 2007b, 1; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009). Though the particular characteristics of aid-based research will be examined in the latter parts of this chapter, a brief contextualization of the problem is a useful preface in order to gain a better footing with the holistic issues of partnership.

If NSRP programs are considered in terms of equality, an additional layer of complications arises. Birgit Jentsch (2003), in a case study of a UK-Bangladesh research partnership in the health sciences, raises an important distinction regarding the desired or expected goals. She states:

It is interesting that ‘equal partnership’ is not only portrayed as progress in the current state of affairs (and, if it was achieved, in many partnerships probably would be) but as an ultimate goal… More than this, should the ultimate goal of North-South research partnerships really be one of ‘equality’ between the partners (whatever that means in practice), or should we not strive for a situation in which the South can determine their own research priorities on the basis of their ‘realities’? (p. 265-266).

The present study’s literature review reveals that this type of question is widely echoed, though it is often absent from national development agency documents. This line of questioning speaks to the political issues intertwined with development-related research, particularly when Northern governments and agencies fund such initiatives.

For the most part, the literature presents a fundamental assumption that equality in the project is a desired outcome and each side of the linkage should benefit equally from the exercise, particularly when stemming from Northern donors through their line ministries and intermediary agencies. This type of assumption begs two questions: What does equality mean in the context of collaborative research (is it equal or shared responsibility?) and how is this definition altered by the involvement of non-academic development-related actors (specifically, government agencies and ministries tasked with administering bilateral or multilateral research programs)? Differences and tensions in the expected outcomes and goals of NSRPs are not only dependent on how partnerships are constituted at a practical level, through project selection frameworks and management mechanisms, but they are also reliant on how the collaborative program is conceptualized at the outset by the constituent funder and funded actors. Essentially,
is a given partnership implemented as a form of collaborative assistance within discipline-based research endeavors or is it constructed as a development assistance initiative that is meant to be responsive to broader sets of development-related goals and ideals, such as the Millennium Development Goals?

The ideal-type constructed through the following sections engages the first question in order to gain a better understanding of how all sides of the relationship envision equality in collaborative research projects. Equality is a crosscutting theme of the various categorical examinations that occur throughout the construction of the analytic framework. Through this layered deconstruction of NSRP dynamics and structures, a more comprehensive definition and understanding of equality is made possible. As with the ideal-type constructed, this definition is not intended to be a fixed postulate, but is rather meant as a fluid articulation of a more comprehensive understanding of partnership dynamics in donor-funded research projects.

Before engaging with the particularities of the NUFU program, and the exploratory case study of a single research network project, a pre-existing corpus of empirical studies is examined in order to frame the broader phenomenon of NSPRs in an historical light. However, there is an extremely significant limitation in the literature; studies that examine NSRP programs and procedures, situated in both the academic and agency literatures, are almost exclusivity produced by actors situated in the global core or semi-core and are most often directly tied to the funding program in question. This fact is particularly pertinent when discussing issues of equality, for despite the perpetual discussion of ‘both sides’ in the literature, the mediators and arbiters of the sides are predominantly part of the core (note that the author includes himself in this problematic grouping).

Mirroring to some degree the Northern interpretation of Southern development needs, the majority of empirical studies on the NSRP phenomenon have been carried out through either the accumulation and synthesis of Southern voices and perspectives, through ethnographic case study methodologies or through semi-autobiographical reflections on the dynamics and processes in singular NSRP projects. While many of the authors can be labeled as ‘allies’, they still constitute an intermediary layer between the voices of Southern actors and the broader audience; readers remain almost entirely reliant on Northern-actor interpretations of Southern-actor experiences. This dynamic is not highlighted in order to discount the interpretations of Northern researchers, as the author himself is engaged in the process and contends that there is value to be had from such allied case study examinations, it is merely a reminder of the Northern bias that is present in the majority of academic inquiry regarding issues of
development and aid, stretching from the global level of the international aid regime to the local level of qualitative inquiry.

In regard to the question of equality, there is a forceful contention in the academic literature that when the internal logic of an assistance program falls under the umbrella of aid and development-related rationales, the fundamental partnership dynamic of the collaborative research project is altered in a deleterious way, gravitating away from high levels of researcher autonomy and demand-driven research and towards hegemonic systemic reproduction (Cohen & Reif, 1984; Gaillard, 1994; King, 1985, 2004; Samoff, 1996; Ellerman, 2002; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Holdtland & Boeren, 2005; Engle & Keijzer, 2006; Bradley, 2007a, 2007b). The primary manifestation of this inhibiting dynamic comes through various forms of dependency: epistemological, financial or material. Samoff terms this phenomenon the ‘financial-intellectual complex’, whereby the continued reliance on external funds for domestic research eventually homogenizes local perspectives, such that the basic understandings and expectations of those who commissioned the research are reproduced and reified within the local political economy (Samoff, 1996; Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 106).

Cohen and Reif (1984), in their study of North-South interactions in Northern-funded educational research programs, proposed a similar model that they termed ‘contract research’, whereby Northern development agencies, as a byproduct of the tendered research process, employ Northern researchers and higher education institutions as sub-contractors between the donor community and recipient institutions in the South. The selected Southern institutions then carry out agendas constructed by funding agencies or their governments in a mediated manner, unwittingly or disinterestedly building local legitimacy for foreign development concepts and mandates. Under this model, “the talk is of knowing the ‘rules of the game, of ‘winners and losers’, of project teams writing scripts that conform with the guidelines of the funding agency, and of contracting counterpart researchers in the recipient countries to draw them into collaboration” (Cohen & Reif, 1984, 13).

Building on these critical analyses, significant research has been produced that evaluates European NSRP programs and raises issues of fundamental incongruities in the mandates of post-secondary researchers and development organizations (Sorbo, 2001; Thiel, 2004; Bohmert, 2005). Cross-cutting similarities in an array of national jurisdictions indicate that development-related research is continually downgraded as a priority for universities in the face of increased domestic pressure for income-generating and entrepreneurial activities; consistent resistance from government officials who envision academic advice as too inefficient, theoretical, or
ideological; science and development cooperation are too incongruous to synthesize in an economically efficient manner; and the development agendas of many funding agencies are fixed to short-term project cycles, whereas investment in research and other knowledge producing activities operate on long-term cycles.

This model of research collaboration is markedly different from the more empowering ideals espoused by development critics and practitioners, such as Samoff and Carrol (2004), who posit that:

To be something other than foreign aid, a partnership must involve a collaboration that can reasonably be expected to have mutual (though not necessarily identical) benefits, that will contribute to the development of institutional and individual capacities at both institutions, that respects the sovereignty and autonomy of both institutions, and that is itself empowering, enabling both partners to specify goals, chart directions, create appropriate governance strategies, employ effective administrative routines, and focus human, material, and financial resources on high priority objectives (p. 115).

Boeren’s (2005) conclusions echo this contention:

In partnerships, the goals, strategies or values of the organizations working together seldom coincide; the nature and purpose of partnerships are seldom clearly defined…Equality does not mean that they are the same, rather, that they share responsibilities and benefits in a way that supports both organizations…The evaluation of research cooperation programmes clearly indicate that the success of cooperation projects depends to a large extent on true partnership, shared responsibilities and complementary interests on both sides (p. 16).

These concluding analyses, from comprehensive comparative studies of American and European NSRP programs, respectively, reinforce the need for mutuality at both conceptual and operational levels. These need not be directly tied to identical responsibilities at all levels of the partnership, but are meant to support models of shared responsibility and the acknowledgment that engaged actors possess reciprocal rights and obligations throughout the entirety of the research process (Pearson, 1969).

The historical record indicates that autonomous discipline-based research is more often than not subverted in favor of development-related rationales in accordance with the broader agendas of the Northern aid regime (Weiler, 1984; Ellerman, 2002, 2005; Samoff & Carrol, 2004). The aforementioned model of ‘contract research’ results in NSRPs adopting the form of a development assistance project, as opposed to an autonomous disciplinary project, and perpetuates many of the dependency dynamics examined in the second chapter of this study. These critiques have been present in the international development community for close to 40
years and some progress has been made to counteract the negative or inhibiting structural asymmetries associated with Northern-funded NSRPs, both in rhetoric and implementation. The following section problematizes the concept of ownership, a corollary of partnership discourse that similarly became a cornerstone of late-20\textsuperscript{th} century development discourse, as a last preparatory stage before laying-out and examining the particular categories of the ideal-type analytic framework. As will be seen, though the ownership concept is firmly embedded in the mainstream rhetoric of development, there is much debate over the effectiveness of its implementation in both the global development landscape and development-related research programs.

\textit{Interrogating ‘Ownership’}

The concept of ownership is equally intertwined with the dynamics of partnership, and prevalent in development discourse over the latter parts of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century and early 21\textsuperscript{st} century. In response to historical asymmetries in the formulation and implementation of the global aid agenda, the issue of ownership has come to occupy a central place in development-related initiatives and core-periphery relations, particularly in regards to the real world implications of discursive concepts (Escobar, 1984, 1995; Ferguson, 1994; Boas & McNeill, 2004; Cornwall, 2007; Buiter, 2007; Pickard, 2007; Scoones, 2007; Lie 2008). Kenneth King (2004) aptly describes the issue of ownership in aid discourse as follows:

This notion suggests not only that the recipient government should own the aid agenda and thus be in the driver’s seat – a grossly over-used current aid metaphor – but also, and more rarely, that the country should be able to make a substantial contribution towards the financing of the reform agenda, and to its longer term sustainability. In other words, ownership should imply a serious degree of responsibility for implementing and maintaining the agenda (p. 4).

Issues of partnership have increasingly morphed into discussions of ‘national ownership’ and ‘country-led’ or ‘demand-driven’ development (Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Nair & Menon, 2002; King 2004; Holtland & Boeren, 2005; Martens, 2005; Engel & Keijzer, 2006; Bradley, 2007a, 2007b; Buiter, 2007).

Knowledge production, mobilization, management and research collaboration are ideal incubators for discussions of ownership, as they rely heavily on systematizing and negotiating the interactions between groups of actors with varying levels of institutionalized power in order
to produce research and knowledge that is responsive to the needs and demands of less powerful actors within the linkage. Described at the broadest level:

Knowledge production involves two basic processes; namely, first translating local problem definitions to more generalized knowledge, and then translating the results from generalized knowledge back to local contexts, so that it can be matched to local circumstances (Rip, 2001, 14).

However, as Holtland and Boeren (2005) describe in their analysis of European research-based assistance programs, this knowledge production process is not a straightforward and linear process moving from a point of origin to a point of conclusion, as though following a clear scientific method:

In projects, the ideal is that the needs in the South are the starting point for any cooperation and that a Southern organization owns the project; it formulates the objectives and is responsible for the management and organization. In practice, the Northern partner has its own priorities as well, and so does the donor. On top of that we have to deal with the perspectives and interests of ministries, NGOs, students, embassies and a wide range of others. These are all legitimate stakeholders and their ideas have to be taken into consideration; yet simply adding up all priorities and mixing them into a project is not an option. The result would be that nobody owns the project, and that it will have unrealistic objectives and an unworkable approach…The above makes clear that ownership of programmes and projects in the South is a concept with strong ideological connotations which in practice cannot be achieved, only approximated. Co-ownership is the rule rather than the exception. The challenge in any programme or project is to clearly define the co-ownership relations and responsibilities of the stakeholders/partners with the aim of optimizing the effects of the arrangement (p. 13-14; emphasis added).

The current analysis, vis-a-vis the formulation of an ideal-type framework, focuses on the issue of co-ownership in order to establish an open-ended categorization of partnership processes and dynamics that either inhibit or support the ‘optimization’ of the NSRPs. Such a discussion facilitates a better understanding of the negative or restrictive dynamics that must be overcome in order to achieve the elusive concepts of partnership and ownership. Furthermore, the flushing out of the two broader, over-arching concepts presents a more structured frame for the subsequent analysis of the particular component parts, as expressed by the analytic categories.

Beginning with the 1972 OECD Conference of Directors of Research and Training Institutes, there have been concentrated calls from Southern actors for increased autonomy and “mutually beneficial partnerships managed in the South and based on Southern priorities” in the knowledge production and management processes associated with Northern-funded research assistance programs (Amin et al., 1975; as cited in Bradley, 2007b, 1). This was particularly forceful in the Latin American context, where “the top-to-bottom, North-to-South chain of
command of ideas, methods, and strategies in the development field underwent a radical transformation. Other more horizontal, or democratic, models appeared. And Northern agencies that resisted changes found themselves increasingly estranged from their Southern counterparts” (Pickard, 2007, 577). However, the global economic crises of the late 1970s and early 1980s limited this movement from gaining long-term traction, both in Latin America and other industrializing regions of the world, as international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank leveraged the economic crisis into structural conditionalities, particularly as related to higher education (Frank, 1977; Carnoy, 1995; Collier, 2000; Gore, 2000; Mehta, 2001; Klees, 2002; Heyneman, 2003; Ellerman, 2005).

This organizational tension has led some analysts to re-evaluate how development agencies engage in the process of North-South linkages, in order to more realistically frame agenda-setting and decision-making at the project level. Martens (2005) argues:

The main role of aid agencies is to solve the ownership problem that is caused by the broken feedback loop in foreign aid. They do this through mediation between donors’ and recipients’ interests, or preferences…Mediation implies that there is no full ownership by either the donor or the recipient. In most cases, ownership will be partial and shared in accordance with an agreed contract: both donor and recipient obtain a partial fulfillment of their preferences (p. 644).

This interpretation is based on the idea that in the context of research partnerships, characterized by non-linear, diffuse creative processes, development agencies are better suited to create a structure that supports equal exchange between individuals with mutual interest then for establishing fixed processes with specific outcomes-based indicators.

**Analytical Framework for North-South Research Partnerships (NSRPs)**

This study implements an ideal-type framework in order to analyze the rationales that the NUFU program uses to conceptualize and implement its research linkage program, with a particular focus on the South-South component of the program’s modality. The construction of the ideal-type is predicated on the assumption that there is a significant enough corpus of literature examining NSRPs and the dynamics of donor-funded ‘partnerships’ so as to enable the construction of functional, yet primarily representational, categorical models aimed at facilitating a comparative mechanism that is both general and cohesive in nature and definition. The explicit intention of this construction is to establish an analytical framework for critically evaluating the historical conditions and contexts of NSRPs considered broadly, as well as
possible alternatives for more responsive, effective, and mutually fulfilling linkage modalities. The ideal-type construction depicts an historical legacy of restrictive and asymmetrical linkage modalities that have offered limited spaces for locally responsive researcher-driven epistemological communities within the higher education institutions of the global periphery, specifically SSA in the scope of this study. The perpetuation of dependency relations through an array of systemic circumstances and conditions ultimately undermines the ‘collaborative’ and ‘partnership’ labels affixed to many NSRP programs. Through an examination of project and program selection processes and criteria, resource and knowledge management dynamics, agenda-setting structures and decision-making processes, and policies in support of institutional and individual sustainability, the literature review portrays a situation that has made little progress over the last 40 years of study and analysis, and that can be characterized as highly coercive.

As outlined in the second chapter of the study, linkages between higher education actors in the global core and the global periphery have historically been predicated on the political and economic concerns of a limited range of core actors. Higher education in the colonial territories was not supported as an inherent public good, but was operationalized as a medium for extending dominant economic structures and ideologies throughout the global periphery, at both institutional and individual levels. While the latter half of the 20th century witnessed a softening of such rationales, at least at the discursive level, developmentalist initiatives continued to operate within a predominantly Realist political economy; for the most part, nation-states engaged within the international arena, particularly bilateral relations, in order to promote domestic priorities. This interpretation is not meant as a critique, but merely a re-stating of the manner that mainstream international relations theories continue to analyze the policies and engagement of national actors within international cooperation; governments, including line ministries and official agencies, are explicitly tasked with promoting the interests of their domestic constituents, both private and public.

The implication of this for NSRP programs and structures is a persistent pressure from domestic actors to fund programs that will not only support technical development in peripheral jurisdictions, but that will enhance domestic jurisdictions in some explicit way. Development-related programs have not merely been perceived as outward-looking mechanisms of international support, but have historically been viewed as a means of extending domestic influence and opportunities in the foreign political and economic sectors, particularly through the training of foreign scholars in dominant systems of thought, systemic tying of budgetary
support to domestic enterprises, and leveraging peripheral knowledge in international patenting and intellectual property systems (Morgenthau, 1948; Mazrui, 1975; Weiler, 1984). As such, Northern research funding agencies must be considered as more than mere disciplinary experts; they are integral participants in what Tvedt (2007) refers to as the Southern Political System, a sub-system of Northern domestic political systems that recognize and support the political and economic capital engendered through cross-national interactions with the nations of the global South (Tvedt, 2007, 619-620). The following sections synthesize the argumentation and evidence within the NSRP literature, both academic and government, in order to present an interpretive framework of the core thematic categories relating to core-periphery power dynamics within research linkage programs. Essentially, the following categories are suggested as integral analytic components in potential evaluations of NSRP programs or projects, though open and flexible to future re-interpretation and modification.

**Program and Project Selection Criteria and Processes**

Based on the qualitative research triangulated during the course of this study, the most determinant, and potentially problematic, elements of any development-related donor-funded activity, regardless of the sector, are the methods, rationales and criteria used to select and fund program-level initiatives and individual projects within such programs. These criteria prioritize, privilege and/or exclude particular research themes, geographical jurisdictions, participant actors, research methodologies, and linkage mediums, as well as determine the procedures involved in reviewing, validating, selecting, monitoring and evaluating research proposals, either though open-ended requests for proposals or targeted thematic calls. While there have been significant rhetorical shifts in the discourse of development over the last twenty years, the empirical record indicates that these shifts have rarely been matched by substantive alterations in the core structural dynamics of the international aid architecture (Jones, 1997; Klees, 2002; Samoff and Carrol, 2004; Ellerman, 2005). North-South research linkage programs have long suffered from structural and conceptual limitations for two primary means: top-down program prescriptions and asymmetrical proposal evaluation systems. This section interrogates how program and project programming and selection mechanisms have historically been implemented in NSRPs, and compare this record with positive alternatives as expressed by actors engaged in NSRP activities.
Development-related funding agencies are predominantly arms-length intermediary agencies of national political systems. This has historically placed such organizations in the difficult position of simultaneously acting as both a disciplinary entity, supporting high-quality research and on-the-ground interventions intended to be responsive to local demands and subject matter expertise and experience, and as a politicized organization, mediating and implementing the interests and preferences of donor governments in relation to foreign recipients (Martens, 2005, 644). However, unlike in domestic settings, there is no democratic feedback loop when it comes to international assistance; foreign nationals cannot participate in a meaningful democratic process to influence or determine the scope and means of donor initiatives. As a result, “only donors have political leverage over the decision-making process” in development-related aid (ibid, 644). Since funding agencies have historically engaged in international development-related activities in accordance with specific ideological predispositions regarding the foci and desired outcome of such activities, as outlined in the second chapter of this study, it is the mandate of the intermediary agencies to determine how best to operationalize and interpret domestic political agendas and ideas, as well as the concomitant spending decisions, in a productive, efficient and responsible manner.

Historically, the productivity, efficiency and responsibility of a development-related initiative, and the operational definitions of such terms in any given initiative, have been determined and evaluated by the funding agency, entrenching the evaluative feedback process in the hands of domestic actors (Bradley, 2007a, 2007b). Essentially, from the outset of the entire process, the structural dynamics of North-South linkages have been embedded in systems that place political actors in key positions of almost unquestionable power, with development-related intermediaries predominantly relegated to positions of management and administration. This structural asymmetry has predominated in NSRPs over the last 40 years, acknowledged by both academics (Cohen & Reif, 1984; King, 1985; Gaillard, 1994, 54-56; Maina-Ahlberg, 1997, 1233; Baud, 2001, 156-157; Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 150; Bradley, 2007a, 2007b) and finding agencies (Olsson, 1992; Bhagvan, 1992; Bautista et al., 2001, 12; KFPE, 2005, 7-15).

While the structural asymmetry of program and project selection processes is relatively clear at the conceptual level, the procedural particularities require elucidation in order to outline and detail how asymmetries in structural power operate across NSRP programs. Bradley (2007a, 2007b) concludes in her survey of NSRP programs and agenda criteria:

The literature on North-South research cooperation often laments the continued domination of collaborative agendas by the interests of Northern donors and
scholars, and almost invariably calls for more equitable Southern engagement in agenda-setting processes. Yet the implications of this statement and the obstacles to its realization are rarely examined in detail (Bradley, 2007b, 1).

Recognizing that funding agencies operate in accordance with particular contextual determinants, particular in relation to the motivations of sponsoring governments for supporting development-related programs, the empirical record is robust enough to draw commonalities from the array of particularities, such that project and program selection criteria and systems represent the major mechanisms for core actors to extend influence and/or control over research processes in recipient institutions and jurisdictions and for perpetuating general asymmetries in core-periphery relations.

Donor-driven or supply-driven approaches, characterized by the top-down pre-determination of research topics and requirements, often focus on legitimizing and prioritizing priorities that are more beneficial to supply side participants, and are less concerned with responding to local institutional needs, such as developing indigenous researchers, methodologies, and goals (Samoff, 1999; Baud, 2001). In one of the earliest academic publications systematically examining the NSPR phenomena, Kenneth King (1985) contended:

> It should be noted that the nature of most aid projects in education determines the kind of collaborative research that is carried out. Which is to say that the research is dependent on the nature of the aid project rather than being an autonomous disciplinary project (p. 183).

Despite consistent evaluation findings that “projects are most successful when they fit organically in the development path of the recipient” (Holtland & Boeren, 2005, 6), and that “programmes designed to enhance research capacity must build on existing situations in the country concerned and take the different levels of a national research system into account in a coherent manner to be effective” (Baud, 2001, 157), the agenda-setting process has remained a core coercive mechanism in NSRP programming over the last 40 years.

In a study examining major bilateral donor activities in science and technology partnerships, Gaillard (1994) argued that despite the many benefits accrued by Southern recipients, the focus of research proposals varied greatly between Northern and Southern researchers, with Northern researchers focusing on particular tropical diseases, while Southern researchers focused on preventative medicines and broader health system design (p. 56). As such, Gaillard recommended that “project proposals should, whenever possible, be drafted jointly, and each partner should be associated as much as possible to the important decisions which need to be taken” (ibid, 35).
In a comprehensive study of agenda-setting processes in donor-funded NSRP programs, Meggan Bradley (2007b) states:

Southern researchers’ approaches to collaborative agenda-setting are shaped by the structure of the development research funding system, in which partnerships are the primary funding modality; financing is devoted to short-term projects, rather than long-term core support; and donors have predefined substantive interests, which change often enough to be labeled “flavors of the month” by jaded Southern researchers (p. 18).

Bradley offers two major concluding arguments: first, “donor policies definitively shape agenda-setting processes, chiefly by requiring Southern researchers to partner with Northern counterparts in order to receive support” (ibid, iv) and second, “many of the researchers I interviewed stressed the difficulty of crafting agendas that could meet donors’ demands for concrete and ideally immediate results in terms of poverty alleviation” (ibid, 18). These conclusions are representative of a wider body of literature that highlights pre-project evaluative structures and criteria as central to the establishment of equitable, demand-driven programming, such that the landscape of NSRP programs is a ‘buyer’s market’ that is almost entirely reliant on the goals and expectations of Northern actors, particularly the government-funded intermediary agencies (Castillo, 1997; Crossley & Holmes, 2001; Vehlo, 2002; Holdtland, 2005; Gordon, 2005; Bradley, 2007a, 2007b).

There is a robust corpus of critical literature that examines individual donor-funded programs and argues that donor ideology has historically driven NSRP programming, rather than the quality of disciplinary research. In a review of European government-funded NSRP programs, Holtland and Boeren (2005) contend:

One consistent finding of evaluations is that projects are most successful when they fit organically in the development path of the recipient. This means that a lot of attention should be paid to the identification and formulation of projects and the fact that programmes should be able to design ‘tailor made’ solutions to specific needs or types of assistance that match with the existing capacities of the institute. Unfortunately few programmes offer such flexibility (p. 6).

Boeren (2005) elaborates in a separate study: “in most programmes, such operation measures to increase Southern ownership at the programme and project levels are lacking, despite the fact that these programmes advocate a demand-driven approach and ownership in the South” (p. 6). In an examination of American NSRP programs, Samoff and Carrol (2004) come to a similar conclusion:

The U.S. partner receives most of the money; the availability and use of resources are far from transparent; the U.S. partner makes or controls the
principal decisions, from conception through design and implementation; the African partner has little say over starting, transition, and ending points; curricular and pedagogical innovations originate in the U.S. and are inappropriate to the African setting; the locus of decision-making renders the partnership disempowering and unsustainable; partnerships are extractive (p. 147).

Crossley and Holmes (2001) similarly contend that the British Department for International Development (DFID) operates under strict supply-side rationales when it comes to research support in Southern jurisdictions:

(Support) remains conditional on potential partners having a ‘clear commitment’ to meeting the International Development Goals for education… This latter example of predetermined conditions for partnership illustrates the danger that potential partners in the South could remain excluded from defining the terms of 'partnership' itself. If partnerships are conceived and initiated primarily by Northern agencies and personnel then relationships are likely to be structured according to existing power relations (p. 401).

Rew argues that the DFID thematic agenda that has focused on poverty-reduction through the Millennium Development Goals is emblematic of a wider fundamental reluctance to relinquish substantive control over NSRPs projects and program goals:

Another disincentive concerns the lack of in-country acceptance of DFID priorities. Partly, there are few in-country incentives for local researchers to conduct poverty focused research; partly, there is a lack of consistent access to DFID views and programmes and this leads to intellectual and emotional distance from the supposedly collaborative agenda (Rew; as cited in Surr et al., 2001).

It should be noted that in the case of DFID, the 2002 Development Act saw a radical shift in development-related research policy, untying grants from a requirement to have British researchers involved in any project, with DFID officials remarking on the “morally dubious” nature of tied NSRPs (Bradley, 2007b, 10).

The above arguments and conclusions regarding the impact that funding agency policies, and the restrictions that follow, are echoed in documents produced by a number of Northern intermediary agencies. A 2001 conference sponsored by the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) examined the problem of building research capacity for development-related issues in both the North and South by drawing on experienced NSRP actors from various regions of the world. The proceedings produced a series of evaluations regarding different funding schemes and modalities (KFPE, 2001). One of the general conclusions was that “the groups found that priority setting in building research capacity
cannot just be left to traditional social processes within the academic world dominated by the North” (KFPE, 2001, 28; emphasis added). KFPE came to a similar conclusion in its 2005 review of NSRP program selection processes, stating that “current processes to select research projects and programmes for funding are strongly influenced by themes and institutions that mainly reflect the priorities of the so-called ‘North’” (KFPE, 2005, 7). In response to these critiques, KFPE created an 11 principle framework for establishing equitable NSRPs, with four of these principles related to program and project selection processes: decide on objectives together, build up mutual trust, share responsibility and create transparency (ibid, 14). While these principles are so general that they appear to fall under some of the aforementioned critiques of overly broad development discourse (Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Cornwall, 2007), the KFPE studies’ claim that the efficacy of Northern-funded research linkages is directly linked to the reproduction of an “academic world dominated by the North” is an insightful admission, and is in line with the conceptual framework outlined in the second chapter of this study.

Three intermediary bodies of the Dutch government have produced a number of critical evaluations of NSPR programming over the past 15 years that come to similar conclusions. These studies were produced by The Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO), the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS) and the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC). A 2006 desk review that examined RAWOO’s NSRP conceptualization, preparation and design processes highlighted a number of relevant lessons. It was claimed that “a majority of the Dutch mainstream research institutions and researchers were not interested in linking their funding to a Southern agenda” (Engel and Keijzer, 2006, 16), with one Dutch researcher asking, “do we now have to do the research that they define? It may not even be interesting or challenging to us” (ibid, 12). The 2006 evaluation concluded:

The net result (of Dutch NSRPs) was that eventually, with few exceptions, the researchers who continued on the programmes were development researchers rather than mainstream researchers from the Netherlands…So, if the aim of a North-South research partnership is also for the Southern partners to access research on developments in the Netherlands, to only include development researchers and their institutions doesn’t necessarily suffice (ibid, 18-19).

The authors further concluded that “with very few exceptions, Dutch mainstream research financing institutions proved rather inflexible in finding ways to join hands with their Southern counterparts on developing a country-led research agenda, to the point that they were forced to deliver or withdraw” (ibid, 21-22).
This evaluation builds on similar findings from a 2001 review of the RAWOO program, based on a cross-analysis of select case studies, which found considerable asymmetries in the structural framework of the program. The study concluded:

(NSPRs) cannot help but be out of balance from the start...(Northern partners) even describe what the impact of cooperation will be on local and national research institutions, and they define what such concepts as ‘participation’, ‘ownership’, ‘partnership’, and ‘quality’ will mean in practice. Southern partners, on the other hand, believe they have no alternative but to accept the role that is being offered (RAWOO, 2001, 5).

These points were further elaborated:

There are still many research cooperation projects where the role of the South is limited to collecting data on phenomena in the South…The Northern partners interpret the data that was collected, produce the theories, disseminate the results, design the policies and draw the lessons, and package the research results for the policymakers, stakeholders and scholars (RAWOO, 2001, 25).

The study also made a series of interesting comments on the nature of the international academic order and its impact on development-related research, a topic that is of central interest to this study and that will be investigated in more detail further on (ibid, 7-10). The authors of the report argue that the mainstream international academic regime is grounded in very particular hierarchies of knowledge, hierarchies that evaluate the practically-oriented, applied research often produced by NSRP projects as significantly less prestigious to Dutch scholars. As a result, the international academic system, specifically the dominance of core-dominated research agendas and epistemological paradigms therein, directly contributes to the artificial suppression of research interests and priorities within the project selection processes of intermediary funding agencies (ibid, 7-9).

Canada’s major NSRP program offers similar critiques regarding some of its programming. The University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD) program undertook a program evaluation in 2007 that raised concerns similar to those found in the above literature. The most striking of these conclusions is as follows:

There are still proposals whose vision is not shared between partners, where the Canadian Institute has a directive rather than a participatory approach and where developing country partners do not express themselves or understand the Program well enough to state their real needs and the difficulties they foresee (CIDA, 2007, 9).

The evaluation highlighted that the UPCD program retains many legacies of the 1980s and 1990s linear transfer paradigm: the program is conceptualized through a primarily supply-driven
framework, the legal agreements are predominantly based in Canadian Institutions, and projects are selected through the Canadian Institutions with minimal involvement from Southern actors (ibid, 9). This is not to say that there are not individual projects that are characterized by mutuality, respect and positive partnership dynamics, but rather, these conclusions imply that the overall structure of the UPCD program is constituted in such a way that equitable partnerships are not systematically supported through the project selection and design process (ibid, 9-10). Perhaps as a result of this evaluation, but most likely due to other political and economic factors, the UPCD program was shelved for restructuring in 2009 and the form of the next iteration of the program has yet to be determined.

The above literature indicates a long-standing awareness of the impact that structural asymmetries in NSRP project selection processes have on the entirety of the research linkage. This awareness appears to be growing in the early years of the 21st century, particularly within evaluations produced or sponsored by funding agencies. However, it should be asked what the implications of these dynamics are in terms of the NSRP life cycle, beyond surface level critiques of ‘asymmetry’? What is so detrimental about a supply-driven development research process that has forced the hands of Northern agencies to shift program-level policies towards greater Southern inclusion and accountability? In conjunction with critical analyses of foreign intervention and influence in post-colonial Africa and critical IPE arguments regarding the centrality of knowledge in the perpetuation of a global political system that marginalizes traditionally peripheral countries, critiques aimed at the criteria and conditions of donor support for supposedly Southern-driven research programs directly intersects with issues of power in the global political and economic arenas. The continued dominance of core agendas in the research activities of peripheral higher education institutions reflects the perpetuation of systemic dependencies that have been articulated within the field of comparative and international education studies for almost 40 years (Carnoy, 1974; Mazrui, 1975; Fuller, 1991; Arnove et al., 1992).

As the global economy continually shifts towards knowledge-based activities, the ability of foreign actors to determine the scope and construction of both knowledge and research, particularly vis-a-vis international development frameworks and agendas, will increasingly become an issue of paramount importance for peripheral actors as they work towards meaningful social and economic de-linking, sustainability, and autonomy (King, 2004, 3). In the African context, the imposition of external institutional arrangements, both pre- and post-colonization, has led to continual economic and political instability, and the perpetuation of
dependent and coercive relationships. As Samoff and Carrol (2004) contend, “research, too, has become more cautious than critical. That is especially so for research on education, which has become inextricably intertwined with the needs, interests, and preferences of external funding and technical assistance agencies” (p. 94). The roots of this conservatism appear firmly embedded in the agendas supported by Northern actors and implemented through their intermediary agencies and the associated programs. If development-related research in African universities is operating on borrowed agendas and through borrowed frameworks, the efficacy of research addressing cultural and regionally specific issues remains highly questionable (Hountoundji, 1995; as cited in Box, 2001, 15).

Resource management

Resource management frameworks and structures are directly related to the complexities of agenda setting and project selection processes in NSRP programs, primarily in terms of the administrative control over the management of financial resources, but also with regard to the procurement and distribution of hardware and technological software. In the scope of this study, resource management refers both to the initial resource base for NSRP programs and projects and to the institutionalized system of distributing and managing resources throughout the life cycle of a project, particularly in terms of the structural framework and transparency of the distribution system. Studies from both academic (Samoff, 1996; Tilak, 2001; Vehlo, 2002; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Pound & Adolph, 2005; Eduards, 2006, 16; Hatton & Schroeder, 2007) and development agency sectors (RAWOO, 1995, 2001, 2003; SIDA, 2004, 2005, 2006b, 2007; KFPE, 1998, 2001, 2005; CIDA, 2007; NORAD, 1995) have highlighted the issue of resource control and ownership as a central problem in the perpetuation of power imbalances in favor of core actors. While resource management controversies and conflicts are noted as a significant limiting factor in relation to project and program efficacy and sustainability, the erosion of trust and the potential for negative inter-personal dynamics resulting from tensions over resources is highlighted as a potentially more damaging outcome stemming from this issue. This sub-section documents some of the pressing concerns raised in the literature and examines their impact on the overall structure of NSRP programs and projects.

The issue of resource management, particularly in light of the significant resource dependency dynamics that have historically impacted relations between the various
constructions of the world-system framework (North-South, center-periphery and colonizer-colonized), is directly linked to the aforementioned critiques of partnership and ownership in NSRP activities and modalities. While some NSRP models have attempted to challenge or redress the resource dependency dynamic, most notably the Scandinavian countries, the majority of Northern-funded research linkage programs have historically operated on a traditional linear resource transfer model that places control in the hands of Northern actors and institutions (Boeren, 2005). According to this archetypal model, institutions situated in the funding jurisdiction predominantly act as the incubators and gatekeepers of individual project resources, tasked as intermediary bodies by Northern agencies, and are given primary management and administrative responsibilities for the accounting, allocation, and access of project resources for all involved actors, both Northern and Southern (Bautista et al., 2001, 8; Boeren, 2005, 15).

Tied to the gatekeeping functions is the use of conditionalities in the formal contracts that bind funding agencies and their recipients. The mantra of conditionalities in NSRP programs, and its pervasive use as a discursive tool in policy construction, has diminished since the 1980s and 1990s, primarily in response to significant failures in World Bank and IMF policies that were characterized by extensive conditionalities and the dominance of Washington Consensus development economics (Bennell, 1996a; Jones, 1992, 1997, 2002; Collier, 2000; Samoff & Carrol 2004; Pound & Adolph, 2005; Ellerman, 2005). However, despite ample evidence and critique that conditionalities contradict and undermine autonomous development, particularly in the education sector, (Escobar, 1995; Sen, 1999; Gore, 2000; Klees, 2002; Kanbur, 2001; Hickling-Hudson, 2002; Ellerman, 2003; King & McGrath, 2004; Collier, 2000), conditionalities remain a key structural component in many donor policies and programs, though the discourse has often shifted to obfuscate such measures.

As an alternative to formal conditions within programs that are meant to operate as partnerships, Northern agencies have increasingly relied on commission-based research in order to directly recruit Southern researchers and circumvent formal institutional linkages and the evaluative components therein (Buchert & King, 1996; Samoff & Carrol, 2004). Both of these models are examined in the following section in order to understand the dominant trends in North-South research financing and to explicate the inhibiting influence that imbalanced resource management processes have on the creation of autonomous research activities in the global periphery. These limitations are tied directly to the program and project selection
asymmetries outlined above; donor selection criteria are a primary avenue used to determine the structure and scope of funding opportunities.

The system of commissioned research that has evolved over the latter part of the 20th century has produced extremely deleterious consequences for peripheral research systems and epistemic communities, consequences that can be extended to all forms of core-periphery research linkage programs. According to research conducted by Samoff (1996), a pervasive financial-intellectual complex has historically dominated education-related donor programming and policies. The effects of this complex were noted as early as the 1980s, whereby David Court (1983) produced a comprehensive analysis of the East African higher education sector:

In a context like the Kenyan one, however, there are dangers in a situation where research is perceived as justified exclusively in terms of its problem-solving capability. One is the risk of diminished credibility arising from the fact that it cannot provide the ‘developmental answers’ that may be expected. A second is the risk of extinguishing other types of research, e.g., basic and theoretical work, on which the ultimate strength of the educational profession depends (p. 182).

According to this line of argumentation, the consultancy-based research model not only discoutrages certain types of research, but it significantly skews the holistic development of an institutions’ research culture; it limits the training of Masters and Doctoral students, as these initiatives take more time and are heavily resource intensive, and it supports the notion that consultancy reports are more valuable resources than basic research or publications in peer review journals, despite the former requiring extensive time and resource investments with limited immediate financial pay-offs (King, 1985, 1990, 2009; Samoff, 1999b).

This financial-intellectual complex has resulted in the institutionalized blurring between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ actors and has produced knowledge that often homogenizes local perspectives in line with donor ideologies through the adoption of ‘universal’ development-related perspectives and conclusions within the domestic spheres of Southern actors (Samoff, 1996). The outcome of this type of commissioned research is often a search by Northern agencies to confirm pre-determined ideas or courses of action (King, 1990, 48). For example, King and McGrath (2004) note that in the development of DFID’s Target Strategy Papers in the early 2000s, 84% of the bibliographical research resources were agency-commissioned work (p. 119). This phenomenon will be expounded upon in the section on knowledge management, but for the sake of this section it is sufficient to highlight that Northern development-related research linkage programs do not operate in isolation from domestic political and economic pressures, and that the motivation for many of these NSRPs remain questionable, resulting in the
need for a constant interrogation of what ‘partnership’ means in any given project in terms of
the underlying economic framework.

The tenor, rationales and objectives of this type of arms-length intervention in Southern
research systems has fluctuated over the last twenty years, adopting more nuanced and sensitive
discursive elements in an effort to appease concerned stakeholders and build political capital
within an increasingly skeptical global periphery, but the structure and impact have remained
markedly similar (Steiner-Khamsi, 2009). Samoff and Carrol (2004) argue:

The near invisibility of this path of influence renders it particularly powerful. The
funding agencies need no longer announce imperiously what is to be done. Rather, they attach their funding to certain strategies or research findings that
they regard as relevant and solid. Notwithstanding the efforts of some researchers
to adopt a critical posture, the research overall presents a strikingly coherent and
self-reinforcing picture. Some questions simply never get asked (p. 107; emphasis
added).

The sentiment of this analysis is taken a step further by a Southern researcher at the 2001 KFPE
conference on NSRPs:

Doing research too often means conforming to a westernized model of producing
knowledge and technology. I would say very simply that when you, western
donors, talk about strengthening my capacity, I feel forced to become like you:
your science, your culture, your money, your language (a text cannot be scientific
if it is not written in English), your values, your cosmology, your rituals, and so
on (KFPE, 2001, 40).

As outlined in the above quotations, issues of resource dependency tie directly with the
discourse of project ownership; if Southern actors are limited from controlling and managing
project funds, are not fully integrated into decision-making processes relating to resources, and
are forced to turn to Northern gatekeepers for access, not only for research activities but for
project-related expenses, such as travel, administrative support, basic infrastructure and
hardware, to what extent can Southern researchers reasonably be expected to have significant
autonomy within research projects as a whole?

Gordon (2005) elaborates upon this point in a case study of higher education institutions
in Ghana, stating, “donors or external university ‘partners’ now determine activities, reporting
cycles and procedures, negotiate and control directly projects or individual units, and in general
interfere and limit the autonomy of the institute and their capacity to establish priorities” (p. 6).

The broader literature, both academic and agency-based, supports the general conclusion drawn
from individual case studies such as Gordon’s, and contend that it is only within the last 10
years that an increased number of donor agencies have explicitly acknowledged the role that
financial instruments play in perpetuating systemic inequalities in NSRP programs (Baud, 2001, 157).

Dating back to the early 1980s, and growing incrementally since that period, the academic literature has focused on deconstructing the impact that financial dependency has had on higher education and research activities in Southern institutions (Court, 1983; Cohen & Reif, 1984; King, 1985; Weiler, 1978, 1983, 1984). Weiler was one of the early prominent analysts to explicitly draw a correlation between external financing of Southern education systems and research activities with the perpetuation of foreign-influenced, or more drastically, foreign-determined, national policies and programs in Southern states (Weiler, 1978, 195-196). He argued, “the challenge of building independent capacity is wider than just research and development and includes all those areas in the formulation and implementation of educational policy where there has been, and continues to be, a heavy presence of foreign personnel, models and materials” (ibid, 196). King (1985) was equally skeptical of foreign assistance to Southern research, positing, “in some cases this produces a direct conflict between the researcher’s pursuit of his academic discipline and his participation in contracted evaluation research, regardless of topic…cooperation is essentially about Northern influence on the South” (pp. 185-7). These dynamics have been maintained, relatively unchallenged, in the form of a ‘buyer’s market’ for NSRPs through to the late 1990s and early 21st century (Hirji, 1990; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Holtland & Boeren, 2005; Pound & Adolph, 2005, 9-10; Bradley, 2007b, 2; Hatton & Schroeder, 2007, 157; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007, 171).

The asymmetry in resource management and the dependent financial nature of NSRP programs and projects has resulted in a number of significant procedural and conceptual limitations in research linkage programs. First, the nature of research projects and the mandate of NSRP programs are often directly tied to fluctuations in the political and economic systems of the funding nation, fluctuations that operate within short-term frameworks that seek to appease domestic constituents within limited political and economic cycles rather than build long-term, sustainable programs within the recipient nation (McGrath, 1998; Box, 1999; Boeren, 2004; Bohmert, 2005, 2-3; Holtland & Boeren, 2005, 4). Additionally, some critics contend that funding policies and requirements are based on political desirability or official doctrines rather than empirical study on the effectiveness of development-oriented research programs (Roe, 1991; Baumann, 1999; Box, 1999; Ellerman, 2004). Box (1999) concludes, “donor policies (on development-related research) cannot be based on the results of empirical
research, because such results simply do not exist” (p. 30). As a result, “reality is then shaped according to the wishes of the funding agency, which are all powerful” (ibid, 30).

A consequence of the empirical vacuum is that research priorities are apt to change rapidly, stunting the life cycle of research projects or disrupting the continuity in long-term capacity building programs (KFPE, 2001, 32-33, 2005, 7-11, 34-35; Bradley, 2007b, 15-18). This problem is referred to in evaluations of donor-funded programs by both external (Court, 1983; Ilsoe, 2001; Tilak, 2001; Vehlo, 2002; Eduards, 2006, 16) and internal (KFPE, 2005; Engle & Keijzer, 2006) analyses. However, given the relative permanence of such dynamics in the evaluative record, and the frequency with which the same agencies repeat similar findings, little progress appears to have been made across the general NSRP landscape in redressing these issues. Mainstream models appear to be just as entrenched as they were 40 years ago.

A second issue tied to resource ownership is the limited empowerment of peripheral actors, and more poignantly, the establishment of hierarchical relationships stemming from resource dependencies. Inequitable resource management frameworks grounded in gatekeeping mechanisms are commonly noted as stunting research productivity, either through an absence of funds or through the creation of cadres of recipient partners who willingly remain submissive in regards to issues of planning, priorities and methodological standards in order to assure the fluidity of resource flows (Rakowski, 1993; Gaillard, 1994; Chambers, 1997; Aviles, 2001; Jentsch & Pilley, 2003; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007). These problems are perpetuated by programs that give Northern institutions an imbalanced share of project resources, since such practices seemingly incentivize Northern actors who are more interested in their own research than in a holistic research partnership rooted in capacity building modalities. Samoff and Carrol (2004) note that this is the prevalent dynamic in the majority of American cases examined by their study:

The U.S. partner receives most of the money; the availability and use of resources are far from transparent; the U.S. partner makes or controls the principal decisions, from conception through design and implementation; the African partner has little say over starting, transition, and ending points; curricular and pedagogical innovations originate in the U.S. and are inappropriate to the African setting; the locus of decision-making renders the partnership disempowering and unsustainable; partnerships are extractive, with information, knowledge, and often personnel generally moving from Africa to the U.S., primarily to the benefit of the U.S.; books, equipment, and other materials sent to Africa are often outdated or unsuitable for the African context (p. 147).
These issues lead to the characterization of Southern researchers as little more than local data collectors or local legitimizers for the presence of Northern actors (Gaillard, 1994, 57; Maina-Ahlbert et al., 1997, 1233; KFPE, 2001; RAWOO, 2001, 5, 26; Tedrow & Mabokela, 2007; Buiter, 2007) or as being removed from decision-making processes when it comes to resource allocation and budget construction (SIDA, 2007, 21; Pound & Adolph, 2005, 9) As Pound and Adolph (2005) conclude in their evaluation of DFID programming, “management of the flow of funds will be as important as the level of funding, so that planned activities are not interrupted and partners disillusioned” (p. 9).

A third tension, and perhaps the most significant to the issue of development-related research and capacity building in peripheral institutions, is the finding that donor funding tied to NSRPs with extensive conditionalities or through consultancy programs directly and indirectly disrupts the cohesive development of locally-responsive demand-driven research cultures in recipient institutions by incentivizing competitive, entrepreneurial behaviour and exogenous research priorities (Court, 1983; Smillie, 1995; Samoff, 1996; Castillo, 1997; Hailey, 2000; Costello & Zumla, 2000; KFPE 2001; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; King, 2004; SIDA, 2005, 2007; Morse & McNamara, 2006). NSRP programs that inhibit the creation of coherent institution-wide research agendas and institutional capacity building processes directly undermine many of the goals that most NSRP programs claim to espouse as central to their mandates, such as capacity building, doctoral training, long-term systemic planning, and a co-operative research culture both within an institution and between counterpart institutions. Given that individual researchers can be paid the equivalent of one month’s salary for a single day of consultancy work, it is inevitable that many researchers will focus their energy on obtaining such contracts (KFPE, 2001, 53).

This difficulty is particularly relevant in NSRP programs that utilize joint-financing models to support project-based linkages, as opposed to institutional capacity building initiatives, whereby ownership of the program is more often claimed by actors below the level of the institution (Boeren, 2004, 4). Samoff and Carrol (2004) conclude that these types of arrangements create internal divisions within institutions and amongst researchers, “every department searches actively for partnerships with overseas universities. Dependence on these foreign links becomes endemic (see Hirji, 1990), and the result may be a lack of parity within the institution that does not necessarily reflect its overall priorities or those of the national government” (p. 152). While competitive financing and grant allocation is often a desirable quality assurance mechanism in funding frameworks, the deleterious effects of such schemes
within under-resourced institutions have a much greater impact than merely creating a cadre of ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’.

In a study of NSRP processes, Tilak (2004) presents a comprehensive list of how international research partnerships distort national research landscapes to the detriment of sustainable development, articulating four negative outcomes of NSRPs. First, in relation to the nature and value of domestic research systems, NSRPs can displace public funding for research; second, they can set new research agendas that may operate on shorter funding cycles and may be more volatile due to shifting international development agendas, resulting in research that may not be in the best long-term interests of the recipient jurisdiction or institutions, that may eschew projects with longer life cycles, or that may decrease the amount of funds directed towards building of sustainable capacities in recipient institutions; third, they are capable of diminishing the value of domestic research through a number of means, either through references to foreign ideas and methodologies or through the devaluation of local knowledges; and finally, NSRPs may undermine the overall research paradigm such that research may no longer be associated with the creation of conceptual knowledge or the funding of basic research; it may be more concerned with pragmatic aspects of feasibility and short-term issues. This undermines the long-term productivity of a research system, particularly in an era characterized by the need to integrate into a global knowledge economy that sees innovation and new knowledge as the most important forms of intellectual capital.

**Project Agenda-Setting Processes**

The structural issues related to program orientation, project selection, and both knowledge and resource management manifest in practice through decision-making and agenda-setting processes and tensions within individual NSRP projects. The aforementioned structural dynamics set the frame for how individuals interact within a given project. However, this is not a fatally deterministic conclusion, for the primary mechanism of a successful project, repeatedly raised throughout the literature, is the inter-personal relationship between project leaders and their research teams; if trust is established at an early stage, the likelihood of success is significantly higher, regardless of the structural limitations in place. The following section concludes that despite the wide-spread acknowledgement that transparent and trusting partnership relationships are the key to productive, efficient, and equitable NSRPs, creating an
environment that supports such positive relationships continues to be a challenge for most programs, and is highly reliant on an array of structural and contextual variables.

The most significant variable to equitable decision-making and agenda-setting structures is the agency of participating actors, specifically individual researchers involved at the project level. While the structures in place determine many of the central parameters for NSRP projects, the construction of the research agenda within a particular project occurs at the level of individuals and, for the most part, agenda-setting processes are structured in such a way that both sides of the linkage are expected to contribute to the overall design. The question that drives this section is whether expectations are matched by capability, whether peripheral actors are invested with the agency to influence a project’s research agenda? This problem has two sides; a drive from funding agencies to determine research agendas based on their own expectations or conceptions of valid and useful knowledge, and a drive from a multiplicity of Southern actors (researchers, institutional administrators, government agencies, and local stakeholders) to establish their own priorities in the research projects.

The former of the two issues has already been examined to a great extent in the above sections; Northern actors are empowered by the leverage they possess over project resources, as well as by the privileged position of their academic communities and epistemological traditions in the global knowledge hierarchy. It is often tacitly assumed that Southern actors have lower levels of expertise and as a result they have less to contribute to the construction of a research agenda (Bradley, 2007a, 2007b). Additionally, it is often assumed that because Northern researchers represent their donor governments, regardless of whether or not the NSRP program is administered by arms-length organizations and only loosely tied to government agencies, they represent the will of the donor and must be considered as a final authoritative voice in the project. This is most significantly expressed by the reality that Southern actors are required to partner with Northern actors in order to receive research funding, rather than receiving grants directly from Northern donors in order to carry out their own research, such that research processes are inherently mediated from the outset (Bradley, 2007b, 2).

The issue of internal project power relations, in the form of agenda-setting and decision-making processes, is compounded by tensions over the purpose and expectations of NSRP projects. It is apparent that, historically, Northern actors have come to the table with extremely different expectations for development-related research, which has fed directly into conflicts over agenda setting processes. Northern researchers have predominantly been motivated by short-term research agendas focusing on targeted topics or issues that may only tangentially
intersect with long-term structural or system issues in the Southern context (Gaillard, 1994; Baud, 2001; Bradley, 2007b, 15-16) As discussed previously, this is often rooted in disciplinary interests and agendas, as compared to the development-oriented priorities (Baud, 2001, 156).

One glaring example of this is the division in health-related development research, where during the 1980s and 1990s only 10% of global research funding was directed at studying the diseases that comprise 90% of the global health burden (Gaillard, 1994; Edejer, 1999).

The implication of these dynamics at the individual project level is the explicit or tacit pacification of Southern actors in the research design process. Bradley (2007a) concludes in her analysis of NSRP agenda-setting processes that “the literature on structural inequality in North-South research partnerships underlines that whether the Southern partner is well-established or relatively inexperienced, the frameworks within which international research collaboration takes place still tend to channel the benefits of partnership disproportionately to the Northern side” (p. 20). While some development actors recognize this situation, it remains a key challenge that cannot be easily overcome at an organizational level through the structural design of programs (RAWOO, 2001, 25-26). As two Dutch researchers state in evaluations of the RAWOO program, “do we now have to do the research that they (the Southern researchers) define; it may not even be interesting or challenging to us” (RAWOO, 2006, 12), and, “what we can do (in the South) is capacity building but that’s not scientific research” (Engel and Keijzer, 2006, 16).

These sentiments are echoed in the UK context in two recent studies. Young and Kannemeyere (2001) conclude that donors fear that the “devolution of control to Southern organizations, and a focus on capacity-building, may reduce the quality and usefulness of the research (p. 3). Rew concludes:

Another disincentive concerns lack of in-country acceptance of DFID priorities. Partly, there are few in-country incentives for local researchers to conduct poverty focused research; partly, there is lack of consistent access to DFID views and programmes and this leads to intellectual and emotional distance from the supposedly collaborative agenda (Rew; as cited in Surr et al., 2001, 45).

The main implication of these asymmetrical dynamics may sound overly simplistic or redundant, but it is necessary to continually restate in order to influence the construction of further programs and projects; trust between partners is the key to successful NSRPs. The absence of trust within projects has historically represented the most significant barrier to NSRPs. As the above sections outline, there are significant structural limitations to creating equal and equitable linkage programs. Stemming from this, every tension between partners over structural matters increases the likelihood that individuals involved in a project will have their
trust eroded in both counterpart researchers and the system as a whole (Hirschman, 1984; Marra, 2004). However, it has equally been noted that a trusting relationship between individual partners, based on strong mutual interests, can overcome significant structural issues (Pearson, 1969; Gaillard, 1994, 58; OECD/DAC, 1996; Lister, 2000, 237; Jentsch, 2004; Boeren, 2005, 16; KFPE, 1998, 2001, 2005; Mawdsley, 2005; RAWOO, 2006; Bradley, 2007b, 30).

Based on the above conclusions, it can be argued that the most important part of any project is choosing the right partner (Gaillard, 1994, 58). A 2001 RAWOO evaluation claims, “without trust between the partners, partnerships do not work. Northern partners tend to worry about resources being used improperly, Southern partners about entering into agreements which turn out to be against their own or their country’s interests” (RAWOO, 2001, 25). Bradley (2007b) comes to a similar conclusion in her research into agenda setting:

Almost unanimously, researchers stressed that partnerships sink or swim on the character and commitment of the individuals involved in them. While many researchers value having shared political views with their partners, even more critical are the attributes of flexibility, modesty and willingness to learn (p. 20).

An important implication of the role that inter-personal relations play in the success of an NSRP is the predetermination that senior or expert scholars are the most appropriate participants in linkage projects. Ettore (2000) concludes that development-related actors must confront “the myth that most if not all senior researchers who have national prominence can successfully manage international research” (p. 17). The importance of sensitivity to diversity, as well as to an awareness of group processes and dynamics, requires a different skill set than is traditionally supported by disciplinary research (ibid, 16-17).

The shortcomings of the asymmetrical and de-contextualized model that has historically been supported by NSRP programs can be addressed to a certain degree at the program design level, whereby structures are put in place to facilitate a ‘successful’ and transparent partnership, as well as the building of trust between partners in order to compensate for the inherent advantages experienced by Northern actors (Campbell, 1988; Tandon, 1990; Bhagavan, 1992; Postma, 1994; USAID, 1997; Box, 1999, 10; Lister, 2000; Marra, 2004; Bradley, 2007a).

However, despite the progress that has been made over the last 20 years to counteract deleterious forces (Bautista et al., 2001, 12), Boeren (2005) concludes, “programmes which aim to strengthen institutions in the South and advocate that the needs of these institutions should be the starting point of collaborative projects are not always equipped to stimulate Southern ownership” (p. 6). For example, the World Bank has significantly altered its ‘partnership’
rhetoric as a result of backlash to the one-size-fits-all, top-down, and supply-side prescriptions of the structural adjustment programs, supporting more demand-driven programs that are outlined as catalysts of local empowerment (World Bank, 2001, 2006). However, in spite of this rhetorical change, the structure and ideology of the organization continue to be critiqued as being structurally incapable of facilitating significant shifts in ownership over, and decision-making within, development-related projects (Mehta, 2001; Jones, 1997, 2002; King & McGrath, 2004).

A second inhibiting factor that complicates the co-construction of research agendas is the diversity of actors involved or invested in research processes and their potential outcomes within under-resourced institutions and jurisdictions; researchers, departmental and institutional leaders and administrators, government officials and agencies, and non-governmental organizations and actors all have a vested stake in the outcomes of foreign-funded research as a result of the absence of domestic support for research initiatives (Baud, 2001, 157-159). The impact of this diffusion of interests is commonly characterized as the Ganuza Dilemma, whereby “Northern governments set research agendas for lack of a unified ‘voice’ in the South” (Ganuza, 1990). It is unrealistic to expect that individual research projects can incorporate and represent the extremely diverse needs of local and national stakeholders in any given project. In addition, many local stakeholders work towards reproducing exogenous economic, social and political systems for personal or ideological gain, resulting in the distortion of supposedly ‘demand-led’ research (Nair & Menon, 2002, 21-22). The Ganuza Dilemma speaks to issues of cultural reproduction outlined in the theoretical framework of this study in relation to world-system analysis. As Bradley (2007b) contends, “champions of the demand-driven approach were also forced to recognize that Southern researchers were not always the best allies in advancing locally defined priorities as the basis for development research” (pg. 7). Southern researchers often represent an elite cadre within domestic social systems, and their interests should not be assumed to correlate with either those of the foreign funding agencies or the diverse set of local stakeholders.

The above section outlines some of the key issues facing NSRPs in terms of establishing research agendas both equitably and transparently. All participating actors are involved in variety of legitimation and politicization processes both within their professional circles and within a broader socio-political spectrum. Historically, these forces and influences have significantly limited the ability of individual researchers to build productive, effective and transparent research projects based on mutual professional interests. While it has been
repeatedly noted that strong inter-personal trust forms the bedrock of a strong NSRP project, all of the above factors appear to work against the establishment of such open and trusting relationships. As a result, while programs can implement certain structural mechanisms to facilitate open relationships, the ultimate determinant of a successful research linkage is the commitment, openness and awareness of the individuals involved, and projects should ideally be planned and evaluated around such characteristics.

Knowledge Management

The discourse of development has evolved over the last 15 years to include not only issues of knowledge management as a basic prerequisite for ‘successful’ development policy and practice, but to focus on knowledge-related activities as a primary driver of development (King, 2001; King & McGrath, 2004). This movement has been heavily rooted in the World Bank’s re-branding campaign of the 1990s, whereby the Bank attempted to significantly alter its engagement with development-related activities by supporting initiatives that explicitly target knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS) systems and frameworks (Mehta, 2001; Klees, 2002; World Bank, 2002; King & McGrath, 2004). KM and KS manifest within NSRPs through two inter-related questions; at the macro-level, do NSRPs facilitate access to new knowledge resources, and, at the micro-level, do NSRP structures and modalities encourage shared ownership over the knowledge produced in order to support multi-pronged dissemination strategies that address the various professional requirements and interests of participants? The following section will interrogate how these issues have been addressed in the historical record, concluding that for the most part, the gate-keeping function of Northern actors that is so prevalent in issues of resource management, as outlined above, have been reproduced in the knowledge management sector. In addition, the knowledge ‘revolution’ of the late 20th century, spearheaded by the World Bank, has undermined the development of autonomous knowledge management systems in the South more than it has supported fluid and transparent KM and KS techniques and practices through various NSRP modalities.

In regard to the questions raised above, a brief history of late 20th century knowledge management trends is required in order to understand the broad context within which NSRPs and development agencies operate. In 1996, James Wolfensohn, then President of the World Bank, gave a speech on the pressing need to reform the way that the World Bank engaged with
the global development arena, particularly in terms of its impact on the global development agenda. In his own words:

We have been in the business of researching and disseminating the lessons of development for a long time. But the revolution in information technology increased the potential value of these efforts by vastly extending their reach. To capture this potential, we need to invest in the necessary systems, in Washington and worldwide, that will enhance our ability to gather development information and experience, and share it with our clients. We need to become, in effect, the Knowledge Bank (Wolfensohn, 1996, 7).

Implicit in this statement, and observed in the years to follow through a series of publications on the framework of the Knowledge Bank and the implications of the knowledge society (World Bank, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2010), was a call to increase the transparency, fluidity and accessibility of development-related research and knowledge, both within and between institutions and actors. This was most often framed in terms of the sharing of ‘best practices’ and establishing ‘communities of practice’ within development organizations in order to increase their capacity to share knowledge tacitly captured within individuals (King, 2000).

While this study is not meant to analyze the legitimacy or implications of the Bank’s ‘transformation’, it does take the Bank’s efforts as a launching point for examining a primary driver of development practice over the last 15 years. The outcome of the ‘knowledge revolution’ has been an increased emphasis for development actors to manage and share knowledge and information in order to better facilitate the implementation of research in development-related policies and practices. The impact of this on NSRPs has been an augmented mainstream legitimacy for initiatives that aim to build knowledge capacities in the global South, at least at the level of discourse (Mehta, 2001; King & McGrath, 2004). As such, NSRP program and project evaluations often incorporate the extent to which a given modality or program facilitates access to new knowledge.

Examining the historical record over the last 15 years, it is evident that the shift in rhetoric has had a limited impact on lasting institutional changes at most donor agencies in regard to promoting peripheral knowledge systems. As King (2004) summarizes:

In reviewing the most recent preoccupation of agencies with both knowledge and capacity development, we would argue that the agencies have not started with the dramatic knowledge deficits of the South, nor with the key question of how knowledge management could assist knowledge development in the South. A continuation along their present internal trajectories could be counter-productive; it could end up making agencies more certain of what they themselves have learnt, and more enthusiastic that others should share these insights, once they have been systematized. While on the external knowledge sharing side, there is
still little evidence of dramatically increased support to knowledge development in the South (p. 16).

While King and McGrath concede that analysts should not homogenize the many departments and actors within a given agency in broad characterizations, they are consistent in their conclusion that at the organizational level, even the most progressive development agencies have failed to create the necessary frameworks and protocols to support comprehensive KM and KS linkages within the South (King & McGrath, 2004, 195-211).

The inhibition of knowledge sharing practices is primarily attributed to the legacy of linear transfer models outlined previously in this study, as well as the dominance of international organizations in the establishment of educational priorities and policies in the global periphery (King, 2004, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009). Historically, the production of research and the ability of Southern knowledge systems to capture, retain and operationalize that research in domestic policies and practices have been structurally restrained through a variety of means. The most significant limitation on Southern knowledge systems in the post-colonial era has been the structural adjustment programs of the 1980s and 1990s, whereby as a condition of accepting World Bank and IMF financial support, many Southern governments were required to significantly adjust domestic spending on post-secondary education and research activities (Jones, 1992, 1997, 2002; Collier, 2000; Ellerman, 2005). This was particularly acute in SSA (Altbach, 1989; Craig, 1990; Colclough & Manor, 1991; Reimers, 1994; Woodhall, 1994; Bennell, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Buchert & King, 1996; Samoff, 1996, 1999; Mazrui, 1997; King & McGrath, 2002). One of the major justifications for such spending cuts was the argument that there existed an international network of researchers, through the major international development organizations, that were capable of providing the necessary analytic workforce on behalf of governments and institutions with a deficit of domestic research capacity. This framework established a culture of lending rather than a culture of learning, whereby knowledge was disbursed by centralized foreign brokers more than created and shared amongst a group of locally embedded peers (Denning, 2001; Heyneman, 2003; Samoff & Carrol, 2004).

Using the case of DFID policies over the late 1990s and early 2000s as an example, King and McGrath argue that Southern research capacity was framed as a secondary priority within knowledge-related policies (King & McGrath, 2004, 111). They comment:

Capacity building appears to be legitimate only as a by-product of the process of researching DFID priorities, and there is apparently no place for a broader vision of capacity development, as there is in SIDA, that would have as its primary goal
the development of capacities to address broader national concerns, including for pure research (ibid, 111).

SIDA’s internal evaluations of knowledge management issues show that these problems have been considered for some time by development agencies, and, more poignantly, the absence of significant progress in this area continues to be felt. A 1988 evaluative study commissioned by SIDA came to similar conclusions regarding knowledge-related development practices, “technical cooperation often weakened rather than strengthen partner country capacity. Too many decisions were taken by donors and too little attention was paid to existing national capacity” (Forss et al., 1988; as cited in King & McGrath, 2004, 139). This is reinforced by Gustafsson (2000), the lead author of SIDA’s 1992 policy report on knowledge and learning:

Solutions to complex social and political problems are always local. Solutions can be stimulated by but not solved through transfer of knowledge of analytical frameworks, foreign experts or in other ways…Unless there is capacity in countries to analyze their own situation and experience and relate it to what exists elsewhere this is not likely the case. Therefore it is absolutely essential that priority is given to strengthening of national systems of education and research (p. 2).

Lastly, a 2005 internal SIDA evaluation of the organizations’ research cooperation programs since the early 1970s concluded that over the course of SIDA’s programming:

The results of research support will only be used to a very limited extent in society outside the university world or in the private sector, and only occasionally be applied in operations with a poverty reduction focus. The link between research activities and national poverty reduction is often weak, not least in cases where both areas lack strategic governance (SIDA, 2005, 15).

One crucial corollary of the KM debate is the control and influence that Southern actors have over the dissemination of research findings, specifically in terms of the tensions related to which media of dissemination are considered legitimate. Grounded in the mainstream international academic system, peer-review journal publications and citations have long been the primary measuring stick for evaluating the productivity of NSRP projects and programs. However, traditional indicators of quality as related to academia are insufficient and significantly biased towards core priorities and evaluation criteria (Samoff, 1996; Bautista et al., 2001, 19; KFPE, 2001; RAWOO, 2001; Nair & Menon, 2002; Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 155; King & McGrath, 2004, 206-208; Bradley 2007b, 16).

Select funding agencies, such as the Dutch RAWOO program, have examined the need to make research available to a more diverse set of political, social and economic actors within
Southern states, specifically through the formulation and institutionalization of alternative qualitative indicators and measures of processes (Bautista et al., 2001, 18; Nair & Menon, 2002, 15-17). However, since Northern actors are embedded in professional legitimation processes that rely heavily on high-level peer-review publications, the expansion of viable dissemination mechanisms may have a negative effect on Northern participation. While the Dutch RAWOO program presented a strong record of questioning dominant knowledge dissemination practices in order to create more equitable frameworks, it also made consistent mention of a strong resistance to such changes within the domestic Dutch academic community (RAWOO, 2001; Nair & Menon 2002, 15; Engle & Keizjer, 2006, 8,12-17).

Similar sentiments were raised in a series of conferences held by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, in collaboration with the IDRC, regarding the current state of NSRPs in Canada (AUCC, 2005, 2008). Through these fora, the issue of knowledge dissemination was raised in the context of recognition and reward processes at Canadian post-secondary institutions. A consistent finding from researcher interviews and surveys of participants was a desire for “the recognition and inclusion of a broader definition of research results and scholarly activities that included academic and research efforts carried out in an international development context” (AUCC, 2008, 6). In terms of Canadian faculty promotion and recognition frameworks, research dissemination outlets were noted as being considerably weighted against non-peer review media, and competitive grants from IDRC and CIDA were not given equal weighting to federal grant programs (ibid, 6-7; Bradley. 2007b, 19-20).

These arguments are partially based on the issue of relevance and the extent to which NSRPs are meant to be geared towards development-related policy and practice or are meant to fund basic disciplinary research. As Engle and Keijzer (2006) conclude in their evaluation of RAWOO, “do you design research to address societal problems or do you design it to tackle scientific problems?” (p. 13). If a program or project operates under the latter auspice, then it may be more reasonable to place national and international peer-review publications as the litmus test for productivity and the ultimate goal of knowledge dissemination practices. However, as the majority of NSRPs examined for this study explicitly target development-related research outcomes, it can be posited that there exists an inherent contradiction between the competitive structure of core academic communities and the objectives of development-related research. Individual researchers feel compelled to avoid more diverse dissemination media targeted at local communities and government actors in favor of prestigious peer-review journals predominantly based in America and Britain and using the lingua franca of English.
The two questions highlighted in the first paragraph of this section relate directly to the aforementioned tensions in debates over KM and KS; when evaluating a NSRP program or modality, the extent to which peripheral knowledge systems are supported through the building of research must be considered. Functionally, this requires that funded researchers gain access to alternative methodological and disciplinary knowledge and research in order to contribute to critical analytic capacity at both individual and institutional levels. While the dominant trend of the ‘knowledge revolution’ has been to increase the fluidity of internal knowledge sharing at development agencies, the development of autonomous and equitable linkage frameworks requires that knowledge be equally accessible to individuals regardless of their location, within development agencies and amongst practitioners. In addition, there must be a more diverse set of indicators and processes used to evaluate the potential impact that research outputs can have through a variety of dissemination systems, particularly those that are not considered traditional by the mainstream academic standards of the global core.

**Sustainability and Capacity Building**

According to the above analysis, NSRPs can be evaluated through a number of structural and substantive categories, both in terms of programmatic structures and processes and in terms of participatory and inter-personal dynamics and frameworks. Under these rubrics, the success of a program or project can be evaluated in a composite of qualitative and quantitative outputs and processes stemming from a particular project linkage. However, a necessary corollary that can and, according to a critical mass of both academic and development agency literature, should be incorporated into evaluations is the sustainability of individual projects. Therefore, the working definition of sustainability, and the associated concept of capacity building, requires a nuanced explication before any general comments can be made regarding the particular specificities of a particular program or project.

On the one hand, this line of investigation requires an analysis of both the extent and the form that formal project structures are maintained after the cessation of donor support, both financially and professionally. It is grounded in the recognition that research quality and research capacity require long-term coordinated efforts from all stakeholders, and the integration of project objectives with broader institutional objectives in order to support the maximum potential outcomes (KFPE, 2001; SIDA, 2005). On the other hand, formal institutionalization is
only one dynamic of sustained capacity building interventions; softer forms of long-term capacity, such as skills development, critical analysis, and other forms of qualitative augmentation, bypass traditional evaluative indicators and speak to a broader conception of sustainable growth. As such, NSRP programs and projects require a nuanced understanding of capacity and sustainability in order for reflections to be made on the relative successes or limitations inherent in a given modality.

The issue of sustainability is heavily rooted in the conceptualization of ‘capacity building’ as an explicit end goal of development assistance programs, particularly in terms of the renewed drive for quantifiable outputs and accountability measures by funding agencies. Scoones (2007) concludes in his analysis of sustainability discourses in the development community:

Sustainability must be one of the most widely used buzzwords of the past two decades. There is nothing, it seems, that cannot be described as ‘sustainable’: apparently everything can be either hyphenated or paired with it. We have sustainable cities, economies, resource management, business, livelihoods – and, of course, sustainable development…sustainability has become, par excellence, what Thomas Gieryn (1999) calls a ‘boundary term’: one where science meets politics, and politics meets science (p. 589).

This over-saturation of sustainability terminology in development discourses and policies has resulted in an obfuscation of the concept and its application, particularly in terms of development-related research programs; what does sustainability really mean and what are the criteria or metrics of sustainability?

At a conceptual level, the ability for programs and projects to build individual and institutional research capacity, particularly through the long-term integration with institutional needs and demands, represents the explicit goal of many development agencies: “SIDA’s task is to make sustainable development possible and thus make development cooperation superfluous in the long run. Our principal method is capacity and institution development. Knowledge is our most important resource” (SIDA’s mission statement, 1995; as cited in SIDA, 2000, 1); “The purpose of UPCD is to build the capacities of DCETOs (Developing country education and training organization) so that they can better contribute to their respective country’s sustainable development priorities” (CIDA, 2007, 2); IDRC supports scientists and researchers who pursue research that is "geared to alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable and equitable development" (IDRC, 2002); and a 2001 KFPE workshop on NSRPs concluded that the objectives of NSRP programs should “aim ultimately at the generation of relevant knowledge
and material research outputs that will sustainably increase the livelihoods of people in the South” (KFPE, 2001; as cited in Adolph & Pound, 2005, 10). However, in terms of the implementation of sustainability discourse in particular NSRP programs, and the success of such programs to foster sustainable development-related research projects and research units, the historical record outlined below indicates that the rhetoric has not often matched the reality on-the-ground and much confusion remains over the preferable indicators of either individual or institutional sustainability.

As Bautista, Vehlo and Kaplan (2001) aptly question, the issue of sustainability suffers from an ambiguity in definition:

When discussing the issue of sustainability, however, the question that arises…is what exactly is being sustained? Is it the programme as an organization? Is it the model of research management the programme operationalizes, and the underlying philosophical framework of development and knowledge production? Is it the policy that creates a critical mass of development researchers who can shift gears as they produce knowledge to improve the conditions of the poor because of their autonomy to move resources and researchers, especially on the ground? (p. 14).

Based on this study’s literature review, a duality exists in the evaluation of NSRPs that defines sustainability according to a discourse of individual capacity or institutional capacity. The following section distinguishes between the major supporting arguments of the two sides in order to synthesize conceptions of sustainability in a much more streamlined form. Through this process, it is intended that an analysis of a particular NSRP program or project’s sustainability will be grounded in a more complete understanding of the issues at hand, specifically with reference to the dominant narrative of short-term, highly contingent support for NSRP programs.

The coordination and integration of individual and institutional capacity-building processes has garnered a significant amount of debate in the academic and development agency literatures, particularly in regards to the contribution that individual NSRP projects make to the sustainable development of domestic social, political and economic institutions and systems. In the case of institutional sustainability, it has been argued that unless the particular capacities developed throughout a given project are systemically integrated and maintained in the post-project period at an institutional level (via a targeted program, research center, etc…), then the capacities supported through the particular NSRP will not be of significant long-term value to participating Southern stakeholders, and as such, may not represent an optimal investment of resources in terms of building long-term research capacity (Bradley, 2007a). This type of
argument supports the argument for strong institutions as a prerequisite for sustainable development in the higher education sector. However, when considered in terms of individual capacity building, an alternative argument can be put forward that regardless of the institutionalization of an NSRP project or program, the individuals involved are given the opportunity to augment their professional skills and capacities, which, in the long-term, ultimately supports institutional development through the establishment of a critical mass of highly-trained scholars in a particular jurisdiction, either institutionally, locally, nationally or regionally (Bautista et al., 2001; SIDA, 2005; Bradley, 2007a, 2007b). As Bradley (2007a) contends,

The development of long-term partnerships is an investment with considerable returns when it comes to agenda-setting, as negotiations benefit from the trust partners have built up, as well as their ability to be candid with one another and draw on past lessons to iron out present difficulties. Creating long-term partnerships requires dedication and ingenuity, as neither donor funding systems nor academic promotional frameworks are set up to reward sustained commitment between Northern and Southern partners (p. 27).

The conceptual and practical tension between individual and institutional capacity has a direct relation to the conceptualization of sustainability in NSRP programs, and will be analyzed in the below section in order to create a more holistic understanding of this particular evaluative category.

The Dutch RAWOO program (1995) synthesized these perspectives, and added an enabling environment as a third key dimension, in sufficient detail and breadth that their framework bears repeating and incorporating in this study’s analysis:

On the level of individual researchers, the following capabilities and requirements are of importance:
- The capacity to formulate a research problem and to carry out the entire research cycle (where necessary, in cooperation with the users of the research results)
- Appropriate qualifications through further academic training (MA and PhD) motivation, and the opportunity to undertake research
- External contacts (national and international), networks, and membership in professional associations
- Access to information (libraries, databases, etc.) and scientific equipment.

At the level of the institutions, capacity is needed for:
- The development of research policy; the development and management of research projects and programmes (priority setting, research coordination, monitoring, and the publication and dissemination of results)
- The acquisition and management of research funds
- The training of researchers, and staff development
- The provision of adequate incentives and working conditions for researchers (time, financial resources, salaries, libraries, laboratories, equipment, funds for travel, etc.)
- A network of external contacts, which provide links to other research centers, funding agencies, voluntary organizations, businesses, government bodies, etc.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

An 'enabling environment' concerns such aspects as:
- Commitment at the national level to a policy and a set of measures aimed at promoting and maintaining research capacity, including adequate and sustained funding of institutions and programmes
- Mechanisms for steering research towards topics that are of relevance to the economic, social, cultural and political development of a society, and possibilities for various groups to articulate their interests
- Links between research, policy, and practice (involvement of research users in prioritizing, implementing and disseminating research)
- A professional environment, including formal associations, standards, mobility, incentives, and a research tradition.

A broad, multilevel perspective on research capacity consists in acknowledging the complexity of the issues and the inadequacy of isolated interventions. The various actors, levels, and components must be seen in relation to one another. A coherent approach implies that efforts designed to support research capacity must take into consideration the requirements to be met at the various levels, if those efforts are to be effective and sustainable. These points will have to be addressed when support programmes are set up (pp. 7-8; emphasis original).

At the broadest level, this type of multi-layered support appears to be the most comprehensive option, particularly when considered in terms of efficiency. Baud (2001) concludes that, “a lack of institutional capacity often results in the loss of quality researchers to other organizations, domestic and international” (p. 163). Tilak (2002) similarly concludes that the renewed interest in knowledge-based development supported by the international community and the ascension of a knowledge-based global economy:

Necessitates developing careful structures that value and promote a local knowledge base, promote more institutional research than research based on consultancy mechanisms, promote long-term research instead of instant research that offers quick fix solutions, that reduce inter-country and intra-country inequalities, and finally the structures and mechanisms that develop and promote sustainable systematic processes of transformation of data into information, and into knowledge that societies can use for development (p. 308).

The sustainability of an individual project relies heavily on the ability of broader institutional structures to support, absorb and anchor the project and the participating individuals. Without
such institutional and environmental support structures, individual projects become minor stopgaps in an otherwise porous system.

However, the presence of significant inhibitors within the domestic contexts of many SSA jurisdictions and as a result of the international aid and economic regimes, limit the sustainability of NSRP programs and projects as a whole. Samoff and Carrol (2004) summarize the situation faced by many NSRP programs:

They remain nearly entirely dependent on foreign patrons with shifting interests and on foreign funds whose availability is a function of external events and decisions. That arrangement is unlikely to nurture the development of the institutional capacities and the autonomy that enable research centers to establish and sustain solidly grounded and high-quality research programs… Initiatives and reforms that are seen as external projects and in which no local individuals or groups are deeply involved are likely to be poorly integrated into other activities. Ultimately they prove unsustainable (p. 109-114).

Rooted in the resource dependency dynamics outlined in chapter two and in previous sections of this chapter, the economic conditions for sustaining research capacity building initiatives beyond the lifespan of external funding windows is unlikely in the vast majority of cases.

Based on the above arguments, the working definition of capacity-building according to which particular NSRP programs or projects operate will have a significant determining factor on the expected form of sustainability. The extent to which capacity is considered holistically, as part of a broader problematic of structural issues, should predominantly be reflected in the programmatic support structures for the sustainability of a given project. In light of the absence of long-term investment plans in the higher education systems of most SSA jurisdictions over the past 40 years, particularly the 1980s and 1990s, it appears that sustainability has been woefully under-implemented by the majority of development actors supporting NSRP programs, despite the progressive, and perhaps overly convoluted, conceptualizations produced by select donor agencies. As outlined previously, the short-term, highly politicized nature of support to SSA universities and their research programs renders sustainability efforts highly contingent on non-academic factors and perpetuates a cycle of dependency on external funders for continued support. As such, the conceptualization and implementation of sustainability efforts, in conjunction with operational definitions and evaluation criteria of capacity building, forms a core thematic issue of the NSRP ideal-type.
Summary: The Analytic Framework and Ideal-Type

This chapter has outlined the author’s interpretation of key structural and substantive issues associated with North-South research linkage programs in the post-colonial era. This construction is not meant to operate within a vacuum and, as stated previously, the author fully intends for this to be an open-ended contribution to the literature on NSRP programming. There is no definitive form of partnership, linkage, network or collaboration across all disciplines and jurisdictions; there are only snapshots and interpretations of particular modalities and contexts. Analysts and researchers can only reflect upon these structures and experiences in order to highlight contingent trends and experiences, acknowledging circumstantial variations wherever possible. As a result of this overarching perspective, the ideal-type makes a suitable analytical tool for operationalizing any analytic venture in this realm. As will be elaborated in chapter four, the construction of an ideal-type for the sake of methodological analysis is based on the understanding that ideal-types need not have a real empirical referent or manifestation, but that such functional, yet purely representational, models can facilitate a reasonable comparative mechanism that is both general and cohesive in nature and definition.

In the case of this study’s analysis of NSRP programs and projects, the ideal-type framework facilitated the construction of five separate analytic components: project and program selection criteria and processes, decision-making processes, knowledge management, resource management, and capacity building and sustainability. The above sections summarize how various actors and analysts have conceptualized and critique NSRP programs and modalities implemented over the past 40 years by research-based development-related funding agencies, either through examining program structures or compiling case study analyses. For the purpose of this study, the Coercive ideal-type highlights general themes that emerged in the pertinent literatures regarding the nature and scope of NSRP dynamics and processes, as opposed to the formal structures implemented by particular organizations and agencies, in order to establish a general understanding of thematic issues involved in such research linkages, construed as a particular manifestation of broader core-periphery geo-political dynamics and trends. Rather than creating a checklist of indicators for evaluating a particular project or program, the above approach offers a more holistic and open-ended engagement with the issues of North-South and core-periphery collaboration, dealing with discursive issues as much as with practical or technical considerations. This analytic framework is put forward as a fluid and open
tool for analysis that can be adjusted based on changing circumstances, contextual factors, or more comprehensive understandings of the NSRP phenomena.

The first two issues analyzed are the construction of partnership and ownership, both in terms of their discursive application and in terms of their operational and evaluative structures. The concepts of partnership and ownership have been incorporated, and often co-opted, in legitimizing particular forms of development-oriented initiatives since the mid-20th century. In order to understand the rationales, goals and modes of operation within particular programs and the supported modalities, the working definition and conceptual basis of both partnership and ownership require analysis, as they relate to the broader literature that problematizes traditional North-South development-oriented programming. While not part of the ideal-type constructed in this chapter, a discussion and analysis of the application and construction of both concepts in the dominant literature helps illuminate the heavily contingent nature of fundamental NSRP ideals, norms and values established in Northern policy frameworks exported to Southern stakeholders. As such, both concepts require critical interrogation when they are invoked in NSRP policy and practice in order to unpack the sub-layered meanings that make up the particular application within individual contexts.

The third theme considered a primary theme of the analytical tool are the criteria used to justify program and project selection criteria and processes. The findings of the review make it clear that the rationales used to establish NSRP programs or support specific NSRP modalities have historically been based on exogenous political and academic agendas, and have rarely considered endogenous inputs as important constitutive elements. This dynamic has worked to maintain a high level of dependency within the periphery on foreign epistemic norms, structures and systems, whereby peripheral researchers remain beholden to particular mandates of knowledge production and evaluation vis-à-vis supply-side development and knowledge regimes. Therefore, the program and project selection and evaluation structures implemented by funding agencies in the NSRP process represent fertile avenues for understanding the extent to which intellectual and academic autonomy is supported by a given program or modality, or whether, as has historically been the case, the legitimacy of certain research agendas are willfully sculpted or affected through politicized or distorted selection processes.

The fourth component highlighted in this review focuses on the ability of all actors to participate and impact the substantive research phases of an NSRP program or project as equitable peers, regardless of their location: project agenda-setting processes. The literature presents a common situation whereby Southern actors are relegated to inferior positions and are
predominantly responsible for more labor-oriented tasks as opposed to being key contributors to the analytic and technical aspects of a given project. Whether this is rooted in resource dependencies, tacit pacification based on a misplaced belief in Southern inferiority, or a lack of transparency in the decision-making processes, the outcome has historically been negative for Southern participants and has further entrenched asymmetrical control and engagement over NSRP projects. Therefore, based on this review, project decision-making and agenda setting processes require interrogation at both a structural level and as they play out within interpersonal relations. The means and facility that individual actors are capable of engaging within the program structure in order to positively and substantially contribute to their project’s plan of action is highly reflective of the overall program’s sensitivity and responsiveness to the interests and objectives of all participants.

*Knowledge management* and *resource management* represent the fifth and sixth components of the ideal-type construction. The majority of findings within the literature indicate that the common reality across the various NSRP programs and modalities is the entrenchment of Northern control over project resources, both material and intellectual. The former of the two issues reflects the historical asymmetry between core and periphery control over the dissemination and management of development-oriented research. For the most part, Northern actors continue to place themselves at the center of knowledge management systems, often as gatekeepers of technical knowledge and ‘base practices’. This structural asymmetry reinforces the need to evaluate NSRP knowledge management practices, in addition to the above processes that are used to legitimate certain avenues of research.

The latter of the two issues, resource management, speaks most directly to the traditional dependencies that have been operational between the global core and periphery. Just as NSRP programs validate particular forms of knowledge through their selection processes, the amount of resources made available to various disciplines also reifies particular forms of knowledge as valuable within development-related narratives. In many cases, funding agencies are no longer required to explicitly dictate what type of research they view as legitimate; they are merely required to construct a research strategy and attach funding to it. Due to the absence of alternative funding sources in the majority of recipient jurisdictions, particularly those in SSA, this dynamic has resulted in the structural re-organization of knowledge production capacities within many Southern universities in order to remain aligned with the targeted interests of Northern funders. This in turn renders the majority of research contingent on supply-side trends and interests, which, as the literature established, operates within its own internal logic and in
short-term cycles that often prevents the development of substantial demand-driven research cultures within peripheral universities. Based on these issues, and the others raised in the above sections, the form, structure and conditions of particular NSRP programs and projects requires highlighting in order to assess how heavily the root of a development modality, its financial resources, remains based in a dependency model.

The final theme that arose from the literature review on NSRP programming is the issue of sustainability. Based on the above review, for all the gains that may be made in the framework or substance of a particular program or project, the long-term viability or contribution of a development-oriented initiative remains a core problem for evaluation. Given the resource and capacity deficits at all levels of the knowledge production chain in the global periphery, most forcefully witnessed in SSA, there is an implicit expectation that NSRP funding will make long-term contributions to the development agenda. However, the predominance of short-term funding cycles and the limited success of institutionalization efforts across NSRP programs indicates that this may perhaps be the most pressing issue moving forward. How does a program define sustainability and capacity building, and how closely are these tied to Northern paradigms of successful development? Is a program deemed successful if it trains a cohort of individuals who go on to populate posts within the public sector, though not in universities? If a chemist is produced who creates a private sector spin-off, is that valued as a long-term contribution? The working definition of sustainable and capacity require careful analysis in order to determine the extent that demand-side needs are actually considered in the process.

In sum, this chapter has been useful in highlighting how NSRP programming over the past 40 years has predominantly been rooted in a dependency framework. The overarching designation that encapsulates the systemic and substantive asymmetries noted in the historical record has been termed Coercive in the scope of this study. The Coercive ideal-type is not wholly represented in any specific manifestation. However, the author contends that the particular dynamics that fall under its general rubric are consistent enough across the empirical data examined in this study that it presents a relatively cohesive and comprehensive analytical framework. As an analytical tool, it presents a starting point for examining NSRP programs and projects and offers a comparative mechanic for such analysis.

While it may appear natural to present a second ideal-type in opposition to the Coercive, perhaps one that embodies a more autonomous NSRP modality, the author is reluctant to do so for one reason in particular: the Ganuza Dilemma. According to the Ganuza Dilemma, not all Southern actors envision the same outcomes from a development-oriented initiative and
‘demand’ is contingent on a variety of political, economic, and professional conditions rooted in the relationships between local, national and regional actors. Since it is difficult to integrate the various expectations and demands of the affected stakeholders, the path of least resistance has often resulted in Northern actors making decisions on behalf of Southern actors due to the absence of agreement on the prioritization of research. As a result, Southern voices are often homogenized by Northern interpretations or Northern expediency. The implication of the Dilemma for this study is that desirable forms of NSRP modalities will vary based on context, but will be relatively cohesive in the desire to avoid the coercive tendencies that have predominated traditional NSRP programs and modalities.

At this point it is necessary to note that a critique can be leveled against the analytic framework of the current study as a result of the apparent homogenization of Northern actors within the Coercive idea-type. Does the ideal-type similarly, and unfairly, homogenize the various interests of Northern actors engaged in development-related research initiatives in order to artificially construct a cohesive narrative? In response, the author contends that there is a significant contextual difference that validates the decision to overlook the risk of homogeneity when it comes to the Northern actors, while respecting heterogeneity in the South. In keeping with the conceptual framework of this study, the difference relates to power and privilege. Northern actors, regardless of their relative position within their own domestic academic or political communities, are consistently placed in privileged positions in NSRP projects, across all levels, and the literature indicates that their varied interests more often than not drive a research agenda regardless of the way a particular program or modality is structured. As such, a tenuous assumption can be made that Northern actors have predominantly been in positions to operationalize their distinctive differences if they so choose. Yet when it comes to Southern actors, the literature indicates a similar commonality in experiences on the other end of the spectrum. It is rare that Southern actors are empowered by the structure or framework of an NSRP program. As such, the particular voices at play within Southern jurisdictions have been silenced in unison, as opposed to the general empowerment experienced by most Northern actors. The implication of these two trends in the context of this study is that the ideal-type of Northern experiences reflects a relatively common pattern of experiences, while the creation of an ideal-type from the Southern perspective cannot be rooted in common experiences other than coercion, marginalization and exploitation. The author’s response to these variables and conditions is to refrain from postulating a counterpart ideal-type to the Coercive construct, and
to allow for a contextually-based interrogation of more autonomous, equitable and sustainable NSRP initiatives.

This chapter has given an overview of some of the most pressing structural and conceptual tensions in NSRP programming over the past 40 years in order to create a referential tool for examining particular initiatives, such as the NUFU program. While the above review makes it clear that there has been a significant amount of critical reflection given to issues involved in NSRP programs, there have been few comprehensive case studies of individual NSRP projects and the author could find no case studies that examine the impact of a South-South component on traditional North-South linkage programs. Therefore, chapters five, six and seven take up this ideal-type construct, grounded in a conceptual narrative of a marginalizing global power structure built upon a legacy of exploitative and coercive international relations between core and peripheral nations, in order to examine the case of a Norwegian NUFU program. Situated as a semi-core nation without a colonizing tradition, but possessing a robust domestic political sub-system engaged with development-related issues, the Norwegian case represents a unique avenue of inquiry for NSRP programming. Furthermore, the significant financial support given to South-South and regional networking modalities, opens up a new line of questioning that is almost entirely absent from the academic literature.
Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This study incorporates qualitative research methods and methodologies in order to collect and analyze data on the substantive and structural consequences and impacts of the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) on participating Southern higher education research units, including project administrators, researchers and departmental leaders. The purpose of this exploratory case study is twofold: first, to gain a better understanding of how the Norwegian political economy influences the nature and scope of NUFUs North-South research linkage modality, and second, to determine the extent to which the North-South-South modality offers substantive added value both in terms of the linkage outputs and in terms of the nurturing of autonomous epistemic activities within the higher education institutions of the global periphery. The study takes the NUFU program as a clarifying example of a Northern-funded bilateral development assistance program that incorporates a South-South modality into its assistance portfolio.

The study’s central research questions focus on evaluating the NUFU modality’s ability to facilitate the creation of autonomous and sustainable demand-driven research spaces in the selected universities, specifically those located in the sub-Saharan region of the African continent. This examination is situated in an historical context that suffers from severe substantive and structural inhibitors for autonomous epistemic activity in SSA, outlined in the second chapter of this study. Autonomous research spaces are meant to support demand-led and context-sensitive research projects that are capable of incorporating demand-side methodologies, conceptual frameworks, and agenda-setting processes, and that support significant shifts in administrative responsibilities and knowledge management processes towards actors situated in peripheral universities. The exploratory case study methodology is the most appropriate means to gain an in-depth understanding of the NUFU modality implementation mechanisms and impacts, emphasizing the unique social and political contexts that differentiate the NUFU program from the bilateral assistance programs of other Northern nations involved in the funding of NSRP programs.
Research Purpose and Questions

The primary objective of this study is to explore the implementation of NUFU’s research linkage program, specifically regarding its framework for sharing administrative, procedural, and substantive responsibilities amongst Norwegian actors and their counterparts within SSA universities. In order to evaluate the impacts and consequences of NUFU’s modality, particularly the SSN component, a qualitative exploratory case study design is the most suited methodology for implementation. Through an in-depth qualitative investigation of NUFU administrators and organizational leaders, as well as researchers, administrators and institutional leaders involved in one Sub-Saharan Africa research network, involving one Norwegian and two SSA universities, one in Tanzania and one in South Africa, this study observed, interrogated, and analyzed shared social and professional situations and structures in order to gain a better understanding of intra-project dynamics resulting from the NUFU modality framework.

Methodologically, qualitative research methods seek to examine social situations and interactions, either individually or situated within an organizational or institutional structure, by allowing the researcher to enter the worlds of others, either obviously or discreetly. The intent of this type of analytic framework is to achieve a holistic, rather than a reductionist, understanding of a phenomenon or process (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Maxwell, 2005; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Based on this study’s objectives, quantitative research methods are not appropriate for the required data. Quantitative research methods seek to take apart a phenomenon in order to examine its individual components. The methods create hypotheses and designs that designate and distinguish relationships between individual variables (Merriam, 1998, 5). As a result, they risk under-examining or inadequately theorizing complex socially embedded and constructed meanings, both of which are objectives of this study.

Within the framework of a qualitative approach, the data required for meaningful analysis indicates that the exploratory case study design is the most suitable option. This study is intended to examine and explore how and why NUFU’s linkage modality is conceptualized and constructed at policy level, and how it has been implemented and manifests on-the-ground. In order to investigate and evaluate the substantive and structural processes of the modality, this study focuses on an array of decision-making processes and situations, specifically in terms of how they come about, how they are implemented and what their impacts are for the various actors involved in the project (Schramm, 1971; as cited in Yin, 2004, 12). These objectives and
rationales most appropriately intersect with Yin’s explanation of the case study methodology: “the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events, such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes… (and) international relations” (Yin, 2004, 2). As a form of research methodology, the case study allows for the types of data collection processes required for this study, specifically through “an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon, social unit, or system bounded by time or place” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, 80).

The case study design offers two features that facilitate the collection of data in regard to a single NUFU research network. First, the design allows the researcher to “investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2004, 13). Given the complex historical interplay of the global political economy, development ideologies and practices, and international academic relations, particularly as manifested on the African continent, NUFU is situated within multiple intersecting contextual horizons that require examination through an investigation of their real-life manifestation, both in terms of its programmatic framework and the individual project modality. Second, the case study is capable of “dealing with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points and that relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulation fashion” (ibid, 14). Due to the inter-personal nature of the information and knowledge sought in this study and the process-oriented holistic approach to many of the contextual issues, this study requires a non-linear data collection design that is sensitive to multiple, inter-penetrating, and temporally indeterminate sources of evidence. As Merriam (1998) contends, “a case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation” (p. 19).

This case study is most suited to a critical ethnographic theoretical orientation, a lens of inquiry that facilitates a holistic approach. The critical line of inquiry takes education as a social, cultural and political institution, one that is a mechanism for social and cultural reproduction and transformation. As such, knowledge generated through this mode of research is an ideological critique of power, privilege and oppression in areas of knowledge production and development practice (Merriam, 1998). The study’s investigation of the NUFU research linkage modality analyzes both international development assistance and knowledge regimes in order to conceptualize the extent that the interests of the global knowledge hierarchy are
privileged at the expense of actors situated in the research universities of the global periphery, specifically in SSA. The *ethnographic* element derives from the central place that institutional, organizational and global cultures play in the project as shared contexts that are “behaviorally enacted, physically possessed, or internally thought…inter-subjectively shared” (Merriam, 1998, 14). Procedurally, ethnographic research techniques “are the strategies researchers use to collect data about the social order, setting or situation being investigated” (*ibid*, 14). The critical ethnographic case study will allow for a socio-cultural analysis of NUFU’s research network sites, including the NUFU headquarter and higher education institutions within Norway, Tanzania and South Africa.

**Overview of the Research Design**

The study has proceeded through four stages in order to collect the required data for analysis: literature review, document analysis, interviews, and direct observation *in situ*.

**Literature Review**

An ongoing and selective review of pertinent literature was conducted to inform the study’s research problem, rationale, design, and analysis. Three key topics of literature were identified: International development, international relations (particularly international political economy), and comparative and international development education (with a thematic focus on the African continent). The review helped to gain a comprehensive understanding of the multi-layered historical contexts that frame cross-national higher education linkages in SSA and the various research linkage programs and modalities that fall under the rubric of international development assistance. Based on the key substantive and structural issues and themes raised in the literature, an ideal-type framework was created to depict the dominant structures, conditions, and dynamics involved in North-South research linkage programs and modalities. Through this overview, an analytic framework was constructed in order to situate the investigation of the NUFU program. The review resulted in the establishment of seven sub-sections for analysis in the context of traditional, mainstream North-South research partnerships, all of which informed the study’s data collection phases, including the document analyses, interviews and observations. The five sub-sections of analysis include: *program and project selection*
processes, agenda setting processes, resource management, knowledge management, and sustainability and capacity building.

**Document Analysis**

The document analysis stage of the project was divided into two sub-sections. The first portion examined official government documents, program reports and program evaluations produced by the two agencies with jurisdiction over NUFU; the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU), NUFU’s administrative organization, and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the primary international development funding and policy-making wing of the Norwegian government. This review determined the core objectives and expected outcomes of the NUFU program, broadly considered, as well as in regards to the South-South and regional components of individual projects. The second document review examined project specific reports and evaluations produced by both SIU and the partnering institutions in Norway and in the participating African jurisdictions. This review included an examination of application materials in order to ascertain the historical and current situation of the individual project targeted for analysis in the exploratory case study. The document analysis phase facilitated the construction of the study’s analytic framework and allowed for the expansion of the study’s evaluative criteria, adding key objectives as determined by both Norwegian and non-Norwegian actors.

**Participant Interviews and Ethical Protocol**

Open-ended key informant interviews were conducted with researchers, administrators and departmental/institutional leaders at NUFU and the three higher education institutions participating in the case study project, one Norwegian, one Tanzanian and one South African. Interviews were conducted in order to gain a better understanding of how individual network actors interpreted and negotiated the network process and framework, both in terms of NUFU’s particular requirements and influence, and in regards to broader global, regional, national and local pressures and forces. This was done with a specific eye towards: 1) professional and political pressures evolving from within the network’s internal dynamics or imposed from actors outside of the formal network framework; 2) professional and interpersonal relationships within
and between the network sites and the constituent actors; and 3) the construction of meaning in relation to the research project, bilateral assistance, both in general and Norwegian, and the concept of South-South collaboration and regionalization processes as applied to research linkages and development-related research in SSA universities. The final interview guide is included in Appendix 1.

A maximum variation sampling strategy was utilized for selecting appropriate and relevant interview participants whose participation would span a broad range of perspectives. The inclusion criteria for the interviews were administrators, faculty members, graduate students and institutional leaders at the participating universities and the NUFU organizational headquarters, specifically the SIU administrative unit. Several recruitment procedures were used to ascertain the most relevant individuals within the NUFU program and the three participating universities. The first procedure was accomplished by sending electronic copies of the information/consent letter to faculty members and project administrators directly linked to the case study project. Using the snowball technique, other potential participants were either contacted electronically in the same manner or were approached individually through a personal referral. Prior to participating in the interviews, informants were provided with an information and consent letter outlining the expectations of their participation. The participants recruited for this study were central actors from the particular research network and participating institutions and organizations (One Norwegian university, one Tanzanian university, one South African university, NUFU and SIU). The five demographics highlighted for recruitment were: 1) Program directors; 2) Project coordinators; 3) Project researchers; 4) Graduate students/research assistants; 5) Project/institutional administrators; 6) Institutional/organizational leaders with direct knowledge of the NUFU program and NSRPs considered more broadly.

The recruitment letter contained information relevant to the consent process, including: the title of the project, the researcher’s contact information, the supervisor’s contact information, the University of Toronto Ethical Review Board’s contact information, and an outline of the participants rights before, during, and after the interview process. Participants were informed that the project involved in-depth, qualitative analysis of the NUFU program and its supported research linkage modality, as well as the supporting agencies and institutions, with a particular focus on the South-South and regional components. Participants were informed that the individual interviews would take between 45 and 90 minutes, during which time they would be asked to express their opinions and reflections regarding their personal and professional experiences as a participant in a NUFU-supported research project.
Permission and signed approval for the tape recording and transcription of the interviews was obtained prior to individual participation. Participants were provided with the option of not having their interview recorded and of withdrawing from the interview process and/or study as a whole at any time in the study’s lifespan. They were informed that they may also refuse to answer any questions that they were not comfortable with. They were informed that the information was to be retained in a secure location in the researcher’s office and kept confidential, as their names were not be used in the final study, in publications, or in presentations, unless the participants waived their right to anonymity, which would be indicated in writing on the project consent form. Consent forms were stored with the collected data and transcripts in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home. Recruitment and consent form samples are included in Appendix 2.

*Direct Observation*

Direct observation of NUFU program activities, meetings, and consultations were used to gain a better understanding of the agenda-setting, decision-making, and administrative processes involved in the NUFU modality, as well as participant motivations, expectations, objectives and interpersonal relations. The direct observation stage involved field visits to the primary sites of the case study research network. This stage allowed for a more contextual understanding of the activities occurring within and between the participant sites and the constituent actors, as well as a more comprehensive understanding of the key processes in the project as outlined in the literature review and analytic framework sections of the study. The direct observation allowed for the addition or modification of the ideal-type categories through a constant comparative analysis. The researcher also looked for manifestations of tacit interpersonal processes, including participant motivations, expectations, and relations, particularly in terms of the epistemological, ideological and methodological issues involved in project construction and implementation.

*Data Collection Procedures*

As an international case study, the investigation occurred over two separate study periods across the three international locations. The first portion of the study was conducted in
Norway between January and March of 2010. The second portion was conducted in Tanzania and South Africa between March and July of 2010. The data collection was guided by the central research questions outlined in chapter one pertaining to the construction, implementation and evaluation of the NUFU modality as manifested within the single case study network across the three sites. Multiple sources of data were collected:

1. NUFU program archival, policy and educational documents.
2. Observations of academic and administrative processes at the various sites.
3. Semi-structured interviews with administrators, faculty members and institutional leaders at each of the university sites and the NUFU headquarters.
4. Personal journal and reflective notes.

At no point in the study was a translator used to conduct the fieldwork in Norway, Tanzania or South Africa. All relevant documentation was required to be in English and all the participants involved in the NUFU program and the individual project spoke English at a professional level. In addition, all program and project meetings attended were conducted in English and all members had a good command of the English language.

Data collection at all sites was carried out in a similar manner. Aita and McIlvain (1999) suggest that interviews be conducted after other, less sensitive types of data collection occur, such as document analysis, non-participant observations and surveys in order to allow participants in the field to become more comfortable with the researcher’s presence. As a result, interviews occurred only after the researcher became familiarized with local physical and organizational settings at each of the research sites. Observations were made throughout the research process at each site, particularly through meeting periods involving participants from each of the research sites. Interviews occurred through face-to-face interaction at a location and time that was convenient for the interviewee. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and was taped with the participant’s permission in line with the formal consent process outlined above. On some occasions, a second interview was scheduled in order to continue the investigation at the interviewee’s behest.

In the Norwegian portion of the study, a total of ten faculty members and eight administrators were interviewed, identified as N.R1 to N.R10 and N.A1 to N.A8, respectively, throughout the study write-up. Between the Tanzanian and South African site visits a total of 20 interviews were conducted, twelve with researchers and eight with administrators. The interviews were coded as S.R1 to S.R12 for the researchers and S.A1 to S.A8 for administrators. Distinguishing between the two sites was not made explicit in the coding process for the sake of anonymity given the small sample size. All of the interviews were taped and transcribed.
verbatim for analysis. The participants included researchers directly involved in the case study project, institutional administrators experienced with the NUFU program and modality, and past and present NUFU program board members, the governing body of the NUFU program that is responsible for establishing, modifying and regulating program and project objectives, frameworks, and evaluations, as well as constructing and carrying out the project selection criteria and processes.

**Data Analysis Methodology and Analytic Framework**

The data analysis for this study is divided into a preliminary analysis phase and a secondary cross-site analysis and integration phase. In the preliminary phase, data analysis occurred concurrently with data collection during each phase of the case study at each of the constituent data collection sites. The data collected at the various Norwegian sites provided emergent themes, particularly in terms of the program structure, framework and Norwegian context, which helped to guide and focus the data collection at the two SSA sites. The second phase involved cross-site analysis and data integration. During this second phase of analysis, the different sources of data were integrated and compared to the thematic groupings established during the literature review and document analysis sections of the study. The original research questions provided the guiding basis for integration and constant comparison.

To answer the first central research question, regarding the nature and structure of the NUFU modality, the analytic framework constructed in the third chapter of this study was used as a guiding tool for examining the particular NUFU project selected for study. The analytic framework is grounded in an ideal-type methodology, implemented under the rationale of situating the collected data in relation to the historically dominant structure and dynamics of North-South research linkage models, characterized by a number of structural and substantive asymmetries between core and peripheral knowledge-related actors. The ideal-type categories constructed by the researcher are based on core structures, processes and outcomes involved in Northern-funded development-related research linkage programs highlighted during the literature review and document analysis phases of the study and compiled through an open-ended, constant comparative process with the flexibility to integrate or modify categories as they arose throughout the data collection and analysis stages of the study. By implementing the ideal-type framework, this study is able to evaluate the relative strengths or weaknesses of the NUFU
modality and its South-South component in comparison to the historical record and purported ideals of both the NUFU program and North-South research partnerships considered more broadly.

The formal process of constructing the analytic framework, as presented in chapter three, began by identifying and establishing key categories for comparison during the literature review and document analysis phases of the study. The coding process was conceptually linked to the contextual background detailed in the second and third chapters of the study, grounded in a holistic examination of the historical antecedents that precipitated the current models of research-oriented development assistance programs and the socially constructed bifurcation of the international arena into *Northern funder* and *Southern recipient* groupings. Through the coding process, the following criteria were established and subsequently refined through the interview and observation stages of the study: program and project selection criteria and processes, project agenda setting processes, resource management, knowledge management, and sustainability and capacity building. A constant comparative process was implemented in order to ensure three analytic features of the study: that new criteria or categories were not overlooked throughout the investigation; that a constant integration and refinement of categories was carried out to ensure the most parsimonious variables; and that the categories were sufficiently large in both scope and applicability (Merriam, 1998, 191).

Based on the final categories, an *ideal-type* was constructed in order to establish a representational framework of the dominant NSRP processes and dynamics. Due to the long-term structural asymmetries reproduced by a constant environment of dependencies, contingencies and conditionalities, the ideal-type was termed *Coercive*. This ideal-typical construct presents a spectrum from which to situate on-the-ground findings, the analysis and synthesis of coded interviews, and direct observations made during site visits to the participating institutions and organizations in Norway, Tanzania and South Africa. The construction of an ideal-type for the sake of methodological analysis is based on the understanding that ideal-types need not have a real empirical referent or manifestation, but that such functional, yet purely representational, mechanisms can facilitate a reasonable comparative tool that is both general and cohesive in nature and definition.

The ideal-type framework is grounded primarily on Max Weber’s theoretical construction: as Weber described it, “an ideal-type is formed…by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to the one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytic
construct” (Weber, 1949, 90). Ideal-type constructs aim to identify the ideal properties of a concept, and therefore, they need not have a real empirical referent, although they always have an ideal one. As Weber further elaborates, “it does not describe a concrete course of action, but a normatively ideal course, assuming certain ends and modes of normative orientation as binding on actors” (ibid, 13). For the purpose of this study, the ideal-typical construct serves as the framework from which key criteria, as variables or parts of the overarching NSRP modality, can be compared and evaluated as generalized categories. They are meant to make explicit a set of assumptions about the North-South relational phenomena and related processes that are explored, tested, and challenged throughout the research process, from the earliest stages of the literature review to the final stages of the data analysis.

The constructed categories of data are based on the researcher’s interpretations and understandings of broader historical and theoretical considerations that contextualize the NUFU modality, and are not meant to represent a reified set of conceptual structures. Rather, the ideal-types may be restructured and reformulated to better match the logic of alternative development modalities, structures and systems as they arise in the relevant contexts. This framework is implemented with the understanding that specific normative characteristics may arise in conjunction with different cultural, political and economic settings. The study’s ideal-type construction is grounded in the researchers’ interpretation of the economic, political and cultural world-system that has dominated the international arena over the last 500 years of history, as outlined in the second chapter of this study, with specific attention paid to two horizons of analysis: the history of colonial relations between Europe and SSA and the construction and management of the international political and economic arena after the Second World War. This orientation is adopted in order to investigate how broader and more fundamental historical conditions and structures have influenced and, to a great extent, dictated the trajectory of the post-War partnership paradigm associated with international development assistance processes and policies.
Chapter Five: The Context of Norwegian Development Assistance and the NUFU Program

Introduction

The following chapter presents the national context of Norwegian development assistance programming since the end of the Second World War, first through an analysis of the historical developments that have driven Norwegian initiatives over the last 60 years. This is then followed by an in-depth examination of the primary Norwegian program that has dealt with NSRP programming over the last 25 years, the NUFU program. A non-colonial power, Norway has predominantly been divorced from the locus of core-periphery geo-political activities up until the country achieved formal independence from Sweden in 1905; it was only after the end of the Second World War that Norway began to proactively engage the international arena, specifically through its interaction with the newly formed United Nations multilateral system and the evolution of Norway’s domestic economic landscape. As a result of the above developments and the nation’s domestic political economy, Norway became one of the most consistent donor nations in the world by the early 1980s. The combination of Norway’s disengagement with the global periphery until the mid-20th century, other than a strong tradition of missionary work and its presence within that periphery up until the mid-20th century, and the burgeoning role it has played in both the multilateral arena and as a mediator for international conflict in the late-20th century, Norway’s historical status as both a semi-core and semi-periphery state makes it an interesting case study for evaluating its development assistance policies and practices.

The evolution of the NUFU program is one such practice, and its ties to the broader Norwegian tradition and conceptions of development are evident in the analysis of post-War Norwegian aid initiatives. In order to understand the pre-conditions of the NUFU program, this chapter explores Norwegian development assistance in terms of its embedded history through a review of both academic and government literatures, and supported by interviews with key members of the NUFU and SIU organizations. The second half of the chapter builds upon the contextual foundation through a focused examination of NUFU program structures and policies. Grounded in key informant interviews and primary document analysis, this section examines the rationales and goals that drive the NUFU program, with particular reference to the South-South
component, in order to gain an understanding of how NUFU administrators and researchers have historically and presently engaged with the key thematic issues raised in the Coercive ideal type as outlined in chapter three.

**Norwegian Development Assistance: Justifications, Motivations and Rationales**

At the end of the Second World War, as developmentalist and modernist ideologies began their ascent to a place of prominence in the international political economy, Norway’s state institutions were characterized by low levels of active engagement with formal transnational power structures (van der Veen, 2000). Due to country’s geographic isolation and low population density, and its relative paucity of economic development until the discovery of North Sea oil in the 1960s, and the fact that the Norwegian territory was subsumed as a part of both the Danish conglomerate state (1380-1814) and the Swedish-controlled United Kingdom of Sweden and Norway (1814-1905), meant that Norway had not historically been in a position to autonomously develop its foreign policy or engage with either the European or colonial theatres save for a strong tradition of religious missionary work throughout the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries (van der Veen, 2000; Pharo, 2003; Tvedt, 2007; Neumann, 2007). As Riste (2005) contends:

> It has been said that Norway’s history has three time dimensions. As a people and as a nation, that history covers more than a thousand years, beginning with the Age of the Vikings. As an autonomous state with a continuous tradition embodied in a Constitution and in political institutions, Norway’s lifespan stretches from 1814 and the end of the Napoleonic wars. As a fully sovereign nation with her own foreign policy, however, Norway goes back less than a hundred years – to 1905 and the break-up of the union with Sweden. (p. 13; as cited in Neumann, 2007, 56)

The evolution of the Norwegian state over a 500-year period represents a slow development from a peripheral state to a semi-core nation, marked by the move from a structurally dominated territory within the world-system to a robust economic power with active participation in both the global capitalist system and the core-dominated multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank and the United Nations.

In light of the country’s limited history as a sovereign nation, Norway was without a government policy apparatus for development assistance immediately after the conclusion of the Second World War and it was not assigned any UN mandates regarding European
reconstruction and global decolonization (van der Veen, 2000, 458). Furthermore, the Foreign Ministry did not support research into non-European subjects. As of 1963 only seven organizations received a mere 2.7 million NOK (USD) in state support (Andersen et al., 1987; as cited in Tvedt, 2007, 616) Considered in terms of a world-systems analysis, as of the mid-20th century, Norway could have been considered a semi-periphery nation.

However, the later third of the 20th century ushered in an era of economic prosperity and growing interest in issues of international governance. As a result, by the late 20th century Norway’s increased involvement in official development assistance programs placed them as a top donor country in the OECD, and one of the few countries to consistently meet and surpass the recommended contribution of 0.7% GDP, having done so for almost 30 years (OECD, 2008, 13). While the quantitative growth is important to understanding Norway’s engagement with the global arena, the socially embedded rationales and justifications for this shift are key reasons to this study’s analysis of the NUFU program. It has been argued that in the Norwegian case, a ‘Southern political system’ (SPS) has evolved as a core sub-system of the domestic political economy (Tvedt, 2007). Tvedt conceptualizes Norway’s SPS as follows:

(It) comprises both development aid and foreign policy directed towards improvement of the situation in the so-called ‘South’...it also captures that we are speaking here of a top-down interweaving of two different fields of policy which have historically derived from very different, and indeed contrasting, constituent value dichotomies. (Development aid was constituted around the paired values ‘what creates/does not create development’, while traditional foreign policy has always revolved around ‘what serves/does not serve the interests of the state’) (ibid, 619).

The SPS forms an important and powerful sub-layer of the domestic political economy that is focused on the domestic rationales for supporting development-related initiatives and policies within the broader global political economy. By gaining a better understanding of Norway’s domestic political system, specifically as it relates to the form and tenor of the country’s international engagement, this study is able to reflect on the transformative possibilities, structural limitations, and thematic implications of the NUFU program and its South-South-North modality. As such, a brief history of Norway’s involvement with development-related programming will preface the qualitative analysis of the NUFU programs’ structure, rationales and goals, both considered broadly in this chapter and in relation to the case study examination carried out in chapters six and seven in regards to a single NUFU project.

As indicated above, Norway is a non-colonial country that at the end of the Second World War had no systemic apparatus for dealing with development-related programming (van
During the late 1940s and early 1950s Norway was involved in the United Nations development programs, specifically the UN Special Fund for Technical Assistance. However, its contributions were low compared to its European peers (ibid, 468). Its first foray into bilateral aid was through a fisheries project in Kerala, India in 1952, with the single project actively debated in the national parliament for over two years (van der Veen, 2000; Pharo, 2003; Stokke, 2005). As international development became a more prominent global and national issue, efforts to increase assistance resulted in the call for a centralized national organization, resulting in the Onarheim Report of 1967 that was produced by a special committee set up to review and expand the overall aid program. The Report set in motion a process that ended up establishing the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) in 1968 as “a fully fledged directorate and made responsible not only for bilateral aid but also for Norwegian aid transfers through the UN system and the development banks” (Pharo, 2003, 540).

The justifications that have motivated Norwegian development assistance are a core facet of this examination of the NUFU program; it embeds the organization, its evolution and its role within the international development arena within a particular historical, cultural and political context. While specific policies have fluctuated over the last 60 years, particularly since the formation of NORAD and the institutionalization of development-related programming in the Norwegian political system, three general characteristics have consistently motivated and justified Norway’s international engagement: humanitarianism, enlightened self-interest, and international branding and reputation building (van der Veen, 2000; Pharo, 2003; Stokke, 2005; Tvedt, 2007). These dynamics are examined below in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Norwegian political institutions and the general citizenry have envisioned their role within the international community since the mid-20th century. This exploratory case study of the NUFU program will interrogate how these ideals play out in the course of an individual projects’ life cycle and operation, specifically in regard to the purported goal that Norwegian-funded development organizations should facilitate the empowerment of local epistemic communities through capacity building processes. It will also investigate the consistency of policies throughout the various phases of a project’s implementation. While government and organization policy documents represent a primary source for the identification and expression of core organizational objectives and motivations, the project’s implementation of such policies offer insights into the various intersections between program rhetoric and reality.
In regards to Norway’s approach to development assistance over the last 60 years, humanitarianism is noted as the most consistent justification given for development-related activities and policies (van der Veen, 2000; Stokke, 2005). This has predominantly been operationalized through development strategies that seek to assist in improving the public welfare structures within less-industrialized countries, with an emphasis on the improvement of social services, particularly health and education, on the basis that such services directly improve the ability of local communities to meet their own basic needs (Stokke, 2005, 450). Olav Stokke (1989), one of the leading scholars on the history of Norwegian development-related engagement, contended that “(Norwegian aid) is primarily informed by dominant socio-political norms, which encompass, in order of importance, the welfare ideology, Christian standards, and humanitarianism” (p. 161). The direct and indirect influence of these three normative positions has created a development apparatus with a long-standing, high level of sensitivity to the principles of equality and solidarity between genders and both intra- and international social groups. These values were first articulated at the national level in the 1961 Engen Commission White Paper, and have been a key motivator for Norwegian involvement in the United Nations multilateral system (van der Veen, 2000, 469).

While Norway was not a participant in the formal European colonial project in SSA, over the course of the 19th century the country sent out more religious missionaries per head of population than any other European country (Tvedt, 2007, 624). This historical reality creates an interesting and important tension in regard to Norway’s situation within the world-system; despite the historical absence of formalized initiatives for the political and economic repression or exploitation of peripheral nations, the values and social structures promoted by extensive missionary activities can be interpreted as belonging to a quasi-colonizing mentality. Though missionary work was predominantly arms-length from the domestic political apparatus, at the level of individual citizens it indicates a particular ideological orientation to the colonial territories of other nations that operates in line with epistemic colonialism outlined in the second and third chapters of the current study. As Simensen (2005) contends: “central themes of the modern debate about religion and development appeared already during the pioneering period of the Norwegian Missionary Society (“Det Norske Missons-Selskab”) in South Africa and Madagascar from the 1850s and 1860s. The key concepts in missionary strategy of this period were ‘christianizing’ and ‘civilizing’ (p. 2). However, the relationship between religious and humanitarian motivation has long been a source of tension that has played out within Norway’s domestic political system regarding the role of religion in development assistance programming.
Regardless of the influence of religion and the highly contentious history of many missionary activities, both Norwegian and non-Norwegian, the outward-looking orientation of many Norwegians through their religious affiliations facilitated the nations’ adoption of development aid as a primary means of foreign policy and international activity (Tvedt, 2007, 624).

In regard to the prominent role of humanitarianism in Norway’s political and cultural discourse regarding aid, Anne Maurits van der Veen’s (2000) year-by-year analysis of Norwegian Parliamentary sessions over a 35-year period offers insight into the strength and persistence of the humanitarian influence in the Norwegian foreign policy agenda. Van der Veen tallied and coded 886 aid-based arguments proposed by the Norwegian legislature between 1952 and 1998 and calculated the top ten motivators expressed by Parliamentary members. In her results, humanitarianism represents the most persistent rationale, making up 13.4% of all arguments, 3% more than the second-most present argument, international peace and stability (10.4%) (p. 462). At the same time, economic interests were absent from the top ten arguments for development assistance and consisted of less than 3% of all arguments for aid between 1952 and 1998 (van der Veen, 2000, 463).

In terms of popular support for humanitarian based aid, by the late 1960s development assistance had achieved such a prominent and positive place in the national psyche that giving aid was taken as something that more advanced, industrialized nations were supposed to do (Hveem, 1972). A 1947 Gallup poll reported that 97% of Norwegians were in favor of aid, 41% had given money within the last six months, and 36% refused to name a specific country that ought to be targeted, instead choosing to answer, “all those who suffer from hunger have the same right. Aid must go where it is needed most” (van der Veen, 2000, 470). In 1967, an Aftenposten newspaper poll reported that 51% of respondents supported the Onarheim Committee recommendation of 1% GNP to aid (ibid, 470). Since the early 1970s, national polls have consistently reported that the majority of Norwegians continue to support higher levels of aid, with 58% approval in 1972 and 76% in 1986, despite the latter poll occurring in the midst of the global economic depression of the 1980s. The consistency of these numbers reflect Norway’s long held normative ideals regarding their obligation to promote development assistance programs, regardless of the competing political or cultural agendas at play within their domestic sphere.

The second defining characteristic of the Norwegian aid system is the idea of enlightened self-interest, a relatively altruistic manifestation of development-based intervention
and support. The 1995 Norwegian *Commission on North-South and Aid Policies* articulated Norway’s engagement with development issues abroad as follows: “solidarity, justice, equality and benevolence have for years been given as basic motives for Norway’s development assistance...the increasing ecological and social crisis of the global society affects all and has to be solved in common. There is here a question about both common interest and self-interest” (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1995, 5; emphasis in the original document). The belief that assisting and stabilizing developing countries, particularly those in humanitarian crises, has historically been endorsed by the entire Norwegian political spectrum, regardless of party affiliation, and has been characterized by a high degree of consensus among the main political parties (Stokke, 1989, 172). It can also be argued that a great deal of Norway’s interest in this dynamic of international relations has been fueled by its own history as a vassal territory to neighboring Denmark and Sweden over a 500-year time span (Neumann, 2007). In its early stages, aid was not used as a subject of inter-party competition (Balsvik, 1969; Stokke, 1989, 2005; Pharo, 2003), as it followed “a consistent line from the very start, almost without regard to changes in the political color of the government” (Stokke, 1989, 172). Major disputes between the main political parties have centered on aid volume rather than grounding ideologies, with “changes in the relative strength of different parties unlikely to distort (the) measures or motivations for aid in legislative debates” (van der Veen, 2000, 460). The consistency across political parties for aid indicates a significant belief that development assistance is not only a means for assisting foreign humanitarian crises, but is of central importance to the future of Norway vis-à-vis global stability.

Tracing the concept in major Norwegian policies and legislative debates over the last 40 years, it is apparent that despite the central interest in humanitarianism, self-interest has been a pervasive secondary factor in Norway’s assistance rationale. The first national White Paper, the 1961 *Engen Commission*, considered the promotion of economic and social progress to be preconditions for global peace and stability, and put forward an argument that aid “constituted an important part of the peace policy which the nations of the world have committed themselves to pursue as members of the United Nations” (Engen Commission, 1961, 5-7; as cited in van der Veen, 2000, 468). This line of reasoning carried throughout the 1960s and was further articulated in the 1967 *Onerheim Report*, where it was argued that “unequal international distribution of wealth creates the basis for unrest and conflicts both within countries and between states” (*Stortingstidende*, 21 May 1968, 3761; as cited in van der Veen, 2000, 468).
In the 1970s, Norway legislated the concept of distributive justice as a core rationale for aid, in addition to economic and social progress in developing countries (Norway, 1972a, 11; as cited in van der Veen, 2000, 469). In conjunction with the UN Declaration and Conventions on Human Rights, distributive justice added a clear human rights dimension to Norway’s aid endeavours, creating a more robust idea of the preconditions for stability in developing countries. Norway’s responsiveness to UN leadership highlights the pervasive belief that the multilateral system should be a central mechanism to ensure global stability. As a result, in 1972 the Norwegian legislature prescribed that ODA should be divided equally between multilateral and bilateral aid channels (van der Veen, 2000, 469). The UN system was considered “altruistic, effective, organized in the best interests of the recipient, free from strings associated with bilateral aid, including procurement tying, and with the national identity of the donors removed” (van der Veen, 2000, 468), and Norway’s political leadership operated on the belief that a strengthened UN system would help attain an equitable global development system, one that could cultivate global stability as opposed to a hierarchical international arena. This notion of international solidarity through a truly global and equitable geo-political system continued through to the late 1990s, with the 1995-1996 Government White Paper that argued for the maintenance of the instrumentality of international solidarity as enlightened self-interest: “Linked to a number of factors which affect our lives, national identity, and international position in various ways. In the government’s view, an active South policy is an important element of our overall approach to save these interests” (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1996, 10.)

The period of the 1960s and 1970s posed a number of geo-political challenges for Norway’s Southern Political System, particularly in light of the growing tensions of the Cold War and domestic economic considerations (Pharo, 2003, 540-546). In regard to the former issue, the humanitarian and social welfare goals of Norway’s engagement with the global periphery resulted in a series of tensions between the country and leading Western powers, particularly the United States, over issues of economic policy (ibid, 544). Norway’s initial foray into development assistance was highly motivated by pressure from the United States to counterbalance Soviet interests in the post-colonial regions of the world:

The 1952 proposal for bilateral aid to India was a carefully tailored Labour Party initiative designed to serve diverse purposes and directed at several different audiences at home and abroad. Aid to India was seen as a means of helping the West to prop up what was considered to be the pivotal state in Asia after the
communist victory in the Chinese civil war. The need for a containment policy in Asia was recognized across the political spectrum (Pharo, 2003, 529).

However, the growing influence of the G-77 and the calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), particularly through the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), a body of the UN established in 1964 to promote a more equitable structuring of the global economic system, caused Norwegian political leaders to significantly re-evaluate their relations with the traditional Western powers (Pharo, 2003, 530; Stokke, 2005, 472). Pharo (2003) contended:

Within the DAC, Norway was generally skeptical of, and frequently opposed to, the attempts of the United States to forge a common front of the industrialized states against the demands of UNCTAD for increased transfers as well as for major structural changes in the international economic system (pg. 544).

The evolution of this ideological tension represents a key dynamic of the Norwegian political system, particularly the SPS, and distinguishes Norwegian development-oriented policies from those of the other dominant Western donors.

The latter of the two contextual issues during the 1960s and 1970s, that of domestic economic pressure, presented a significant test for the ideological affinities of Norway’s SPS. Before the discovery of North Sea oil and natural gas in the 1960s and during the economic crisis of the mid-to-late 1970s, increased calls were made within Norway for tying the financial resources distributed through development aid to Norwegian industries in order to bring a greater portion back into Norway’s domestic economy (Stokke, 2005, 472-474). As a result, Norwegian leaders participated in a careful dance within the international arena in order to maintain the semblance of solidarity while simultaneously balancing Norwegian domestic interests. For example, Norway took the lead in building coalitions to block attempts by nations receiving Norwegian funds to develop their own domestic shipping industries, developments that would significantly damage Norway’s shipping industry, which contributed more than 40% of its export earnings (Pharo, 2003, 545). It did so by presenting alternatives that would reduce transport costs for recipient actors, while increasing the returns on investment for Norway’s domestic shipping industry (Pharo, 2003, 545; Stokke, 2005, 477). However, this domestic tension was short-lived both in policy and in practice. As early as 1967, untied aid was introduced by the legislature, institutionalizing a maximum 10% margin of benefit to Norwegian producers (ibid, 476-7). While this has been slightly modified in times of economic crisis, the commitment to untied aid has been maintained and strengthened over the last 40 years (Stokke,
In terms of specific outcomes, in 1990 39% of aid was untied, in 1995 this number fell to 23% and as of 2001 tied-aid represented a mere 1.1% of all Norwegian aid (ibid, 478). This trend has resulted in a 99% grant share of all official development assistance (ODA) in the period since OECD-DAC declared untied aid as a goal of development assistance, which marks the highest level of any OECD country (ibid, 478).

A key era for evaluating the strength and consistency of Norway’s ideological independence through its vision of enlightened self-interest is the 1980s, a period when neo-liberal ideology began to dominate the international development agenda and a global economic crisis forced many nations to re-consider development-related commitments (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). During this period, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund became the dominant voices of the international development system, recommending a series of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) to the majority of post-colonial and post-Soviet nations that conditionally tied loans to significant alterations in macro-economic policy, many of which directly conflicted with Norway’s historical support for strong social welfare systems, economic self-sufficiency, and arms-length intervention in development processes (Stokke, 2005, 458-460). Prescribing demand-side restrictions, increased privatization, and drastic cuts to key social services, the one-size-fits-all conditionalities offered up by the SAPs directly conflicted with Norway’s commitment to holistic development assistance through micro-level, context-sensitive support (ibid, 459). Historically, Norway had limited the role of the private sector in development activities and policies and had viewed direct economic intervention as an asymmetrical and self-interested rationale for international engagement (Pharo, 2003, 541; Stokke, 2005, 453). In terms of specific policies, fairer income distribution was added by the Norwegian legislature in 1972 as a long-term goal of development-related assistance. This policy ensured that tied aid was not involved in development programming, that relationships were based on the mutual exchange of goods and services, and demanded increased cultural and political intercourse and cooperation with the citizens and organizations of the partner countries (Report 29, 1971; Rec 135, 1973; as cited in Stokke, 2005, 453).

The stark contrast of SAP prescriptions and Norway’s historical approach resulted in contentious debates in the country’s Parliament and broad ideological conflict regarding the extent to which Norway should incorporate global trends into their vision of development. At first, the parliament accepted many of the SAP recommendations, justifying their adoption within the Norwegian tradition as “adjustment with a human face” (Norway Report 51, 1992, 59; as cited in Stokke, 2005, 457). However, the majority of Parliament was critical of the
conformity to global pressures and many of the initial modifications were quickly overturned (ven der Veen, 2000, 459). The broad international consensus that followed the WB and IMF programmes was countered by a powerful domestic tradition based around a specific set of Norwegian ideals. This is not to say that lasting alterations were not made to Norwegian policy, but the majority of its resource allocations and development-related policies did not follow the new trend towards economic liberalism, inferring a specific national adaptation, interpretation and resistance to global development discourses and policies (ibid, 459). Perhaps in response to the loss of legitimacy in the World Bank system, Norwegian support to multilateral institutions fell dramatically through the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century, with under 30% of the aid budget being directed to multilateral aid by the end of the 1990s (ibid, 469). Bilateral aid was seen as more controllable and responsive to Norwegian development ideas and prescriptions.

It was not until the 1975 government White paper, entitled *Norway’s Economic Relations with Developing Countries*, that economic interests played a more prominent role in national discourse regarding development assistance. However, despite a slight change in rhetoric, the Paper only supported minor changes that increased attention to domestic industries, such as supporting up to 50% of the costs of pre-investment studies for Norwegian firms (ibid, 473-477). The Norwegian government continued to place poverty levels and political regime characteristics within recipient jurisdictions above Norway’s domestic economic interests when selecting recipient countries for assistance, and chose to promote interventions that focused on the poorest countries in the world with governments that promoted socially just policies and practices (ibid, 473).

The final key characteristics of Norway’s development assistance regime are international branding and reputation building, both of which have been intimately tied to an internally driven sense of obligation to development assistance as a means of ensuring Norway’s status in the international arena since the 1950s. As can be seen in the historical evolution of Norwegian development policies and discourse, the country has consistently tied its active role in the international arena to its long-term international interests. Because of this, reputation and branding have been a key determinant for Norwegian politicians, and to some extent the public sector, as aid has been viewed as an important means of influencing international events and organizations (Stokke, 2005). As van der Veen’s analysis showed, prestige (8.2%), obligation (6.3%), inter-state competition (3.6%), and “aid as an expression of Norway’s international identity and as an opportunity for international leadership” (3.2%), constitute 4 of the top 10
arguments put forward by the Norwegian legislature between 1952 and 1998 (van der Veen, 2000, 463). This ties in with the international view of Norway as expressed by the OECD, that “the commitment of the Norwegian people to the alleviation of poverty and suffering in developing countries is a distinguishing feature of their national identity” (OECD, 1996b, 7; as cited in van der Veen, 2000, 462).

While economic self-interest was predominantly eschewed from development policies at the earliest stages of Norwegian development intervention, and enlightened self-interest was articulated in terms of global stability and peace, a less altruistic form of self-interest has historically been operational within the Norwegian political and public spheres. The establishment of NORAD through the 1967 Onerheim Committee and the increase in financial support throughout the 1960s have been linked to Sweden’s incorporation of its national development agency, the Swedish International Development Agency, and Sweden’s ascension to a top donor country (van der Veen, 2000, 471). Norway’s prominent role in the United Nations system can be argued to be a natural extension of the country’s belief that, as representative Solheim argued in the 1995 review of Norwegian aid, “when aid is an issue…where we are in many ways a kind of superpower, and where we have an opportunity to be an example for others…Norway ought to make use of this role and this opportunity” (Stortingstidende, 21 Feb, 1995, 2280; as cited in van der Veen, 2000, 486). This has become more visible in the late 20th and early 21st centuries through Norway’s active participation in the negotiation and mediation of international crises, such as the Oslo Accords of the early 1990s and its long-standing role with Sri Lanka’s civil war. The founding of the Nobel Peace Prize by the Norwegian Parliament in 1901, which is awarded once per year through a nomination and selection process administered by the Norwegian Nobel Committee, may be another expression of this.

The evolution of aid as a tool for international influence and prestige has resulted in a blurring of the lines between development assistance and foreign policy, but in a much different way than articulated by the realist camp of international relations. Tvedt (2007) describes the internalization and institutionalization of development aid in the Norwegian political and public sphere as the creation of a ‘Southern political system’ within Norway’s domestic political landscape (pp. 619-620). The SPS operates according to a co-construction of aid as both altruistic and as a mechanism for influencing norms and policies created in Washington, the United Nations and the European Union (ibid, 619). Foreign policy is articulated through a sub-system of the national Norwegian political system that recognizes the international political
capital that is accrued through the country’s positive international reputation. Thus, while in some ways Norway operates under the Realist assumption that aid is an explicit means of soft power, Norway appears to be less motivated by advancing its own interests in developing countries than by influencing global systems, norms, and discourses around topics of humanitarian intervention, development assistance, and global stability.

The most significant quantifiable measure that reflects Norway’s interest in acting as an aid superpower is its historical record as a leading development-related funder. The 1962 *Engen Report* established its first national GNI target of 0.25%, with a long-term goal of 1%, well before the UN General Assembly, under the leadership of Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson, agreed to a 0.7% GNP target by the mid-1970s. It is interesting to note that Norway itself failed to live up to its own standard until the 1970s, and was criticized by the OECD as one of the least generous donors in 1962 (van der Veen, 2000, 488). In light of the international criticism, a growing sense of responsibility within the country, and a continued belief in the necessity of a strong UN system, the Norwegian Parliament unanimously approved a 1% GNP target in 1973, a goal that was first reached in 1977 (Stokke, 1989, 210). In the 35 years since Norway first attained the target goal, it has remained one of the top donor countries in the OECD and has consistently been one of the few countries in the world to reach Pearson’s 0.7% commitment. As of 2007, Norway remained a leading donor, with over 3.7 billion US dollars committed to bilateral and multilateral assistance programs, and it was only one of only five countries to pass the 0.7% GNP commitment, with a 0.95% commitment (OECD, 2008).

The persistence of Norwegian ideals and assistance levels over the past 50 years, in conjunction with the resistance of Norway’s SPS to many of the dominant global development norms and ideologies that were interpreted as conflicting with the Norwegian political economy and identity, has entrenched humanitarianism, enlightened-self interest, and international reputation as central determinants of Norway’s approach to development-oriented programming. The consistent promotion of a holistic conceptualization of social and economic capacity building, and the conviction that aid must simultaneously address social, economic and political sectors through multi-layered intervention processes, are foundational ideals for this study’s analysis of the NUFU program. These consistent beliefs reflect a unique Norwegian narrative in response to issues of social order, the international political economy, and global economic and developmentalist regimes. Through document analysis and a series of in-depth qualitative interviews with key stakeholders in the NUFU program and it’s administrating agency, the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU), the following
section situates the NUFU program and its NSRP modality within the above context in order to gain a better understanding of the programs’ rationales and goals. It is argued that the Norwegian SPS’s consistent separation from the most coercive aspects of the mainstream development paradigm has opened up spaces for Norway’s development-related programs to support the autonomous development of epistemic communities within the partnering universities situated in the global periphery. As such, interrogating the NUFU program through the Coercive ideal-type constructed in chapter three will augment the contextual analysis of individual NUFU projects, as will be carried out in chapters six and seven.

The Norwegian Programme for Education, Research and Development (NUFU)

Overview

First established in 1987 as a standing committee under the Norwegian Council of Universities with a mandate to strengthen and co-ordinate cooperation between Norwegian universities, colleges and research institutions and their counterparts in nations receiving Norwegian development-related funding and technical assistance, NUFU was first operationalized in a formal agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 1991 (SIU, 2004a, 4). As articulated in NUFU program reports, “the creation of NUFU in 1987 was couched in idealistic terms: Norwegian academics had a moral responsibility to support their colleagues in the South” (ibid, 4). Directly influenced by the broader Norwegian development ideology, rationales and objectives already examined in the first section of this chapter, NUFU has been consistently tasked with fostering long-term, mutually beneficial co-operation between Norwegian and Southern academic institutions based on “reciprocal and equal partnership” (ibid, 5). The program’s goals are achieved through a combination of research and education-oriented projects, with only a few select projects being strictly research-based (ibid, 5).

Since 1991, NUFU funding has increased incrementally as the number, diversity and objectives of supported projects expanded. The initial 5-year project cycle of 1991-1996 operated under a 175 million Norwegian Krone (NOK) budget (~24 million 1991 USD) and was tasked with a broad mandate of aiding the development of research capacity and competence in Southern research institutions (SIU, 2004a, 4). The second 5-year project cycle of 1997-2001 consisted of 71 projects, 5 of which were SSN, and expanded Norwegian institutional
involvement to non-university research institutes, as well as increased the total financial package to 230 million NOK (~$42.8 million 1995 USD), including supplementary project specific funding from the MFA, NORAD, and other government ministries (ibid, 4). The third project cycle of 2002-2006 supported 71 projects and drastically increased the prominence and number of SSN regional networks, with 18 such projects operating, and increased the institutionalization of the South-South modality in NUFU policy and discourse (SIU, 2009b, 24). The operating budget of the current phase, 2007-2011, was approved in 2007 and supports 69 projects, 22 of which are SSN networks, under a total budget of 370 million NOK, 55% of which is directed towards network projects (ibid, 24).

In terms of the structure and institutional characteristics of the program, NUFU has maintained its 5-year project cycles through to the end of its fourth phase, ending in 2011. Over the course of the program’s activities, the predominant source of funding has been the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), with additional funds coming from the MFA and other ministries for select projects. The overall administration of the program is currently the responsibility of the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU), after the MFA transferred the program to NORAD in 1999 (SIU, 2009a, 5). Since the beginning of 2000, decision-making at the program level has been implemented and monitored by a Program Board with a decentralized relationship to NORAD and SIU. The primary impetus for this organizational structure, as will be examined in detail below, is that the decentralization of control supports a higher level of autonomous decision-making and agenda setting by program administrators and leaders (SIU, 1998, 1.1; SIU, 2009a, 8).

NUFU governance has operated under the following schemes since the beginning of 2000: between the 1st of January 2000 and the 31st of December 2002, the NUFU board consisted of six representatives from Norway’s higher education institutions, both universities and university-colleges; between the 1st of January 2003 and 31st of May 2006 the board was expanded to seven higher education representatives and one member from the National Union of Students (NSU); and since the 1st of June 2006, the Board has consisted of six members from the Norwegian higher education sector, one member appointed by NORAD, and one student member appointed by NSU, with NORAD and the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) possessing observer status (ibid, 6).

The following sub-sections will present an overview of the major structural, ideological and methodological components that comprise the NUFU program as both a mechanism for supporting North-South research partnerships and as a representation of broader domestic
political trends within Norway’s political economy. This will be achieved by applying the major thematic headings of the *Coercive* ideal-type formulated in chapter three to the NUFU program, the SIU administrative body, and the matrix of intersecting actors and influences that together make up the Norwegian “Southern Political System”, the sphere of domestic politics that has become invested in Norway’s relationships with developing nations of the global South over the past 50 years of Norwegian North-South relations. To reiterate, the five themes to be analyzed in the scope of the NUFU program history and structure are: *Program and project selection criteria and processes, resource management, project agenda setting processes, knowledge management, and sustainability and capacity building.*

**Theme: Program and project selection criteria and processes**

One of the core mandates of the NUFU Program Board has been to operationalize a decentralized model for cooperation and quality assurance in research partnerships between Norwegian and recipient higher education institutions, a general model that has facilitated the emergence of the South-South-North network modality (SIU, 1998, 1.1). In its program documents, NUFU continually and consistently asserts that the decentralized model promotes the following four positive characteristics: a lack of a substantial central bureaucracy; the promotion of ownership, integration and commitment from the partner institutions to the cooperation both at the departmental and central levels; the promotion of knowledge build-up at recipient institutions; and the promotion of strengthened partnerships between academics and academic institutions in Norway and the partnering jurisdictions through joint initiation, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and day-to-day running of the cooperation project (SIU, 1998, 1.1; SIU, 2009a, 8). The NUFU administration contends that the decentralized model allows for greater integration of recipient institutions and actors in the evaluative process, maximizing local input and recommendations by investing committees, councils or boards located in Southern institutions and comprised of Southern actors with significant authority over the project selection and evaluation processes (SIU, 1998, 1.2). Annual progress reports are prepared jointly by project coordinators in Norway and the foreign institutions, and are supplemented by institutional reports presented annually by all participating institutions (SIU, 2009a, 7).
The organizational justification for this type of decentralized approach is that it provides “structural access to information, technology, professional networks, and publications channels within a framework of long-term and mutually beneficial relationships”, facets that are rare in mainstream bilateral research cooperation (ibid, 8). There is a specific emphasis from NUFU on allowing partnering institutions to select projects according to local and national needs and priorities, a dynamic that the literature review presented in chapter three highlighted as a central critique of traditional NSRPs. The NUFU administration contends that the decentralized model allows for a “process orientation rather than a results orientation with regard to design and mode of operation”, and allows for project innovation and “contribute(s) significantly in terms of cultural knowledge and understanding on the individual level, an effect not to be underestimated” (ibid, 8).

The end result of this logic as far as the NUFU administration is concerned is that “the needs and priorities of the institutions in developing countries take priority over those of Norwegian institutions” (ibid, 9). NUFU asserts that this is maintained through the project selection process; when Southern researchers apply for funding, they are expected to take an equal or leading role in the proposal writing process and their home institutions are empowered to assess and rank the totality of proposals being submitted from their researchers before they are represented to the NUFU Program Board. This is done in order to support the alignment of individual researcher interests with institutional and national priorities and comparative advantages. Formally, the application and selection process proceeds as follows:

1) Coinciding with the end of the previous 5-year funding cycle, an open call for proposals is forwarded by SIU every 5 years in order that a new series of projects, including a second term for some previously supports projects, can receive funding during the next 5-year cycle.

2) In response to the call, “a project proposal…should be planned and worked out jointly by the proposing researchers of the main cooperating institutions” (SIU, 2006b, 1; original emphasis). This is done through the SIU online application system and requires input and signatures from the coordinating researchers at both the Norwegian and Southern institutions, as well as signatures from the heads of the respective departments at both institutions.

3) Once the window for submitting applications is closed, the individual institutions that house applicant researchers receive a list of the projects submitted by researchers at their institution, including the full proposals for each application. The institutional
contact(s), typically an officially appointed senior research administrator, confirms and accepts that the proposal(s) submitted by the researchers are in compliance with institutional policies and can proceed to the first evaluation phase of the proposal evaluation process.

4) The first evaluation stage is comprised of two processes: external reviewers are procured by the NUFU central administration, “one from the South and one from the North, who will assess the scientific quality of the proposals” (ibid, 2); after these external reviews are complete, they are made available to the institutional contacts, at which time, “the institutions must, based on these assessments, prepare a prioritized list of all applications from their own institutions…which should be signed by the Vice Chancellor/President/Rector or similar and be forwarded to SIU” (ibid, 2).

5) “At this point the proposals turn to be official applications, and each proposal will be presented as one application from two institutions. The ranking from the institutions in the South will be given double weight compared to the ranking from the institutions in the North” (ibid, 3).

6) “The NUFU board will make decisions about allocation of funds based on the assessment and ranking from the institutions, balancing renewal and continuation of projects as well as the composition of the portfolio of the NUFU programme” (ibid, 3).

In conjunction with the above process, formal criteria are set forward by the NUFU administration in order to support transparency and consistency in the selection process. Criteria for expert evaluations are: scientific and education achievements of previous funding periods, if applicable; scientific quality and adequacy of proposed research and education program, including originality, objectives, topics, theoretical approach, and project content; merits and capability of project coordinators, research group, PhD candidates; and sustainability. Criteria for institutional evaluations are: relevance according to institutional strategies and priorities; relevance according to national plans for development and poverty reduction; expected results and outputs; feasibility; gender issues; cost effectiveness; external evaluation of scientific quality.

The processes and criteria outlined above incorporate many considerations that hypothetically enable equitable and open selection processes, whereby issues of local relevance, capacity building, and broader conceptions of research beyond thematically limited studies are
balanced with scientific quality and rigor: both Norwegian and Southern research coordinators are expected to be active participants in the proposal writing process; institutional leaders are expected to be engaged in the proposal writing process in order for feedback to be given regarding the nature and scope of the proposed project; experts and institutional leaders from both Southern and Northern jurisdictions are engaged in the vetting processes in an attempt to incorporate multiple interpretations of the potential impact and quality of individual research projects; and finally, the institutional rankings created by the administering officials at the participating Southern institution are given double weighting in the final ranking and evaluation process carried out by the NUFU program board in an attempt to ensure that Norwegian interests are not dominating the selection of individual projects.

In analyzing the program and project selection process, two separate conversations require consideration. On the one hand, as outlined in chapter three of this study, the structure of NSRP programs significantly contributes to the facilitation of equitable and effective research collaboration. The structural parameters of a given program are capable of inhibiting equitable relationships from the outset if poorly constructed. When analyzing the NUFU program, it is important to consider how well the administrators have created a transparent and balanced system for evaluating and supporting individual projects. On the other hand, as outlined in chapter three, there is a robust literature that details the historical failings of NSRP initiatives and raises the specter of coercion and asymmetry even in programs that possess many positive structural components. The Coercive ideal-type indicates that structural asymmetries are capable of manifesting or being reinforced at any point in a given project or program if the individuals involved do not adhere to the purported goals. The entire NSRP process hinges on trust, mutuality, respect, and transparency, and institutionalized checks and balances can only do so much to prevent abuses from occurring within individual projects despite positive structural elements.

At the most general level, in comparison with the limited thematic nature of projects manifesting according to the coercive ideal-type and the subservient role that Southern researchers often have in relation to Northern researchers and power brokers, an evolving feature of the NUFU program is that applications are accepted from all disciplines, and projects are considered regardless of whether they use mainstream or non-traditional methodologies and epistemological frameworks. As one of the founding administrators of the NUFU program stated:
The program here was not, kind of, targeted to a specific discipline or field. It was open... when I started (at NUFU), the first thing I did was to make a bibliography for these first years, because we didn’t have a good overview of what has been produced scientifically. So if you see here (gestures to book), you will find all the disciplines involved here, and that means that our idea was to ask the universities in the South, ‘you should use your local strategies; In which area do you want scientific building up?’ and they took it up (N.A8).

Another Norwegian administrator asserted:

It’s a bottom-up approach; researchers meet, researchers find out if they want to do cooperation, it’s not decided that this institution or that institution should cooperate in this field, because that doesn’t work, it has to be bottom-up approach and it has been from the beginning (N.A2).

The thematic openness and the demand-driven project selection formula are both extremely empowering characteristics for an NSRP program in the 21st century development landscape, even if they may not appear to be all that radical. These considerations have, for the most part, been consistent since the beginning of the NUFU program. Two former administrators passionately commented:

When it started, the World Bank and the international agencies in general, talked about basic education. Higher education and research were not on their agenda because the idea was that these poor countries do not need their own research capacity; that can be obtained in England or the United States or wherever. In a way, forgetting that for a country to receive aid without having the capacity, intellectual, scientific capacity, to evaluate what they receive, is the same as saying you are completely at the dominance of outside powers, outside competence, outside decisions...This is why Norway has said for years that these countries need their own research capacity, both to build up internal research and to have the capacity to evaluate what they are offered” (N.A1; emphasis added)

You had this tradition and that the World Bank, in fact, gave this idea that investment in HE was bad investment, the rate of return was very low, as you would know. So they said to all these countries that you should not invest in higher education. So I will say that the Norwegian engagement in higher education, especially in Africa and also other countries with poverty, was that we had, even though this is small money, but we had principle, an idea, like Sweden, that these countries need their own higher education institutions and even research capacity to be able to participate in the new global society. So whether the World Bank stopped or had the idea that you should not bother because we will provide you with knowledge, international knowledge, because we can give it to you, we had the idea that they should make their own capacity. So the NUFU Program was very small amount of money, but I would say it was a radical idea at the time and kept to these principles (N.A8; emphasis added).
While for the most part international development-related funding to post-secondary education and research declined during the mid-80s and 90s era of the Structural Adjustment Programs, Norwegian funding to the NUFU program increased and administrators were very cognizant to maintain or increase levels of support.

In order to create meaningful and sustainable capacity through NSRP projects, NUFU was operationalized according to an ethic of equal partnership. The optics of equity and transparency certainly exist within the NUFU application and selection process as outlined above, and, based on the historical literature, the NUFU methodology has made great strides to create a system grounded in robust partnerships. In 1999-2000, the Norwegian MFA commissioned the Netherlands Organization for International Co-operation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) to evaluate the NUFU program activities supported between 1991 and 2000. As NUFU described it, “the purpose of the evaluation was to have a reliable, objective document as the basis for the forthcoming discussions between MFA/NORAD and the UHR about a new agreement for the NUFU programme from January 1st 2001” (SIU, 2004a, 13). In regards to the issue of partnership, the commission reported the following:

The decision-making process in the NUFU programme is not transparent and is largely controlled by the Norwegian institutions. The Southern partners have no insight or say in project selection or fund allocations (MFA, 2000, 8; emphasis added).

This is further elaborated upon:

The involvement of the South in decision-making is virtually non-existent, a point already raised in the 1994 evaluation report. Despite the fact that most interviewees agree that the South should play a more substantive role in the decision-making process, and despite the fact that the participants in the Cape Town seminar recommended that UiD priorities should be put before the Committee to enable fair decision-making in project selection, to date no measures have been taken to implement this longstanding intention and recommendation… Another important feature of NUFU’s decision-making process is that no external advisors are involved at any stage of the approval process. This gives the NUFU programme a rather inward-looking character with possibly negative consequences for quality control and accountability (MFA, 2000, 28).

The critical conclusions made by the NUFFIC report were acknowledged and effectively internalized by the NUFU administration, and were the direct antecedent to the decision to give foreign partnering institutions double weighting in the rankings process and to include external Northern and Southern experts in the project evaluation process. However, it is important to
note that despite the modifications made by the NUFU administrators to support an increased Southern presence in the project selection process, there remains no Southern representation on the Program Board.

As has been discussed previously, coercive tendencies or dynamics may develop at any point in an individual project if it is embedded in a problematic institutional, departmental or individual context, either in Norway or in a Southern jurisdiction. Two examples of this stand out from the interviews with Norwegian participants:

In one case it fell apart because we had had one program period of four years and when we started the second, suddenly one of the partners, we had two partners in Ghana, one of the partners denied signing the contract because the coordinator there who was supposed to sign found that the coordinator in Norway didn’t expect, or didn’t accept, that he should have his own doctoral degree included in the project. (The Norwegian academic) said ‘you are the coordinator, the PhD scholarship should go to a young scholar, not to an old scientist without a PhD qualification’. And the Southern coordinator felt so insulted that he just wouldn’t sign the agreement. So, I wrote a letter to the university rector…saying, ‘under these circumstances we have to stop the project because we will not continue without the contract partners in place, we will take care of the other candidate who has begun his PhD, but we will stop the project. Take out the necessary money to finish his PhD, that’s it’. The rectors tried to avoid this, let’s say, mismanagement of the contract but couldn’t because the third partner wouldn’t budge, so we stopped it. We finished the other younger candidate three years later (N.A1).

(Country Z) has had its own agenda with politicized leadership where they have tried to suppress people at the university, also people in NUFU settings…For example, there was a project coming from (Z), they wanted to collaborate with the University of Oslo, and the University of Oslo prioritized that project in the very last place and the University of (Z) placed it on the top. This was initiated by people sitting in the key system politically in (Z), it was de-ranked in Oslo because they said, ‘you cannot have a project where you divide up the ethnic groups in (Z) to do molecular assessments genetically to see what are the different qualities of the ethnic groups and do a comparative assessment of health issues. That’s leading to say, with the thinking that in a country where there is a ranking of the tribes you will say, ‘okay, these tribes in the South, they are not valid support because they are genetically inferior’. So the University of Oslo was very clear from ethical reasons down (N.A7).

What the above quotations highlight is that in the context of Norway and NUFU, NUFU administrators are limited in their ability to ensure equality and equity within a given project if the participants themselves are not interested in such ideals. The project selection process ensures a certain amount of leverage for ensuring positive collaborative relationships, as was the
case in the second quotation, but the interests of any individual can radically alter the dynamic of a project already accepted.

The influence of the NUFU program board, and other Norwegian stakeholders, over the project selection process is a core concern of this study. As advocated by the Realist camp of international relations theory, development-related assistance should operate in service to the national interests of the jurisdiction supplying the funding (Morgenthau, 1948). Under this rubric, national political actors should vet decisions regarding the funding of particular projects in order to ensure there is a positive return on investment, either politically or economically. As raised in the third chapter overview of NSRP programs, the domestic political economy of the funding jurisdiction has historically determined the structural components of individual development-related programs. Therefore, despite the more benevolent motivations espoused by Norwegian politicians and academics alike, the domestic context of the NUFU program requires consideration and analysis. Upon examination, the multi-layered decision-making structures and administrative cultures implicit in the formal institutional relationships between NORAD, the MFA, the MER, SIU and the participating Norwegian universities embeds the NUFU program within an extremely complex system of political and economic influences and concerns that threatens the independence of the NUFU program at various stages. The 2009 COWI AS evaluation of the NUFU program comments on the confluence of interests:

Each player in the network has its own agenda: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs may have their programmatic and strategic objectives closer linked to broader knowledge creation objectives, related to the Norwegian policy of taking full advantage of the globalization process. NORAD, with its aid history, background and administrative culture may have a much tighter aid perspective on the funds transferred to…NUFU. SIU (an organisational unit under the Ministry of Education and Research) may wish to consult with its own Board, with mainly representatives from the Norwegian Council of Universities and the Ministry of Education and Research, before the…NUFU Boards become involved. While the Ministry of Education and Research is the main provider of the universities’ budgets, it has no funds of its own intended for aid, development or capacity building in the South, nor any related expertise. Again there is a risk of a clash of cultures. The ability to make fair decisions about the activities may be hampered by irrational organisational funding or decision-making structures. Attempts at aligning the different – and often conflicting – agendas of the many players are rare, perhaps because it is not clear who holds the responsibility to create a better alignment (COWI AS, 2009, 33).

This balancing act between the various Norwegian stakeholders, and the resulting tension and confusion over NUFU’s mandate, was a consistent finding throughout the interviews and presents a serious impediment as the program moves forward in subsequent years, particularly
given the changing economic and political landscapes that contextualize investment in both higher education and development-related assistance in Norway and globally. In regards to the NUFU/SIU relationship, two participants commented:

The program development has taken place on a higher political level and I think the identity of SIU or the way SIU acts, from my point of view, is shifting a bit, because now SIU wants to be involved in the program development, so they’re taking on kind of, they want to take on new responsibilities in order to be able to influence the development…which is really, it seems to be from my point of view, it seems to be something new, and perhaps you could relate that to the long history of this program, but SIU has a big, big, kind of, feels a big ownership to the NUFU program (N.A4).

When SIU is talking about NUFU they say ‘we’, and when the NUFU Programme was contextualized and established, ‘we’ was the administration of SIU together with the scientific community and the institutions of the universities, and now SIU is too much representing this field through their administration while the professional body of Norwegian HE, which should be the fundament of NUFU, is much less involved… we came into some years where the Rectors of the universities didn’t take ownership and the leadership of SIU was dealing with administration and did that well, but they were captured as a body of Norwegian ministries and lost the grip and ownership of the Norwegian scientific community (N.A7).

In regards to the broader Norwegian ‘Southern Political System’, similar concerns were put forward with regularity by both researchers and administrators:

Part of the problem is that NORAD demands, NORAD is too close to SIU, NORAD should give the money and let them trust that they are being organized. But, whether we like it or not, when you are on the Board you need to respect the work that is being done administratively by SIU. Very often it’s about technicalities, right? Whether an application complies with this or with that, and so on and so forth. It’s very difficult to argue against these technicalities, and the technicalities are very driven by the conversations that SIU has with NORAD. So there is always a clash in there, between the interests of academia and academics and our role as evaluating the quality of academic work (N.R1).

One former administrator commented on the influence of the NORAD representative in the Program Board in relation to NORAD’s support for research relating poverty reduction:

In the Program Board NORAD has an observer, and when I remember back to that meeting in 2006 there were a couple of times when she said you had chosen a lot of projects and you had rejected many and you have in the end then some projects that you have to weigh against each other, and then in some of those cases it was sort of the relevance to development more than to poverty reduction that was maybe given the, sort of the highest, if they were more or less equal on other terms (N.A3).
What the above quotations, and the referenced systemic relationships, mean as the NUFU program continues to develop is uncertain. However, there is a general agreement with the COWI AS conclusion that unless there is a clearer division of responsibility for the program, and its central mandate, it will continue to exist in a state of ideological tension and fragmentation, a state that cannot help but filter into its various decision-making structures. The Norwegian academic community requires assurance that their interests are being seriously considered by the Norwegian SPS, while the SPS needs to feel as though their investment is not being taken for granted by the academic community. The additional layer to this is that the more the Norwegian groups vie for control of the program, the greater the possibility that the Southern side of the equation becomes overlooked, as has happened in many other jurisdictions. The fight for resources and power within Norway is capable of supplanting the original intent of the demand-driven program.

One example of the way that structural tensions over the identity of NUFU are capable of playing out between the various layers of the Norwegian SPS is the creation of the Norwegian University Cooperation Programme for Capacity Development in Sudan (NUCOOP) program, housed at SIU in parallel to NUFU. The NUCOOP program documents assert:

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Sudan, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) wanted to make use of the knowledge and experiences of Sudanese affairs available in Norwegian institutions in order to support the implementation of the CPA and contribute to poverty reduction. Based on this intention, the Norwegian University Cooperation Programme for Capacity Development in Sudan (NUCOOP) was established in 2007. The programme runs until 2012 and is administered by SIU according to a contract with NORAD (SIU, 2011, 1).

Situated under the administration of SIU, the program is technically administered by the program boards of NUFU and NOMA, the sister program to NUFU that is focused on Masters education, with funds coming directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since NUCOOP funds come directly from the MFA, and are allocated under the particular guidelines of the parallel NUCOOP governing agreement, the traditional bottom-up NUFU selection criteria and processes have come into conflict with top-down government directives and interests. As one administrator commented,

This Sudan program was the most frustrating initiative, because it was not taking advantage of what we really have learned by the NUFU program; it seemed to be a vehicle to get away from it. And I remember one of the applicants got the information that he was not prioritized in this because he did too much research. So I don’t know how they decided to recruit the people…. I know that the people
sitting in the process of developing the program, they were not on scope. So it was a nonsense development of nonsense people to a nonsense program (N.A7; original emphasis).

One researcher and former NUFU Program Board member had similar concerns regarding the rigidity with which the MFA operated through the NUFU model,

NORAD decided we want to support Sudan and they allocated, I don’t remember, what, 40 million NOK or something like that… It was earmarked funds for the Sudan project, but within these earmarked funds it was more about building capacity at a more basic level, so it was more educating, creating bachelor degrees in places like Juba, in places where the universities are completely run down. So that was an example where we in the Board didn’t have the power to say no, this should not be NUFU, this should be Norway giving money to Sudan. The problem is, right, giving to Sudan for building up your universities. So they put it via NUFU and it was tremendously frustrating, because people with enormous experience with Sudan didn’t get their projects because their projects were too high on the research level. Whereas in Sudan, the idea was not to educate at the PhD level, but more at the bachelor level. And I remember having an enormous tension with the people in SIU because they, they basically knocked down many of the applications and in the Board it was very difficult to turn them around. I think they respect the Board, but its very important this sort of intermediate process that they do, and its very difficult sometime to fight against that (N.R1).

This example, and the above quotations, makes it clear that even in a domestic environment with a strong tradition of demand-driven development assistance, the Norwegian domestic political environment presents significant challenges when research and capacity building initiatives come into conflict with politically-oriented interests, directives and goals.

While the above complications present a challenging domestic environment for NUFU administration and program leaders, the majority of interviewees consistently indicated that the NUFU Program Board remains a powerful arbiter in the project selection process and can to a great extent ensure that project applications are chosen in accordance with the program criteria for demand-driven research, balancing the needs of Norwegian researchers and non-academic stakeholders. One Program Board member commented:

The NUFU Board in general is academics. So there you find, very often, people like me; extremely motivated, people who have dedicated a lot of personal resources and personal time to get this work done, trying to sort of help manage SIU and materializing the NUFU issues. So, in the NUFU Board, I feel that I speak freely and in fact, I have by all means at all times spoken freely and expressed my opinions and tried to also use my opinions to change and shape the way in which the NUFU program is created (N.R1).
While the intersecting domestic dynamics can create tension and confusion regarding the balance between the inclusion of varied research and compliance with Norwegian priorities, one NUFU administrator succinctly explained the flexibility that the Program Board possesses in dealing with such issues,

The funding is coming from the MFA through NORAD and SIU is managing it. NORAD has some priorities and you are probably aware of the 7 priorities; good governance, HIV/AIDS, etc…But also in the seven areas there are so many possibilities, so it’s very difficult to say what areas are not in…if poverty reduction or social justice is the theme of the moment, it can come from a lot of areas within a particular project. So you can work your way around the 7 priorities to include a lot of different types of research (N.A2).

While the NUFU organizational structure places a significant amount of power within the hands of the Program Board, which can act as a mediator for higher-level domestic interests, the interpretation of institutional rankings and expert evaluations, as well as balancing of top-down policy considerations with scientific merits, are significant challenges for a small grouping of academic experts, and this was readily acknowledged by a number of participants, including past and present Board members. The complications are compounded by the fact that not all Board members were familiar with issues of development research:

Remember, NUFU is not only development research; you get lots of people who actually know very little about development research. Even in the NUFU Board, I think I’m the one who knows about development research as an interdisciplinary discipline and about the bureaucracies involved. The other people, I mean, there is someone who is a veterinarian, right. What they do is about collaboration with the global South, which might not be development research. And people may not do it because they want to produce “development” per se, but because they are interested more in these scientific issues. The same with global health, right. If you are an expert on infant mortality in Africa, is that development research? They will not define themselves very much as that. They will rather be pediatricians (N.R4).

Additionally, it was difficult for Board members to adequately evaluate the impact that research projects can have and have had on particular development-related issues: “You cannot measure the invisible result of supporting HEIs and universities as platforms for an educated society, right? Because that’s an invisible thing” (N.R1)

A structural issue relating to the Board was also raised by a number of participants, and it relates to the part-time nature of the Board. Since all Board members are voluntary and work with NUFU in addition to their professional commitments, the SIU administrative unit takes up a large portion of the preparatory work for all Board meetings, including the distilling and
synthesizing of individual NUFU project reports and proposals for the purpose of evaluation. One SIU administrator commented:

Of course we have a very important position and in practice, of course, maybe we have a more important role than we have on paper, because…For instance, when you are the Secretariat of the Board, we do all the preparation of what is going to be discussed in the Board, and we know all the cases better than they do, because of course we are working with this all the time, they are only getting these documents two weeks before the meetings and they are doing it on top of their ordinary jobs and all that kind of things. So, of course we have a very important role in the decision-making processes, not because we make any decisions with regards to the selection of projects, but we do the, sort of, we are laying the background, we are laying the groundwork in preparing and we are also giving advice for the decision. But it happens from time to time, and it’s happened a lot of times that the Board does something else, but in most cases they rely on our considerations and assessments (N.A3; emphasis added).

Another SIU administrator commented:

What I think is important to know is that the Program Board does not read the project coordinators report, they only read the institutional reports. The project coordinators reports are never presented to the Program Board, they only read the institutional reports with an assessment of the project coordinators report (N.A4).

The cumulative issues outlined by the above quotations and evaluations express the difficult scenario experienced in ensuring a robust, well-informed and transparent decision-making process capable of supporting a program based on academic rigor and quality, broad conceptions of research, and domestic political concerns and influences: decision-making processes at NUFU are highly dependent on the inclinations and interpretations of a voluntary, part-time Program Board comprised of academics who are (a) not necessarily familiar with the issues associated with development-related research, (b) heavily reliant on an array of non-academic administrative processes, and (c) who possess imperfect or shorthand knowledge of the various projects and project proposals based on the evaluation system in place. In turn, these individuals are responsible for making decisions in a very narrow time period and under an array of non-academic pressures. This entire process exists on top of the external workloads that individual Board members carry as a result of their full-time professional obligations. As a result, while the utmost respect was offered for the Program Board and it’s members by all participants interviewed, it is also clear that the decentralized and fragmented nature of the NUFU administrative and decision-making structures, in conjunction with the increasingly contentious domestic economic and political structures, are less than ideal for ensuring the
purported goals of a transparent NSRP process with an explicit priority for supporting high-quality and relevant demand-driven research projects across all disciplines.

**Theme: Resource management**

The synchronism between the NUFU resource management system and the broader ideals put forward by the NUFU administration in regards to the decentralized model is a key area of concern for this study’s analysis. To what extent does the decentralized model effectively support autonomy and demand-driven research vis-à-vis its resource control and management mechanisms? Since its inception, the NUFU administration has claimed that the decentralized management model should result in:

A clear division of tasks and responsibilities between the institutions and the NUFU board. Even more important is perhaps the institution’s ability to organize its own NUFU cooperation in a way that brings forward cooperative research projects of good quality and is capable of complying with NUFU’s requirements for quality assurance of administration and management of the cooperation (SIU, 2001, 6).

It can be inferred that the independent management of resources should fall under the auspices of a decentralized model. However, two problems arise in regard to this model: first, resources are absent from the discourse of management in the majority of NUFU documents, and upon deeper analysis of official documents and through stakeholder interviews, it is apparent that resources remain predominantly administered by the Norwegian side of the collaborative framework; and second, NUFU’s decentralized model does not provide full funds for the individual research projects (SIU, 2004a, 5), but rather, “the support from NUFU is considered a supplement, a supplement which makes implementation of activities possible” (ibid, 5). The result of this arrangement is that all participating institutions are required to subsidize NUFU projects through overhead and indirect research costs, as well as balancing the time that participating researchers direct towards NUFU projects and away from their regular teaching, supervision and administrative roles. As will be discussed below, while the rationale for this arrangement is to anchor individual projects systematically within the respective institutions, this structure presents a number of challenges for the Southern side of the collaboration, particularly in terms of resource management and administrative control.

The first systemic tension in regards to NUFU’s resource management model is in reference to the initial distribution of funds for individual projects, an issue that is
predominantly under-examined in NUFU and SIU documents. The primary sources that raise this issue are the two external evaluations, commissioned by NORAD and MFA in 1999 and 2009, respectively, and the participant interviews with Norwegian researchers and administrators in the scope of this study. In NUFU’s decentralized model, the resource distribution path begins with MFA and moves to NORAD, then to SIU, then on to the administering unit at the Norwegian university and finally it is distributed to the administering unit at the participating Southern institution. In the case of the South-South-North networks, the route has one more stage, as the primary Southern institution, not the Norwegian institution, is responsible for distributing the funds to the secondary Southern institutions. On paper, the overview of this system raises a number of red flags in regards to potential bottlenecks and gatekeeping opportunities within both Norwegian and Southern institutions. This was initially raised by the NUFFIC evaluation carried out in 1999-2000:

The funding of NUFU projects is channeled through the UiNs (Norwegian universities). Although there are agreements between NUFU and the UiDs (Southern universities) and between the UiNs and the UiDs, project contracts with financial consequences are signed between NUFU and the UiNs. There is no direct flow of funding from NUFU to the UiDs. As a consequence, the UiDs have little or no insight or control over the budget of the project, with negative implications for the principles of equality and ownership in the South (MFA, 2000, 29).

This comment was compounded with a critical assessment of irregularities in the monitoring of resources within NUFU projects:

Even though NUFU has designed certain guidelines and financial regulations, individual coordinators sometimes deviate from these and, due to a lack of information or for opportunistic reasons, exercise more freedom in, for instance, the reallocation of funds. There is little control or power to impose sanctions within the NUFU system to prevent this from happening (MFA, 2000, 27).

In light of the broad historical record regarding systemic issues in resource control and management outlined in chapter four, perhaps it is not surprising that similar issues initially manifested in the Norwegian context. Since the NUFU administration reacted swiftly and positively to the NUFFIC concerns over NUFU’s project selection processes, this study is interested in assessing the extent to which NUFU reacted to the issue of resource control and management.

In terms of the current system of resource management, the 2009 COWI AS evaluation succinctly summarizes it as follows:
The funds received are forwarded by NORAD to SIU before funding is
distributed to the Norwegian university partners. They are responsible for the
transfer of money, either directly to recipient coordinators and partners in the
South, or (more often) to university international coordinators or to the financial
administration of the university. From there the money will (often after some
time) become available for the originally intended target groups. Funds remain
with accounts offices and are released only when actual expenses occur (COWI
AS, 2009, 33).

Therefore, the 2009 resource pathway does not differ significantly from the 2000 resource
pathway, and as such, falls prey to similar concerns. A number of Norwegian administrators and
researchers raised serious reservations regarding the continued structural asymmetry of the
resource management process, specifically in terms of how it may undermine the rhetoric of
partnership, equality and capacity building espoused by all of the involved Norwegian
stakeholders if individual project coordinators are incapable or unwilling to develop a robust
ethic of trust and transparency within their projects. One administrator commented on the
psychological impact of the current situation:

Now all the money goes through the Northern University, so you know the
money goes from MFA to NORAD to SIU to UiN to UiS. So you can just
imagine the problems. I’m sure there could be things to look into when it comes
to this thing, because, I mean, if the partners decided how much money should be
sent to each partner and then the money went straight from SIU, then I think it
would feel better for the UiS that they didn’t need to come to their partners at all,
“actually we don’t have any more money can you please send us some more
money?” I think it’s not good for your, for feeling equal terms, that you all the
time have to come and ask (N.A6; emphasis added).

However, a number of Norwegian participants also felt that this asymmetry was based
on either practical considerations or necessity for a certain amount of Norwegian system control
in order to ensure that participants remained in compliance with the mantras of financial
transparency and good management. In regard to the practical considerations put forward by
some participants, one institutional administrator commented:

There’s another layer of problems. NORAD expects SIU to give them ready-
made annual reports on accounts and all that. If you shift responsibility or divide
responsibility, SIU will have a hell of a lot of work to make out all these
problems; accounts and different understandings of administrative routines, that
we now do for them, because they have presently they have not that kind of
knowledge or capacity… To construct a more watertight control system than this,
will be so resource consuming for SIU that more money would be spent on
control than what might be saved in reducing the misuse of funds (N.A1).
The second issue is much more complex, and taps into issues of institutionalized corruption, systemic mismanagement of funds, and the significant influence that foreign funding can have on institutional and individual behavior in the context of jurisdictions that otherwise possess inadequate funds for the most basic of higher education expenses. These matters fall under the rubric of the financial-intellectual complex that manifests in reaction to the presence of large-scale Northern-funding, or at least large in the context of most Southern jurisdictions, directed at particular forms of knowledge production (Samoff & Carrol, 2004). In conceptualizing and contextualizing the issue of mismanagement and mission creep, two Norwegian participants commented:

If we want to avoid being patronizing and inherently suspicious of "Southern institutions", we have to confide in signed university documents. What we know happens sometimes is that other costs than those we expect to find, might be covered to get a particular job done - and that might even be the only way to get the job done! or that a university issues "internal taxation" that will be considered not only necessary, but even compulsory from a university or a national point of view, but in violation of the NUFU agreement (N.A1).

We had a meeting with the Norwegian auditor general some years ago, or two people, high-ranking people from the auditor general, who asked us how do you manage to control that you get what you pay when you had projects in the South? That is a damned good question for any country really. It’s the main question behind all this talk about corruption and so on… We discussed it back and forth and finally (X) said, ‘my proposal is that you forget about the Kroner and concentrate on the results. You can’t trace Kroner into local currency anyway beyond a certain amount and then you lose track because an invoice will be impenetrable, if it’s well done it’s impenetrable anyway, so why not say that ‘well, we paid 10k Kroner to have this or that done, is the result worth 10k Kroner or does it seem to represent some kind of fraud? Is the result not in correspondence to what you could expect?’ That is to follow result instead of the Kroner…However, I do not think it should be overlooked if it happens just because we are dealing with Southern institutions. Transparency and accountability are essential aspects of what we want to convey in the direct or indirect training in project administration that is the result of NUFU projects (N.A1; emphasis added)

Academics in the global South are extremely busy, that’s another of the biggest problems. They get paid very little money, they end up having lots of jobs at the same time, they don’t have the lives that we have in Canada or Norway or even in the US. So you find people who work as consultants for NORAD, this is the irony, because they get paid more for consultants for Oxfam or for the World Bank, and then the real, real research time becomes very compromised…to be honest, in order to maintain a family you cannot live on a professor’s salary, or its very easy to fall into all sorts of consultants. All the good people are doing consultancies for the international agencies (N.R1).
On the issue of financial mismanagement, the following comments were put forward:

When you institutionalize partnerships you also relinquish responsibility for how things are used and you in essence acknowledge that whatever they’re doing over there with what you provide is alright by you. The biggest problem we had consistently in all countries was corruption, and institutionalizing such projects opens the way for corruption so much that it is impossible to fight (N.R5).

If the accounts are correct, the accountants and the economists will say there’s no fraud here because everything is correct, but the car you promised to buy is not anywhere to be found but the invoice is there and the invoice is alright, the signatures are there, but the car is not there, you see? So if you have paid 200 million Kroner and there is no car then something is wrong. If someone else, someone in the system, someone along the way has had a small kickback (N.A1).

We also had problems of getting out what is the cost of having a student at the masters level in (Country G), because the level of the master’s scholarship financed by a donor varies from sponsor to sponsor, because the professors try to take out the kickback, so the professor said to his student, ‘you get so much’, but he said to the donor that it cost 2 or 3 or 4 times more. So it was absolutely impossible to have the university give a price for a Master’s scholarship, local cost, because that would endanger this extra income, you see (N.A1).

While the above dynamics raise some valid and serious concerns over the decentralized management structure supported by NUFU, many Norwegian stakeholders contend that it is still preferable to other models currently in vogue in the international arena. In terms of the institutionally embedded nature of the decentralized management model, specifically in regards to both institutions having to invest resources on top of those provided by NUFU, one administrator contended:

I think in the personal relationship when they are together in a project when they make their annual plan, when they say we are going to do this and that, it’s in many cases I think more, you feel more obliged to really do that. So, I think it has some very, maybe we do not value enough that all the commitment that also the Norwegian partners that put into this, it really has a lot of results and to replace it with some sort of new structure where you just send the fund money into a basket and you expect that some people will do the right thing, I don’t think that will be as effective actually, because it’s a lot of push in that trust and personal relationship (N.A3).

In regards to the flexibility supported by the NUFU program, another research commented that it was an inherently positive dynamic, as capacity building in research and education should not be subjected to simple inputs and output formulae,

I can’t say that I don’t think anything was a waste of money, simply because even if it didn’t attain the academic goals that perhaps the project application had
set out, it would do something for the institutions involved and particularly for the people involved; it gave them at least a chance (N.R6).

The latter perspective, much less prevalent amongst Norwegian participants than Southern participants, as will be seen in chapter six, in combination with the debate over the results-oriented perspective versus the strict accountability framework, raises a central concern for NSRPs in terms of resource management; what are acceptable and/or appropriate measures for research capacity building and educational training? Given that jurisdictions with mature higher education systems still wrestle with the idea of learning outcomes and the return on investment for various forms of education, the current conversation about the efficiency of donor funding for development-related projects intersects with broader considerations of the economics of education.

In the Norwegian context, the changing economic, governance and managerial conditions and frameworks as related to the higher education sector have indirectly impacted institutional and researcher participation in the NUFU program and as such require some consideration. Since NUFU’s decentralized model embeds projects within individual institutions, changing conditions at participating institutions will have a large impact on an array of NUFU-related activities.

The above analysis portrays the NUFU program model as one that rhetorically supports the ideals of trust, transparency and equality in the administration of project resources, yet has not found an adequate mechanism to accomplish this goal. In many ways, this cannot be held against them, for it is something that the broader development community continues to struggle with. Institutionalized and individual resource mismanagement and corruption is a problem that plagues all forms and models of development-related programming, and NSRP programs are no different. The NUFU administration supports a decentralized model of project administration and management under the auspices of researcher autonomy and capacity building, arguing that only through independent management of resources can participants feel empowered in the collaborative process. The decentralized model of the NUFU co-operation is developed on this platform, with the result that work, responsibility and ownership of the projects are anchored in the partner institutions. Consequently, the NUFU program is often referred to as a program owned by the institutions and their researchers.

However, it is clear that the actual structure of resource management does not adhere entirely to these ideals. There is a certain measure of independence regarding how funds are spent at each research site or university, which will be explored in more detail in the following
section on project management. However, the resource pathway has not changed over the 15 plus years of the program’s existence, and continues to position Norwegian institutions in the driver’s seat for the overall resource distribution process. Given the overall systemic issues with financial mismanagement, while the current model may not be ideal in theory, it appears to be a practical compromise that is grounded in the overall structure of development assistance; development-related funding comes from Norway’s public purse and is not a condition-free grant, even if it technically labeled as a grant rather than a loan. As such, there are certain requirements for accountability and transparency that require reconciliation. In chapter six, Tanzanian and South African perspectives are explored through a case study of one NUFU project in order to gain a better understanding of how African recipient participants interpret these conditions, but for the most part, the Norwegian stakeholders interviewed for this project acknowledge the difficult position faced by the NUFU administration in matching ideals with practical realities.

**Theme: Project agenda setting processes**

The first two issues examined NUFU in terms of its administrative and management structures, specifically how the processes determined, organized and mediated the collaborative relationship between Norwegian and Southern actors. In summary, while the NUFU program documents and administrators put forward positive ideals regarding NUFU goals and support mechanisms, a number of tensions exist that relate to the overall nature of development-related assistance programming. While certain structural elements support both academic autonomy and recipient control over project selection and project management processes, there exist a number of structural and political issues that inhibit the establishment of a more equal and transparent relationship. At this point in the analysis, the issue of control and autonomy within the substantive research process requires engagement and analysis in order to gain a better understanding of how structural parameters impact the research process in the NUFU model.

The first two sections operate according to the understanding that the overarching goal of the NUFU program is to support collaborative research projects between Norwegian academics and their counterparts in the global South in order to build research capacity through the training of doctoral students and the pursuit of demand-driven research topics that are responsive to institutional and governmental needs and priorities in Southern jurisdictions. The
most recent SIU document that outlines the expected results of the 2007-2011 program phase summarizes this goal as follows:

The overall aim of the NUFU Programme is 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. It also aims to contribute to increased academic collaboration in the South, and between South and North. In order to build capacity and competence in research and research-based higher education, the NUFU-supported projects include education of Master’s and PhD candidates, development of Master’s and PhD programmes, training of technical and administrative staff in the South as well as joint research programmes, publication and dissemination of research results (NUFU, 2008b, 1).

This section takes up the above goals as the general frame of reference for examining the NUFU program framework supported and operationalized by the NUFU administration in order to analyze the overall effectiveness and consistency of the program mechanisms in pursuit of these goals.

As already laid out, the decentralized NUFU model is meant to facilitate the purported goals in a few particular ways; first, each research site is meant to possess substantial control over the research activities occurring therein; second, each research coordinator is expected to have a significant voice within the project decision-making processes, particularly during the initial stage of proposal writing; and third, there is an expectation that annual meetings between the research coordinators will ensure that the goals of the project are on target and that each site is operating in accordance with the goals and timelines set out in the initial proposal. Beyond these three logistical arrangements, the decentralized model aims at allowing a wide berth of academic freedom and autonomy for the participating researchers. No quantitative metrics are legislated as necessary components or goals by the NUFU administration or used as conditions for further funding once the initial 5-year project proposal has been accepted. While the productivity of the project is loosely tracked through the annual project reports written by the research coordinators, there are no expectations put forward at the outset of project funding regarding the number and form of publications. As a result, these outputs are allowed to be set internally within individual projects based on the determinations of the coordinators and the local and national contexts within which a project operates.

In terms of NUFU’s training function, program documents present a broad and loosely defined expectation that doctoral students, and potentially masters students, will be trained throughout the life of a project. Again, no quantitative goals are set out by the NUFU
administration at the outset of any project; the NUFU framework only specifies that PhD candidates should be recruited from current staff or prospective staff at the home institution in the Southern jurisdictions, but this is not legislated in the formal agreements signed by participating institutions (SIU, 2008b, 6).

Another central aspect of the training framework is the issue of gender equity. Gender equity and gender mainstreaming, articulated as both the inclusion of gender-sensitive research projects and the inclusion of female students and researchers, is a central mission in all Norwegian development-related programming. This has been most directly articulated in the Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation 1997-2005 (NORAD, 2005) and the subsequent Norwegian Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (MFA, 2007; NORAD, 2009). However, NUFU program documents indicate that gender mainstreaming represents one of the major obstacles that has consistently limited the effectiveness of the NUFU model, and many projects report significant difficulties recruiting and retaining female students and researchers due to a variety of economic, cultural, and professional pressures (SIU, 2006b, 2008b, 2009c). While gender equality is a global problem within academia, it is extremely salient in many African countries, particularly in terms of senior academic and researcher positions (Mama, 2003, 2006). In the context of higher education, NUFU asserts, “since women are underrepresented in higher education and research in all South countries, projects should pursue the recruitment of female PhD candidates” (SIU, 2008b, 6). Data from 2003 shows that while female enrollment is limited across SSA in all demographics, female staff and faculty are the hardest hit, with a continent-wide high of 20% female academic staff members in Uganda, and a low of 6% in Ethiopia (Rathgeber, 2003). As such, recruiting and training female graduate students and incorporating established female academics within Southern institutions are key objectives of the NUFU program, objectives that have been difficult to attain.

The frequency of female participants, at both researcher and student levels, has been systematically tracked since the NUFU model was first operationalized. The most recently completed program cycle of 2002-2006 set a goal of 40% female student and researcher participation and included a general objective on the integration of women and gender perspectives in the collaborative projects chosen for support (SIU, 2008a, 18). However, in the final review of the project cycle, the NUFU administration acknowledged that the objective had been:
Neglected in the implementation of the programme. Projects and institutions have not been asked to report specifically on gender perspectives. Neither has there been any specific thematic focus on such perspectives in conferences, seminars, or other events during the programme period (ibid, 18).

In terms of raw numbers, the 40% target was attained for the student demographic in most projects, however, the gender distribution of researchers fell well below the target benchmark. Female researchers from institutions in the South accounted for only 24% of the total group, and more interestingly, female researchers from Norwegian institutions only comprised 35% of total researchers from Norway (ibid, 19). In total, one out of every four researchers or students from the South was female (ibid, 19).

In response to the difficulties of the third cycle, the 2007-2011 Program took a more direct approach to supporting gender mainstreaming. However the means of attaining the 40% target are contentious and the early results are debatably positive. The NUFU program document for the 2007-2011 project cycle introduced a reward of 50,000 NOK for all projects able to recruit at least 50% female PhD candidates from the South (SIU, 2009b, 22). While the outcome of this change has resulted in an increase in the number of total female PhD candidates (41%), and with 31 projects meeting the mark (ibid, 22), the methodology for this tactic may not be indicative of a cultural shift within the Southern university and may more aptly reflect the consequences of resource dependency on foreign donors in conjunction with inhibiting local economic situations; patterns of behavior may not have shifted for ideological reasons, but rather merely to gain access to more funding. Therefore, it is uncertain if female participants are being adequately integrated into individual projects or if they are merely being recruited as loose appendages in order to obtain NUFU’s incentive funding.

An unforeseen, yet detrimental byproduct of the new program reward system has been that female recruitment in MA programs is down 11%, from 50 to 39 participants, as of 2008. In addition, as of 2008 the percentage of female project coordinators remains only 26% at Southern institutions (15 of 57) and 42% at Norwegian institutions (24 of 57) (ibid, 22). It is clear that NUFU continues to engage the gender gap and issues of gender mainstreaming in order to better integrate the gender dynamic into Southern institutional contexts. This remains a central, and growing, objective put forward by the NUFU administration within the scope of the decentralized model. However, it is important to note that gender mainstreaming is not a firm condition of NUFU funding, but rather an incentivizing one, and project autonomy remains in
the hands of project coordinators despite the strong Norwegian drive for gender parity within the higher education institutions of the global South.

As outlined above, the structural framework of NUFU’s decentralized partnership model, particularly in terms of internal project decision-making processes and conditions, allows for an extremely open research process that is driven by the project coordinators and shaped by contextually relevant goals and indicators. Researchers are empowered to follow a bottom-up research path that is independent from thematic or programmatic conditions or requirements, and they are able to negotiate the particular objectives and outputs of projects amongst themselves, free from imposition of top-down conditions or expectations. The majority of Norwegian participants interviewed for this study echoed this conclusion. However, it was a less important component of Norwegian self-analysis than expected, perhaps because the research context in Norway, as in many other industrialized jurisdictions, traditionally operates according to liberal conceptions of academic freedom and therefore they have not experienced more restrictive research models. Some comments of note,

The NUFU program has a kind of ideology, an idea, that I really like; that we consider the NUFU idea, the NUFU concept, the NUFU ideology that we defend, will hardly find a researcher taking part in the NUFU program that wouldn’t defend the idea (N.A1).

It is the partnership model, it is that you bring professors together, the bottom-up approach, and from there you work on and are dealing with both research and with staff development, a combination of these two. It is a long perspective you need to do this with the funding, but they find the model interesting (N.A5).

But I think that the basic idea has all the time been this, both sides, both the program should be and it should promote academic collaboration and it should always be something in it for both parts, but at the same time, it is of course development funds, it is also, the capacity building is a very, very important word, and it should, it’s also building up something which is weak that can be strengthened by this collaboration and then we’re talking about the South partners, of course, first and foremost. So the idea is that building capacity for research and research-based education is a way of making a country, or first of course the university, but then which can then contribute to its country’s, sort of, I would say more like help to self-help, or a way to sort of building something which can, building a research capacity, building expertise so that the country can be better equipped for sort of solving their own problems (N.A3)

Some participants did comment on the comparison between NUFU funding and Norwegian Research Council (NRC) funding, outlining the limitations present in the NRC context:

NRC is more limited because the NRC has mainly defined their programs to what Norway needs, that is what they are there for, but they have always had the
programs like the multinational programs, South programs, South Africa-Norway programs, and so on, now a Latin American program. So there are smaller programs, more tailor-made to what we would like to see, but the bulk of the NRC funding goes for technical research, climate research in Norway and Northern areas, marine research, nano-technology, medical research, etc… It has a completely other goal. It’s more directed to what do we need here. Then there will be very little for competence building in the South because it is a research program expected to give research results (N.A1).

The major criteria for being funded through the NRC is excellence in research, so the broader research aspect and the institutional capacity building, up to now, has not been a part of their agenda (N.A5)

If you go to the NRC, they have more and more targeted idea. When they launch a research program, the ideas of what should be covered and how you should write it, that application, is very, very tight. So the ideas of what we want form you is very, very decided from the top. So this idea of the bottom-up is definitely under pressure (N.A8).

The comparison between NUFU and NRC funding makes for an appropriate segue to an analysis of the impact that the changing conditions in Norway’s higher education system are having on the NUFU program, specifically in regards to the reservations that many participants expressed about the future of NUFU. While the open-ended research model supported by NUFU is clearly appreciated by the individual researchers, it is equally evident that a clash of cultures is occurring in Norway as a result of changing socio-political conditions. The background for this discussion is rooted in the changes initiated by the European Bologna Process, a series of sweeping structural changes initiated in 1999 by 27 European countries in order to increase the global competitiveness of European universities and to increase mobility within the participating countries. While the context of Norwegian higher education policy is important in the scope of this study, it is tangential to the central arguments being put forward in regard to the NUFU program and an in-depth analysis is not in the purview of this study. However, the major changes instantiated over the past decade require a brief examination in order to situate the NUFU program in the broader Norwegian context, as it does impact the freedom for Norwegian researchers to participate in the NUFU program.

While the introduction of New Public Management reform in Norwegian higher education can be dated to the early 1980s (Forland & Haaland, 1996; Høstaker, 1997; Bleiklie, Høstaker, & Vabø, 2000; Frølich, 2006), this study will focus on the most recent iteration in Norwegian public policy, specifically the Quality Reform (the Reform) of 2003. The major impetus of the Reform was a demand for increased accountability from the university sector in
order to better assess, plan and tie societal needs, specifically with regards to the labour market, and student activities through more outcome- and results-based funding (Frølich & Strøm, 2008). As Frølich and Strøm (2008) contend, “output-based funding schemes in this area always face the possibility that agents’ efforts will be biased towards activities that increase measured parts of output and will turn away from unmeasured dimensions” (p. 563). In the case of the Reform, this bias was introduced by rewarding the number of students who passed exams and the number of degrees awarded (ibid, 565). As expressed by some of the key NUFU researchers and administrators, the impact of this on the NUFU program has been that Norwegian faculty members do not receive any credit in the new managerial system for students who do not graduate or pass exams from Norwegian universities, which represents almost all Southern students in the scope of the NUFU program. As a result, the supervision of non-Norwegian students through NUFU projects is dis-incentivized by the new funding scheme. This is important given the strong historical presence of Southern students in Norway’s higher education system. For example, a 2004 study found that more students from African countries were formally enrolled in Norwegian higher education institutions than students from North America (Maassen & Uppstrøm, 2004, 21).

In terms of the international dimension of Norwegian research, the Reform put forward internationalization as “a core instrument to maintain and improve the quality of higher education” (Gomitzka & Stensaker, 2004, 81). As a result, a new internationalization platform was established to promote faculty and student mobility, increase research cooperation, and ‘economize’ internationalization strategies and activities as a source of income (Maassen & Uppstrøm, 2004, 27). However, many Norwegian researchers and university administrators interpreted the reframing of internationalization ushered in by the Reform according to discourses of competition and hierarchy, such that traditional forms of internationalization, such as cooperation with Southern institutions, are increasingly viewed as inferior or ineffective use of resources (Frølich, 2006, 201). “Internationalization by hierarchy and design” supports primarily instrumental forms of university research, as opposed to more voluntary forms (Olsen, 2007; Stensaker et al., 2008, 2; Trondal, 2010, 356). This strategic pathway is coupled with an explicit “government strategy for internationalising Norwegian research and higher education that aims to combine ‘quality’ in research and higher education and seeing ‘higher education as… an instrument in Norwegian foreign policy’ (NOU 2008:3, 164)” (Trondal, 2010, 360).

In response to the above changes, many participants expressed serious concerns over both the future of the NUFU program and their own participation in North-South research
A number of participants acknowledged the declining importance that collaboration with Southern partners has in the Norwegian higher education recognition and reward system, operating in conjunction with an increased focus on European and North American linkages:

Interviewer – So when tenure comes up for an upcoming professor, international work would be ranked, not inferior, but at a lower level than a straight discipline based journal?

Respondent – Yes, and also international work will be defined as work with European or North American partners, because that is where prestige is, that is where you get the good journals giving you high points and good kickback on the department budget and so on. So all these factors, the quality reform, the management reform, and also the governmental economic model for universities and colleges will drive the development in one direction. That is, it’s more and more difficult to do this kind of idealistic work. I think it started with the new governmental economic model for public activities, public companies, the education sector and so on. That was the first of the reforms that came, then the quality reform and the management reform (N.A1).

Nowadays, I think it is much more strong, there are strategies on many levels and there are certain topics that the university wants to, or certain directions or certain things they want to specialize in, for instance, and I think everybody is much more put into a streamline and they have to do what is decided from the top, more or less. Of course with some freedom, but I think with much stronger requirement on getting money to the institutions, doing, taking on, applying projects from the EU or from the Research Council or somewhere where you get full financing and you get credit of course, and you get those kinds of things (N.A3).

I mean all the criticisms you heard in the meeting about NUFU not being accounted in our work is absolutely true. I am coordinator of the NUFU project and in fact I have 3 PhD students from Ghana sitting here, to which I am supervising intensively for a two-month period, and that doesn’t count at all towards my workload in my university, so it’s volunteer work, just about. It looks nice in your vita but it doesn’t count in the system (N.R1)

A great extent of the described tensions derive from the series of reforms initiated in 2003 to bring about new accountability mechanics in all public sectors, including higher education. Some participants commented as follows:

You know the problem is that today we are facing this new public management tradition in, with all the, every minute should be counted for and you have this very strong new pressure to publish, because the publish or perish paradigm is much more hard today, and there has not been a willingness in the department or the ministry of education to give support to, for instance, if you are an adviser to a student from Uganda or Tanzania you will not be rewarded for this job you do. So that is the problem, it doesn’t fit into this very tight new schedule of rewarding academic work (N.A8).
It is really a problem in Norway, that the women and men dealing with this work they are closer to 60 than to 40 years old. It’s hard to get new academics into this cooperation, because it’s so little for them in it… and it’s also that some of the departments don’t allow their young researchers, their young staff to work on this, because it’s not so much in it and also it’s not recognized that way (N.A2).

I think also the process is global. It’s this mania of public management mentality all over universities and it’s this mania of evaluation and more, you know, how do you call it, targets and so on and so forth (N.R1).

One of the things that has come with the reform, the University reform in Norway, is that the metrics of merit are being used much, much more. Anything that can be quantified is being used and most potently, publications. Notoriously, publications with third parties and especially with third world or developing nations take a very long time to get through and have inherent experimental weaknesses and analytical weaknesses, unless you have a good alliance, and can take some time just to get the language forth. So one of the indirect ways of discouraging development research is saying that we need the publications…This also means that is only the tenured scientists, like myself, who can afford to say we’ll try this and if it doesn’t go we’ll try something else. Those who are not tenured are much more dependent on getting up their CVs and can’t afford to try it. Which is also unfortunate because it is the young ones who would most easily make a contact with other younger researchers and then be able to draw benefit from it (N.R6)

From the Norwegian perspective, threats to development-related research and NSRPs arise from both formal structures, such as the administrative and accountability reforms, and informal structures, such as the socially constructed and self-referential hierarchies of knowledge and knowledge dissemination embedded in the global academic culture. Regardless of the source, participants indicated these developments have had a significant impact on their work within the NUFU framework over the past 10 years, calling into question the sustainability of such an open-ended model in an era of increasing top-down micro-management of funds, time and outputs. Needless to say, if young Norwegian researchers, who possess nuanced sensibilities regarding the concepts of relevance in NSRP programming, do not fill the void created by a retiring generation of scholars and institutional leaders who largely supported the ideals of the NUFU model, then the likelihood for open and equitable research projects between Norwegian and Southern participants may become increasingly precarious. For while the structure of the NUFU program remains open to different disciplines and forms of research, and promotes equality between Norwegian and Southern research coordinators in project decision-making process, the resource dependent nature of most Southern academics tied with changes in
Norwegian interests can impact the dynamics within a given project regardless of the framework.

In response to these changing conditions, many Norwegian participants argued for two kinds of resistance to what they perceived as encroachment on their intellectual autonomy, if not their academic freedom: first, the strength of the NUFU and SIU administration was one key avenue for maintaining the internal coherency of the program; and second, a strong argument was made that increased institutional support from Norwegian university leaders could counteract managerialism. One former administrator and current researcher in the NUFU program expressed the first argument most passionately:

Of course the board members of the SIU board can do it, but they are, I have not seen that. I have contacts in the Ministry and they say, ‘we don’t see other people than you’. I don’t see where are the NUFU board, and again I’m back to what I said, the allocation of too weak and, I must say, people who are more concerned of trying to catch to their institution than identifying themselves as the vehicles and the leaders of a national important program. The weakness of leadership (N.A7)

In regards to the second argument, the above participant and another senior administrator made the following comments:

It became very clear that you need real commitment by the institutions allowing the researchers to use the funds. So what happened with us? Because we were sitting in an institution which had a strong and clear commitment, we had people in leadership saying that this is the way to go, that means that at the university we have, only here in health we have 8 or 9 professors who have a job description saying that their primary job is to do research and teaching but mainly research in collaboration with institutions in developing countries. And there’s no other institutions in Norway having that, and even a lot of people not having in the job descriptions they had an institutional commitment along these lines, so it was obvious and it was prioritized and it was visualized that you could use all your time in that because this was an ordinary project prioritized by the university… The worst thing is that the rectors of the Norwegian Universities have not taken ownership into this, they had it in the beginning of the 90s. When SIU was moved into the Ministry system, then you lost the perspective (N.A7)

The former chair of the NUFU board said, ‘there are too many men like me with gray or white hair in this business’. And that’s serious…. I think again that the priority has to be given from a central level, a national central level, saying to the institutions you should go into this cooperation, you should give it priority, and the signal there is very essential (N.A2).

While these points are salient to the changing conditions of academic research in the Norwegian context, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to fully engage with the Norwegian political
economy surrounding higher education and universities considered more broadly. For the sake of this study, it is pertinent to present the conflicting tensions in the Norwegian environment that participants are experiencing as impacting their work in the NUFU program, and the implications and possible responses presented to preserve or adapt the NUFU framework in a meaningful way. In general, Norwegian participants were extremely satisfied with the open, transparent and equitable framework supported by the decentralized NUFU partnership model, and expressed great appreciation for the opportunities it allowed for in the Norwegian research funding landscape. The reservations examined above reflect broader considerations of how informal pressures and dynamics can influence formal programs indirectly, regardless of the frameworks in place. This concern is not restricted to the Norwegian case, but is a function of the tenuous position of development-related research programs in national and global landscapes that are increasingly placing a premium on domestic economic development and targeted research themes.

Theme: Knowledge Management

The fourth theme of the analytic ideal-type is knowledge management; to what extent do participants have control over the knowledge created within a given project and how is this control formally integrated into the NUFU structure? Broadly construed, this sub-heading is the most straightforward from a programmatic perspective, though it will become more complex in the case study analysis to be carried out in chapter seven. As outlined in previous sections of this study, the balance between quality and relevance is a highly politicized debate, often determined more by ideological positions than professional expertise in the realm of development studies. NUFU has historically recognized this tension and has aspired towards a balanced approach to the production of research. The 2008 Annual Report acknowledged that “the highest-rated scientific journals have little or no interest in issues that are relevant primarily to African or Asian contexts and that authors from well-known high-prestige universities are more likely to have their contributions accepted by the same journals” (ibid, 11). As a result, the NUFU administration states:

It is necessary and appropriate to apply a broad concept of quality that also includes relevance with regard to poverty reduction and national development in the South as criteria…publication and dissemination of research results at national and regional level may be of greater importance in terms of the impact
of the research, as it reaches a wider community including those who have the power and position to change policies and practices (ibid, 11).

Despite this open and reflexive approach to the contextual variation in the value of knowledge, as of 2007 NUFU was still evaluating the scientific quality of research production along traditionally conservative lines. For example, the 2007 Annual Report states:

The qualitative success of the research will be measured against quantitative goals set forth by the project coordinators, most importantly on the publishing of research results in scientific journals. Scientific articles published in recognized refereed international journals are benchmarks of scientific quality and the most important indicator for the quality of research conducted (SIU, 2009b, 13).

While the Report acknowledges the value of relevance, it appears that NUFU is still negotiating the tenuous balance between relevance and quality in the international academic environment. However, despite the tensions operating within NUFU’s internal evaluation of research quality, strict guidelines are absent from the NUFU framework both in terms of the expected quantitative output for individual projects and the medium of publication for such outputs. Norwegian participants were appreciative of this framework, but as will be discussed below, and has been discussed in relation to the changing Norwegian higher education context, there is a general awareness that the historical status quo may no longer be acceptable to other actors in the Norwegian higher education landscape.

At a program level, the research produced through any given collaborative project is loosely governed by the NUFU model agreement on Intellectual Property Rights, first established in 2004, a legally non-binding document used as the foundation for issues relating to IPR (IPR) (SIU, 2006c, 1). This document supports a broad operating definition of IPR in the context of NSRP programming:

These guidelines and the ModAgreeIPR highlight the need for focusing on and securing researchers moral rights in all NUFU supported project. In academia, respecting such rights is an essential premise for career building and personal as well as institutional reputability. However, it must also be recognized that moral rights may differ from country to country. The ModAgreeIPR suggests that all Project Results are to be owned by the Partner generating the results or - where both Partners must be seen as generators – jointly owned between the UiS and the UiN. It also recognizes the need for separate agreements between the owning institutions and their respective Researchers concerning ownership to IPR. The above mentioned agreements must pay heed to existing statutory IPR regulation within each national jurisdiction, as well as any institutional IPR policies that may exist at the time of agreement (SIU, 2006c, 7).

In addition, the document makes the following prescription in regards to Access Rights:
An Access Right is a contractually based license or user right to the other partner institutions Project Results or Project Background. The Access Right regime of the ModAgreeIPR (page 17 - art. VII) give preferential Access Rights for Use to the UiS, based on the general assumption that such an allocation of rights will strengthen the principal objectives of NUFU supported projects. These guidelines and the ModAgreeIPR are based on an assumption that for the majority of NUFU projects, the granting of sub-licenses will not be an issue. However, the possibility of giving the licensee a further right to grant sub-licenses will always have to be decided by the licensor in connection with a concrete written request for access. The ModAgreeIPR is also designed to secure access to Project Results and Project Background after the end of the collaborative project, the intention being that such a solution would safeguard the Partners general interest in enjoying the fruits of their collaboration in full depth (SIU, 2006c, 9).

Similar open statements are in place in regards to the dissemination and use of project results and operate according to the argument that not only are all stakeholders allowed to use results, but that there is a general obligation for the use of results in support of the broader NUFU mission (SIU, 2006c, 9-10).

In the participant interviews conducted in support of the current study, no Norwegian actors made reference to negative or positive perceptions of the NUFU knowledge management framework, and generally expressed that equality and transparency in the use and dissemination of results was a foundational priority of the NUFU program. However, some similar concerns were raised with regard to the changing Norwegian higher education and research contexts as were raised in the context of project decision-making processes; many participants felt that the recent increase in domestic publication pressures, specifically aimed at raising the level of Norwegian publications in internationally recognized journals, threatened or compromised involvement in the NUFU program and other NSRP programs. This belief was based on the reality that many NUFU-funded project outputs are not circulated in traditional Northern-based peer-reviewed journals, but rather locally oriented mediums of dissemination. Concerns over local and national relevance, and the highly contextualized impetus for many research projects, dictate that peer-reviewed journals are an ineffective or entirely inappropriate medium for knowledge dissemination and practical impact. Two participants succinctly expressed this concern as follows:

The second problem is that the standard on which we measure academia in the global North, and that influences the way in which NORAD measures results, doesn’t necessarily have relevance in the South. I have colleagues who are writing books on neurology with drawings to teach the people in Malawi. You cannot peer review or publish in Routledge or in Cambridge University Press that
work. The relevance is completely outside what we measure and what we consider top quality academia, and I think many NUFU projects are achieving a lot in that sense, but then it’s very difficult to measure… With anthropological case studies about, for example, the way in which people continue using traditional medicine or traditional beliefs and so on and so forth, right. And many of this, to publish these into, I don’t know, an Oxford University Press, very expensive books, makes no sense. It’s much easier to publish this with University of Bergen publication and then distribute the book for free in the local area in the Southern country or region (N.R1).

One of the features of quality is that research holds a scientific quality which makes it possible to get your articles into a well-known or well ranked, high ranked, high reputation journal, that is sort of a, you can count that sort of quality, but it’s much more difficult to count relevance or to measure relevance. I mean you can say, have a meeting with a policy-maker; but what does that lead to, what is the result of that meeting? Or you can try out a new vaccine and it might be a good, you might get an article in a journal, but if nobody is using your results or your new developed vaccine then it’s of no use (N.A3).

However, these concerns are only indirectly related to the NUFU structure itself. No participants expressed concerns over the management of research results and data through NUFU projects, and, as outlined through the IPR document, there is a strong framework in place that outlines the responsibilities and expectations for all participating researchers.

**Theme: Sustainability and Capacity Building**

Sustainability and capacity building comprise the final major theme raised in the literature review carried out in chapter three in regards to the historical antecedents of NUFU’s NSRP program and model. As articulated in the third chapter, sustainability and capacity building are issues so tightly linked that it is appropriate to conceptualize them as part of the same overarching structural process; the capacity building element of NSRP programs has historically been directly or indirectly aimed at raising the overall level of research expertise in partnering universities, such that initiatives either become institutionalized to the degree that they no longer require foreign financial support or that the skills and proficiencies augmented can facilitate the subsequent development of an individual’s or institution’s capacity post-NSRP project. As noted in chapter three, arguments regarding institutional vs. individual capacity and support is one of the major conceptual debates regarding capacity building and sustainability in the broader NSRP literature, and this is similarly the case in the NUFU context.
The following section analyzes how sustainability and capacity building are constructed as ideal concepts in the formal NUFU and SIU literatures, and compares and contrasts these definitions with the interpretations provided in the interviews with key Norwegian stakeholders. This comparison draws together the various strands presented throughout the other sections of the ideal-type construction and crystallizes the overall tension between autonomy and dependency, coercion and empowerment. It is argued that all avenues of the NUFU program are aimed towards building research capacity within the participating universities, however, this goal constantly comes into tension with an array of structural and conceptual limitations and restrictions grounded in the tension between “research” and “development assistance” paradigms.

The aim of the NUFU program is to raise the level of capacity in Southern universities (SIU, 2008b, 1). However, as with many similar funding agencies, the operational definition of capacity is difficult to define and even more difficult to evaluate. Bautista, Vehlo, and Kaplan (2001) summarize this issue through the following questions:

What exactly is being sustained? Is it the programme as an organization? Is it the model of research management the programme operationalizes, and the underlying philosophical framework of development and knowledge production? Is it the policy that creates a critical mass of development researchers who can shift gears as they produce knowledge to improve the conditions of the poor because of their autonomy to move resources and researchers, especially on the ground? (p. 14)

These relatively straightforward formulations of extremely complex problems highlight the difficulty that funding agencies face when establishing program goals and expectations, and when selecting methodologies to evaluate projects at individual and institutional levels of analysis.

Using the program objectives already stated, the NUFU program appears to focus capacity building and sustainability efforts at the level of the individual, which has become a loadstone for debate in the Norwegian context. The objectives set out in formal NUFU documents are somewhat ambiguous regarding the relationship between individual and institutional capacity. The most recent NUFU document examining program expectations puts forward the following working definitions and objectives:

In order to build capacity and competence in research and research-based higher education, the NUFU-supported projects include education of Master’s and PhD candidates, development of Master’s and PhD programmes, training of technical and administrative staff in the South as well as joint research programmes, publication and dissemination of research results (NUFU, 2008b, 1).
The specific objective is to educate new researchers and to develop Master’s and PhD programmes. The education of Master’s and PhD candidates recruited among staff at the institutions in the South represents one measure to achieve this objective. The Master’s scholarships should be earmarked to selected students that have the potential for continuing into PhD education and hence, contribute to strengthen the institutional capacity for research and research-based education. The training of technical and administrative staff is a measure to enhance and sustain technical and administrative support, and hence, contribute to institutional development (SIU, 2008b, 2; emphasis added).

While the relationship between individual and institutional capacity building is not explicitly formulated, the primary mechanism put forward in order to support capacity building is the training of individuals, as opposed to investments in infrastructure or other forms of capital. As such, a tenuous argument can be made that there is a programmatic belief in the primacy of the individual. This interpretation is supported by findings produced by the COWI AS (2009) evaluation:

Evidence from reports, interviews and self-evaluations shows that capacity building has primarily been focused on individual researchers and students from the South, and only marginally on the administrative and professional personnel; among these, mostly on technicians. Institution building does not seem to be a high priority, no matter how needed this may be… It is clear that the focus on the individual researcher and the limited attention to logistics and research infrastructure of institutions in the South limit the contribution to institutional sustainability… In addition to research and education infrastructure there is also a need to strengthen institutional capacity and build local ownership of facilities, curriculum development, student supervision etc… Although programmes, their results and management, in a few cases may have been able, in part at least, to foster new research management and policy measures introduced at departmental levels, influencing decision-making at university level has been more limited, it has not been possible to verify impact in relation to the higher education sector as such (pg. 22-23).

That the NUFU program is primarily focused at the level of the individual was widely confirmed by key participant interviews. However, while the conclusion of the COWI AS report appears to be critical of the individual-focused nature of NUFU support, the majority of researchers and administrators argued in support of this model, stating that institutional capacity cannot develop in the absence of strong individuals. A few examples of this argument follow:

It is all about individuals, it is about persons who are giving the possibility to develop themselves and their institutions, and they need a long perspective to do this. But this person who can then be in charge, he will develop maybe further, he can also, like I have seen, go into public service or governmental service and be a person who can talk higher education and research in a government, for instance
In the NUFU Programme there is one goal and that is that people should become staff at their institutions, that’s how you build up capacity at the institutions, and that’s a narrow objective but that’s the objective. So, if you use strictly on that one definition you would think that everyone who has a job outside is sort of a waste, but of course they are not because they can increase the capacity in other kinds of institutions (N.A3).

So the idea is that building capacity for research and research-based education is a way of making a country, or first of course the university, but then which can then contribute to its country’s, sort of, I would say more like help to self-help, or a way to sort of building something which can, building a research capacity, building expertise so that the country can be better equipped for sort of solving their own problems (N.A3)

Capacity building is something very clear. If out of this NUFU project we get 3 more PhD people, people with degrees, finished degrees, that otherwise would have not been possible, right, because they need to work, and so on and so forth. That’s capacity building. You are building; you are qualifying people to a higher degree (N.R1).

The above quotations indicate a belief in the bottom-up nature of the type of individual capacity building that is carried out under the NUFU program. This narrative was structured to a great degree around the needs of many African nations, where highly educated, well trained individuals are relatively scarce and can benefit the public good in many ways beyond their involvement in university research. While it was acknowledged by some that the departure of individuals who have benefited from NSRP programs is an impediment to the further development of the university, the majority of participants indicated that positive spill-overs could continue to accrue for the broader society so long as the beneficiary didn’t leave the country altogether, and individuals could still be of value to national and regional capacity building efforts.

In terms of the debate regarding the value of institutional capacity building, a common response from Norwegian participants came in the form of critiques regarding realistic or unrealistic, as was often the case, expectations for what individual researchers are able to contribute to institutional capacity building efforts and programs. One Norwegian researcher conceptualized the problem as such:

I find it ludicrous that we are supposed to have institutional consequences; I think it’s a complete misunderstanding of academic partnership. If NORAD wants the money that it is putting into NUFU to have institutional consequences they should give them money to the Ministry of Education in the Southern countries.
and negotiate with them that the money is for doing this, this, and that, rather than producing or co-producing knowledge, which is the good part of this NUFU… we should be very careful in not idealizing and not giving tasks to the NUFU projects that cannot, that are not supposed to be there. Compare the work we do. What is to build capacity in Canada if you are an academic? Lets say that there is a region that has a smaller campus and we want to create a project that builds capacity in that more remote area of Canada. I think its exactly the same definition: to qualify people, to teach them, and at the same time to learn from them, and then eventually build programs (N.R1).

Two participants articulated this sentiment using similar language:

A university is not a very good aid agent, it is a very good university agent, in the sense that we are good at research and research education, and to a certain degree dissemination but we are not aid workers. NORAD is a specialist in that, some of the NGOs are good at that, but a university is a university. What the NUFU program is, it’s the contribution from a university sector on what they are good at, which can have an effect in, lets say, in the long run on development, on aid, but it’s in itself not aid, it’s research, it’s researcher training (N.A1).

My thoughts on that are that there are a lot of different people who can help these universities improve on different things, and I think, for the Norwegian universities, I think the most important contribution could be within research and education, actually. Because if we come with all our administrative systems they can be very different and maybe they are not appropriate, but for the research and for the education, the systems are international and there is no reason why you shouldn’t be able to cooperate and both grow out of that (N.A6).

The above participants focused on the problems associated with trying to turn researchers into institution builders, namely that it was not possible. If the aim of funding agencies is to reform institutions, either in the image of Northern institutions or in a more context-driven manner, then researchers are a poor agent for such types of change.

In terms of local graduate students completing their degrees at their domestic institutions, NUFU acknowledges that due to inconsistencies in the reporting procedures at different institutions and the difficulty in tracking part-time students who move in and out of supported programs, comprehensive graduation numbers are difficult to attain. However, based on the individual project reports collated at the end of the 2002-2006 cycle, the number of MA and PhD graduates who received complete financial support from NUFU during the period was estimated at 603, in addition to 100 partially funded students. Of this group, an estimated 297 students were in PhD streams (SIU, 2009a, 11).

Given NUFU’s emphasis on graduates remaining in their country of origin, the record of post-graduate employment points to the success of this objective. According to the final reports
of the 2002-2006 cycle, only 4-5% of the education PhD students with NUFU funding had left the region by the end of the project period, and a reported 60% of all students were directly employed as staff members at their home universities after degree completion (ibid, 15). However, a limitation of the post-graduate data collection process is that data on employment is for the most part gathered during a relatively short period after degree completion. As such, NUFU recognizes that it is not possible to offer longitudinal data on general professional attainment, let alone from specific programs or initiatives (ibid, 15).

A critical line of argumentation against programmatic mandates that focus on institution building problematizes two aspects of the partnership dynamic. The first focuses on the issue of partnering with peripheral institutions that have histories of financial mismanagement and/or corruption:

When you institutionalize partnerships you also relinquish responsibility for how things are used and you in essence acknowledge that whatever they’re doing in the South with what you provide is alright by you. The biggest problem we had consistently in all countries was corruption, and institutionalizing such projects opens the way for corruption so much that it is impossible to fight, and that was the reason why I curtailed the second installment of the project series I was involved in (N.R6).

This issue is all the more pressing in jurisdictions where governments regularly infringe on domestic university autonomy. In additional, the relative absence of transparency at many recipient universities appears to prevent Norwegian actors from focusing on institution-level initiatives to the desired extent. One Norwegian administrator explained the problem as such:

There were cases…where we had a project where we eagerly asked them to catch all the different components that could run in the same direction as the project, what resources do you have, what other national or international cooperation do you have that you could bring into the cooperation? And they said they had none. They had them but they didn’t tell us, and the reason is that when they ask for 4 computers from us they had just received 20 from Germany, and they were stored behind a door and they wouldn’t use it for this project although it was completely possible to do it. No, that was another donor and they wouldn’t show us that it existed. They wouldn’t share their links and connections with us because then they thought that we would pull out some of our resources. This is not our way of thinking; it’s to increase the scope. They thought differently; they thought if we tell that we have contact with the German university then we will just go (N.A1).

Ultimately, the dire economic conditions in many jurisdictions result in the absence of transparency and trust between partners despite the convergence in overall interests. This was mentioned as a major limitation for Norwegian actors committing to institution-level initiatives
and expending scarce resources and time to initiating and developing more institutionalized linkages.

Another line of inquiry focuses on the primacy of trust in the research process, particularly when dealing with partners across vast distances where face-to-face meetings occur infrequently, such as in the NUFU case where project coordinators often meet twice a year and secondary researchers may only meet once a year. In reference to the bottom-up NUFU format, one participant commented:

I think (the personal connection) is what makes it work, because if you get some sort of, should I say, recommendations, or instructions from somewhere above, for example some people you don’t know who write you a letter to say that you have to do this and that, then it doesn’t mean as much to you. But I think in the personal relationship, when they are together in a project when they make their annual plan, when they say we are going to do this and that, it’s in many cases I think more, you feel more obliged to really do that. So maybe we do not value enough that all the commitment that also the Norwegian partners that put into this, it really has a lot of results and to replace that with some sort of overall structures when you just send the fund money into a basket and you expect that some people do something, I don’t think that will be as effective actually, because it’s a lot of push in that trust and personal relationship (N.A3).

These comments reflect many of the concerns raised in the study’s literature review, whereby it was argued that trust and individual buy-in are two of the major motivators for productive partnerships. By focusing on institutional outputs, NSRP programs threaten to detract from the participant researchers primary area of expertise and overwhelming them in non-academic endeavors that they may not be equipped to adequately manage.

A corollary to the focus on the individual is the length of time needed to develop and carry out a research project adequately. The literature review conducted in this study’s third chapter indicated that the NSRP landscape operates increasingly along short-term timelines. This is due in part to the politically sensitive nature of many development-related funding programs and in part to the relatively short-term election cycles experienced in many of the funding jurisdictions. Despite a similar political reality in Norway, long-term support for NSRPs has been a foundational aspect of the NUFU program since the program was first conceived. The timeframe for NUFU supported projects has always been five years with a chance for renewal resulting in a second five-year term of support. The extended period of support in comparison to other major international donors was widely acknowledge by Norwegian researchers as being extremely beneficial, both in terms of the research output and in terms of supporting sustainability. Given that one of the primary aims of the NUFU program is
to develop and graduate PhD students, anything less than five years would make it a challenge to adequately train candidates.

On top of the potential for up to ten years of support, NUFU offers “Supportive Measures” (SM) for an additional two years “with the aim to phase out cooperation projects that had been running for 10 years with support from the NUFU Programme. Activities in these projects should have a clear focus on sustaining the capacity and competence that was built up during the previous project periods” (SIU, 2009a, 7). Based on the summary offered in the 2009 NUFU Annual Report (SIU, 2010, 4-5), it appears that the addition of the SM scheme has been successful in contributing to the sustainability of projects after the primary funding periods have ended. Nine NUFU projects received funding to support twenty-one postdoctoral students through the SM framework, contributing to staff retention and allowing for periods of intense publication for new graduates (ibid, 5).

One area that appeared to be a noted weakness in the NUFU mandate was the training of technical and administrative staff in recipient universities. One administrator with significant experience working with counterparts in Southern universities commented:

I think the NUFU program, it doesn’t really have a lot of incentives or activities that are geared towards particular areas of more administrative support. So, the way that we can say we contribute to building up the administrative support is more on the departmental level, I would say, where they do the project. For example, when I meet with an institution, normally I would speak with the person who is at the institutional level and then also to speak with some of the people working with the finances. I wouldn’t say that this program is so much geared towards the administrative part in the South, actually. It’s much more on the scientific part and in the evaluation (N.A6)

The general conclusion that can be drawn from this sub-section is that the NUFU program offers significant opportunities for participants to develop long-term research projects and to contribute to capacity building efforts at both individual and institutional levels. While the primary focus articulated in NUFU documents is to support individual-level training processes through both graduate training and research projects, the freedom to institutionalize projects through Masters and Doctoral degree programs and other initiatives is also present. However, due to an array of inhibiting environmental factors found in both Norwegian and Southern milieus, these mechanisms appear under-utilized in the current NUFU context. While the COWI AS (2009) evaluation states that “institution building does not seem to be a high priority, no matter how needed this may be” (pg. 22), it appears that the majority of Norwegian participants interviewed believe that either it is beyond the scope of NUFU to contribute to
institutional development at a larger scale without a serious re-orientation of the NUFU mandate or that it is not the place of academic researchers to be participating in institution building, as it is beyond the scope of their expertise. Indeed, NSRPs have generally not been viewed as vehicles for initiating institution-level changes, but are rather targeted at supporting individual research projects that may have positive spill-overs on the academic environment within a given university, faculty or department.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the historical context of Norway’s involvement in development-related programming as a facet of the country’s domestic political economy after the Second World War. This approach was taken in order to highlight the historical antecedents that framed the establishment of the NUFU program in the late 1980s. The NUFU story is more than just a case study of a government-administered organization; it is tied to the socio-cultural identity of a country that experienced significant economic development throughout the late-20th and early 21st centuries. As a nation situated in the global periphery up until the early 1960s, Norway’s engagement with the international arena, particularly in the Southern hemisphere, was radically different from that of the traditional European superpowers and evolved at a distance from dominant geo-political conflicts and tensions. Having been absent from the land-grabbing colonial experience, despite participating in the quasi-colonial missionary tradition, the past 50 years of Norway’s history has focused on extending support to the “poorest of the poor” in an effort to augment sustainability across political, economic and social sectors in the nations of the global periphery. The aspect that has been focused on for this study is higher education and the role that research capacity plays in demand-driven and sustainable development.

The NUFU program has been the primary means for Norwegian scholars to engage and support academic researchers in the universities of the global periphery over the past 25 years, and has, for all intents and purposes, successfully reflected the Norwegian humanitarian ethos in both its mandate and its activities. Founded during an era that saw many Northern funding agencies drastically cut support to emerging higher education systems, specifically in response to the policy work done by the World Bank in the mid-1980s, NUFU maintained a strong footing in the Norwegian political system and facilitated strong support from both government and the higher education sector towards the issue of research capacity. Operating under a rubric of helping Southern jurisdictions help themselves, the NUFU program has focused on training
individual researchers across all levels of the university, including the various academic pathways (masters, doctorates, post-doctorates and faculty members) and administrative avenues (research management, institutional planning, etc.).

The overview and analysis presented in this chapter draws on the historical literature examining Norway’s role as a leading international donor over the past 50 years in order to contextualize the NUFU case study. Incorporating an examination of the dominant North-South Research Partnership modalities over the past 30 years, as carried out in chapter three, this chapter applies the Coercive ideal-type as a framework for analyzing the NUFU program from the perspective of Norwegian stakeholders and participants, both in terms of its overarching mandate and in terms of the particular programmatic policies and mechanisms used to frame the core components of the individual NSRP projects chosen for support. By applying the analytic categories used in framing the ideal-type, an in-depth analysis of the NUFU program is carried out in order to evaluate the extent to which the NUFU structure and framework differs or coincides with the dominant themes of the Coercive model.

In general, the findings indicate that according to NUFU program documents and as interpreted by current and past NUFU researchers and administrators, NUFU’s decentralized, bottom-up modality presents an open and transparent NSRP framework that coincides with the program goals. However, one implication of the model is that the inter-personal dynamics at play within a given project and between project coordinators and researchers is the greatest determining factor as to whether a partnership is equitable or coercive. Given the decentralized program structure, individuals are empowered with high-levels of autonomy once a project has been accepted for support. This results in a double-edged sword, for while it is possible that true partnerships are established based on mutuality and trust, it is equally possible that Southern stakeholders may find themselves in the traditional subservient role articulated in the academic and development agency literatures. However, based on the research collected for this study and previous evaluations, it appears that the Norwegian experience with the NUFU structure has, on the whole, resulted in extremely positive externalities and opportunities capable of facilitating open and demand-driven research projects that are in line with both local needs and demand-driven research priorities.

The analysis of the first ideal-type category, Program and project selection criteria and processes, indicates that the NUFU structure has made great strides to balance the interests and needs of Norwegian and Southern researchers in the two foundational processes. The NUFU mandate supports research projects across all disciplines, allowing for the support of projects
investigating non-traditional topics or using non-mainstream methodologies. As noted above, the major development has been the double weighting of Southern institutional rankings in the project selection process and the incorporation of Southern external proposal evaluators in order to ensure that Southern perspectives are considered in the project selection phase. While particular projects are capable of exhibiting either positive or negative control characteristics depending on the interpersonal dynamics of the participating researchers, at a structural level, NUFU has worked towards creating a transparent and equitable application and selection framework in order to combat the deleterious asymmetries that have historically plagued NSRP programs. This marks one of the strongest achievements of the NUFU program, as many funding agencies have succumbed to political and economic pressures in order to frame “relevance” around particular thematic areas of focus that are of interest to Northern researchers, government or industry, rather than of interest to Southern stakeholders.

However, this analysis has also made it clear that the increasingly complex Norwegian political system has provided numerous challenges to the autonomy of the NUFU program in recent history. As the COWI AS (2009) evaluation concluded, domestic pressures are increasing on the NUFU program and the multi-layered network of actors continually threatens to overtake the original NUFU agenda (p. 33). In addition, members of the NUFU Program Board, a part-time and voluntary grouping of academics, administrators and students, argued that that have been increasingly restricted by changes in the accountability frameworks implemented in Norway over the past five to ten years. The political economy of Norwegian higher education has heightened the managerial mechanisms in operation and, key NUFU actors contended that the changing context has decreased the legitimacy and practicality of partnering with Southern scholars, with far-reaching implications for academics interested in pursuing research in the peripheral jurisdictions. Despite the encroachment of other Norwegian stakeholders on NUFU’s autonomy, significant reforms have been enacted in order to redress structural imbalances recognized as inequitable over the past ten years, and the modality as a whole has maintained a strong balance between Norwegian and Southern interests.

The second thematic category of the ideal-type construction is resource management, referring to the ability of the NUFU model to enable equitable control and management of project resources and the extent to which the NUFU structure supports the empowerment of Southern researchers within the research process. Based on the above analysis, this remains the most problematic aspect of the NUFU framework. It should be noted that this issue remains the most challenging for most of the NSRP funding agencies examined in this study. The balance
between financial autonomy and public accountability remains at the heart of debates over development-related assistance in all sectors, not just higher education. However, the commonality of experiences beyond the Norwegian jurisdiction does not absolve the NUFU model from the challenges it faces.

Comments regarding cost-efficiency are removed from this analysis, as the study does not possess the necessary scale and scope to make any concrete determinations of the fiscal context for this type of work in the various jurisdictions. As the COWI AS (2009) evaluation concluded:

To assess cost-efficiency of capacity building in support of Masters and Ph.D. programmes poses a variety of challenges. First, it presupposes rather detailed data gathered over longer programme periods by the programme responsible institution, both in relation to direct and indirect costs as well as data on outputs and outcomes. Secondly, comparisons with similar programmes elsewhere, such as within a Nordic context, are challenged as funding conditions and indirect costing vary considerably (pg. 19).

Comparisons as described above necessitate an entirely separate investigation using more quantitative modeling practices than utilized in the current study, though they would make for important and interesting follow-up studies.

In general, the NUFU structure supports an equitable distribution of resources, however, the transparency and control of such resources remains a point of tension. While each participating institution receives an equal share in the total project purse, the Norwegian partners remain in firm control over the resource distribution process and Southern actors remain primarily at the mercy of Norwegian academics and administrators for obtaining their share of the resources. As discussed in chapter three and in the sections above, this is highly problematic for empowering Southern actors as autonomous and equal partners in the NSRP endeavor.

Many Norwegian stakeholders justified this practice as a response to the difficulties associated with resource management in NSRPs, as noted in chapter three of this study. Issues of financial mismanagement, lack of transparency and institutionalized corruption were repeatedly referenced by Norwegian participants as reasons for the continued imbalance in the resource management process. Since the primary unit of analysis for this chapter is NUFU’s structural framework, the conclusion drawn from the above is that despite the challenges faced in some projects and institutions, continued asymmetries in the resource management process indicates that NUFU has not yet attained it’s desired goal of empowering Southern academics and administrators throughout the research process. The resource pathway has not changed over
the 15 plus years of the program’s existence and continues to position Norwegian institutions in the drivers seat for the overall resource distribution process.

The third thematic category, *project agenda setting processes*, refers to the internal mechanisms that enable or inhibit projects from being jointly constructed and implemented with equal participation of Norwegian and Southern researchers and coordinators. Once a project is selected for support, do both sides of the partnership contribute equally to the project design and output? The answer to this question will vary for each individual project, but in terms of the NUFU framework it can be argued that an enabling structure is in place to support the desired outcomes. The decentralized model allows a wide berth of academic freedom and autonomy for the participating researchers because the project outputs are allowed to be set internally based on the determinations of the project coordinators, and not externally by top-down requirements or conditionalities. All of the participants interviewed on the Norwegian side appreciated this structural dynamic and believed that it was an extremely important and increasingly rare situation.

The fourth thematic category of the ideal-type is *knowledge management* and it relates to the ability of all participants to access, use and disseminate research findings during and after the project completion. Based on the NUFU documents outlining intellectual property rights and interviews with Norwegian stakeholders, it appears that the NUFU modality supports openness and transparency in all aspects of knowledge management. The only major reservations proffered by Norwegian researchers were in relation to the pressures felt in the Norwegian higher educations sector to disseminate knowledge in particular mediums, most notably North American and European peer-reviewed journals in the English language. However, this issue does not relate to the NUFU framework, whereby all research dissemination mediums are considered legitimate and decisions as to the most appropriate dissemination strategy are left to the project coordinators in each individual project.

The final, and perhaps the most complicated, thematic category is composed of the intertwining issues of *sustainability and capacity building*, issues that are inexorably linked in their purpose and outcomes. As the conceptual cornerstones of the NUFU program, sustainability and capacity building frame the program’s focus on training individuals as a means to build institutions, as well as the long-term orientation of the program. However, it is clear that a number of tensions are constantly at work in regard to these goals. Recent changes in the international donor community have drawn many programs away from individual capacity building and towards institution building, an approach that NUFU stakeholders appear
to be resistant to for a variety of reasons. For the most part, researchers and administrators involved in the NUFU program have based their resistance on the belief that strong individuals are a prerequisite for strong research institutions and, therefore, the focus of the program should be on training individual researchers. A second contention is that top-down research directives, rooted in the interests of administrators and politicians, are an ineffective and inefficient use of resources when it comes to building research capacity since individuals are the progenitors and incubators of research.

Based on the number of Master’s and Doctoral students trained and graduated, the NUFU program appears to be successful in its efforts to heighten individual capacity through graduate programming. In addition, the NUFU data indicates a high level of employment for graduates of NUFU-supported programs, particularly in terms of gaining employment at their original universities. Longitudinal data is absent from the study, primarily due to the extremely limited data collection systems in place in many Southern jurisdictions.

In terms of the viability of long-term capacity building in Southern jurisdictions, many limitations were noted and observed by Norwegian researchers and administrators, particularly relating to the lack of transparency at Southern institutions regarding existing resources and capacities, as well as pervasive institutional cultures of corruption and financial mismanagement. However, both of these issues exist beyond the scope of the NUFU program, and institutional reforms are beyond the purview or scope of such a targeted program.

Despite the noted limitations, Norwegian participants affirmed a widespread belief that the NUFU program effectively trains young and experienced researchers alike, so long as there is participant buy-in on both sides of the relationship. The long-term focus of the program, supporting between five and twelve years of research, training and dissemination activities, enables all participants to invest substantial energy and time in the development of research projects, graduate programs and students. Institutional capacity building is a highly likely result of such extended investment in particular departments or faculties. The general conclusion that can be drawn from this sub-section is that the NUFU program offers significant opportunities for participants to develop long-term research projects and to contribute to capacity building at both individual and institutional levels. While the primary focus articulated in NUFU documents is to support individual-level training processes through either graduate training or research projects, the freedom to institutionalize projects through masters and doctoral degree programs and other initiatives is widespread and potent. Additionally, there appears to be a strong correlation between the NUFU goals as articulated in their formal program documents
and the experiences and perspectives articulated by Norwegian participants regarding on-the-ground implementation of the program modality.
Chapter Six: NUFU Case Study -
Analysis of the North-South dynamics in a trilateral research network

Introduction

In order to gain a better understanding of how the NUFU program mandate, administrative structure, organizing framework, and the overall project modality intersect with and impact the nature and function of individual projects supported by the program, the following chapter presents the findings from the exploratory case study conducted to examine one of NUFU’s network research projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. As discussed in the first and fourth chapters, the case study is not meant to present concrete or generalizable conclusions regarding the NUFU program as a whole; rather, the analysis and observations are meant to highlight elements of the NUFU structure and modality that may facilitate or inhibit the establishment of equitable demand-driven research partnerships, either tied directly or indirectly to the organizational and substantive framework supported by NUFU. The following case study uses the *Coercive* ideal-type, as constructed in chapter three, to ground the comparative analysis.

Prior to analyzing the case study project, the national contexts of both SSA jurisdictions are presented in order to situate the particular project in the historically contingent narratives of the two jurisdictions in question. Just as the NUFU program did not evolve in a socio-political vacuum within Norway, the two SSA research sites are embedded within national and regional contexts that require a brief overview before undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the particular NUFU project. The two case study jurisdictions are Tanzania and South Africa. In order to ensure the anonymity of the individual participants interviewed in the study, the names of the participating universities have been withheld. However, despite this anonymity, the national contexts remain extremely important influencing factors and require some brief explication.

As previously articulated, the higher education systems of all SSA nations have been constructed, administered and influenced by non-African actors during the 20th and 21st centuries. While the colonial superpowers organized the domestic management and administration of their respective African colonies in a variety of forms and structures, in the scope of post-secondary education policies, substantial homogeneity occurred in the general governing conditions, rationales and intents of all colonial powers; post-secondary education and training was extremely limited across all SSA nations and was almost exclusively
implemented as a vehicle for the domination, subjugation, exploitation and coercion of indigenous Africans. In the post-colonial era, African jurisdictions have re-asserted distinct educational pathways through their domestic policies. As such, the case study analysis carried out in the second half of this chapter is prefaced with two sections on the history of higher education in Tanzania and South Africa. This preface is accompanied by a brief introduction to the political and economic contexts of the two nations during the post-colonial era in order to provide a more holistic contextual frame for the study as a whole. The limited temporal focus, specifically looking at the post-World War 2 era, is justified on the grounds that the current period of the modern world-system was instantiated after the Second World War and that the resulting geo-political shifts laid the groundwork for the modern international aid paradigm. The specific focus of the following two sections explore Tanzania’s post-colonial history and the pre- and post-Apartheid situation in post-War South Africa, respectively.

Following the contextual introductions to Tanzania and South Africa, the remainder of this chapter presents the findings of the case study analysis. This is carried out through an in-depth case study of a single NUFU-supported research project. Data for the case study was derived from participant interviews, official NUFU documents, on-site observations at the two participating universities, and pertinent literature produced by the NUFU project under examination. Drawing on the perspectives and interpretations put forward by the Tanzanian and South African participants, the analysis explores how case study participants conceptualize the NUFU NSRP model, particularly its decentralized governance structure. The findings are organized according to the Coercive ideal-type constructed in chapter three and implemented in chapter five in order to align Southern perspectives with the categories of partnership that have historically determined the success or failure of NSRP programs and projects. This analysis is intended to offer an examination of NUFU’s NSRP modality that gives voice to the perspectives of participants from two distinct African nations regarding the NUFU process and Northern development-related programming in general.

**The Case of Tanzania: Nyerere, African Socialism, and Structural Adjustment**

Despite the turbulent, often violent, history of both pre- and post-colonial Africa, Tanzania is often referred to as one of the continent’s most politically stable countries, particularly in the sub-Saharan region; it has never experienced a civil war, a coup d’état or
significant violence in any national election, and it has had regular presidential and parliamentary elections every five years since independence (Green, 2011, 224). The modern Tanzanian state is primarily rooted in the events of the late 19th century. In 1891, the German federal government took formal control over the interior and coastal strip of East Africa previously controlled by the Omani Sultan of Zanzibar by appropriating the territory from the German East Africa Company and appointing the first governor of the region in Dar es Salaam (Gaillard, 2003, 318). However, German control was relatively short-lived and ended when the East African territories were ceded to the United Kingdom in accordance with a League of Nations mandate after the end of the First World War (ibid, 319).

British rule lasted until after the end of the Second World War, when mounting domestic discontent, declining British power and pressures raised by the independence of other African colonies enabled the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), under the leadership of Julius K. Nyerere, to radically transform the domestic political landscape by attaining victories in the legislative council elections of 1958 and 1959 (Gaillard, 2003, 319). In May 1961, Tanganyika became an autonomous state under a new constitution, and in December of the same year the country achieved full independence as the Republic of Tanganyika, while retaining its place in the British Commonwealth. In 1964, the mainland territory of Tanganyika joined with the islands of Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania (Jamison, 2011, 31). For the sake of coherence, this study will refer to the country as Tanzania in regards to both the Tanganyikan and Tanzanian phases of its history.

The country’s colonial economy focused on agricultural and mineral exports, primarily iron, gold and cotton. However, economic development was limited by extremely low levels of capital and labor (Green, 2011, 225), which were dispersed throughout the territory in relatively low quantities (Iliffe, 1978) and which ultimately resulted in a generally stagnant economy under colonial rule. Tanzania’s population, and its economic potential, was ravaged by slavery, disease and violence during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Iliffe, 1978; Berry, 1994; Nunn, 2008; Green, 2011).

While the evolution of the modern Tanzanian state is fascinating in its own right, the guiding research questions of this study are concerned with understanding and analyzing the antecedent conditions that led to the formation of the current higher education landscape, with a specific focus on the country’s research activities. A holistic examination of the various social, political and economic issues in the post-colonial state is beyond the purview of this study, despite the interpenetration that broader issues of power bear on educational opportunities and
determinants in and across all nation-states. As such, this brief historical overview will primarily concern itself with the major national policies and developments that directly impacted the evolution of Tanzania’s higher educations sector in the post-colonial era.

In terms of the higher education system’s organization, 50 years of post-independence initiatives and policies have culminated in a binary system, with universities and university-colleges that offer bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees representing one half of the overall system and non-university higher education institutions that focus on certificate and diploma credentials making up the remaining fifty percent of the system and. The system as a whole is comprised of 12 publicly assisted universities and colleges, 20 private universities and university colleges, and 14 public and 2 private non-university higher education institutions (Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011a, 18). Public universities and university colleges fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, and various other government ministries regulate the private non-university institutions (ibid, 19).

In regards to issues of access and participation, the most recent Gross Enrollment Rates (GER) available for the relevant age cohort in Tanzanian post-secondary education (18-24 year olds) indicate a mere 1% GER as of 2004, compared to a 5% average for the rest of SSA, and 3% rates for neighboring Kenya and Uganda (ibid, 19). The total number of students enrolled in Tanzanian higher education institutions (HEIs) as of the 2007-2008 academic year was ~82,000, with ~12,000 enrolled in private universities, and another ~16,000 in the 16 non-university higher education institutions (ibid, 119).

In terms of Tanzania’s current state of economic development, competitiveness and innovation, all of which are directly or indirectly tied to both higher education and research productivity, the following statistics help contextualize the state of the nation: Tanzania’s Human Development Index (HDI – computed as an average of a country’s adult literacy rate, life expectancy, and GDP per capita, in other words encapsulating both social and economic indicators) ranked at 159 out of 177 countries in 2005, with life expectancy at 51 years in 2005; adult literacy at 69.4%; and a combined GER for primary, secondary, and tertiary education of 50.4% (UNDP, 2009) (Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011a, 9).

In terms of the World Economic Forum’s 2010 Global Competitiveness Index (WEF, 2010), Tanzania is ranked at 113 out of 139 countries (ibid, 12). As Bailey, Cloete & Pillay (2011a) conclude, “on higher education and training, Tanzania fares poorly relative to its average competitiveness ranking of 100 – its ranking for higher education and training is 128 out of 133 countries. However, for innovation (Global Innovation Index) it is ranked at 98,
seven places lower than its average competitiveness ranking. Other competitiveness factors on which it does well are institutions (74), macroeconomic stability (77), and financial market sophistication (74)” (p. 12). However, according to the 2009 GCI, Tanzanian “enrolment rates at the secondary and university levels are among the lowest in the world (ranked 125th and 129th, respectively). Related to the education level of the workforce, the adoption of new technologies is low in Tanzania (ranked 120th), with very low uptake of ICTs such as the Internet and mobile telephony. In addition, the quality of the educational system receives a poor assessment” (WEF, 2009, 40; as cited in Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011a, 13).

In order to situate the above statistics in the context of this study’s examination of a trilateral research network supported by NUFU and involving Norwegian, Tanzanian and South Africa universities, the major national policies and initiatives with direct implications for higher education since independence is useful for gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the current situation. As examined in the second chapter of this study, the history of higher education in all of the colonial African jurisdictions is directly linked to colonial policies enacted during the 19th and 20th centuries, and the Tanzanian case is no different. In Tanzania’s pre-independence era, this resulted in the absence of domestic post-secondary opportunities for the indigenous population.

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the first leader of the independent Tanzanian state was one of only two indigenous Tanzanians educated at the university level in the entire country (Gaillard, 2003, 319). Julius Nyerere, a schoolteacher by trade, helped organize and mobilize the TANU political party and subsequently became the first Prime Minister of Tanganyika and then the President of the Republic of Tanzania.

The social policies enacted by Nyerere in the immediate post-independence period focused on the idea of African self-reliance and sought to sever the colonial relationships that had historically inhibited the development of autonomous African and Tanzanian identities, as well as social, political and economic structures (Nyerere, 1962, 1967a; Jamison, 2011). Beginning in 1962 and culminating in the Arusha Declaration of 1967, Nyerere sought to radically restructure the organizing principles that had governed society under German and British rule by drawing together all Tanzanians under an indigenous national identity that superseded all other ethnic allegiances, including the tribal social structures that pre-dated colonial rule and remained emblematic of many other post-colonial African nations (Nyerere, 1962, 1967a; Tripp, 1999; Collier, 2009). Nyerere termed the new nationalist ideal Ujamaa
(Swahili for family-hood) and incorporated it as the cornerstone of a Pan-African socialist ideology that became inextricably embedded in all of Tanzania’s post-independence reforms.

Two major domestic policies that stemmed from Arusha were the nationalization of property, specifically the targeting of property that was owned by foreign entities, and the villagization of rural citizens through mandated resettlement programs, a move that sought to relieve some of the inhibiting economic issues associated with an extremely dispersed populace (Bjerk, 2010; Green, 2011, 228-229). A third major policy related to the intellectual and political emancipation of the citizenry through a reconstituted education system (Nyerere, 1967a). According to Nyerere’s blueprint of African socialist development, the education system was a central mechanism for reshaping the relationship between the individual and the state. In regards to the formal K-12 system, this emancipatory goal manifested in a number of ways; as of 1973, government-supported secondary and primary schools fees were completely eliminated (Samoff, 1994); Nyerere’s support of siasa (Swahili political education) was operationalized in order to create and sustain positive notions of national identity (Green, 2011, 235); and the Tanzanian government mandated Swahili as the official medium of instruction in primary school, as well as the official language of government, in an effort to forge a sense of national identity through a shared language (Young, 1976; Hastings, 1997; Miguel, 2004; Collier 2009; Green, 2011). However, in the context of this study it is Nyrere’s legacy in relation to universities that is of greatest concern and interest.

University College, Dar es Salaam (UCD) was the first formal university in Tanzania. UCD was first operationalized by government Ordinance in 1961, the same year that the country achieved independence from the UK, but it was only instituted as law through the University College, Dar es Salaam Act in 1963 (Kimambo, Mapunda & Lawi, 2008, 154). While the British colonial administration had planned to establish a domestic university by 1964, the pace of development was accelerated upon independence in order to address a variety of post-colonial needs, most pressing of which were significant labour force demands resulting in the complete withdrawal of Britain’s administrative force post-independence (Kimambo, Mapunda & Lawi, 2008; Jamison, 2011, 72). The acceleration of the British plans resulted in the University opening its doors three years early, with an initial enrolment of 14 students in the Faculty of Law (Mapunda, 2008).

In 1963, a significant shift occurred in the higher education landscape of the East African region, primarily consisting of Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, as a result of the creation of a trans-national university system constructed under the moniker of the University of East
Africa (UEA) through the *University of East Africa Act*, which incorporated UCD as one of three branch campuses, in addition to the University of Nairobi, Kenya and the Makerere University in Uganda. The primary driver of this radical development continues to be debated, but it is widely accepted that the deficits in human, physical and financial resources in post-independence East Africa were major contributing factors (Jamison, 2011). In Tanzania, Nyerere incorporated his ideological vision into the functional utility of the UEA by imbuing UCD with a distinctively African and Tanzanian cultural mandate. In Nyerere’s inaugural speech at UCD, he stated, “our young men and women must have an African-oriented education. That is, not only given in Africa but also directed at meeting the needs of Africa…our present plans must be directed at reaching the village” (as quoted in Omari, 1991, 182).

Despite the pan-African ideology espoused by Nyerere, the historical record indicates that other than a shift in research topics and curricula at UCD, the structure of the university, as with many other post-colonial African universities, remained closely aligned with the inherited colonial model (Court, 1975, 1980; Mazrui, 1978; Kimambo, 1984; Shivji, 1993; Jamison, 2011). At its outset, Tanzania’s lone university was directly linked to the University of London, with the majority of the curricular and testing responsibilities crafted by academics in London and administered locally in Tanzania (Mazrui, 1975; Jamison, 2011). In addition, the majority of the staff employed by UCD were expatriates from Britain, mainland Europe, the United States and Canada (Court, 1980; Jamison, 2011). As Jamison (2011) states in her historical case study of UDSM:

> For the initial recruitment of faculty members, UCD and UEA relied on the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas (IUC). This council internationally advertised open positions at UCD and interviewed the candidates. UCD got the final word in the hiring process. Most of the academic staff members during these early years were from British universities, with a few coming from North America and other places. Top administrators at UCD and UEA placed an emphasis on recruiting specialists with international recognition so that the university would be seen as having the highest standards. In this way, British institutions were significantly involved in the academic hiring process since the UEA depended heavily on its connection with the University of London as well as with the IUC, an extension of the British government, for recruitment of top candidates (p. 74).

As already outlined in the second chapter of this study, given the absence of the most basic post-secondary tradition in many post-colonial nations, including Tanzania, and the serious economic and resource-based pressures facing the post-independence states, African governments and
universities were significantly limited in their ability to distance themselves from their former colonial rulers in order to reform the structure and function of national universities, despite the clear desire to do so.

In terms of a national vision for post-secondary education, the *Arusha Declaration* became the conduit through which Nyerere put forward the most concise formulation of his philosophy of African socialism and its associated political implications. In relation to formal educational structures and systems, this vision was further expanded in Nyerere’s *Education for Self-Reliance* (ESR) document (Nyerere, 1967). The epistemological framework constructed by Nyerere in the early stages of post-colonial Tanzania “rejected the right of any other nation to govern (Tanzanians)” (Nyerere, 1967a, 4), and infused ideas related to the common Tanzanian social good with an intellectually oriented point of reference. The driving message of ESR was that the inherited education system, and its particular class-based outcomes, needed to be replaced by a system that would promote equality amongst all Tanzanians and a recognition that education is more than just a degree but is a fundamental orientation towards society as a whole (Kimambo, Mapunda & Lawi, 2008, 177-179).

Despite the initial regional orientation of the UCD campus vis-à-vis the UEA network arrangement, and despite the continental elements of Nyerere’s pan-African socialist vision, UCD dissolved its formal arrangement with the UEA in 1970 and established itself as a discrete institution under the name of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) (Jamison, 2011). While it remained in close collaboration with Makerere and the University of Nairobi in a number of matters through the Inter-University Committee of East Africa (Nhonoli, 1973), the Tanzanian government re-positioned the institution to more directly incorporate national politics into its mandate by reinforcing its role in the creation of a distinctly Tanzanian society. The 1970 *University of Dar es Salaam Act* formally established UDSM as an independent university and put forward the following mandate for the institution, its faculty and its students:

a. To preserve, transmit and enhance knowledge for the benefit of Tanzania’s people.
b. To create a sense of public responsibility in the educated, and promote the search for truth and respect for truth.
c. Promote student engagement with the people to benefit the nation
d. To assume responsibility for Tanzania’s national university education and provide centers of learning, training and research.
e. Cooperate with the state and people to foster strong national education development.
f. Stimulate and promote intellectual and cultural development for the benefit of the people.
g. To conduct examinations for, and grant, degrees diplomas certificates and other awards.
Based on these ideals, post-secondary education and the UDSM system was tasked with infusing every aspect of intellectual pursuit with a practical orientation linked to the realization of a Tanzanian developmental trajectory, operating under the rubric of self-reliance and through a complete rejection of external influences.

In 1974, Tanzania’s government adopted the *Musoma Resolution* to officially tie the university to Nyerere’s brand of developmentalism vis-à-vis the ideology of the Tanzanian *Ujamaa* state, and to review the progress made in reforming the national education system in response to both the *Education for Self-Reliance* document and the *Arusha Declaration* (Mkude et al., 2003; as cited in Jamison, 2011; Kimambo, Mapunda & Lawi, 2008, 193-194). This marked an interesting era in Tanzania’s political history that was marked by robust debate over the direction and ideological underpinning of the nation’s post-colonial development path, debates that ascribed fundamental significance to post-secondary education; the tension between African solidarity and national development marks a recurrent theme in Africa’s post-colonial history, a theme that in many ways undercut the ability for nations to pool resources and manpower successfully in the initial post-colonial era in order to leverage their shared experiences to overcome historical dependencies. Since the focus of this study is on the research function of post-independence African universities, a comprehensive investigation and analysis of the implications of post-colonial nationalism is not in the scope of this paper. However, it is an overarching theme worth further consideration in regards to the evolution of post-colonial higher education systems on the continent.

As a result of the emerging national focus in Tanzania’s post-colonial government, UDSM, the country’s only degree granting post-secondary institution, slowly became a politicized institution with close links to the ruling TANU party. The UCD as originally instantiated was broadly conceived as an apolitical institution during its UEA period (Museveni, 1970; Shivji, 1993; as cited in Jamison, 2011), and as Issa Shivji (1993) argues, despite the initial fervor after decolonization, the majority of the intellectual discourse at UCD during the 1960s remained predominantly couched in Western theories:

Both the continuity and the change that was political independence found a theoretical expression in modernization theories. This school ruled the discussions and the debates of the early sixties. As is known, the modernization school was not of local origin. It derived its inspiration and articulation from western and in particular North American scholars such as Rostow and Lewis in
Economics, Parsons in Sociology and Morgenthau and Apter in politics (p. 130; as cited in Jamison, 2011, 76).

However, with the fracturing of the UEA system and the burgeoning pan-African intellectual movement, the formal distance between the ruling party’s socialist ideology and the intellectual activity at UDSM became increasingly blurred. The Tanzanian government increasingly envisioned UDSM as “one of the main tools for defining a distinctive Tanzanian national identity” (Jamison, 2011, 33). This was reinforced in a keynote speech made by Nyerere at UDSM:

The University in a developing society must put the emphasis of its work on subjects of immediate moment to the nation in which it exists, and it must be committed to the people of that nation and their humanistic goals…We in poor societies can only justify expenditure on a University—of any type—if it promotes real development of our people…The role of the University in a developing nation is to contribute; to give ideas, manpower, and service for the furtherance of human equality, human dignity and human development (as quoted in Coleman, 1984, p. 86).

This was reinforced through pre-university and concurrent national service requirements for all students applying to and enrolled at UDSM, and institutional practices were reformed around the idea of the service function that a developmental university could fulfill in the African context (Court, 1980, 661-662).

Based on the prescriptions put forward in Nyerere’s visionary statements, Tanzanian higher education in the 1960s and 1970s aimed at fostering public legitimacy through three primary movements; expanding enrollment; reforming curricula in support of eliminating colonial vestiges; and developing indigenous staff, since in 1963 only 10% of academic staff at the UEA were East Africans, including just 16% at UDSM¹. As Court (1980) stated:

In 1963 as constituent colleges of the newly formed University of East Africa they had between them only 1,289 undergraduates, a limited range of courses, physical facilities which with the exception of Makerere were embryonic, and hardly a score of indigenous academic staff members! Secondly, the universities followed a British model, and in the formative stages of their emergence the prevailing ideas about higher education and development stressed the importance of teaching, scholarship and the furnishing of high-level manpower rather than any more grandiose "developmental" purposes (p. 668).

A corollary to the service mandate in Tanzania’s higher educations sector was the emphasis on manpower planning and the role that university-trained individuals could play in

¹ Data is only available using the “East African” categorization; breakdown by country is not available.
the revitalization of the Tanzanian economy (Brooke-Smith, 1978; Court, 1980). In the mid-1970s, the Tanzanian government aimed to achieve total self-sufficiency in all high-skill sectors of the national economy, such that “by 1980 every middle and high level post in the country should be filled by a Tanzanian with the necessary education” (Brooke-Smith, 1978, 143). In order to achieve this object, a Manpower Planning Unit was established in the national government and the syllabus of training courses were focused on job requirements in the state bureaucracy and economy” (ibid, 143).

In order for these broad sweeping reforms to be implemented, traditional Western conceptions of academic freedom were not only challenged, but were deemed inappropriate for the Tanzanian context (Jamison, 2011). President Nyerere served as the chancellor of UDSM for some time and a number of key political figures sat on the institution’s governing council. In his role as chancellor, Nyerere advocated for a limited implementation of academic freedom, arguing that the national context did not allow for the resources to be used in ways that did not directly benefit society. As Jamison contends, “according to Nyerere and TANU, UDSM was to be formed around and limited by the needs and capacity of the local economy as dictated by the state” (Jamison, 2011, 35).

If the early period of Tanzanian higher education could be characterized as in service to the state, the middle period of the 1980s and 1990s can be equally characterized as a gutting of the higher education system in relation to the state. The precipitous failure of Nyerere’s economic policies, coupled with a global economic depression, resulted in Nyerere’s government abandoning its isolationist policies and reaching out to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in order to secure much needed finances through Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) that would hypothetically stabilize the domestic economy (Brock-Utne, 2000; Vavrus, 2005; Jamison, 2011). The crisis ultimately cost Nyerere more than his African socialist vision; in 1985 Nyerere stepped down as the first president of Tanzania.

In relation to the higher education sector, despite the focus placed on the country’s flagship university to address the economic and social deficits left by colonialism, the fragile post-independence state and economy ultimately resulted in UDSM being unable to initiate or maintain the broad sweeping social mandates put forward by Nyerere’s government (Court, 1980). The already vulnerable condition of UDSM was compounded by the economic failures of the regime, and the institutional erosion was accelerated by the series of macro-economic reforms initiated by the SAP. In order to secure the requisite IMF funds, reforms were mandated that required a drastic reduction in government subsidies for certain consumer goods and
government services, eliminating trade barriers, devaluing the currency, and most importantly for the scope of this study, establishing cost-sharing policies in various social sectors, including higher education (Rugumisa, 1989; Wagao, 1990; Kerner & Cook, 1991; Ponte, 2002; as cited in Vavrus, 2005, 180). These economic conditions were further exacerbated by war with neighboring Uganda, declining prices for the country’s major export crops and increasing prices for importing oil (Vavrus, 2005, 180).

The impact of SAPs was severe across all social sectors but particularly for post-secondary education, where, as outlined in chapter two, the dominant economic theorists of the time argued that since the private rate-of-return for post-secondary education far outweighed the public rate-of-return, public subsidies for higher education should be drastically reduced (Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011a, 18-19). While this had extremely negative effects on access to post-secondary education, at UDSM this resulted in an almost complete hiring freeze for over 10 years, whereby as of 1998, not a single staff member was under the age of 30, with the bulk of the population between 40 and 50 years old (Gaillard, 2003, 321). At a national level:

The budget to University education declined between 1978/79 and 1989/90. In nominal terms the University budget for the periods 1978/79 and 1989/90 were Tshs. 123,048,451 and Tshs. 1,302,701,900, respectively. However, in real terms these figures when deflated by the consumer price index (CPI) were Tshs. 123,048,451 and Tshs. 79,930,361 for the respective periods. In other words in real terms the University budget for 1989/90 was 35% less than it was in 1978/79 (UDASA 1990) (Galabawa, 1991, 51).

Furthermore,

By 1984 foreign dependency on development expenditure for education in general was between 75% and 80%” (ibid, 51). At UDSM, dependency has resulted in close to 30% of all revenues coming from foreign donors as of 2010, with 66% coming from government and only 5% from institutional revenues (Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011a, 20).

These developments, in conjunction with the changing macro-economic policies ushered in by the SAPs, resulted in higher education taking on a more active market-orientation than under Nyerere’s government. The move away from the policy framework of the SAP era began with the 1999 National Higher Education Policy (MSTHE, 1999) and culminated in the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 document (United Republic of Tanzania, 2000), produced by the President’s Office Planning Commission. The latter document put forward the following three goals regarding the role of education-related activities in the country’s development process:

1. A broad human development strategy: There is need to promote a broad human development investment strategy which involves a wide range of
players as well as a broad resources base which embraces individuals, families, communities, agencies and corporate bodies.

2. A learning society: The society should be encouraged to learn continuously in order to upgrade and improve its capacity to respond to threats and to exploit every opportunity for its own betterment and for the improvement of its quality of life.

3. Education as a strategic change agent: Education should be treated as a strategic agent for mindset transformation and for the creation of a well educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges which face the nation. In this light, the education system should be restructured and transformed qualitatively with a focus on promoting creativity and problem solving.

(United Republic of Tanzania, 2000, 13-15).

However, despite the steps taken by the national government to improve the quality of facilities, programs, courses, students and staff in the country’s publicly-assisted higher education institutions, the following conclusions, made by Bailey, Cloete & Pillay (2011) in their comprehensive overview of Tanzania’s higher education landscape, concisely summarize the state of affairs as of 2011; “the tertiary education challenges in Tanzania are substantial and include the following: low enrolment in higher education institutions; inadequate infrastructure in higher education institutions; inadequate textbooks, reference books, journals and laboratory equipment; inadequate teaching staff accompanied by poor mastery of teaching language; inadequate budgetary allocation for higher education development; and a lack of understanding and awareness on cost-sharing policy in higher education” (p. 23).

With regards to research activities in Tanzania’s higher education sector, there is little in the way of official data available to examine the levels of government support since independence. However, some analyses can be made based in the limited data available. At a thematic level, Nyerere’s interest in higher education tasked UDSM with research into practical and applied areas of study that could support the nation’s post-independence economic development (Nyerere, 1967a). The impact of this on the institution’s structure and curricula was three-fold; traditional disciplinary subjects were infused with cross-disciplinary emphasis in order to create a more holistic approach to teaching and learning that could engage with the country’s multi-faceted development issues (Court, 1980, 666); “development studies” were emphasized as a part of the core curriculum in order that all students were versed in and engaged with the social, economic and political obstacles facing the country (ibid, 667); and a
fusing of theory and practice was meant to occur at all levels of the education system, but particularly through university research (Kimambo, Mapunda & Lawi, 2008, 137-139).

In terms of government support to research, a number of bodies were established to support and coordinate the limited resources available for investment in research activities: in 1968, the Tanzanian National Science Research Council (UTAFITI), subsequently renamed the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), was established to coordinate research and development activities. COSTECH was designated as an advisory and policy-making body, and developed a document on priority areas for research in Tanzania (Gaillard, 2003, 319); in 1979, following the collapse of the East African community, the National Institute of Medical Research was established as a parastatal organization under the Ministry of Health (Gaillard, 2003, 328); in 1992, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education (MSTHE) was established; and in 1995, COSTECH established the National Fund for the Advancement of Science and Technology (COSTECH, 1996). As with all Tanzanian research organizations, inadequate staffing has been a major inhibitor of activity. As of 2003, only 11 of 58 scientists on staff at COSTECH (out of 200 total staff) had PhDs and 21 had Master’s of Science or Master’s of Arts (Gaillard, 2003, 328).

However, despite the interest and institutional support for research at the country’s universities and other research-based institutions and bodies, Tanzanian higher education institutions have rarely been able to overcome their dependencies on foreign bodies and actors for either financial or capacity building support (Gaillard, 2003). As Gaillard (2003) states in the only major study on record examining Tanzania’s research environment since independence, “Tanzanian researchers are dependent on foreign colleagues at each stage of their scientific work, from access to literature, to analysis of samples and requesting the use of equipment in working order or not available in Tanzania” (p. 329). At Sokoine University, as of 2003, foreign support represented more than 90% of financing for research and resulted from partnerships with 48 distinct foreign funding sources; this dependency on foreign sources is much greater than for grantees in Africa as a whole, where on average 57% of research budgets come from international sources (Gaillard, 2003, 329-333)

In terms of raw research productivity, Tanzania lags significantly behind it’s continental counterparts, ranking 8th in SSA in terms of production of articles in major international journals, producing 2% of total African production, and with as much as 72% of all articles produced being published in collaboration with foreign authors, only 7% of which with authors from other African nations (mostly Kenya and Uganda) (Gaillard, 2003, 333). Tanzania’s
contribution to the share of world Science and Engineering Publications as of 2007 was ~0.03%, with the total African contribution (including Northern African nations) representing 1.37% of the total S&E publications (Hassan, 2007; as cited in World Bank, 2010, 56).

**The Case of South Africa: Apartheid and Reconciliation**

South Africa’s history after the Second World War is markedly different from Tanzania’s, scarred as it was by the establishment of one of the most systematically repressive regimes of the 20th century. At the end of the Second World War, the structure of South African colonial rule was not that different from its African counterparts; state-enforced race-based discrimination was the norm. However, the mechanisms of colonial rule were milder in the pre-Apartheid state. That is not to say the race-based policies of pre-Apartheid South Africa were benign, as non-Europeans were barred from political enfranchisement and severely limited in all economic sectors, but rather the legal mechanisms under British rule were less aggressive and all encompassing in the separation of white and non-white populations. Beginning with the election of the Afrikaner Nationalists Party (ANP) in 1948, South Africa’s black population became inexorably subjected to increasingly powerful and refined legal mechanisms of race-based repression, control and abuse in order to maintain a system of racial segregation and regulation (Carter, 1955, 142). As Prime Minister Hans Strijdom stated in a 1956 speech to South Africa’s parliament, “either the white man dominates or the black man takes over…the only way the Europeans can maintain domination is by withholding the vote from Non-Europeans” (Meredith, 2005, 117).

While the scope of South Africa’s history, particularly the post-war Apartheid regime, is beyond the limited space available in this chapter and thematically stretches well beyond that of higher education, a number of key historical moments are briefly introduced in order to contextualize South Africa’s current education standing within the purview of this study, particularly in relation to higher education. As will be described below, education became a crucial tool in the Apartheid regime’s efforts to maintain control over the country’s non-white population, and the system that was put in place in support of that goal will not be reversed in a short amount of time. In regards to this study’s topic, higher education research, the development of a radically new higher education sector and framework after the end of Apartheid rule required, and continues to require, substantial reformation in support of both national reconciliation and economic development.
Afrikaner identity was sculpted through a turbulent history in its own right, particularly in regard to the discriminatory policies enacted under British rule in the aftermath of the late-19th century Boer Wars between the Afrikaner settlers and the British Empire, and the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 under British rule. While the Afrikaner population remained extremely privileged in comparison to their indigenous counterparts, evidenced by their inclusion in the country’s first National Convention held in 1908, an all-white affair that reinforced the separation of white and non-white citizenship, the issue of Afrikaner identity under British rule remained tense. This was primarily due to the Afrikaner theology which reified Afrikaner identity and statehood as a religious issue as much as a political one; Afrikaner nationalism was based on a teleological ideology that envisioned South Africa as a divinely ordained white nation meant to be ruled by the Afrikaner population, absent even English-speaking white Europeans (Adam and Giliomee 1979; Debroey 1990; February 1991; Ramutsindela, 1997). In brief, Afrikaner cultural identity foreshadowed the Apartheid regime that was implemented after the ANP came to power in 1948.

From its outset, ANP rule sought to mold the structure of South African society in support of the perpetual domination of white populations over the various non-white populations in South Africa. ANP policy sought to sculpt South Africa into a safe space for the preservation of Afrikaner culture from all outside influences, including British (Carter, 1955; Ramutsindela, 1997). The base of the ANP movement was the Afrikaner population, a community whose origins trace back to 18th and 19th century Dutch colonists who staked their claim over large portions of South African territory. At the time of the ANP ascension, white South Africans comprised roughly 20% of the total South African population, between 2 and 2.5 million of South Africa’s total 11 million population, with roughly 60% of the white population being Dutch-descendants and the other 40% being primarily British (Dvorin, 1951, 33; Giliomee, 1995, 87).

In support of Afrikaner domination, a number of country-wide initiatives were implemented during the first ten years of ANP rule, including: the Group Areas Act, legislating that any territory could be designated for the exclusive occupation of any one race; the Natives Resettlement Act and the Natives Urban Areas Amendment Act, which allowed for the forced migration and re-population of non-white citizens out of white urban centers and into more rural townships or “Bantustans” governed under separate semi-autonomous governance systems; and, the development of the ‘pass card system’, whereby all non-white South Africans over the age of 16 were required to carry identification cards in order to enter designated ‘white areas’, with
a penalty of imprisonment for failing to produce such cards (Carter, 1955, 145-146; Meredith, 2005, 121-122).

The above policies augmented the pre-existing race-based divide that limited non-white property ownership, employment, voting rights and educational opportunities. Throughout the history of colonial South Africa, both before and during ANP rule, white South Africans owned almost all of the land, were employed in all of the skilled and most of the semi-skilled jobs in both the public and private sectors, and staffed the top and medium rank positions in the civil service, the various military branches and the state police forces (Giliomee, 1995, 86). For example, the Native Land Act of 1913 allowed for up to 87% of all land to be exclusively owned by white South Africans and for the indigenous population to be territorially divided into ‘linguistic nations’ (Ramutsindela, 1997, 102). The combination of ANP policies and the pre-existing colonial framework was intended to create an Apartheid state, whereby black and white South Africans existed in distinctive parallel societies, operating under distinct rules and regulations, with the former population being ultimately subservient to the latter (Carter, 1955, 144).

In regards to educational policies, the Apartheid regime implemented what it called “Bantu Education” through the 1953 Bantu Education Act (Government of South Africa, 1957), which established a regime of separate, unequal and inferior programs of education for the non-white population (Abdi, 2003). Bantu education institutionalized Afrikaner language, history and culture within South African curricula, including the fabrication and perpetuation of Afrikaner mythologies and religious interpretations that elevated Afrikaners as a “destined” people with a divine mandate to occupy and control all of South Africa (Le May, 1995; Abdi, 2003). While Bantu education was an ideological development, it was only a practical option for the ANP because, up until the mid-1970s, the South African state and economic structures did not require supplemental human capital from the non-white population. As previously outlined, whereas many other African colonies lacked a sufficient number of foreign colonial administrators and required a small cadre of educated and trained indigenous Africans in order to fulfill basic administrative functions, this was not the case in South Africa due to the comparatively large Afrikaner and British populations already settled in the jurisdiction. However, due to a declining white population, an increase in government bureaucracies due to the expanded Apartheid state structures, and demands for more, and cheaper, manpower resulted in increased employment and educational opportunities for the non-white population (Giliomee, 1995; Emery, 2008).
By 1976, the administration of education for Africans had been decentralized into four regional territories called “Bantustans”, essentially self-governing, forced resettlement territories composed of black Africans, that were responsible for education across all levels, including higher education (CHE, 2004, 22). This policy culminated in 11 African-based institutions, now referred to as Historically Black Universities (HBUs), falling under the Ministry of Education and Training, which administered all HEIs in South Africa (ibid, 22).

As Cross and Chisholm (1990) argue, Bantu Education had three policy priorities; to provide low-skill labor in order to meet the needs of a growing economy; to pacify the large African urban underclass; and to diminish truancy within the youth of the urban working class population. Ultimately, Bantu Education was meant to construct a sense of psychological inferiority in the African populace. As one of the primary Apartheid architects, Prime Ministry H.F. Verwoerd stated, “when I have control over native education, I will reform it so natives will be taught from childhood that equality with Europeans is not for them” (Murphy, 1992, 368; as cited in Abdi, 2003, 93).

The higher education sector was thus almost exclusively restricted to the white population, and the limited provision that was available to the non-white population, through the HBUs, was limited in both scope and potential. The 1957 Separate University Education Bill and the 1958 Extension of University Education Act combined to restrict university education solely on racial grounds, preventing non-white enrolment at white universities, except in special circumstances, and creating a system of ‘university colleges’ that were recognized as inferior to the traditional universities and solely for non-white students (Greenberg, 1970). Harold Wolpe (1995) described the system as follows:

(HBUs) were to generate the administrative corps for the black state development bureaucracies, wean a new generation of students away from nationalist and socialist sentiments, and win them to the separate development project through the appropriate mix of repressive controls and the promises of economic opportunities in the Bantustans and around the social services needs of blacks (p. 279).

By the end of the Apartheid regime, this mandate had resulted in a 6:0.1 ration of white-to-black Bachelor degree holders in South Africa (SAIRR, 1995) and 85% of all Master’s and Doctoral degrees being granted at Historically White Universities (Wolpe, 1995). As Yoloye (1995) contended, “in colonial South Africa and continuing throughout the Apartheid era little or no science was taught to black (African) people in the country and as a result there were very few schools that offered science to Africans” (as cited in Khumalo, 2001).
In terms of raw numbers, the following data highlight the extent to which access to higher education was restricted amongst the different racial groups within South Africa: In 1967, three universities served the entire black population of 12.7 million South Africans, as opposed to 10 universities serving 3.6 million white South Africans (Greenberg, 1970); in 1986, the number of university students per 1000 people was 3 for blacks and 30 for whites (Nordkvelle, 1990); and the government expenditure per white student was 8 times higher than per black student, and the student-teacher ratios for white and black institutions were 19:1 against 41:1, respectively (ibid, 1990). This disproportionate representation was mirrored in faculty positions, where as of 1984, 92% of all academic staff were white, and even in the HBU's, no more than 35% of the academic staff were black (ibid, 1990).

While a comprehensive analysis of the Apartheid educational regime is beyond the purview of this study, it is worth stating that education was used as a key tool of repression by the state between 1948 and 1994 and the education system was fully implicated in maintaining control over the non-white majority (Tikly, 2003). The Total Strategy initiative of the Apartheid government, started in the late 1970s, explicitly rationalized race-based policies on the basis of science, as exemplified by the 1980 South African Plan for the Human Sciences produced by the Human Sciences Research Council (Cloete & Muller, 1991; Tikly, 2003). This move towards a positivist and technical approach to social engineering and control reflected a greater incorporation not only of education structures in support of social and economic policies, but of the research process itself.

As a result of the massive inequalities and systemic repression implemented through race-based education policies and opportunities during the Apartheid era, post-Apartheid educational policies incorporated higher education as a cornerstone not just of economic policy but of systemic social policy. The first step towards this was the creation of the Higher Education Task Team (HETT) in 1994, acting as a preparatory committee to establish the terms of reference for the follow-up 1996 National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) (Moja & Hayward, 2000, 337). Cloete and Muller (1998) state:

One of the first policy acts of the post-apartheid Education Department was to announce an intention to establish a national commission into higher education…the terms of reference stated that restructuring South African higher education should address the inequalities and inefficiencies inherited from the apartheid era, as well as to respond to the social, cultural and economic demands of a globalizing world (p.5).
While the tenor and scope of the policy dialogue and debate occurring in the NCHE were highly contentious due to the variety of systemic issues being confronted and the legacies still in place from the pre-Apartheid regime (Moja, 2000), the overall mandate of the Commission was to create a new vision for post-Apartheid South African higher education that would fundamentally restructure the sector in support of increased equality, equity and social opportunity for citizens, economic productivity for both public and private sectors, and a general re-connection with the rest of the international community by severing the country’s radical isolation during the Apartheid era (NCHE, 1996, 6).

The outcome of the NCHE was a policy framework that focused on three mandates to be implemented through two documents: the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (DoE, 1997) and the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997). The three primary features were: increased participation; greater responsiveness to societal interests and needs; and, increased cooperation and partnerships in the governance structures and operations of higher education (CHE, 2004, 25). In the context of a highly fragmented Apartheid system, both in terms of the access that different ethnic groupings had to post-secondary education and in terms of the stratified binary system of universities and technikons (colleges/polytechnics) operating in relative isolation from one another (NCHE, 1996, 52), the new vision of post-Apartheid higher education was meant to create a single coordinated higher education system that was planned, funded and governed according to a broad consensus-building framework (CHE, 2004, 26).

The post-Apartheid higher education landscape can be characterized as tense in regards to the governance of the system and its institutions, with institutional autonomy being a central area of concern given the radical and abusive interference experienced during the Apartheid era (Olivier, 2001, 5-6). The NCHE ultimately decided on a model of “co-operative governance” that was placed within a “state supervision” framework (NCHE, 1996). This was formally articulated as follows:

Government as a main role player should exercise its authority and its powers over the higher education system in a transparent, equitable and accountable manner and in a discernible pursuit of the public good. It should understand the social, cultural and economic needs and concerns of all potential (direct or indirect) beneficiaries of higher education, to be able to steer the system in a desirable direction. In its relation to institutions and to the system as a whole, there should be a recognition of the maximum degree of practicable autonomy and a commitment to consultation and negotiated solutions of problems (NCHE, 1996; as cited in Olivier, 2001, 5).
This framework of co-operative governance was intended to result in the sharing of functions and powers in regards to policy formulation, implementation and monitoring such that government and non-government actors could participate in all aspects of policy formation and implementation, while still allowing government to have a degree of steering, planning and coordinating capacities based upon agreed upon values.

Since the mid-1990s and the end of Apartheid policies, South Africa’s higher education system has undergone a fundamental reorganization in the distribution and differentiation of higher education institutions (Jansen, 2002), a comprehensive rethinking of the curriculum, specifically through a national qualifications framework and authority (Cosser, 2000; Ensor, 2002; CHE, 2007), and a wholesale reconfiguration of the academic workplace in all of its possible connotations (Webster & Mosoetsa, 2001). This has been facilitated by a number of White Papers, Green Papers and government-supported Commissions, including: the 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology (DACST, 1996), the 1997 Education White Paper (DoE, 1997), the 2002 National Research and Development Strategy (PSA, 2002), the 2008 Anti-Poverty Strategy (PSA, 2008), the 2008 Ten-Year Development Strategy (DST, 2008), and the 2009 Human Resource Development Strategy (DoE, 2009), amongst others. However, despite the implementation of these and other initiatives and policy frameworks, the 2007 South African Council on Higher Education national higher education review stated:

Despite such far-reaching changes in the higher education landscape, there remain disconcerting continuities, including the racially skewed profile of especially senior academic appointments, racial and gender inequalities in research productivity, and the stable “institutional cultures” of universities that still bear their distinctive racial birthmarks expressed in dominant traditions, symbols and patterns of behaviour (Department of Education 2001; Mouton 2003; Thaver, 2005). Yet, except for bold and official pronouncements of change, it is not clear exactly what the reach and impact of these changes have been on higher education practice; nor is it clear what these changes mean to higher education practitioners; and it certainly is not clear how these changes in one national context relate to, or derive from, global changes in higher education (CHE, 2007, 157).

In terms of the structure and characteristics of the current South African higher education system, the post-Apartheid reforms resulted in a series of strategic institutional mergers in order to incorporate and deracialize the previously racially-defined higher education institutions and to redress the systemic abuses of the Apartheid era by creating a unitary and inclusive higher education system (Moja, 2000; CHE, 2004). The current landscape of the country’s public higher education system is as follows; 11 universities; 6 universities of
technology; 6 comprehensive universities (merged universities and technikons), and two
National Institutes of Higher Education, offering higher educations services in the two provinces
without universities (Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011b, 21). As of 2010, the 23 publicly assisted
universities are complemented with ~95 private higher education institutions, including
universities, professional institutes and technikons (ibid, 21).

In regards to issues of access and participation, South Africa’s 2010 participation rate in
higher education was between 16 and 17% (~800,000 students) of the relevant age cohort (18-
24 years old), which was significantly higher than the average for SSA, which is around 6%
(ibid, 22). However, this number was still significantly lower than an array of comparable
industrializing countries, (such as Chile 42%, Argentina 56%, Venezuela 27%, Malaysia 27%,
Mexico 21%) and industrialized countries (average >60%, Finland 86%, South Korea 98%)
(ibid, 22).

In terms of South Africa’s current state of economic development, competitiveness and
innovation, all of which are directly or indirectly tied to both higher education and research
productivity, the following statistics are available: South Africa’s Human Development Index
(HDI – computed as an average of a country’s adult literacy rate, life expectancy, and GDP per
capita, in other words encapsulating both social and economic indicators) ranked 129 out of 177
countries in 2007. “Interestingly, South Africa’s HDI position is 51 places lower than it’s
ranking on GDP per capita alone…this reflects both its low life expectancy and an unequal
distribution of income. Of the HDI components, life expectancy in 2007 averaged 51.7 years,
adult literacy 88%, and the combined gross enrolment ratio (GER) of primary, secondary, and
tertiary education was 76.8% (UNDP 2009)” (Bailey, Cloete, & Pillay, 2011b, 8). As of 2009,
South Africa’s HDI ranked third in sub-Saharan Africa, behind only Mauritius (81) and
Botswana (125) (UNDP, 2009).

The contextual analysis supported by the above data is augmented by the World
Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), whereby South Africa is ranked at 54
out of 139 countries, the highest ranked country in SSA (Bailey, Cloete & Pillay, 2011b, 9). In
general, South Africa ranks well on the following competitiveness indicators: institutions (45),
infrastructure (45), goods market efficiency (35), market size (24), business sophistication (36)
and innovation (41). It ranks poorly on health and primary education (125), labour market
efficiency (90) and technological readiness (65) (ibid, 11).

The most recent 5-year Strategic Plan put forward by the Ministry of Higher Education
and Training focuses on the increasingly important link between higher education and all
avenues of development, and laid out the following three challenges as the most pressing issues facing the country’s higher education sector:

1. To increase the participation of men and women in undergraduate and postgraduate science, engineering and technology, in absolute numbers and in proportion to the population demographics, with respect to race and gender.
2. To increase the size and caliber of the academic teaching and researcher population, in order to create the knowledge required for economic and societal development in the next 50 or more years.
3. To ensure that the level of investment in education is equivalent to the global average for the further and higher education and training systems (DHET 2010, 22-23).

In regards to the analysis conducted on South African research capacity, the study is restricted to the post-World War 2 period, with a primary focus on the post-Apartheid era beginning in 1994. The dissolution of the Apartheid regime in 1994 represents a natural break in research policy due to the significant disruptions that followed the course-altering events of the mid-1990s in South Africa. The period immediately after the end of Apartheid was marked by a radical system-wide restructuring of higher education in the country, and, combined with South Africa’s re-integration into the global research community through the cessation of a near-global moratorium by foreign governments on collaboration with South African universities, makes the post-1994 period the most appropriate focus for this study’s analysis.

As described above, South Africa’s post-Apartheid government targeted education as a key mechanism for redressing the society-wide inequalities mandated under the Apartheid regime. The NCHE envisioned wholesale changes to all aspects of the country’s education system, including increased support for an already strong research sector. The Apartheid regime implemented highly differentiated and racialized curriculum across all levels of the country’s formal education system. However, its support for research at the historically white universities was a cornerstone of the regime’s governing philosophy. Beginning in 1993, in preparation for the political transition, significant changes began to be initiated in the country’s research sector, starting with the establishment of the Science and Technology Initiative (STI) as a mechanism to reform a S&T research sector in decline, dominated by the country’s white minority, lacking adequate co-ordination and transparency, and absent public participation or transparency in key decision-making processes (CHE, 2004, 108). One of the most significant findings of the STI was that:

Despite awareness of the need to shift resources towards the science, engineering and technology (SET) fields, there appeared to be a lack of adequate discrimination regarding funding across disciplines; this was consistent with the
absence of central direction as to academic research output. Thus, for example, South African universities were spending only one third as much as their international counterparts on engineering research (5% compared to 15%) and almost twice as much as other countries on the social sciences, arts and humanities (ibid, 108).

The combination of a post-Apartheid drive for equality and transparency, and the rising influence of S&T research and innovation in the global marketplace, resulted in a renewed emphasis on research capacity, both applied and basic, in both the 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology, developed by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. which was formed in 1994, and the 1997 White Paper on Education (CHE, 2004, 109). The two policy documents established a road map for a national system of innovation that was capable of coordinating research support in order to “create synergy between the various sectoral, institutional and infrastructural elements of the system; to promote innovation; and to develop a research framework in line with national priorities” (ibid, 109). The above initiatives laid the groundwork for the 2002 National Research and Development Strategy which aimed to establish a national research plan based on fostering innovation, increasing investment in the country’s science base, and establishing a fully integrated science and technology system. All of this occurred through restructuring the system of funding in the public and private sectors for research and development vis-à-vis the establishment of the National Research Foundation and a number of associated research programs (ibid, 110). The most recent government policy document that engaged with support to research in the higher educations sector is the 2010 Department of Higher Education and Training Higher Education Strategic Plan (DHET, 2010).

The outcome of the various post-Apartheid developments has been significant and predominantly positive. The 2009-2010 Global Innovation Index (GII), which “assesses in detail the extent to which different economies benefit from the latest innovation advances, South Africa was ranked at 51 out of 132 countries, the highest in Africa. In terms of innovation inputs, the country ranks very highly at 35, but in terms of innovation outputs, it fares relatively poorly at 99” (Bailey, Cloette, & Pillay, 2011b, 13). Scientific research in South Africa is currently at the highest level of any African country, not just those in SSA, with studies putting its contribution to scientific publications at over 50% of the continental total (Pouris & Pouris, 2009; World Bank, 2010) and roughly 25% of the continent’s Science and Engineering Publications (World Bank, 2010, 56). At the outset of the 21st century, South Africa boasted an average of 195 researchers per million population, the second highest number of any African country, and more than either India or Brazil (World Bank, 2009, 55). In terms of R&D
expenditures as a percentage of GDP, South Africa currently ranked 34th in the world at 0.97% as of 2007, just behind Brazil and ahead of India (World Bank, 2012). While India and Brazil may have advanced in recent years due to their own higher education investments, it is clear that South Africa remains at the forefront of the industrializing world in terms of research capacity.

Despite the robust state of South Africa’s research indicators, the national and institutional case study conducted by Bailey, Cloete and Pillay (2011b) summarized the current South African situation as follows, “in the African context, South Africa is performing very well in terms of international innovation indicators. However, this is because of a small, highly developed component of the society that is able to participate fully in the knowledge economy” (p. 111). They continue, “innovation is being critically hampered by the quality of education and human resources in general and Innovation inputs as a whole are excellent in terms of developing country standards but are failing to translate into innovation outputs especially those relating to ‘creative outputs’ and equity in society” (p. 13). This, in conjunction with the various educational and social indicators outlined above, implies that while there is a small cadre of elite researchers contributing to the most economically productive sectors of the national research landscape, the country as a whole remains partially embedded in the legacies of the Apartheid era, which is not surprising given the short amount of time that has passed since political the transformation and both the length of operation and severity of Apartheid era policies.

**Contextual Comparison of South Africa and Tanzania**

While the two above sections present only a limited overview of the countries pre- and post-colonial histories, some broad conclusions can be made in relation to the higher education sectors, the state of research, and the domestic economic conditions that contextualize the current levels of investment into public higher education institutions and their research functions. As this study is not focused on the domestic education systems of either jurisdiction, it is not within its purview to comment on the current political economy of each nation, either in general or in relation to higher education. However, it needs to be acknowledged that domestic political debates and decisions are, and have been since independence, direct determinates of the level of funding allocated for research in public higher education institutions, and the higher education sector represents one area of contestation in national politics. Because of this study’s
focus on NSRP programs, a brief comparison will be put forth below with regards to the current state of research in both jurisdictions and the general economic conditions that enable or limit such investment.

Based on the overviews presented above, it is clear that education has formed a central platform for both Tanzania’s and South Africa’s post-World War Two histories. In Tanzania, under the rule of the TANU party and its leader Julius Nyerere, education became the cornerstone of post-independence development; only through an indigenized education system, at all levels, could Tanzania, and Africa as whole, break the colonial bonds that remained after independence and create an independent, autonomous and potent African continent. As a result of this ideological commitment, all sectors of education in Tanzania became a political priority, but higher education embodied the hope for the country’s future: significant investments were made in support of training the next generation of political and economic leaders; students were required to commit themselves to the nation’s development through mandatory public service; and the University of Dar es Salaam, after a brief period of regional engagement, became a central arm of the ruling party’s ideological wing.

In comparison, education in South Africa during the same period took a radically different form, explicitly embodying the opposite characteristics and ideological underpinnings as those professed by Nyerere. Under ANP rule, education was not a means for social, political and economic emancipation, but rather a key mechanism of segregation, oppression and exploitation. Non-white Southern Africans were not only physically separated from white South Africans, but an entirely separate schooling system was created in order to perpetuate and augment the colonial apparatus. While access to higher education expanded rapidly under Nyerere, access under ANP rule was almost entirely cut-off for all non-white South Africans, with minimal levels being established only in support of the Bantustan apparatus and the need for low-skill workers.

Over time, the two nations appear to have exchanged their positions on higher education, resulting in each country currently experiencing opposite trends in terms of access, investment, and potential. Due to Tanzania’s near economic collapse in the late 1970s and early 1980s, higher education has once again become a possibility primarily for the elite, with access to the nation’s leading public universities almost entirely restricted to the country’s upper and middle classes. Declining investment in higher education has resulted in an almost complete disregard for public research. As a result, the nation’s leading public research institutions are almost completely reliant on foreign support for the most basic research activities. The national metrics
for the training of researchers and high-skilled laborers are some of the lowest on the continent, despite the fact that unlike many of the other struggling African nations, Tanzania has never experienced serious political or military conflict.

South Africa has come to represent the outlier in SSA’s general milieu; it is the only major research center on the continent and it is investing a significant amount of money into public higher education institutions and world-class research facilities. While South Africa’s higher education sector and research productivity still pales in comparison to other industrialized countries, it has ascended as both a continental and regional superpower in these regards, and has become a legitimate engine for the continent’s economic growth. Access to higher education for the entire population has never been higher and higher education remains a leading topic within the nation’s political consciousness. Similar to how Tanzania experienced a boom in the immediate post-colonial years, South Africa has harnessed the post-Apartheid fervor for educational opportunities and is responding in kind.

The above observations depict two countries moving in opposite directions when it comes to higher education and research; one country has reverted to an elite system with limited opportunity for basic or applied research, while the other has embraced its newfound independence and envisions higher education as a mechanism for national reconciliation and economic prosperity. Traditional NSRP programs operate on an unequal plane between the participating jurisdictions, with the Northern country traditionally being significantly better equipped in terms of formal training and access to resources. In the context of the case study project, this dynamic is multiplied by the involvement of a middle-industrializing Southern country (South Africa), a low-industrial Southern country (Tanzania) and a highly industrialized Northern country acting as the funder (Norway). In general, this creates a number of additional complications and opportunities for the traditional North-South model. While the inter-jurisdictional dynamics are a central query in this study, they will be explicitly dealt with in the seventh and final chapter. However, the issues raised by partnering two SSA nations with radically different educational contexts remain salient in the context of the following analysis and should be kept in mind as the findings are examined.

*Case Study of a Trilateral Research Network Project funded by the Norwegian Programme for Education, Research and Development (NUFU)*

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The following section presents a case study of a single trilateral network research project that has been supported by NUFU funding for two program cycles, 2002-2006 and 2007-2011. The case study project incorporates research teams from one Norwegian university, one Tanzanian university and one South African university. Much in the way chapter five analyzed the historical political economy of the NUFU program within the Norwegian milieu, drawing out an array of Norwegian perspectives on the founding, evolution and current manifestation of NSRP programming in the country broadly construed and specifically in relation to the decentralized modality supported by the NUFU program, the following sections of this chapter expand the analysis to include the perspectives of researchers, administrators and institutional leaders situated in the participating Tanzanian and South African universities.

In terms of the research logistics, the case study research occurred over a five-month period and included research stays at both Tanzanian and South African universities. 20 key informant interviews were carried out with project coordinators, researchers and administrators participating in the case study project, in addition to other institutional leaders and researchers who had previous experience with NUFU-supported projects.

As was highlighted in the third chapter of this study, the literature on NSRP programming has long been dominated by Northern-based or Northern-mediated studies and interpretations of Northern initiatives within Southern jurisdictions, and has offered very little in the way of direct access to the perspectives of Southern participants. As a result, the current study was structured in order to directly engage with African participants in order to allow for significant opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns regarding the NUFU program and modality structures, as well as North-South constructs and dynamics more generally. However, it must be noted that given the author’s Canadian origins, as much as the intention of this analysis is to give voice to the African perspective, it once again occurs through mediated lens. The author was aware of this tension throughout the research process and attempted to mediate for bias or misunderstanding at all times by continually engaging with participants regarding local contexts and meanings.

In pursuit of this study’s driving research questions, interviews were conducted with the coordinating and primary support researchers at the participating Tanzanian and South African university sites. In addition, interviews were conducted with project administrators and institutional, faculty and departmental leaders where appropriate. The range of participants was intended to garner a diverse set of perspectives on how the particular NUFU project and the NUFU model in general operate and impact the local research culture at both institutions. The
focus of the interviews dealt primarily with the nature, scope and framework of the NUFU modality and how the ideals, goals and rhetoric manifested in the project operations.

The following sections present findings from a series of interviews conducted over a 4-month period in 2010 at the two SSA university sites. In order to assure the anonymity of the participants, the two universities, including the departments and fields of study involved in the project, are not identified and the names and positions of individual participants have been withheld. In sum, 21 participants were interviewed between the two university sites, 9 at the Tanzanian university and 12 at the South African university, with 8 participants at the administrative level and 13 at the researcher level.

While many interesting related issues were raised during the interview process, the focus of this chapter is on findings directly related to the NUFU modality as either an empowering or inhibiting mechanism for demand-driven research in SSA universities. The dynamics of the specific project under study are taken into account, however, the particular thematic content and inter-personal dynamics that manifest within the project are secondary in interest to the programmatic implications that can be derived from the project’ operation. This case study is not intended to delve into the productivity of the particular research project or the thematic content and significance of the research it supports, but is rather focused on understanding how program modalities frame, structure and determine the politics of partnerships in general. Therefore, as with the previous chapter’s analysis of NUFU program, this chapter’s engagement with a particular NUFU project implements the Coercive analytic framework in order to situate African perspectives within a broader framework for understanding NSRP dynamics on the whole, while acknowledging that individual projects are embedded in local contexts and histories.

**Theme: Program and Project Selection Criteria and Processes**

As outlined in the previous chapter, the NUFU program and project selection criteria and processes are thematically open and give significant systemic power to the applying Southern universities, specifically through the double-weighting of the rankings conducted by the NUFU steering committees at Southern universities against the single-weighting given to the rankings produced by the steering committees at Norwegian institutions. In the previous chapter, Norwegian participants and administrators expressed an array of opinions and concerns
regarding the NUFU structure at a programmatic level, including the domestic politics that impact the programs’ mission and threaten to filter into the formal and informal project selection criteria and processes. Amongst the African participants, the issue of thematic openness was equally salient, though the specific selection mechanisms implemented in the NUFU program were rarely raised or even acknowledged, aside from the project coordinators who had direct engagement with the NUFU administrative structure.

The most commonly referenced characteristics of the NUFU program within the interviews with African participants were NUFU’s thematic openness and the structural flexibility of the NUFU program as a whole. One researcher summarized and praised the NUFU model in the context of other Northern-based programs:

I think NUFU is an outlier, along with the other Nordic countries, because they are fairly flexible. I think also that their scholars are widely knowledgeable…they don’t have fixations that stop them from permitting the possibility that you need to negotiate what you might call quality, what you might call feasible, what you might call relevant. These are all contested terms, because you can find that funding is flexible but the scholars from the North who are supposed to be champions of this when it is useful for creating greater space for what they want to do in the south, being rigid themselves with the scholars that they are dealing with in the south (S.R.4).

One administrator expanded upon NUFU’s openness, praising it in comparison with the domineering models implemented by other funding agencies:

There are times when you submit a project to the donor and the donor now can actually twist your arm and say, ‘ah yes, but I see that you want to look at the low-income people in the village, why don’t you try to find this work in places like Dar es Salaam or why don’t you focus on this group of people, etc…’ Now those kind of issues, where the suggestions or the terms actually come not just as suggestions but as directives, if you want to get money then you have to change this, maybe perspective or change this sub-topic into this area, so those are the kind of problems we sometimes face, although the Norwegian and Swedish donors are aware of this and they are trying to be quite open and leave the doors open so that we are allowed to, like for them they so much give the power to the university in saying that what the university things is maybe important, as far as our research goals, objectives and plans are, then we should handle and screen the projects, the proposals accordingly (S.A2; emphasis added).

Administrators and researchers alike consistently echoed their appreciation and respect for NUFU’s flexibility and openness. For example, one of the project coordinators explicitly stated that “NUFU as a funder is much more flexible and less bureaucratic than all the other funders” (S.R8), while another stated:
The other donors would not have given us, I don’t think we would have gotten that money through the usual European Union and World Bank support. I don’t think this is the type of study which would have been funded, I don’t think. Even within the university community it was very difficult. When we got phase two, in fact a lot of people were surprised that we got phase two, but we got phase two on the basis of being very productive, of being able to do client-driven research on what they want (S.R1)

One senior administrator commented:

The good thing about the NUFU program is that they give you great flexibility. First of all, they don’t tell you which topics to write on, it is you to decide which topic to write on, and it is you who makes the budget, and all the plans, you are the one who is doing them. So that is really what makes the NUFU program to be very different, because you are doing a project in the area that is important to you. They are supporting you, but it has to be addressing your own local needs, unlike many other projects where they come with already prescribed research project areas, ‘we want to do research in this area’, sometimes not necessarily that that area will be relevant to us. So with NUFU it is very open (S.A1; emphasis added).

An interesting and important theme that was raised by many of the more senior participants and institutional leaders at both sites was the recognition that the NUFU modality had adapted over the years in order to redress systemic imbalances in the project selection process. This point was raised by many Norwegian participants in chapter five, particularly in terms of the program level changes that were initiated after the first external review conducted by NUFFIC in 1999 (MFA, 2000, 8). It is significant that many of the participants were aware of the changes made by the NUFU administration and furthermore appreciated the willingness of Norwegian stakeholders to modify the NSRP model in order to promote greater autonomy and control. The following comments reinforce this conclusion:

What they have decided to do is to give the decision-making power to the university here, because initially that was usually not the case, people applied and Norway would be the one to determine which is which, but then there was some complaints…so finally the decision was why don’t we make the decision. So we find now the process is like that; the screening is done here and then at some point collaboratively between (Institution X) and Norway, and then they come to the consensus. So that is a bit better, it is expected that those who participate in choosing the project, those from (Country X), will assist in establishing the relevance or determining the relevance of those projects (S.A2).

Another administrator commented:

There was a switch in tone in the mid-to-late 90s, in which they wanted equal decision-making between Norway and (Country Y), there was much more feeding into government sources and government saying where the cash would
go in (Country Y), which is a bad thing. The whole point about universities is that they need independence from government if they are going to do any thinking. You need independence...The joint decision-making can be problematic if it denies freedoms of independence of the outfits, because it becomes, ‘oh, we’re going to give it to the department of X and then they give to their favorite X studies outfits’. I don’t want that to be too strongly put, but it did become a bit of a problem in my head, and how outputs are measured also became a bit more like the key performance indicators...I think NUFU operates on a much broader understanding of what research can be...I think there’s insufficient international aid, insufficient listening to the other side on both sides, we need to do the diplomacy better. What is nice about NUFU is the mechanism for that interchange...Trying to drive a motorcar together requires a whole lot of diplomatic interchange and the NUFU mechanism is very good at that (S.A5; emphasis added).

A strong part of this theme is that some of the participants recognized and acknowledged that the changes made to the NUFU program are often the result of Norwegian “allies” who are willing to fight for a more equitable system, in spite of competing domestic pressures. As two researchers stated:

NUFU is possible because there are struggles going on, it is not charity...I think it is a struggle on both sides...my impression is that scholars in the North have to struggle as hard as the scholars in the South, and the struggle of the scholars in the North has to do with the prioritization in the North, you know, against something that may have immediate spin-offs with industry...you can see that it is always a bit of a struggle...it’s not easy, I see it’s not easy (S.R11)

NUFU uses tax-payers money, you see. The problem is how do you link the interest of the funders and the others, it is something which is sometimes very difficulty that you can see in the meetings. Sometimes you see people trying to push something which you think it may not work here, but you need also to strike a balance, to see there is another side of the coin. Both sides need to be flexible. I think what is more important to people on the other side to be able to find a niche within the NUFU structure (S.R1).

While some of the African participants recognized the tensions at play within the Norwegian domestic context and between the NUFU administrative structure and other Norwegian stakeholders, the majority of participants interviewed did not express significant thoughts regarding NUFU’s programmatic structure, primarily because it is only the project coordinators and administrators, as well as select institutional representatives, who have direct or significant engagement with NUFU at a programmatic level. The average researcher or administrator appeared to be engaged with NUFU only through the activities of their particular research project, which, given the decentralized model, does not draw rank and file researchers into contact with the broader administrative structure or application processes unless initiated by the
project coordinators. In addition, given the significant pressures and constraints faced by many African academics, including heavy teaching workloads, potentially high levels of external consulting work, and quite often a necessity to provide financial support for large extended families, the majority of participants indicated that they were quite happy to remain only loosely connected to the main responsibilities of the NUFU project and allow the coordinators and administrators to deal with what they saw as the logistical burden of applying and managing the project.

Therefore, despite the power and influence of the structural components in NSRP programs in general, including the NUFU program, the majority of the participants interviewed in this study were not overly concerned with the general structure of the NUFU modality in terms of the project selection criteria and processes. One unexpected rationale for this ambivalence was expressed by a number of participants and deals with a latent and perhaps unintended flexibility in many NSRP programs. While it may appear that many NSRP programs are thematically rigid, a few participants stated that this rigidity is more rhetoric than reality since it is possible to link a wide array of research topics to the thematic priorities of funding agencies, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Two participants briefly commented on this as follows, “at any point when you are planning you need to have themes, so you put them down, but then at the end of the day you will find that almost any topic can fit in a number of thematic areas” (S.A2), and “one area that does get funding very easily is AIDS, HIV/AIDS. If you want anything, you just put in AIDS this or that and you will probably get the funding” (S.R8). What these types of quotations indicate is that while thematic restrictions may appear as inhibitors of certain types of research, many of them, particularly for programs that focus on the Millennium Development Goals, can be accessed by creatively constructing research questions in ways that link to the driving mandates of a thematic call for research.

The tentative conclusions that can be drawn from the interviews is that for individuals who are directly engaged with the NUFU administrative structure, particularly through the project application and selection processes, there is a strong appreciation for NUFU’s historical openness. Furthermore, the willingness of the NUFU administration to make significant program modifications in order to augment Southern participation and control through more demand-driven research projects throughout the past 20 years was recognized as a significant concession by the Norwegians, something that not many Northern agencies have been willing to allow. There was a strong awareness that while international support for research in African universities has historically been limited in both scope and scale, and primarily not undertaken
through open dialogue and exchange, the NUFU administration has attempted to create a program structure that is sensitive and flexible to the priorities of African institutions and researchers. As indicated in previous sections of this study, the particular dynamics of any given project depend to a great extent on the personalities involved and the jurisdictional and institutional contexts that embed individual projects. However, based on the present case study a conclusion can be made that if motivated, creative and flexible partners are involved in a NUFU project, the program structure can be maximized to ensure both a productive and equitable research project with significant symmetry between Northern and Southern participants during the project development and selection processes.

**Theme: Resource management**

The issue of resource management at the participating African universities was one of the more contentious, and admittedly confusing, processes to understand in relation to the particular NUFU project chosen for analysis. The manifestation of project-based tensions and ambiguities has implications for the NUFU program design as a whole, which will be explored in the following section. Building upon the extensive literature reviews carried out in the second and third chapters of this study, financial and material resources are the most important driver of NSRP programming in general; the inadequacy of domestic funds for research activities in the majority of Southern jurisdictions, particularly in SSA, requires researchers to seek international funding sources. In turn, this has normalized significant dependency dynamics within the international research environment that favor the interests of the funders, traditionally the Northern bilateral and multilateral development agencies (King, 1985, 2005; Escobar, 1995; Mkandawire, 1997; Selveratnam, 1998; Samoff, 1999a; Samoff & Caroll, 2004; Sawyerr, 2004). As a result, access to and control over resources often represent contested battlegrounds for the interests of participating groups and individuals.

As the section on resource management in chapter five indicated, the NUFU model has sought to bring about some level of equality in the distribution of funds. However, the dominant asymmetrical paradigm found in the literature, which privileges Northern researchers through their direct or indirect association with resource gatekeeping processes, appears to be the overarching dynamic at play within the NUFU program structure and model; while the NUFU rhetoric has softened over the years, the traditional resource distribution pathways remain
entrenched in Norwegian institutions and pathways, and the NUFU administration, in conjunction with the administering Norwegian university, continues to act as a potential bottleneck for resource distribution processes. As was stated in chapter five, this is not to say that NUFU administrators abuse this position, but rather it indicates that a systemic imbalance continues to exist despite the proliferation of rhetoric stating otherwise.

In the scope of the case study NUFU project, African participants rarely raised issues with either the total amount of resources provided by NUFU or the access to such resources, and all parties indicated that they were quite pleased with the Norwegian institutions distribution process. In terms of the total amount of resources, one senior researchers stated quite explicitly, “I’ve never found that I need more money, I’ve always been able to manage… we’ve been able to go to a conference, buy schools things, have workshops with teachers, we’ve been able to do everything we’ve wanted to do. Money actually goes quite far, you know” (S.R9).

One of the major positives that was repeatedly raised was in regards to the flexibility with which funds could be used while still remaining in line with the NUFU guidelines; many participants indicated that the restrictions placed on the resources provided by NUFU were much more lenient than with many other funding agencies, allowing for a greater range of activities to be carried out within the project. As one administrator stated:

In my opinion what is good about the project is in terms of the finances of the project. It was not like other projects, say an Australian project where most of the expenses is actually in Australia or for Australians. I think here it was much more of an equitable distribution of the finances actually that were available for the project. I think NUFU doesn’t have these conditions, such as say you get a USAID project then you must cross the Atlantic on a US carrier (S.A6).

One researcher elaborated:

What I like about this system is that they do see spending on social activities as part of developing this community. So, for example, when a student graduated it’s tradition in Norway that they have a graduation party, and then we would have a graduation function for the students and their families and the whole community, whereas I think other funders would not allow that kind of thing, but I think the social aspect is an important aspect (S.R2).

These comments represent the consistently high level of satisfaction expressed by participating researchers with the NUFU funding framework and model. While the conversation in chapter five indicated that in the Norwegian context stakeholders are divided over the amount of resources, as well as the expected outcomes and key indicators of success that can be derived from financial data, there was much less concern amongst African actors in both these regards.
The overall sentiment was that NUFU provided sufficient resources in order to carry out the prescribed research plans, train a number of graduate students, both doctoral and masters, and disseminate the research amongst the targeted dissemination pathways.

The most significant conclusion was that no participating researcher indicated that unreasonable gatekeeping mechanisms were in place at either university; while debates over the optimal use of resources occurred within steering committee and researcher meetings, this was acknowledged as normal part of any research project, and the NUFU model provided significant room for participants to voice concerns and come to a consensus regarding the optimal use of resources based on conditions in the recipient jurisdiction. One researcher reflected on the decentralized model in the following way:

First and foremost there has to be a structure, there has to be a willingness on the part of those that deal with the resource allocation in the North that some money can be used on things to do with the South about which we are not going to define anything in detail, to have someone who will allow that (S.R4).

Respondents indicated that the NUFU system did not place any additional restrictions or conditions on the use of resources within the research project. As one researcher stated:

The main thing that I have seen in the project is that people are open each other about how the money is used. The peer reviewing and oversight is not done rationalistically by scholars from the North thinking that it is their money, which sometimes happens and creates feelings of being used (S.R10).

This is in line with the purported goals of the decentralized model outlined in chapter five; resources should be distributed equally amongst the NUFU partners and the management of resources at each site should be autonomous, so long as they can be accounted for in official records. While some administrators expressed that the financial reporting process was somewhat cumbersome, specifically in terms of the reporting process required by NUFU for finance and expense records, in general this was more of a concern with the reporting procedures and not the overall structure or intent of the reporting requirements.

However, despite all of the positive remarks regarding the distribution of funds in the particular NUFU research project, there was a consistent awareness that these types of NSRP programs perpetuate African dependency on non-African agents and agencies, even if the Norwegian actors in the case study project did not leverage that dependency for greater control or power within the particular project. The following comments reflect the consistent concerns that arose regarding the dependency-type dynamics:
I think people take it as like, okay this is the alternative that is available, so we take it because we don’t have funds from the government. So if that is the only option, people have to take it, and then in the process people get used to thinking that maybe this is the only way to do research, you know. Write a proposal, send it out to donors, and sometimes you have also this corporations looking for researchers in different areas. I think it also keeps us away from thinking about what we actually need, what do we actually need, you know? Rather than chasing what other institutions, what other people want you to do for them as part of the research project, okay. I think that does help, but I don’t think it solves the problem (S.R2).

Then, you need to look at the reasons why the donors are giving you that money. Maybe I should say that most of the knowledge we are generating is more useful to the North than to us (S.R1).

Ideally, when you look at the amount of money the donors are giving us, it’s that amount of money we can get it through our government, but unfortunately the collective national thought to give us that money is not there. It’s not a lot of money we are getting…and I think this is the biggest project we are working on in our school…which has been sustained for 10 years. But when you look at the amount of money, the money is so little that there is no reason why it should not come from our government (S.A6).

The final comment is perhaps the most poignant, as it tapped into a general theme felt by many researchers, particularly in Tanzania, that despite the relatively small amount of funds being allocated by the NUFU program, the national government is either unable or unwilling to provide similar funding opportunities for researchers at the country’s universities. These types of comments summarize the depth of the dependency felt by many African researchers; the near total absence of domestic research funds perpetuates and embeds the continued reliance on foreign donors.

One aspect of the dependency expressed above and that was previously raised in the study’s literature review chapters, is the fragmenting and competitive influence that northern funding can have amongst faculty at the recipient universities. As one senior administrator stated:

When it comes to finances, that is when the professors will be very, you know, sticky, just holding to themselves, but really in terms of research activities, they always involve other people in the department, because, you know, in any case they are not able to do everything by themselves. So, they are involving other members of the department in doing research activities, if there are publications they will always do it together, and especially the junior staff. Not the senior staff, because the problem is the senior staff, you know, money here is a big issue and that should come up very quickly. When it comes to money, people are very careful (S.A1).
However, the majority of participants did not comment on this type of issue. Furthermore, this dynamic was not linked to the NUFU project or program, but rather to dependency dynamics in general.

One issue that became apparent throughout the case study was that the resources available to researchers and research units varied significantly based on the national and institutional contexts. In one of the jurisdictions, the institutional context resulted in a relatively high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty in regards to the final locus of control over project resources. The major confusion appeared to lie with the institutional control mechanisms over the management and use of the funds transferred from Norway. This issue had less to do with the source of the funds, the NUFU administrative unit, or the circuitous path that the funds took in Norway before they were distributed to the institution, and more to do with the internal tensions that play out within many African institutions, faculties and departments or between the individual actors over access to and control over project resources. This was a common point of contention raised by a number of Norwegian interviewees in the fifth chapter of this study, who expressed a variety of frustrations with Southern administrative systems for their lack of transparency in regards to the resources accrued, which many argued had resulted in both systemic mismanagement and institutionalized corruption.

In the case of one of the participating African institutions, despite numerous interviews with researchers and administrators at a variety of levels, the author was unable to determine with any certainty what level of institutional administration had control over the NUFU project funds and which individuals were ultimately responsible for the distribution of those funds. This uncertainty was compounded by two factors; first, the unwillingness of the Faculty administrator with jurisdiction over the NUFU project to meet and discuss the particularities of the case study project, and second, conflicting reports from participating researchers and administrators over the resource management and distribution system. No quotation accurately summarizes the level of opaqueness encountered by the author in pursuit of information regarding these matters, but the significant and persistent confusion makes it impossible to accurately determine which individuals had the most control over the resources transferred to the institution, specifically in corroboration with the information provided by the NUFU administration regarding the expected pathway for the transferred resources.

Despite this issue, the participants at both African universities expressed a belief that all members of their independent research teams had equal access to funds throughout the course of
the project, and that resources were not being hoarded or unfairly controlled by the steering committees or project coordinators. As one researcher stated:

In the project, the things that I’ve seen, I think if I compare the other projects that I’ve seen, the impetus is on the individual scholars themselves because they are the ones who are trusted by the sending agencies, the ones who are supposed to be…if they don’t have those kind of attitudes, then when you sit down you are beating on each other, you are criticizing each other about how everyone is spending their money, but here nobody feels like it’s anybody’s money…nobody is going around saying that we should use money (S.R4).

In the case of both institutions, annual project meetings occur in order to go set the research agenda for the following year, which includes the vetting of the project budget by participating researchers. Budgets are drafted either by the research coordinator or by the project’s senior researchers and then presented to the research team as a whole, including the steering committee, in order to discuss and make any necessary modifications. At both sites, project coordinators require approval from a more senior institutional representative, even if in the one case it was uncertain who that individual was, in order to ensure that coordinators are not entrenched as the sole power broker over resource management decisions.

**Theme: Project Agenda Setting Process**

The third major thematic issue constructed in the *Coercive* ideal-type is the project agenda setting process within NUFU’s decentralized NSRP modality. The analysis in chapter five indicates that the decentralized model promotes an equitable distribution of agenda setting responsibilities between Norwegian and Southern project coordinators, as well as between researchers within each university site. As already explored in the *program and project selection criteria and processes* sections of this chapter and the previous chapter, the decentralized model was developed by NUFU administrators in order to promote the relatively autonomous development of the research project at each university, autonomy under the umbrella of a collaborative network framework linking the research results in pursuit of a comprehensive driving research question. Based on the interviews conducted at the two African institutions, the decentralized model appears to have facilitated the desired autonomy and decentralized ownership, ultimately resulting in agenda setting processes that are deeply embedded in each participating institution. However, despite the relatively strong support for autonomous
research sites, the role of the Norwegian researchers was problematized by a number of African participants and requires some examination within the section to follow.

As previously stated, the NUFU modality supports a decentralized management and administrative framework meant to foster autonomous site-specific research that is linked to the work being done in the other partnering sites by an overarching research question(s). According to the majority of the African participants interviewed in the study, this goal was accomplished. It was claimed that each research group: had substantive control over its own research agenda; was able to tailor the driving research questions and epistemological framework that grounded the questions; was free to undertake the research project through the most relevant research design and methodology; and, was empowered to craft the project in accordance with the needs and interests of participating researchers, home institutions, and national authorities where relevant. The NUFU modality manifested itself at the two participating African universities in the following way:

There is a steering committee; it’s not just the three coordinators. We have a steering committee with assistant coordinators also in the committee, and there is also an editorial committee in the project. And we have an editorial committee because most of the research work that we do, we present first as seminar papers or workshop papers, and then we publish them in the form of a book, and this is produced by our local publishers… So rather than chasing what other institutions, what other people want you to do for them as part of the research project, we are developing our own projects, and I think that does help (S.R10).

In general, the steering committee established the driving questions and themes for the research project as a whole, with input from any interested researchers connected to the project, and which were subsequently communicated to the rest of the participating researchers:

Here at the beginning of the year when we decide in the workshops, we each decide that we are researching the theme, this year’s research theme is given. Then we all go into our different departments or areas and write proposals. And then we present them to the coordinator, okay, who then looks at the proposal and the budget and then they give you a go ahead (S.R2).

This model ensures that coordinators, researchers and administrators at other participating university sites and the NUFU administrative site are distanced from the substantive decision-making processes at the other universities, though they may give feedback if it is sought out directly. This is one of the core ‘decentralizing’ mechanisms in the NUFU model and is aimed at promoting the institutional and individual capacity for managing, administering and implementing team-based research projects within Southern universities, as well as for promoting the development of independent and demand-driven research projects.
It was clear that while the Norwegian partners had been consulted at times throughout the research process, consultation was not mandatory and the feedback provided by Norwegian partners was not binding; African coordinators and researchers were given complete control over their site-specific portion of the research project and they were empowered to construct the research agenda using methodologies that they deemed appropriate for addressing the driving research questions. One researcher, who expressed the utmost respect for what he believed the NUFU model was trying to accomplish, elaborated on the openness of the research process supported by NUFU:

Then (NUFU) leaves it to scholars in the North to work with scholars in the South to work out what will work, and then they expect scholars in the North to act as peer reviewers and evaluators so that they can say that this is not a waste of money. So, you can see, there has to be people who are willing to give space, but there also has got to be people in the North who are like their own governments going to also be willing to be flexible and allow the possibility that the epistemological underpinnings of the research or the excitement about the findings are not what you would normally value in the North…if you are working with a person who is not flexible and who thinks his word is final, then you create an unnecessary antagonism within the project (S.R4)

Another administrator stated:

The choice of topic for research, that was the professors’ choice, so the professors had to have some idea about what they wanted to research, and we identified certain things that they did, how they were local, how they went beyond the local, so we did ensure that there is not imperialism in terms of trying to decide what should be researched…There was much more symmetry than one would normally expect in a project of this nature. It wasn’t a project of the nature that sometimes comes up, you know, that the South are the carriers of the video cameras and the tape recorders and the North are the researchers (S.A6; emphasis added).

This administrator expanded on this perception of the NUFU model by pointing to what he interpreted as a strong Norwegian conception of trust:

It’s again situated within the Norwegian notion of trust, there is a lot of trust actually in Norway. When we lived there we were amazed with the amount of trust…I think that filters through the program, actually (S.A6).

This series of quotations summarizes the common sentiment expressed by the majority of the interviewees; the NUFU model allows for a great degree of openness between and within the project sites, and the NUFU administration is extremely supportive of independent research questions and activities, including those that may incorporate non-traditional epistemological frameworks and methodologies. However, this framework appears to be heavily rooted in
personal trust, necessitating a strong and respectful interplay between Norwegian and African participants. As S.R4 stated, the obstacles for a successful demand-driving project are undermined “if you are working with a person who is not flexible and who thinks his word is final”.

When the participants compared their experiences with NUFU to those with other Northern research funders, one of the core strengths of the NUFU model became quite apparent; the ability for significant and robust debate to occur within NUFU projects with regard to the desired research objectives and outcomes, as well as the meaning of particular terms, was an extremely important component of the NUFU model. Participants believed that this dynamic stemmed both from the decentralized model and from what was often termed as the “Nordic sensibility”. Two researchers expressed the dynamic as such:

I think NUFU is an outlier, along with the other Nordic countries, because they are fairly flexible. I think also that their scholars are widely knowledgeable, I mean they have traveled around, they don’t have fixations that stop them from permitting the possibility that you need to negotiate what you might call quality, what you might call feasible, what you might call relevant. These are all contested terms, because you can find that funding is flexible but the scholars from the North who are supposed to be champions of this when it is useful for creating greater space for what they want to do in the South, being rigid themselves with the scholars that they are dealing with in the South (S.R12: emphasis added).

I think that the important thing for me is that NUFU has assisted to allow for diversity in some kind of an orderly fashion, not diversity which yields to an unwieldiness (S.R4).

These sentiments were evident during the site visits that occurred at each participating university; individual researchers were empowered to interpret the overall research topic and data in order to develop independent research questions, and, more importantly, were encouraged to interrogate the meaning and significance of the questions in their local contexts as they saw fit. The methodological and epistemological diversity both between and within the participating institutions indicates that the breadth of scope purported by the decentralized NUFU model is indeed capable of fostering demand-driven research. However, this conclusion is directly linked to the presence of project coordinators who are willing and able to create a supportive framework and environment for the research project at and between each participating site.

In terms of the intra-site dynamics, a limited number of forums and spaces were embedded within the project structure in order to promote the engagement of all participating
researchers, or at least those researchers with a desire to participate in inter-site collaboration. However, between the interviews and site visits it became evident that the project coordinators were positioned as the most important drivers of the research agendas within the respective research units. One researcher explained the structure:

(The coordinator) actually steers the project...when (the coordinator) would say, ‘could you please translate these books’, and then we do the translations, and then on such and such a day let us go to the school to deliver the books, and can you edit and so on before you deliver and so on (S.R6).

This comment did not appear to be a criticism of the coordinator or the structure, but merely highlighted that the NUFU model manifested at that particular site within a hierarchal framework, lead by the project coordinator, and incorporated the participating researchers under the broader project framework. This reality was explicitly acknowledged by one of the research coordinators who stated that:

(The research agenda) was largely driven by me, but we would have meetings, as the four of us we would have meetings, but it was largely driven by me (S.R8; emphasis added).

This is not to say that other research groups supported by NUFU may not support a horizontal decision-making framework, but at the two African sites examined the coordinator remained the ultimate authority in terms of the overall research project. Yet, this did not inhibit the participation or freedom of the other researchers at either site. As one researcher commented:

Yes, look, there were no clear, kind of, you know, we weren’t instructed to do it in a certain way. The main instruction was to gather the data and interpret the data, and then determine whether the research question could be addressed (S.R7).

The ultimate goal at both sites remained investigating the driving research questions outlined in the project proposal and the subsequent steering committees, and each participating researcher was empowered to develop their own perspectives and sub-projects.

In this particular case, the dynamics allowed for such a power structure to develop without any negative repercussions, but it can be imagined that project stakeholders, particularly the site coordinators, may not always foster such open and amicable working conditions. This is one possible shortcoming of the NUFU model; the decentralized model appears to place significant structural power within the hands of the project coordinators and there appear to be relatively few, if any, systems in place to ensure the equitable distribution of responsibilities amongst Southern researchers. This may be compounded in cases where the project coordinator
is positioned as an institutional gatekeeper for resources or professional promotion. Cases were raised in the previous chapter that indicate the possibility for such types of systemic abuses, whereby other NUFU projects suffered as a result of project coordinators hoarding resources or project control. Though these dynamics appeared to be absent from the present case study, the research conducted verifies that the decentralized nature of the NUFU framework may be susceptible to such occurrences.

As evidenced by the majority of the above quotations, the NUFU model was widely praised for facilitating a research project that was intellectually driven and procedurally managed by African stakeholders. The only problematic issue that was raised was in regards to the role of the Norwegian researchers within the research project itself. This issue is not directly linked to the NUFU model and its supporting structure, but rather to an overall ambiguity in the terms of participation for Norwegian researchers, including the role(s) that should be expected for such researchers within the agenda setting and research processes. The following critique is raised not in regard to the agenda setting process as such, but the parameters of the agendas that were deemed viable by African participants in the case study project. While the NUFU model does not explicitly privilege Norwegian actors in a manner that correlates with the opinions expressed by the particular African participants in this case study, the possibility for such dynamics to occur is important, and speaks to the potential for more extensive issues in other projects if the circumstances allow.

As a baseline for comparison, the NUFU model formally intends for Norwegian researchers to “jointly implement the research and educational activities to be performed in the Project” (SIU, n.d., 3). However, the particularities of the implementation are defined almost exclusively in terms of the management of the project, the day-to-day operations and administration, and reporting on the projects outputs and overall quality. In almost all official NUFU documents there is a noticeable absence of discourse regarding the extent to which participating Norwegian researchers, coordinators or otherwise, are expected to establish their own research agendas, participate in project fieldwork, conduct original research, or participate in the training of African researchers and doctoral students. In this vein, the only major criticisms raised by a group of the Southern participants was in regards to the omission of parameters for Norwegian researchers within the NSRP framework. One researcher asserted:

I think I’ve mentioned this on several times, I think what we also need to look at is that Norway, the participants in Norway always come to the South to do research here, but the participants from the South don’t have a chance to go and do research in Norway, which I think is something that needs to be explored… I
mean, the research component is only one way, it’s south, it’s not south-north, so
I mentioned that in my comments and that’s how I feel, I’m being honest with
them and being open, you see, because if you go to Norway we can’t (conduct
our research), we don’t have the opportunity to perhaps going and looking at
how they are doing things, but when they come here everything is open for them.
So I would have liked to see that kind of relationship where there is openness,
where I can go to Norway and do research in one of the schools like they do in
the South, but it’s lacking (S.R6; emphasis added).

In the view of some participants, the Norwegian researchers did not appear to have
responsibility for the implementation of an extensive research program either in Norway or in
one of the participating African jurisdictions. While numerous faculty-level researchers
participated in the NUFU project at the two African universities, only one faculty-level
researcher was involved from the Norwegian university. A number of Norwegian doctoral
students participated at different points throughout the projects’ two cycles of NUFU funding,
however, the majority of their funding did not come from NUFU directly, but from other
Norwegian sources.

The above conditions and parameters were extremely problematic to some of the
participants, who expressed concerns that an historical asymmetry was being reinforced,
whereby Northerners travel to African countries in order to carry out research on the “other” but
Africans are restricted from conducting comparative research in the North. The historical
examination carried out during the construction of the Coercive ideal type indicates that the
tendency has indeed been for such a North–South imbalance, with Northern researchers
traveling to the South in order to gain access to Southern research sites and to influence the
research agenda at Southern institutions. Given the historical tendency for this type of behavior,
and the significant problems associated with it, the perception that this dynamic was reoccurring
under modern guise within the NUFU framework is an extremely important consideration in the
evaluation the NUFU model and framework. However, while participants may have felt the
presence of this dynamic within the particular project, the NUFU framework as a whole does
not explicitly restrict travel from the South to Norway, nor does it prevent Southern researchers
from conducting comparative research within Norway.

Another area of concern raised by a number of participants relates both to the flexibility
available to researchers within the research project and to the commitment of Norwegian
researchers to establishing an equitable, demand-driven research partnership. One researcher
succinctly summarized the tension by stating, “it’s not really researched in Norway, I think
Norway is just the funders” (S.R7). This statement raises a number of questions regarding
NUFU’s intention for Norwegian researcher involvement within the partnership framework as a whole, including the agenda setting and research processes. Based on the findings of the case study, only one Norwegian faculty-level researcher was directly involved in research and capacity building within the African jurisdictions throughout the project’s ten years of NUFU support. This appears to have created a significant asymmetry between the Norwegian and the African sides, whereby the latter committed significantly more human and institutional resources to the project than the former. Multiple Norwegian doctoral students were also attached to the case study project. However, while the doctoral students stayed for periods of time in the two participating jurisdictions in order to conduct their own research, there was limited formal collaboration in the research process or outputs produced, nor were the doctoral students extensively involved in the training of project researchers. In addition, it was indicated that only a small portion of their studies were funded through the NUFU resources. As a result, they did not consider themselves core members of the project, but separate researchers with intersecting interests to the NUFU project who were only made aware of the project through a common Norwegian supervisor.

Based on the above comments and observations, it appears that for some participants the NUFU project was negatively impacted by ambiguities regarding the intended involvement of Norwegian researchers in both the research and capacity building processes. This includes the possibility for conducting comparative research between Norway and either of the two African jurisdictions. This may not have been a concern for some of the participants had the NUFU framework explicitly intended for the participating Norwegian researchers to act as mentors or facilitators in the research project. However, since the NUFU model allocates equal funding to the Norwegian and non-Norwegian institutions, some interviewees felt that the NUFU framework tacitly expected a comparable commitment from the Norwegian partner. Given that the broader NUFU mandate operates under the auspices of robust collaborative partnerships that support extensive capacity building processes and participation in the research projects, there appears to be legitimate support for this interpretation. In light of the tension and ambiguity expressed by some participants, the NUFU administration may be well served by addressing how it intends for the Norwegian presence to be incorporated into the modality as a whole, both in terms of the researchers supported and the possibility for comparative research using Norway as a case study. As it currently stands, the NUFU model leaves it open to the project coordinators to decide such matters internally, respecting the autonomy of the participating coordinators and researchers. However, it also opens a space for imbalances to manifest in the
partnership, as outlined above. The ambiguity of the Norwegian researchers, coupled with the inability of the African researchers to carry out comparative work in Norway, indicates the latent propagation of higher order asymmetries within the particular project examined for this case study, and at a more general level, possible within the NUFU framework writ large.

This section has depicted a relatively open, autonomous and flexible research environment, with researchers acting in equilibrium within one another at each site in order to conduct individual research projects under the umbrella of the project’s driving questions. African participants indicated that they felt comfortable in the NUFU framework and felt empowered by their coordinators to pursue lines of inquiry in accordance with their individual research interests. The perception of an inhibiting environment within the project appears to derive from the particular context and conditions of the specific project and does not appear to be symptomatic of the decentralized model as a whole, despite the possibility for some of the tensions expressed above. While the decentralized model clearly has a number of strengths, including the empowering of Southern participants to dictate the structure and intention of the research conducted at their sites, the structural relationship between the Norwegian and Southern partners could do with a more explicit delineation in order to assuage ambiguities that may arise.

**Theme: Knowledge Management**

The fourth major thematic issue raised in the analytic framework is that of *Knowledge Management*, which, as articulated in chapter three of this study, can be defined as: 1) access to new knowledge resources, and 2) shared ownership over the knowledge and research produced in the NSRP project, including the dissemination of such knowledge and research. The following section examines how African participants in the case study project perceived the extent of their engagement in the two sub-themes. In general, the interviewees expressed that they felt well served by the projects’ publication framework, and that they were given sufficient space and funding to disseminate their research to the pertinent local, national and regional stakeholders in their area of research, as deemed by the participating researchers themselves as opposed to NUFU determinations of pertinent stakeholders. However, the participants raised the issue of accessing new and relevant knowledge with much more trepidation. For the most part, researchers did not feel as though new opportunities were provided to expand their
knowledge base, aside from the original research that stemmed from the project itself. The following section will explore the issues raised above, although it must be acknowledged that, to the great surprise of the author, interviewees made limited comments regarding the management and dissemination of the research findings.

As a preface to the following analysis, responses were almost universally positive in regards to the dissemination of the original research findings produced through the NUFU-funded research project. Interviewees indicated that there were no limitations or conditions placed by the NUFU framework or administration on what was considered viable, appropriate or relevant mediums of knowledge dissemination. When queried regarding the overall purpose of the research project one researcher stated:

Dissemination. It was dissemination…and not only dissemination but engagement, engaging policy makers, engaging the government, engaging civil society, engaging the schools, to be able to show them the findings and to be able to get support. We think we made it (S.R1).

The crux of the matter for many of the participants was not just the ability to disseminate the findings produced but the freedom to do so in non-academic mediums, such that public stakeholders could be engaged as much as the academic community. The same researcher summarized the significance of NUFU as follows:

The problem we face, you know, is what I call the realization problem, to be able to translate all these things that we are doing to link it to development, to link it to change, it is very easy to generate a lot of that information. There are so many constraints and bottlenecks, most of them structural, in African countries…While it is true that the university has to play a bigger role in development, it is the link itself, to be able to realize that, is very difficult (S.R1).

These comments reflect the tension between the expected outputs of traditional academic research and development-related research; the former is often considered a necessity for individual professional development, whereas the latter is crucial for contributing to broader development-related debates and processes.

Interviewees indicated that NUFU helped fill some of the research-to-policy gaps by allowing for a variety of dissemination techniques:

Smaller pamphlets for audiences, because we were engaging government policy makers, institutions, people in research institutes. As far as we are concerned now, the knowledge gap that was there, that people didn’t know the policies…we think we have generated that, if you look at our first publication. Then the possibilities of dealing with the efficacy of (the topic) has been improved in our research and the publications are there for people to read (S.R11).
Another example of the permissible non-academic media supported by the decentralized funding framework was the production and dissemination of a video on the research topic and findings that could engage illiterate or semi-literate stakeholders and that could be distributed in the pertinent jurisdictions and appropriate venues in an economical manner. The incorporation of a diverse set of publication media was widely acknowledged as being extremely beneficial to the research project as a means of supporting policy formation in the two jurisdictions, a positive spin-off of development-related research and NSRPs in general.

While the majority of participants interviewed in the case study did not express strong opinions regarding the research dissemination strategy or processes, the theme was implicitly present throughout the data collection and interview processes for many of the aforementioned reasons. Participants indicated that NSRP programs, such as NUFU, should support flexible knowledge dissemination policies in order that researchers may engage with the most relevant stakeholders. This is particularly salient in jurisdictions with weak research capacity or limited space for public debate, such as through traditional media. NSRP programs or modalities that mandate the publication of research findings in peer-reviewed journals, particularly more prestigious or international English language journals, tend to reinforce a neo-colonial mentality that eschews alternative fora or media. The majority of peer-reviewed journals are based in Northern jurisdictions, managed and moderated by Northern researchers, produced in Northern languages, and many universities, governments, private corporations and public policy think-tanks in sub-Saharan Africa lack adequate access to online or paper versions of these publications (TFHES, 2000; Altbach, 2007). This is not an argument that traditional mediums of academic publishing were shunned by participants in the case study project, but rather there was an implicit, and at times explicit, acknowledgment that a balance is required in order to fulfill both the professional and developmentalist functions of researchers in Southern universities. Based on the data collected for this study, the NUFU program accepts a diversified understanding of knowledge dissemination, though peer-reviewed journals are encouraged, but not mandated.

The tension between the relative value of peer-reviewed publications and non-academic dissemination was expressed by some of the participants interviewed. One research stated:

Now I’m not sure what to do about it because if you have the publications, the only thing that it does to you is to boost your profile as a researcher, and then of course when you apply for promotions that come in, in terms of how much I’ve published. The other issue is the issue of accreditation. You see, the projects’ publications are not accredited as far as I know. What it means exactly is that
non-accredited publications do not receive the same kind of weight as accredited publications. The accrediting agent is the department; it recognizes a particular publication because of the rigor of the review of those articles. A peer-review journal would be more important than maybe a publication from this project (S.R6).

This reality was extremely problematic for a few of the researchers, particularly younger faculty members at earlier stages of their careers. For more senior researchers, the tension was acknowledged, particularly in relation to younger scholars, however, the goals of the project necessitated the production of non-academic publications.

In the case study project, there was an almost complete absence of peer-review journal publications by the participating African researchers, despite a number of peer-review journal publications by the Norwegian researcher and doctoral students. One of the more critical researchers raised this issue:

There was also a plan for publishing in accredited journals but most of the publishing was done through (the researcher), in accredited journals, and there were fewer publications by us for various reasons; (the researcher) had more time, we have quite heavy teaching loads and responsibilities here…. It’s continued in the sense that (the researcher) has published mainly in accredited journals and has never drawn us into the accredited journals, (the researcher) has only drawn us in to the books to write jointly which are not accredited (S.R8).

Based on the document analysis conducted in support of this case study, it appears that no Southern researcher from either jurisdiction has published the findings from the NUFU-supported research project in an international accredited peer-review journal throughout the 10-year lifespan of this project. However, the author states that “it appears” because the record keeping for publications derived from the research project is not comprehensive. In the annual project reports, the coordinators from each site are asked to submit the publications produced by participating researchers at their respective institutions. While the names and titles of publications are given in all cases, the publication format and title is absent in the majority of cases. Therefore, conclusive evidence is absent from the case, despite supporting evidence that is available and the claims made by various researchers regarding the absence of collaborative writing in international peer-review journals.

It must be stated that only a few researchers raised the issue as problematic, and the majority of the researchers were content with having an opportunity to publish at all. While the majority of researchers felt the opportunities to publish were adequate, given the backdrop of the historical asymmetry between Northern and Southern researchers in terms of knowledge
production and dissemination in the major, mainstream research fora, the divide in publication records present in the case study was somewhat problematic and did not reflect an adequate balancing of relevant media and access to new knowledge fora. There is a fine line between the promotion of alternative or policy relevant research and the systemic divide between the acceptable forms of Northern and Southern research dissemination. While there was no sense that the case study project operated under an explicit framework to stream the research of participants, the presence of traditional asymmetries requires further examination. Perhaps of more significance to this conversation is that the majority of African researchers were either unaware of any divide or did not see the disparity as problematic, even if it was unintentional. It is not within the purview of this study to make inferences regarding the psychological or cultural determinants or implications of this form of asymmetry, but it is an interesting issue that needed to be acknowledged nonetheless.

**Theme: Sustainability and Capacity Building**

The final thematic issue raised in the *Coercive* ideal-type examines the extent to which the NUFU framework facilitates a sustainable investment in research capacity, defined either at the institutional or individual level. As outlined during the construction of the ideal-type in chapter three, the appropriate level of analysis for the interlinked themes of sustainability and capacity building remains a topic of considerable debate within the NSRP and development-related research communities, amongst both academics and practitioners. Sustainability and capacity building have come to represent buzzwords or ‘garbage can’ concepts that can be directly or indirectly linked to almost any aspect of development-related work. As outlined in chapter five, NUFU has historically focused on building individual research capacity as the primary mechanism in support of long-term sustainability at research universities in Southern jurisdictions.

While the external program evaluations conducted in 1999 (MFA, 2000) and 2009 (COWI AS, 2009) incorporated the issue of institutional capacity building into its evaluation of the NUFU program, based on the conclusion presented in chapter five that formal NUFU documentation focuses on individuals as the primary means of supporting institutions, the locus of analysis for this section remains on the individual researcher. As such, the following section examines the perceptions of African participants regarding the development of individual
research capacity, as well as the viability of long-term sustainability in NUFU’s preferred capacity building mechanism. Some thoughts are first presented on the institutionalization of capacity building. However, it is not the focus of the NUFU framework as constructed in the ideal-type and merely represents a framing mechanism for the discussion as a whole. It is important to note that a parallel analysis of NUFU’s sustainability dimension is carried out in chapter seven in relation to the South-South component of the NUFU modality, which augments the analysis presented below.

One researcher’s thoughts make for an excellent entry point into the capacity building dilemma faced by Southern NSRP participants in general, not just for those involved with the NUFU program:

Our tradition has been building the institutions and they don’t care if professors go, you see, they don’t care in these universities. People never cared if a professor who has generated all this work goes after six years or if he finds greener pastures and moves to other countries. You see, that’s the problem. But we go to many Northern universities and you find some of the professors there are almost physical entities; they are bringing a lot of money and a lot of thinking but they are also training new people. But they are also generating institutional structures. It is the individuals who actually make this work. At one time I argued very strongly at some of the meetings that it is very important we move towards individual capacity building rather than institutional building, because if you are very good to individuals with a vision, and to have a mission of what they want to do, the whole aggregate of an institution will come. But if you don’t have good professors, don’t think you can have a good school of education or school of business studies (S.A6; emphasis added).

The historical absence of strong institutions, rooted in the colonial experience of domination, has led to a focus in the donor community to build institutions within Southern jurisdictions. However, the absence of strong and committed individuals with the skills necessary to produce high quality research and mentor new students undermines the institutional mission before it can take root. Another senior administrator problematized the transience of researchers in the participating universities,

In terms of involvement of the Department and the School, I will be very honest to say that there has not been much involvement because this project is run by individuals...But, whether this project could survive in the absence of (the coordinator), you know, time will tell, because, you know, he has not involved any other person in the Department or in the School, so in terms of sustainability it leaves a lot to be desired, because there has been very little involvement of other people” (S.A1).

The tension between individual and institutional capacity building and sustainability is acutely present in the case study findings as expressed above and elsewhere. However, despite the
potential for institutional disconnects inherent in NSRP programs that focus primarily on the individual, the vast majority of respondents indicated that in the absence of the individual focus the project as a whole would not have been as successful as it turned out to be:

The whole project was built on a network of individuals, individual capacity building, and then you build a network… Because if I look for example in Norway, we have been able to work for all this time to work with (Prof. X), I don’t know how the situation would have been like if we didn’t have an individual who wasn’t committed to this type of project. It would have been very difficult. So, individual capacity building in that way becomes the key to such success (S.R2).

In brief, the near universal expression of similar sentiments throughout the case study research reinforces the decision to focus on the individual as the primary means of evaluating the sustainability and capacity building components of the NUFU program. However, as the quotations above indicate, there existed a constant tension between individuals and institutions within the case study universities, which mirrors many of the findings present in the literature.

The first, and perhaps the most important, comment regarding sustainability and capacity building within the NUFU project structure is that while the NUFU model is geared towards individuals, the decentralized framework allows for project coordinators to develop institutionalized initiatives and mechanisms as they see fit. This can manifest in a number of ways, including the creation of research centers, establishing Master’s or Doctoral programs in conjunction with the training of graduate students, infrastructure development, and access to physical resources with positive spillovers for the university and participating departments. One administrator summarized this possibility:

What we have tried to do in our project is that apart from training PhDs and Masters, we have put in possibilities of acquiring books and other reading materials from abroad, and also we have put training in general skills, for example, writing skills, how to publish, so we are training our Master students and PhD students so we can at least make a small contribution in terms of building the department’s capacity in those areas, and even competing for publications in international scholarly journals, which is quite tough and many people here do not have that skill (S.A1).

This was reinforced by one of the senior researchers:

I feel as though we’ve been able to build sustainability because we have leveraged our funding to develop master’s and doctoral programs that will exist beyond the life of the research project (S.R8).

While in the context of the case study project the focus was on individual capacity building, it was evident through observation and various interviews that the NUFU framework as a whole
allows for significant institutional capacity building if called for within particular projects. The major inhibitor of substantial institution-oriented initiatives may have more to do with the limited project budget for NUFU-supported projects, than with mandated requirements within the NUFU framework.

In terms of the particular mechanisms used to augment the research capacity of individual participants, the case study project focused on developing high quality research and writing techniques, as well as creating opportunities for publishing in a variety of media. Before examining the particularities of the project, it is important to note that the timeline of the NUFU program was widely acknowledged as being crucial for the development of substantial and lasting capacity; as outlined in chapter five, the NUFU program operates on five year project cycles, with the possibility of renewal for an additional five year term, resulting in up to ten years of consecutive support for research and training activities. In addition, some projects are able to secure an extra two years of supplemental funding in order to facilitate the completion of outstanding graduate students, support select graduates through post-doctoral fellowships, and allow extra financing and time to support the dissemination of research findings in academic peer-reviewed journals. All of the above falls under the umbrella of individual capacity building and were positively considered by the involved participants:

It has to be long-term. I mean, the appreciate thing about the NUFU program is that you can have one period and then a second period depending on what you did in the first period, and I think that just the sense that you can continue and use those experiences, you learn to develop and move forward, and I think we would not have gone through and graduated so many students if we did not have that solid first phase to build on…we have now a critical mass of Master’s students who are now moving towards PhD with critical thinking…I don’t think this is a critical mass that can die very easily (S.A6).

In terms of the skills developed by individual researchers, the following quotation summarizes the general narrative expressed by the majority of the case study researchers:

There has been a capacity building effect which is very positive, at the individual level. Because now I feel like I can write a proposal and do the research, you know, on an area that I feel like…And I think those are maybe the purpose in the long-run, that it would have that effect. I think we also can now focus to think what we need to do about this situation, about our situation (S.R2)

The long-term orientation of the NUFU framework appeared to have allowed the needed time for individuals to develop extensive research agendas, implement the agendas, and reflect upon the outputs both in terms of the individual project and, more holistically, in terms of the
professional development and the development-related issues faced by local and national jurisdictions.

As outlined in chapter three, the majority of Northern-funded NSRP programs operate according to much shorter schedules than NUFU’s five year cycle, with some programs offering as little as twelve months of project support and are burdened with specific quantitative outputs expected upon completion. As a result of this key characteristic in the global NSRP landscape, it should come as no surprise that all of the case study participants felt that the NUFU model went well beyond the norm for supporting sustained training and development opportunities in their home universities. Participants expressed the belief that NSRP program with limited flexibility and short output timelines may be not suited to broader capacity building efforts beyond the scope of the research project itself, as sustainability occurs through prolonged engagement and development. One administrator commented on the long-term presence of a previous NUFU-funded project:

The activities NUFU is supporting became very sustainable. For example, one of the projects we are having now initially supported the developing of the Master program and then they supported the teaching of that program, and because of their long presence we have managed to mainstream that project within the university activities. So the project has ended but we are still running that Master program and it has become part of our structure, so it is very sustainable. The problem with the short-term support is that once the project ends, possibly the activities will end there (S.A4).

The perceived necessity for NSRP programs to have a long-term commitment in order to produce sustainable capacity building effects was particularly salient in regard to the training of doctoral students and early career faculty members, who often require more extensive training periods in order to attain and maintain substantive development. As many respondents mentioned, programs that last less than 4 years are effectively limited when it comes to doctoral student development, as the majority of doctoral students in SSA jurisdictions are incapable of completing their studies in the allotted time. While the length of doctoral studies are generally four or five years across all jurisdictions, North or South, students in Southern jurisdictions are often impacted by significantly more inhibiting fiscal considerations, such as the need to maintain full-time employment during the study period. A senior researcher addressed this issue and acknowledged that even NUFU’s extended project period may not suffice for some students:

With a PhD taking three years as a minimum, if you are basically here in (Country X), who is going to relieve you from teaching? Some of us who did a
PhD abroad part-time did it almost for 10 years, so who is going to fund you? … How do you get in a PhD someone who wants to have some flexibility? (S.R2).

One option that is present within the NUFU framework is for Southern students to travel to Norway in order to study full-time while receiving some basic remuneration. The doctoral students connected to the case study project felt that this was an important element in the NUFU program:

When I was in Norway I was able to spend more time undistracted and I was able to access more materials from the library there. I was kind of amazed because most of the materials were in Norwegian but I was able to get some books in English as well that were related to my topic. So I used that space for reading and for writing. I think at that time I was busy with my literature review, so it was quite a good opportunity… If it were not for my connections with (the NUFU project) I don’t think I would have had that good of a time, because NUFU assisted me in terms of the finance (S.R5).

However, the issue of student mobility under the umbrella of capacity building drew mixed feelings from some students and professors.

In terms of some of the positive elements, as indicated by the above quotation, many participants felt that spending significant time in Norway enabled them to progress much more quickly through the doctoral process. Additionally, there was a strong sense that the time spent in Norway could facilitate the exploration of a more diverse set of ideas than is commonly possible at many African universities:

What I’m saying is that if you study in the north there is more diversity, students are exposed to more diversity than if you study here. You are less likely to be indoctrinated in the North than you are in the South, because there you have diversity. If you study here, already the circle is rounded out, because you don’t have as many universities or research grants. There is more diversity and more debate…so studying in the North actually does the opposite of what many people think, because it increases possibility…there is nothing like diversity to trigger the diversity in your head. I see it every day. Even the Marxists aren’t Marxists because there are so many different types of it (S.R4; emphasis added).

In regard to some of the negative elements, participants raised two limitations. The first was that the Norwegian experience could be difficult to negotiate, both personally and professionally. The few students who had travelled to Norway for extended study periods expressed some reservations regarding the overall experience. In terms of professional development, the issue of language was paramount:

Their courses are not so many options because most of them are offered in Norwegian, so you have to look for the English ones, they have to make courses
for those that are not Norwegian speaking, so we didn’t have so much choice (S.R3).

The personal experience was also highlighted:

It was a big challenge, especially when you are a student by yourself…If you’re in a train station and they announce that they train has been delayed, you’re wondering why isn’t the train coming or why are people leaving the train, yeah, it’s a culture shock… With the academics we had support, but not so much socially; socially we relied so much on ourselves (S.R12).

The second reservation expressed by some participants centered on the belief that by sending graduate students to Norway, African universities were depriving themselves of the positive spillover effects that accompany the development of strong graduate programs. One senior researcher stated:

I still insisted that I want to develop my own researchers, because I don’t want to send all the students to Norway, I want to develop a graduate community here (S.R8).

This type of comment reinforced a narrative that situated the doctoral mentorship and supervisory processes as an important part of the overarching NSRP capacity building mission. However, while a few individual faculty members raised the above concerns, the majority of the participants expressed the view that the opportunity to study in Norway was something that could not be passed up and which could have extremely positive long-term effects on both their personal and professional development. As one administrator stated:

If I had the money I would have sent more students to Africa, but the money comes from the US, the money comes from Norway, the money comes from Europe, so where do I send those students? All I hope is that while they are in those other countries they meet other Africans, because the same thing happens in other African countries, their students also go to Europe and so on…In our case, the fact that the money comes from those places and the fact that I know there are other Africans in those other countries, that may be the best that I can do under the circumstances. That is the challenge (S.A4).

The issue of graduate training was a key component of NUFU’s program goals that positively intersected with the national contexts in both of the case study jurisdictions. While South Africa has achieved remarkable gains in its higher education sector since 1994, the lasting effects of the Apartheid era educational policies has resulted in a pressing demand for young researchers and faculty members. As outlined in the introductory section of this chapter, in Tanzania, the economic stagnation of the 1980s and 1990s, coupled with the weak research
culture post-independence, has resulted in a crisis of qualified professors. One Tanzanian administrator commented on the situation:

Training is very important at this point because we have one major handicap in Tanzania, that because of our fragile economy in the 90s the government decided to freeze recruitment in all sectors, in many sectors including higher education. So we did not recruit any one in the 90s and now from 2002 the ban was lifted and we are recruiting…Now, you find that we do have young staff at our university who have just finished their first degree, we recruit them as tutorial assistants, or those who have finished Masters, we recruit them as assistant lecturers, so we have a large number of those, and then we have the top professors, those who are retiring or who have retired already, so we don’t have a mid-range. Now this problem is also affecting us in terms of the staff, so if we are to train our staff, the young staff, based on our own local resources, then it’s going to take much longer and so for a long time we won’t have people who can take up. So when we get any kind of external assistance in capacity building, in fact that is doing the most needed service to the future of our university

(Selected quotes for anonymity; emphasis added).

The more senior South African participants put forward similar comments. While the two countries experienced colonialism in radically different ways, the continent-wide need for innovative and passionate young researchers and faculty members made the NUFU commitment to graduate training and long-term sustainable development of individuals that much more salient in both of the case study institutions.

Despite NUFU’s strong commitment to long-term sustainability, the reality expressed by many participants was that regardless of the good intentions put forward by the Norwegian stakeholders, and regardless of the ground covered in any individual NSRP project, the economic reality in SSA jurisdictions makes long-term sustainability highly questionable, even in a country as seemingly well-resourced as South Africa. As outlined in both the analysis of post-colonial resource dependency (chapter two) and the analysis of NSRP sustainability and capacity building (chapter three), the majority of SSA nations are ill equipped to support domestic research initiatives beyond the bare minimum. This will be dealt with in greater detail in chapter seven’s analysis, however, for the moment the following quotation summarizes the issue facing researchers in both jurisdictions:

We did the capacity building but I do think that that is the difficulty with projects of this nature, actually, that it gets you to a certain point but to go to full independence needs still some sort of support… because researchers get drained down by the work in their own institutions and also the network that was built can’t be sustained by the funding that people have available currently in their home countries or universities. People have to wait to meet one another at conferences, they rarely get funding for conferences from the institutions, and
when they do go to conferences their focus is on what the conference is about, they can’t think about how they can strengthen the networks that they built in the past (S.R6).

As will be seen in the following chapter, this type of response forms the central narrative in regard to the NUFU programs contributions; Individual capacity has been enhanced and NUFU has made significant contributions through its sustained support of the case study project, however, institutional or project-based developments will most likely be unsustainable in the absence of continued foreign support.

Summary

The analysis carried out in the above chapter paints a generally positive picture of administrator, faculty member, and student experiences within the specific NUFU project analyzed in this case study. However, participants raised some significant limitations with regards to the overall efficacy and equitable structure of the NUFU program framework and project modality. On the one hand, over the past twenty years, NUFU has developed and honed a demand-driven program structure that is highly responsive to the needs of Southern institutions and researchers; Southern institutions are significantly incorporated into the decision-making processes at both program and project levels, NUFU-funded projects are thematically open and are free from any structural conditionalities, resources distributed to Southern stakeholders can be used for a wide array of activities and initiatives, the knowledge and research produced as a result of NUFU projects can be disseminated through the most appropriate media for both professional and policy-related development, as determined by the participating researchers, and the long-term investment allows for sustained development of institutions, programs, faculty members and graduate students. In the case study project, these factors have been a major boon, resulting in relatively open and trusting inter-personal and professional dynamics and supporting an extremely productive research project that is engaged with and driven by a large portion of the participating researchers. However, the open and flexible structure of the decentralized modality, in conjunction with its individual-driven nature, results in a framework that is almost completely dependent on the participating individuals, particularly the project coordinators, to ensure the implementation of an equitable and transparent collaboration research project. In regard to the five categories of the Coercive ideal-
type, based on the analysis of the case study conducted in this chapter, the following comments can be made.

In regard to the Program and Project Selection Criteria and Process, there was a strong appreciation from the majority of participants for the openness with which NUFU has historically operated, in terms of both the procedural and substantive elements. The willingness of the NUFU administration to make significant program modifications in order to augment African participation and control was recognized as a significant concession by the Norwegians, something that the majority of Northern NSRP agencies have not been willing to do, according to both respondents and the literature review conducted in chapter three. There was a strong awareness that while international support for research in African universities has historically been limited in both scope and scale, and primarily not undertaken through open dialogue and exchange, the NUFU administration has attempted to create a program structure that is sensitive and flexible to the priorities of recipient institutions and researchers. While the particular dynamics of any given project depend to a great extent on the personalities involved and the jurisdictional and institutional contexts, the present case study indicates that if motivated, creative and flexible partners participate in the NUFU modality, the program structure is capable of supporting a productive and equitable research project with significant symmetry between participants during the project development and selection processes.

On the issue of resource management, many of the issues raised in the literature were absent from the case study project. For the most part, individual researchers and administrators felt engaged in the project’s resource decision-making processes. This was facilitated by annual meetings amongst the project participants in order to jointly discuss results, and annual steering committee meetings at each site and between the coordinators of each site in order to set future goals for the project. While some confusion existed over which individuals had the final say over resources at one of the universities, this did not appear to spillover amongst the researchers within the project, as none of them expressed concerns over the distribution of and access to financial or material resources. In addition, and perhaps most surprisingly given the context depicted in the literature review sections of the study, participants at both universities indicated that while more money would always be appreciated, finances were not an inhibitor of productivity at either site, and in fact, the availability of NUFU resources was used by some participants as leverage in order to acquire NSRP resources outside of the NUFU project.

The project agenda-setting processes were widely praised as being both open and transparent for participants at both African sites. The case study results indicated a relatively
open, autonomous and flexible research environment with researchers at each site able to conduct an array of research projects under the broad project umbrella. Participants indicated that they were comfortable in the NUFU framework and felt empowered by their coordinators to pursue lines of inquiry in accordance with their individual research interests. The only perceived inhibitors appeared to derive from the national and institutional contexts that embedded the project, which do not appear to be symptomatic of NUFU’s decentralized model. This is not to say that tensions were absent from the project, but rather that the tensions that existed could not be directly linked to the NUFU structure or requirements, and could more accurately be linked to the, at times, divergent interests of participants. One comment that could be made regarding the agenda-setting process is that the formal expectations of the Norwegian involvement within the NSRP project could be strengthened and made more explicit by the NUFU administration in order to more clearly establish the desired parameters of the North-South collaboration from the outset.

The knowledge management component of the project was perhaps the least discussed of the five themes, as the majority of participants were extremely content with the flexibility of NUFU’s decentralized model. Many participants expressed that NUFU was a good model of how the complex issues of relevance and application can be dealt with in the scope of NSRP programs, for by allowing the participants to determine the optimal pathways for dissemination, NUFU explicitly empowered researchers to drive the agenda in connection with development-related public policy within the participating jurisdictions. The ability to engage both the traditional academic audience through book publications and peer-reviewed journals and the non-academic world of government, non-governmental organizations and local stakeholders appeared to be an extremely powerful structural component of the NUFU model. However, this did come into tension with professional development goals in a few cases, specifically in regard to the desire of many researchers to disseminate their work in European and North American peer-reviewed journals. Again, this was not a deficit within the NUFU model as much as it was a byproduct of the specific dynamics at play amongst the participants. The tension between academic and non-academic dissemination remains precarious for Northern NSRP program administrators, as the balance between mandating dissemination practices, particularly accredited peer-review journals, and empowering Southern actors to engage relevant stakeholders as determined by themselves is part of a much broader conversation about the international academic regime, as discussed in chapter two and three. The case study findings indicate that NUFU has chosen to allow participants to self-determine the optimal dissemination
practices and pathways of their research findings, which is in line with more progressive ideals for NSRP programs.

The final theme, and perhaps the most difficult to evaluate, is sustainability and capacity building, referring to the ability of the NSRP program to augment individual research capacity at the participating African institutions in support of a long-term vision of institutional capacity building. What became clear, and which will be made more explicit in the following chapter, was that despite NUFU’s efforts to support a long-term vision of research, the dire economic conditions at play within both jurisdictions are a far stronger determinant of success or failure than the NUFU program in isolation. It appears that the NUFU administration recognizes the immense challenges involved with attempting to institutionalize research activities within Southern universities, and as a result, has chosen to focus on individual training as a means of building research capacity. While faculty members conduct a large portion of the research and publications, the NUFU program specifically targets graduate training as a key mechanism of capacity building. It is asserted that by expanding the number of young researchers with high-quality graduate degrees and research experience, both the home universities and the broader national research culture will be significantly augmented over time.

Given the limited funds available to each NUFU project, and the difficulty in establishing sustainable projects and initiatives within the majority of Southern research universities, the NUFU approach appears to be an extremely reasonable and realistic effort to support research capacity beyond the strictures of a single project. In additional, the NUFU model offers relatively long-term support for individual projects and recognizes that the training of graduate students requires a substantial period of sustained support in order to receive a worthwhile return on investment. The combination of the above factors resulted in widespread appreciation and praise for NUFU’s approach to sustainability and capacity building, particularly in comparison with the more time-restricted modalities employed by many other Northern NSRP programs.

The primary conclusion of this chapter is that while some commentators may critique the NUFU program for focusing on individuals as the crux of research capacity building, specifically in that the model appears to concentrate a significant amount of power in the hands of select individuals and within a system with limited checks and balances, the case study findings indicate that when the model works to its potential it is a worthwhile decision. By facilitating the creation of demand-driven research opportunities within African universities, and
focusing on graduate training as a necessary corollary, the NUFU model empowers researchers and graduate students in a number of important ways.

First, by allowing Southern stakeholders to determine the theme, scope and design of the research project the model opens up the possibility for truly demand-driven research in response to both basic research interests and pressing development-related issues. While the majority of NSRP programs restrict research topics to issues determined by the major international development actors or topics with positive spin-offs for researchers and industry in the funding Northern jurisdiction, the NUFU program allows researchers in Southern universities the freedom to research without such restrictive conditionalities. Given the array of structural restraints at play within Southern universities, this freedom is rare and was extremely appreciated by the case study participants.

Second, by supporting Southern researchers to craft their own research questions and determine the optimal dissemination pathways in terms of academic and non-academic audiences, the NUFU model acknowledges that Northern conceptions of ‘relevant knowledge’ are not universal. While particular forms and media have become the norm within many industrialized jurisdictions, the issues at play within many industrializing countries manifest in ways that Northern researchers may not be able to fully appreciate as outsiders. The NUFU administration appears to have recognized the possibility for epistemological neo-colonialism inherent in both thematic restrictions and mandated research outputs, and as a result, it has continued to develop a program that is capable of addressing the varied needs and interests of Southern researchers and institutions.

Third, given the limited size of NUFU support, particularly in comparison to NSRP programs operated by the dominant Northern donor agencies, the NUFU administration has realized the niche potential of its decentralized model. By focusing on individuals, NUFU is better able to facilitate long-term research support, as opposed to investing its relatively small resources in large infrastructure or physical resource projects. That is not to say the aforementioned elements are wholly eschewed from NUFU support, but rather that NUFU’s comparative advantage is focusing its resources, both human and material, on the training of individuals and the augmentation of institutional capacity by developing the supporting the local and national talent pool.

Lastly, rather than mandating institutional agreements in a top-down manner, the NUFU program facilitates the development of research through bottom-up pathways. Many participants indicated that NSRP projects are doomed to fail if institutional leaders determine
them without researcher buy-in. The legitimacy deficit that often ensues from institution-led projects results in the wastage of valuable resources and time. By prioritizing individuals, NUFU acknowledges that inter-personal trust is a crucial, perhaps the most crucial, element in any successful North-South initiative, and that faculty-led research projects benefit from more legitimacy within the respective university communities.

All of the above indicates that the NUFU program has substantially incorporated the issues of ownership and partnership in the development and implementation of the decentralized modality. As outlined in chapter three, ownership and partnership have become ubiquitous within development-related discourse, and as many commentators contend “the notion of partnership is itself an elusive target. Today, everything is a ‘partnership’” (Samoff & Carrol, 2004, 71-72). However, the case study project analyzed in this chapter appears to have developed some of the key characteristics of an equitable partnership that is based on strong principles of Southern ownership, thanks in large part to the many positive and empowering characteristics present in the NUFU model.

This is not to say that the financial-intellectual complex at play within the broader international development architecture does not continue to influence the stakeholders in the case study project, nor does it infer that the Norwegian participants are not inherently positioned in an advantageous position in relation to their South African and Tanzanian partners. The case study is replete with references to the overarching meta-theme of dependency and neo-colonialism, if not explicitly in the scope of NUFU and the specific case study project, but in terms of the structural conditions that continue to limit the development of robust spaces in Southern universities in support of autonomous research cultures. Rather, the opposite could be inferred; independent spaces are becoming less and less prevalent, even in comparison to the dire conditions that have existed since independence and the end of Apartheid. However, it is for that reason that the NUFU model is appreciated; in an era of increased managerialism and heightened demand for market-oriented and applied research, the NUFU framework provides legitimate space for demand-driven research in support of local issues.

The freedom of NUFU-supported researchers to determine their own research questions and conduct pertinent research appears to be rare in the wider global landscape. The relatively small size of the NUFU program, specifically the small amount of resources committed in comparison to other major funding agencies, should not make this fact any less important. While the peripheral or semiPeripheral status of the participating institutions nations will not be altered by NUFU support, nor will a radical transformation of the higher education system occur
as a result, the creation and maintenance of alternative research spaces is a valuable contribution in and of itself in the early 21st century, and based on the appreciate responses from the respondents in this study, requires acknowledgement in its own right. This recognition comes in light of the awareness that the dominant epistemological horizon is not just being imposed on the South from the North, but that substantial battles are occurring within the countries of the North as well. This was clearly the case in Norway and adds a layer of complexity to the overall analysis. However, the contestation of the NUFU project within and between the Norwegian government and Norway’s higher education institutions did not directly affect the NUFU project, and many African participants appreciated the continued resolve of their Norwegian allies.
Chapter Seven: NUFU Case Study
Analysis of the South-South dynamics in a trilateral research network

Introduction

Despite the structural, ideological and material dependencies embedded in the post-Second World War period of the broader world-system epoch, the last 60 years have witnessed both calls and action in support of a variety of alternative, and at times resistant, movements advocating increased Southern autonomy both in the international arena and in domestic affairs (Nyerere, 1967a, 1967b; Frank, 1967, 1977, 1981; Galtung, 1971; Yesufu, 1973; Cardosa & Faletto, 1979; Escobar, 1984, 1995; Mudimbe, 1988; Said, 1993; Carnoy & Samoff, 1995; Samoff, 1996, 1999a, 2009; Mkandawire, 1997, 2005; Sen, 1999; Smith, 1999; Dei, Hall & Rosenberg, 2000; Klees, 2002; Ellerman, 2005; Connell, 2007). In the scope of this study, the issue of central concern in regards to such types of alternative development movements is the presence of South-South narratives that underscore many of the alternative narratives put forward for increased national and regional sovereignty (Weiler, 1984; UNECOSOC, 2008; Steiner-Khamsi & Chisolm, 2009; Silva, 2009; Samoff, 2009; Tikly & Dachi, 2009; JICA, n.d.; Mochizuki, 2009).

In post-colonial Africa, the most salient area of South-South activity became operationalized under the rubric of regionalism through the Pan-African ideologies of the 1960s and 1970s (Fawcett & Gandois, 2010, 619-622; Olivier, 2010, 27-28), in the form of sub-regional social, political or economic organizations or through regional market integration platforms, spurred by the expansion of neo-liberal market mechanisms and policies during the late 20th century (Olivier, 2010, 28-30). This chapter explores the history of regionalism on the continent, both theoretically and empirically, with reference to the rise and fall of South-South movements in order to frame the historical context of the South-South component in NUFU’s NSRP modality. Through such an analysis, it is possible to investigate the extent that regional South-South research partnerships offer added value, both material and ideological, to the traditional NSRP modality, or if the South-South label is nothing more than a discursive buzzword or foil for otherwise standard operating procedures and the traditional asymmetries they manifest.

South-South cooperation is not a new phenomenon, but has been a general method of cross-fertilization, resource sharing, and technical assistance incorporated by academics, non-
governmental organizations, and both national and international organizations since the end of the Second World War (Silva, 2009, 39). Silva, in her 2009 review of South-South interactions in the international arena since the end of the Second World War, establishes a tripartite framework of South-South collaboration (SSC) with three distinct phases that situates such activities within a narrative of significant historical events; 1949-1979, covering the majority of the colonial independence movements and the Cold war; 1980-1999, covering the fall of the Soviet Union and the ascension of neo-liberalism and structural adjustment programs; and 1999 to the present, characterized by the strengthened presence of historically peripheral actors in the international environment, as well as the promotion of ‘best practice’ transfer platforms and knowledge banks, such as the World Bank’s Global Development Network, by the international donor community (ibid, 39-41). While the concept of South-South has been present to varying degrees in the field of international relations for some time it has played a more consistent role in the study of regions, a topic that has found renewed interest in the 21st century (Hettne & Soderbaum, 2000; Hettne, 2005). Theories of regionalism and regionalization, specifically as they relate to regional activities in sub-Saharan Africa, mark the conceptual launching point for this study’s investigation of South-South cooperation in SSA, particularly as it relates to the NUFU program.

Regional activity technically predated the end of colonial rule on the African continent, most significantly through the establishment of the Pan-African Congress (PAC), an organization that met multiple times over a 25-year period beginning in 1919 (Sidaway & Gibb, 1998). First meeting as an adjunct conference to the Treaty of Versailles, the PAC called for the increase in autonomous rule by African leaders over African territories (ibid, 1998). In the economic sector, the South African Customs Union, made up of Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland and South Africa, was also founded in the early 20th century and made significant efforts to regulate intra-regional trade and to impose a common tariff structure (Sidaway & Gibb, 1998; Gibb, 2004). However, while the limited presence of pre-independence regional organizations are significant points of activity in the story of African regionalism, due to limitations in both space and scope the pre-independence era will only be referenced indirectly throughout this chapter. The primary purview of this study is the post-war era, specifically the regional dimension of post-independence educational policies and initiatives, and the particular geo-political configurations that spurred and influenced regional activities. Thus, the overview of African regionalism begins in the 1950s, under the auspice of Old Regionalism Theory (ORT), and spans until the present 21st century, operating under a reformed conceptualization of
regionalism under New Regionalism Theory (NRT) (Hettne, Inotai & Sunkel, 1999; Hettne & Soderbaum 2000; Soderbaum & Shaw, 2003; Grant & Soderbaum 2003; Hettne 2005). This study focuses on the post-war regional projects in the newly independent nations of Africa, bypassing any analysis of European and North American initiatives as only indirectly and theoretically related to the developments occurring in the low-income regions of Africa and Asia.

The study of regions has become *au courant* since the beginning of the 1990s, marked by renewed drives for regional cooperation in regards to both economic integration and security, as well as the proliferation of trans-national communication and trade through the advancements of late-20th century globalization (Hettne & Soderbaum, 2000). This new configuration of regional activities has spurred extensive theoretical and empirical considerations into how recent initiatives compare to the previous era of intense regional activity, particularly the era of post-war independence movements in the global periphery and the bloc formations of Cold War Realpolitik, dominated by pure Realist analyses such as Regional Security Complex Theory (ibid, 2000).

Regardless of the era, on a fundamental theoretical level the study of regions has either focused on the programmes and strategies that cross-national political forces, most often state-led, consolidated through formal institutions in order to organize the world in terms of regions and specific regional projects, vis-à-vis Regionalism, or the patterns of cooperation, integration, complementarity and convergence within a particular geographical space in order to form regions, vis-à-vis Regionalization (Marchand, Boas, & Shaw, 1999, 900; Hettne & Soderbaum, 2000, 457-458; Hettne, 2005, 545). This has most typically occurred using the Westphalian nation-state as the primary unit of analysis, particularly during the epoch of Old Regionalism, though non-governmental, trans-national organizations and movements have become increasingly inter-twined with such analysis (Hettne & Soderbaum, 2000, 471). All of this has occurred under the auspice that the sovereign nation-state is incapable, inefficient or unwilling to bring about various political, social or economic projects, and that regional initiatives can be a more effective level of activity to assure various outcomes or structures. These regional projects are most often devised in order to promote integration among the constituent sub-regional parties or to mediate extra-regional forces and pressures that impinge or influence the constituent sub-regional parties.

In the African context, post-war regional processes have predominantly been considered as manifestations of the latter rationale, and, as a result, fall squarely under the conceptual lens
of Old Regionalism. The old conceptualization of regional processes focused on state-centric activities that aimed to integrate the individually weak economies of newly independent states into a more effective bloc of partners, while allowing for sovereign political rule and reformation within each individual state (Tikly & Dachi, 2009, 104). In response to the extremely fragmented state system created by colonialism, the political and economic structures left in place were of such marginal utility that supra-national cooperation was often promoted as a necessary process for economic and political development, and not merely one of many possible alternatives (Gibb, 2009, 703). The political forces that emerged post-independence were for the most part dominated by an anti-colonialist fervor, underscored by notions of African Unity, African Fraternity and Pan-Africanism, and converged to determine the form of subsequent regional activities (Murithi, 2005; Olivier, 2010, 27).

The initial regional organizations were predominantly constructed with mandates of territorial sovereignty and economic integration for a united Africa (Gibb, 2004; Ndayi, 2009; Fawcett and Gandois, 2010). In 1961, Kwame Nkrumah, both the first president and the first prime minister of Ghana, spearheaded the socialist-oriented Casablanca Group, comprised of six African nations, as a first step towards South-South resistance to the influence and ideology of Western Liberal states, and advocated for an immediate political unification within a federalist framework (Fawcett & Gandois, 2010, 620). This initial formation was complemented by the Monrovia Group, a consortium of 19 countries that promoted a less radical de-linking from the West that maintained territorial sovereignty while sustaining select foreign linkages (ibid, 620). Both of these organizations were quickly subsumed in 1963 under the Organization for African Unity (OAU), a continental body operating under similar, but more comprehensive, directives.

While the various parties differed in their opinions over the preferred method of cooperation and the form of future relations with the West, the OAU was founded with a general consensus regarding a Pan-Africanist movement that rejected the colonial fragmentation of the continent and promoted the political and cultural solidarity of African nations at the rhetorical level, even if it did not operationalize deep integrative policies (Ndayi, 2009). Through the OAU and Pan-Africanist philosophy, post-independence developmental regionalism was heavily influenced by dependency theory’s drive for “deliberate state policies that fostered local industrialization through protectionism”, and “import-substitution industrialization policies became the strategy of some developing countries to attain the autonomy needed to achieve the necessary structural change and economic diversification” (ibid, 372-373).
Despite the interest in regional cooperation in sub-Saharan Africa, the early efforts of the OAU and other regional bodies failed to meet their potential for a variety of reasons (ibid, 2009). The most notable being the extremely weak state structures left over in most post-colonial African nations, the highly unequal distribution of resources and human capital both between and within nations, the fragile democratic conditions that were often in conflict with patrimonial social and political structures, and the continued dependence on the former colonial powers politically, economically and in some cases militarily. It is not within the purview of this study to examine the particularities of the failure across a number of case studies, however, it is important to note that the regional fervor of the 1950s and 1960s was unable to sustain itself on the rhetoric of Pan-Africanism alone; the definition of the African *Self* against the European *Other* was not in and of itself a powerful enough catalyst or rhetorical tool to spur the collective self-reliance, social and political equality, and economic development called for by the Pan-Africanist movement of the epoch (Murithi, 2005; Fawcett & Gandois, 2010).

This period of African regionalization coincided with, and was supported by, broader international movements that sought to challenge Western hegemony in the post-war and post-colonial era through South-South collaboration and solidarity. The most significant political organizations were the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77, the roots of which lay in the Bandung Conference of 1955 and the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) (Abraham, 2008, 197-198; Lee, 2009, 88). As Lee (2009) articulates, the Bandung Conference, occurring in Bandung, Indonesia, “can be seen as a pivotal moment placed in mid-century, summarizing an alternative chronology of world events organized by intellectuals and activists of colour who had been subjected to forms of colonialism, racism and class oppression” (p. 83). With many peripheral nations achieving independence, and many more on the cusp, there was considerable impetus for the global periphery to come together as autonomous actors in order to collectively confront the legacies of Western imperialism and to debate the post-colonial approach to future challenges, most important of which was the initial stage of the Cold War (Romulo, 1956; Abdulgani, 1964, 1981; Rana, 1969; Prashad, 2007). As many contemporary scholars retrospectively contend, the greatest impact of the Cold War was not on the European continent, but rather in the former colonies through continued colonial relations, and in new and more complex forms (Westad, 2007).

Partially stemming from the ideas and networks of the Bandung Conference and the AAPSO, the NAM developed as a grouping of nations that chose to distance themselves from the growing political tensions between the United States, Western Europe and the Soviet Union,
and that sought to create a parallel structure to the Western-dominated United Nations (Biel, 2000; Alden & Viera, 2005, 1081). Established in 1961 amongst a grouping of 25 nations from the global periphery and expanding on the Afro-Asian origins of Bandung to include Eastern European and Middle Eastern nations, the NAM promoted the idea of a non-bipolar international order (Abraham, 2008, 197). It has been argued that the NAM should be considered as “nothing more (or less) than the rational outcome of a calculated approach to maximizing national interests in a context shaped above all by Cold War bipolarity (first argued by Rana, 1969). By this logic, a policy of non-alignment was the best way of gaining leverage, especially economic, from competing superpowers seeking to attract newly independent countries to their side” (Abraham, 2008, 197). For the sake of this study, the fact that South-South alignment may have been the most logical outcome for promoting the self-interest of newly independent nations is secondary to the fact that peripheral nations followed through on this potential in order to promote regional or cross-regional solidarity in the face of core forces.

As will be seen with the various African regional organizations, the AAPSO and the NAM, along with other regional groupings of post-colonial states such as the Asian Relations Conference, failed to maintain a cohesive ideological front for promoting peripheral solidarity. As Abraham (2008) outlines in his analysis of the NAM:

Even as delegates would find common ground on a number of issues, especially criticism of European colonialism and racialism as a world phenomenon, there was little agreement on the meaning of military and security threats facing each country and the world and appropriate responses to them. The strains of organizing collective international action based on assumptions about race, history and geography – these countries’ common experience of colonialism and proximity to each other – had come out into the open…and following political independence for much of Asia and the Arab world, the hope for common action from the colored world appeared to have given way under the pressure of national self-interest (p. 23).

Even at the first Bandung conference, considerations over political sovereignty and sub-regional politics foreshadowed future conflicts within the bloc. For example, China and India found themselves in a border war in early 1962, with China choosing to align closely with the Soviet Union, ultimately creating divisions with significant repercussions for constructing comprehensive alliances (ibid, 207-208).

The failure of trans-national organizations in the global periphery can also be attributed to the internal instability of many post-colonial nations as a result of fractured domestic social and political institutions. “One-party states, authoritarian regimes, abuse of human rights, and
economic discrepancies between elites, workers and peasants have all too often characterized the social and political conditions of nation-states within the Third World, contributing to its pejorative valence in expression” (Lee, 2009, 90). Despite the intention for increased collaboration and ideological solidarity, the economic and political conditions in many states were incompatible with prolonged comprehensive engagements. Many newly independent nations did not have their own houses in order before they launched into trans-national dialogue and cooperation, ultimately leaving domestic politics susceptible to fracture with subsequent domino effects in the international arena.

While regional activities and dialogue were maintained at various levels in the late 1960s and 1970s, the second phase of regionalism and South-South collaboration did not arise until the early 1990s. In the African context, even though the OAU was not officially defunct until it was re-constituted as the African Union in 2002, it proved to be an ineffective medium for collaboration and progress (Olivier, 2010, 26). As a consequence, a series of sub-regional organizations emerged in order to fill the vacuums left unaddressed by the OAU. These initiatives marked a radical shift in the political economy of SSA and took on a very different tone and function than their critical developmentalist predecessors (Taylor, 2003; Gibb, 2009; Tikly & Dachi, 2009; Olivier, 2010, 31-32). Of note for this study is the increased emphasis that education began to play within the various regional missions and action plans, particularly through greater coordination of the respective national higher education systems (Oguchi, 2009; Boshoff, 2010).

The new wave of regional activity was constructed and operationalized under the same rubrics of African self-reliance and self-centered development that were promoted in the post-independence era, but functionally, many of the new structures operated according to the ideological foundations of neo-classical economic Liberalism (Ndayi, 2009; Gibb, 2009; Tikly and Dachi, 2009). Based on the mission and mandates of the new organizations, many of the new sub-regional bodies supported the modernist conception of development, vis-à-vis promoting open regionalism as a mechanism to enhance multilateral trade liberalization and more intense integration with the broader global economy (Gibb, 2009, 705). The new sub-regional initiatives also promoted economic development over and above political and social development and integration (Tikly & Dachi, 2009, 106), using the rhetoric of collective self-sufficiency as a tool for regional economic integration.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was founded in 1975 to promote economic integration amongst West African countries and currently has fifteen
member countries. In 1979, the countries directly neighboring South Africa formed The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), with extensive support from European countries (Lee, 1989; Mistry, 2003; Sidaway & Gibb, 1998). The primary aim of SADCC was to act as an economic, political and military counter to the regional hegemony of South Africa’s apartheid state (Sidaway & Gibb, 1998; Lee, 2003). Similarly, in 1979 the Constellation of South African States (COSAS) was initiated by the government of South Africa in order to reduce regional tensions, particularly those arising out of SADCC, by supporting increased economic and technical assistance from South Africa to other regional nations (Gibb, 2007; Boshoff, 2009). The form and mandate of SADCC shifted in 1992 after the fall of South Africa’s Apartheid state, and regional stability and economic integration emerged as the new impetus for cooperation (Hentz, 2005a, 2005b; Hess, 2000; Lee, 2003), with free trade replacing the previous mantra of balanced trade (Gibb, 2006, 2007). Lastly, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), formally established in 1998 in its current form, has its roots in the 1978 Lusaka Declaration of Intent and Commitment to the Establishment of a Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA). The PTA was put into force in late 1982 and followed the other sub-regional bodies with a mandate of forming economic cooperation within the regional and coordinated trade liberalization.

Though contextually defined by the historical conditions and experiences within the region, the rationales for increased regional activity in SSA’s higher education landscape is mirrored in other peripheral regions, and represents a wider geo-political shift for increased South-South cooperation since the beginning of the 1990s (Ohiorhenuan & Rath, 2000; UNECOSOC, 2008; Silva, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009; Boshoff, 2010) Two alternative modalities that have evolved and entered mainstream development discourse over the last ten years are South-South collaboration (SSC) and trilateral cooperation. The former modality pairs actors situated within similarly positioned developing nations and regions, or at least positioned along similar development trajectories in the eyes of Northern bilateral and multilateral agencies, while the latter modality incorporates a Northern funding agency, primarily bilateral, in the coordination and facilitation of a South-South partnership (UNECOSOC, 2008, 14). Both SSC and North-South-South modalities operate primarily under the rubrics of best-practice, policy borrowing, and the belief that Southern actors, who are themselves in the process of development, are “better placed and have the relevant experience to respond to the needs and problems” of other developing countries (ibid, 15).

However, little research has been done into the nature, purpose, and outcomes of these
new partnership arrangements, and there is very little quantifiable data on the amount of resources or number of programs currently implementing the various modalities (ibid, 16). As such, the motivations for and consequences of these alternative frameworks are still under-examined and lack in-depth analysis and theorization, despite the certainty that SS and NSS cooperation projects are being increasingly operationalized by strengthened nations long considered part of the global periphery, such as India, Brazil, South Africa and China, and Northern bilateral agencies, such as NORAD (ibid, 14). Despite a lack of transparency and information sharing between development-related funding agencies, some estimates have been made regarding the level of expenditures originating from these new funding nations. In terms of Chinese programming, tentative analyses indicate an increase from 600 million to 2 billion USD a year between 2002 and 2009, primarily operationalized through grant-based projects (Chin & Frolic, 2007, 11; Grimm et al., 2009, 16), with 10% FDI directed towards the African continent (Dowden, 2009). This number is approximated at close to 10 billion USD in 2004 alone if loans are also considered (Chin & Frolic, 2007, 11). Reliable data for India is likewise difficult to ascertain, but studies have estimated an annual contribution to development assistance at between 500 million and 1 billion USD (Rowlands, 2007, 12). Finally, South African ODA levels appear to be roughly 300 million USD annually, or 0.17 Gross National Income (ibid, 12).

This renewed push has resulted in a broadening of both the number and influence of SSC advocates, contending that the modality has the potential to be a revolutionary paradigm shift in development cooperation, especially for African countries. As Silva (2009) argues, “since the least developed countries (most of which are in sub-Saharan Africa) received less than one third of the Official Development Assistance provided by the North (Sogge, 2002), South-South cooperation can correct the distortion by establishing cooperative efforts between mid-development and poor countries” (p. 57). Though research into the phenomenon is sparse, recent analysis raises two significant questions that further problematize the growing trend: 1) Do South-South development projects replicate many of the same dynamics found in North-South development assistance, specifically the extension of a dominant country’s political, economic, and cultural influence? (Tikly & Dachi, 2009); and 2) To what extent are Northern countries promoting SSC as an arms-length means of spreading core-dominated development agendas and benchmarks? (Steiner-Khamsi, 2009).

As the above questions imply, this study situates international academic and knowledge relations within a global political economy that incorporates knowledge production,
dissemination, and control as a key structural category. As such, SSN research networks will be examined within a broader historical project, one that envisions the promotion of more independent research units as part of a resistant and transformative development project. As SSC offers alternatives to traditional partnership dynamics, funding agencies have begun to support more demand-driven and led platforms and programs. The following section will outline the history of regional cooperation in Sub-Saharan higher education and will analyze the dominant policies and modalities in order to situate the analysis of NUFU’s SSC program that follows.

South-South and Regional Activities in Sub-Saharan Africa Higher Education

The role that higher education institutions have played in the regionally oriented development landscape since the end of the Second World War is much less robust than the economic-oriented counterparts, and has only recently become a more prominent horizon of action. The reasons for the historically limited scope of regional initiatives in the higher education sector coincides with the inability of SSA nations to leverage their ideological solidarity; divergences in conceptions of development, issues of national sovereignty, and weak public institutions provided significant internal inhibitors for developing national public higher education institutions, let alone for creating and sustaining productive intra-regional collaboration or integration. However, as with recent progress in fostering new regional organizations at political and economic levels, over the last 20 years a significant resurgence in Pan-African and sub-regional higher education initiatives has occurred, partially in isolation for non-African actors and partially facilitated by them.

As outlined in the second chapter of this study, the majority of national higher education institutions in SSA were ill equipped to face the transition from colonialism to independence. This precluded substantive collaboration from occurring at any level of activity. The anomalies on the continent were to be found in East Africa, where University College Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, University College Nairobi in Kenya and Makerere University in Uganda possessed significant institutional capacity, predominantly due to the Kenyan and Tanzanian institutions being established as constituent campuses of the University of London system in 1961 (Jamison, 2011, 72). As a result of the relatively strong institutional capacity at each of the three universities, particularly in comparison to other SSA institutions at the time, and in light of the
growth in Pan-African ideology at national and regional levels, the three institutions were absorbed into the regional University of East Africa in 1963. This development occurred through the University of East Africa Act, whereby the parameters of the partnership were defined with each campus taking primary responsibility for teaching specific disciplines; UCD focused on Law, Makarere focused on medicine and agriculture, and UCN was responsible for engineering (Jamison, 2011, 32).

However, the regional merger was short-lived; in 1970 the constituent members suspended the integrated model in the wake of the collapse of the East African Community (EAC) and in order that each nation could have full autonomy over the structure, curricula and mission of their respective institutions (Oguchi, 2009, 337; Jamison, 2011, 32). They continued to have formal relations through the Inter-University Committee of East Africa (Nhonoli, 1973), but the more comprehensive integration effort was deemed to be unsustainable in the face of national sovereignty issues and the perceived need for universities to address the particular needs of each country, rather than regional or continental issues (Jamison, 2011, 32). The tension between regional solidarity and national sovereignty is particularly noteworthy, as it is a recurring theme in the literature on regionalism, both broadly considered and specifically in the African case (Fawcett & Gandois, 2010). As Fawcett and Gandois (2010) contend in their analysis of African and Middle Eastern regionalism, “external influence is an insufficient condition for sustaining regionalism in the absence of favorable conditions: other internal conditions must also be satisfied. Over time its negative effects can multiply as regional states become more resistant to external hegemony and seek local ownership” (p. 624).

While the particularities of the UEA experiment are beyond the purview of this study, it is interesting to note that despite the rhetoric of Pan-African solidarity and unity, it is widely accepted that the UEA remained very much in line with similar institutions in Western Europe both in structure and in content (Kimambo, 1984). The UEA Act of 1963 defined the mandate of the university as follows:

Above all the University should be relevant to our situation, should be African in a true sense. It should not be a pale reflection of alien universities but a living concrete symbol of all that is African and make a peculiar African contribution to the world of scholarship, achievement and research and the advancement of knowledge (as quoted in Court, 1975, p. 196).

Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania, was the most prominent advocate of this mission, espousing African solutions to African problems through the Arusha Declaration (Nyerere 1967a) and the Education for Self-Reliance pamphlet (Nyerere, 1967b). Despite the movements
towards an indigenization of the East African university model, the Pan-African ideology was unable to filter into the constituent members of the UEA until they engaged more directly with issues of national sovereignty. Difficulties arose in a variety of forms that at first limited the efficacy of the UEA, but quickly resulted in the devolution of the model into three discrete national universities rather than a single regional university. Court (1980) argued that the drive for societal engagement and relevance “stemmed from misconceptions about what universities in East Africa were equipped to do, in terms of their internal resources, and what they were able to do in terms of their institutional relations within the wider East African political system” (p. 674). Furthermore, “as the essence of this task was viewed as the furnishing of qualifications with which these intellectuals could ‘legitimately’ replace incumbent expatriates, it did not seem to require much change in the inherited and imported pattern of university organization” (Court, 1975, 194). Taken as a whole, the initial effort to create a regional higher education institution that operated according to independent, indigenous epistemological foundations was unsustainable in practice; the prevalence of global professional structures and norms and the pressure from local political institutions rendered the regional a distant third in terms of geopolitical influences and priorities.

Even more so than with regional political and economic initiatives and organizations, regional higher education processes were relatively non-existent between the early 1970s and late 1980s. Three initiatives of note during this period are the Arusha Convention of 1981, the formation of the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) and the creation of the Association of African Universities (AAU) in 1967. The former convention was “a framework agreement which provides general guidelines meant to facilitate the implementation of regional co-operation relative to the recognition of studies and degrees through national, bilateral, sub-regional and regional mechanisms that exist or are created for that purpose” (Oguchi, 2009, 342). In support of Arusha’s overarching goals, twenty African states signed a Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education (Arusha, 1981; as cited in Watson, 2009, 423). The second organization was established to support cooperation amongst East African universities, particularly the former UEA institutions, in order to foster increased mobility, harmonization of qualifications and various forms of collaboration through regional regulatory frameworks and coordination (ibid, 337). The third major initiative in support of greater regional integration, harmonization and cooperation throughout the African continent was the development of the AAU in 1967. Initially comprised of 34 public university members, the organization “serves as
the continental organization and principal forum for consultation, exchange of information and cooperation among higher education institutions in Africa” (AAU, 2007, 6). The mission of the organization is to:

Raise the quality of higher education in Africa and strengthen its contribution to African development by fostering collaboration among its member institutions; by providing support to their core functions of teaching, learning, research and community engagement; and by facilitating critical reflection on, and consensus-building around, issues affecting higher education and the development of Africa (AAU, 2004, ix).

The most recent survey indicates that the AAU currently draws together over 200 member institutions from 45 African countries in all five sub-regions of the continent. It represents the primary continental body to facilitate and coordinate long-term collective action in support of African higher education (Ayoo, 2009, 306). Over the past 45 years, the AAU has supported initiatives in the following areas: International and regional staff exchanges; grants for theses, dissertations and professional development; international fellowship programs, quality assurance harmonization and development support, HIV and AIDS education programs, ICT networking initiatives, working groups on higher education and related topics, inter-governmental and inter-institutional communication services, and extensive funding programs for research, training and infrastructure (AAU, 2006, 4-5).

The major era of renewed regional activity in SSA began in 1988 with the formation of the Donors to African Education (DAE), which subsequently became the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) (Tikly & Dachi, 2009, 109). Interestingly, it has been argued that the DAE’s drive for regional collaboration in SSA primarily came about in response to the increased interest in such modalities from Northern development agencies (ibid, 109). The second major regional initiative with a focus on higher education is SADC, with its first major platform presented in 1997 as the SADC Protocol (SADC, 1997). The Protocol was directed at education more broadly with only a component on higher education and sought “to progressively achieve the equivalence, harmonization and standardization of the education and training systems in the Region” (SADC, 1997, 4), and operates under the rationale that “no SADC Member State can alone offer the full range of world quality education and training programmes at affordable costs and on sustainable basis” (SADC, 1997, 2). SADC has continued to build on this initial framework, primarily in the areas of science and technology through the Protocol on Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI), which calls on member countries to collaborate in order to build institutional and inter-institutional R&D capacity for
economic development and to link STI more directly with societal issues (SADC, 2007a, 2007b).

A third major body engaged in regional higher education activities is the African Union. Their major initiative over the last 15 years came through the Plan for a Second Decade of Education, which identified higher education as a priority area for revitalization (AU, 2007). Through this initiative, the AU has produced a number of policy documents and white papers, including the 2007 Harmonization of Higher Education Programmes in Africa document (AU, 2007). One of the primary goals of the AU initiative is to achieve continent-wide harmonization between the various sub-regional groupings and initiatives under the rubrics presented by the AU (Watson, 2009, 425).

The final major actor in regional higher education activities in SSA is the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), an organization founded in 2001 in conjunction with the AU in order to emphasize regional collaboration, particularly in market-oriented STI such as biotechnology, geo-sciences, and product engineering (NEPAD, 2001a). Together with the AU, the NEPAD Secretariat produced a Consolidated Plan of Action for Africa’s S&T in 2005 (NEPAD, 2005), focusing on the contribution that R&D could have on the socio-economic revitalization of SSA and the renewed socio-political presence of SSA countries internationally (Boshoff, 2009, 485; Ndayi, 2009, 372). Beyond the role of STIs, NEPAD has promoted education across all levels as a means of combating brain drain (NEPAD, 2001a), decreasing the education gap within the regional and within nations (NEPAD 2001b), increasing skills development, particularly marketable skills (NEPAD, 2001c), and integration higher education delivery within the continent (NEPAD, 2001d).

Based on the above initiatives and other smaller regional processes, Watson (2009) conceptualizes three thematic groupings emerging that help define the parameters of new regionalism in sub-Saharan Africa’s higher education landscape, and which are particularly useful for mapping this study’s understanding of SSA regionalism in the early 21st century. The first area is qualification portability, human mobility and program comparability, the second is collaboration, sharing of resources and curricular cooperation, and the final is accessibility (Watson, 2009, 426-429). The cumulative impact of the various initiatives along these horizons is to overcome the neglect of higher education, the insufficient provision, and the lack of resources that have plagued the continents universities since independence, and particularly since the early 1980s, through collaborative developmental frameworks and systemic planning (AU Harm, 2007a, 2007b; Watson, 2009, 429; Boshoff, 2009, 2010; Ayoo, 2009; Tikly &
Taking a step back from the particular organizations, policies and initiatives, the geopolitical implications of the regional push require consideration. As with the regional economic and political initiatives of the post-war era, the regional dimension of higher education in SSA possesses many counter-hegemonic possibilities in the face of increased global competitiveness in R&D and the resulting marginalization of SSA researchers and institutions; marginalization that is pushing many SSA actors below their already compromised positions into complete irrelevance (Dabdouh-Guebas et al., 2003; Samoff & Carrol, 2004; Leydesdorff & Wagner, 2008; Boshoff, 2009, 2010). While the historical record offers little evidence to support the positive externalities of such SS movements, some have argued that “the combined effort and strategic blending of the best of Southern research could increase the international visibility of science produced by developing regions, and strengthen the South’s participation in global science (Ohiorhenuan & Rath, 2000; as cited in Boshoff, 2010, 483). Additionally, and more importantly for this study’s analysis, the cumulative solidarity and shared experiences of peripheral researchers could “give developing country scientists the requisite capacity to effectively negotiate with Northern collaborators” (Binka, 2005, 208). However, as will be examined in the analysis of NUFU’s program, many traditional considerations of South-South cooperation require interrogation. Assumptions of epistemological and cultural compatibilities based on shared experiences of colonialism, geography, spirituality and other shared environmental conditions are often supported as reasons for increasing SSC in various higher education and research activities (Kane, 2000; Ohiorhenuan & Rath, 2000; Boshoff, 2009, 2010).

Unfortunately, the outcomes of increased regional cooperation, or at least the increase in SSC rhetoric, has not created or sustained significantly different patterns of relations between the SSA higher education actors. To the contrary, some scholars contend that it has actually deepened the influence of traditional funding agencies, but in much more complex and nuanced ways that are more difficult to detect and significantly more difficult to counter (Steiner-Khamsi, 2009; Tikly & Dachi, 2009). It must be noted that given the newness of many SS protocols and frameworks related to the regional coordination and integration of higher education activities, a substantive body of empirical evidence has yet to be complied and analyzed in order to draw compelling conclusions from. However, the data and analysis that is available indicates that the current initiatives are not having the desired effect, quantitatively or qualitatively.
In his analysis of SSC both within and between SADC countries and their non-SADC African counterparts, Boshoff (2009) concludes, “the few instances of intra-regional and continental collaboration in the SADC are largely the product of North-South collaborations” (p. 481). Some specific examples of this from SADC and the wider continent are as follows: authors from high-income countries are included in 60% of intra-regional co-authored papers and in 59% of continental co-authored papers, and 77% of the papers that were co-authored by two or more scientists from Central African countries also had European co-authors (ibid, 481). In regards to the SADC region, “only 3% of SADC papers during 2005–2008 were jointly authored by researchers from two or more SADC countries (intra-regional collaboration), and only 5% of SADC papers were jointly authored with researchers from African countries outside the SADC (continental collaboration)” (ibid, 481).

What is perhaps more significant is the creation of regional hegemons within higher education and research landscapes. In the Southern African region, between 2005 and 2008 South Africa produced 81% of all SADC papers and 78% of all intra-regional co-authored papers (ibid, 482). This corroborates other research that found only 1% of publications produced by South Africa’s research-intensive universities were co-authored with other African scholars, despite an increase from 41% to 53% in the international research co-authorship (Sooryamoorthy, 2009). In the rest of the continent, a 2007 study concluded that 75% of the scientific papers produced in Africa were written in 6 countries, 4 which are located in North Africa: Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia, Kenya and South Africa (Tijssen, 2007). The next major producer of scientific publications in SSA was Tanzania, producing only 2% of the continents’ total activity (Pouris & Pouris, 2009).

The above data, though in the early phases of being analyzed and understood, points to more substantive problems than the asymmetry of quantifiable outputs. As Boshoff (2009) contends, “this implies that there is a highly unbalanced and unequal partnership that can best be described as a variant of North–South collaboration with the scientific giant in the South taking on the role of the ‘political North’” (p. 482). This conclusion falls in line with the work of Steiner-Khamisi (2009), Silva (2009) and Samoff (2009), who all caution that the rise of SSC and increased regional activity may very well be a subtle reconstruction of the traditional neo-colonial project, dispersing core ideologies through best practice and transfer models, and immersing peripheral intellectuals in the epistemologies and methodologies of the academic metropoles, rather than opening up new spaces for alternative ways of thinking and approaching the problems of development.
NUFU and the South-South dimension: Norwegian Perspectives

The above literature review situates the current study within a broad historical narrative of regional policies and discourses in SSA specifically relating to higher education policies and knowledge production regimes since the end of the Second World War. The subsequent analysis problematizes the concept of regional identity and the implementation of a regional cooperative project through the case study of a trilateral project supported by the NUFU organization. The aim of this analysis is to come to a better understanding of the processes, impact, and perceived importance that a formal and institutionalized regional component potentially plays in the structural and substantive dimensions of a development-related research linkage program.

The final analytic chapter of the study examines the thematic findings that emerged from the qualitative data collected in regards to the South-South dimension of the NUFU case study project, specifically through how faculty researchers and institution-level leaders (such as department heads, vice-presidents research, international relations officers, NUFU program officers, etc.), conceptualize and interpret the regional component of the project, both theoretically and in relation to the procedural aspects of the research project. This investigation and analysis is important for gaining a more comprehensive understanding of how, or if, the supra-national trends and national policies relating to increased regionalization and South-South collaboration, both globally and within the African continent, are appreciably integrated at the individual level, or if they represent discursive buzzwords at an international level and remain divorced from realities ‘on-the-ground’ in SSA universities.

This case study offers a mere snapshot of one trilateral network research project supported by a particular bilateral donor, and, as such, offers limited generalizability. However, there is virtually no empirical data on how these types of funding and research arrangements are being implemented and conceptualized by participating and affiliated actors. Therefore, this case study provides a potential launching point for further research into this type of modality and a better understanding of the associated processes and concepts.

The qualitative thematic analysis of the faculty and administrator interviews revealed six major themes that link to the above overview of higher education and research activities in the context of regional or South-South initiatives and ideologies. These main themes were: added
value (broken down into professional development and personal development), limitations (broken down into isolation, resource dependency, sustainability, identity and coordination), structure, and conceptualizing South-South cooperation. The major thematic findings are contextualized through a comparative analysis of Norwegian and African participant views on the role of South-South collaboration in the context of the NUFU program and the particular case study project examined. This chapter concludes by drawing implications from the thematic findings in consideration of the broader literature on regional and South-South activities in SSA higher education activities.

Before analyzing how the involved African actors conceptualize the regional component of research linkage programs in general, and NUFU in particular, an overview of the expectations, rationales and justifications that ground the involvement of various Norwegian actors in the NUFU program is presented. This facilitates a comparative analysis of synergies and disconnects in the understanding that all actors bring with them into this type of project modality, and how the on-the-ground experiences of the project’s implementation has enriched their broader understanding of South-South potentialities.

The first layer of analysis focuses on NUFU’s goals, rationales and expectations for South-South and regional networking as a core portion of their funding portfolio. Based on document analysis, South-South-North partnerships were formally incorporated into the NUFU structure during the second phase of the program, initiated in 1996 and ending in 2000. At the time, only 4 of 99 NUFU funded projects fell under the Network category, a loose nomenclature that is currently defined as any research project constituted by one or more Norwegian institution and between two and six Southern institutions (SIU, 2008, 4). However, in the program review document for the 1996-2000 phase, no formal definition was given to the network modality, and no separate statistics were kept of the resources spent on projects using the network modality (SIU, 2004b).

Over the course of the next two program phases, comprising of the years 2002-2006 and 2007-2011, the proportion of network projects grew rapidly, and a working definition of the network modality was institutionalized. However, as shall be argued below, the goals and rationales for supporting this type of research linkage project remained vague and open-ended. In the third NUFU phase, 2002-2006, 18 of 71 projects (~25%) were categorized as networks (SIU, 2009c). This number rose to 35 of 69 projects (~52%) in the current fourth phase, 2007-2011. It was during the second NUFU phase that South-South-North cooperation first appeared as an articulated goal within official NUFU documentation, specifically within the 2003 Annual
Report (SIU, 2004b). References had been made to this type of modality as early as the 1998 Annual Report (SIU, 1999, 8), however, this early reference was primarily in the vein of a potential that required more investigation and more funding. The 2001-2005 NUFU Strategic Plan, contained within the 2003 Annual Report, represents the first directed comments regarding the institutionalizing of the South-South-North modality and the potential of operationalizing regional network projects:

NUFU’s programme board will concentrate on selected universities and university colleges in the South. In time, such core institutions can be become the “motors” and “coordinators” for regional cooperation in the South that will support the development of South-South relationships (SIU, 2004b, Appendix, p. 6; emphasis added).

This quotation indicates a particular institution-based goal for South-South-North networks, one that expresses a belief that that building institutional capacity at peripheral universities can have significant benefits not only domestically, but also regionally.

This general narrative was carried over into subsequent NUFU reports and program documents, albeit sporadically and with minimal elaboration on the particularities involved in the implementation and evaluation of regional networks (SIU, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009c, 2009d). The 2006 Annual Report stated, “the wide disparity in the state of development of the UiS institutions could be turned into an advantage by partnering well-resourced institutions with weaker institutions and the SS networking may support the building of research bases across the Southern continents, which could stem, or at least slow down, the brain drain” (SIU, 2007, 35), and the 2002-2006 Final Report, published in 2009, re-iterated that the “programme serves in some cases as a catalyst for increased cooperation between universities, faculties and departments in different countries, based on common interests and efforts in research and education” (SIU, 2009b, 9). This orientation is reinforced in the external evaluation of the NUFU program that was commissioned by NORAD in 2008 and completed in 2009, whereby it was concluded that “there is now a need to revisit the programmes’ capacity building concepts in order to also meet the demand for more holistic approaches which encompass the department, the faculty, and even the university management” (COWI AS, 2009, xiv). This conclusion was supplemented with a recommendation that projects become more tied to institutional, rather than individual, needs (ibid, xv).

Interestingly, this narrative is inconsistent with interview findings from Norwegian administrators and researchers at NUFU, SIU and two participating Norwegian universities. A central point of tension amongst the various Norwegian parties is the optimal target for North-
South and South-South-North research and capacity building programs. Interviews with stakeholders at NUFU, SIU and researcher levels indicate a general feeling that focusing on individual researchers, as opposed to institutionally-driven linkages, is the most appropriate locus for funding research projects that have the potential to result in regional spillovers and opportunities. It is argued that since it is the researchers themselves who are the primary vessels of capacity and it is their dedication to a project that will ultimately determine it’s success or failure, institutional needs must be considered but should not be the driving force behind linkages. This argument is grounded in the belief that by connecting likeminded researchers in mutually beneficial research projects, positive spill-over effects will inevitably follow, not just within a particular department or institution, but across institutions and national systems.

The major means of this occurring is by individuals leveraging their shared interests in order to build the most authentic ‘partnerships’ possible. Two Norwegian administrators reflected on their historical engagement with successful projects as follows: “the motivation for the SSN modality is always where do I find interesting people, why should we go to Norway if we can go to Khartoum, Khasala, Port, Sudan, Malakale in Uganda, and Addis?” (N.A1); and “I think it’s purely the academic challenges that have driven these partners to create even more partners in the cooperation” (N.A2). In response to questions about the viability of top-down, institution-level approaches to creating SSN research linkages, one administrator stated:

I’m afraid they will end up in a kind of formalistic void. They will create a SS network of rectors traveling between universities and creating nothing… We’ve had delegations from universities all over the world here, and you receive them as high rank delegation, you take them around, and so on; very little comes out of it, and some of our departments, the most popular departments, like petroleum geology, the climate research centres, they say, ‘we are sick and tired of receiving delegations, we don’t get anything out of it’. So NORAD may start a program like that for ideological reasons, but it’s just a buzzword (N.A1).

Norwegian administrators agreed with the contention that the institutional dynamic is important to producing long-term sustainability and that networks offer the possibility to bolster regional research cultures through linked research projects. As the above administrator stated:

It’s obvious that by using the SSN model you have a chance to drag into cooperation institutions that might not qualify by their own, because to qualify as a main cooperating partner in the South, your university has to pass a kind of evaluation by NUFU and you have to belong to a certain country, but in the NSS connection you can connect a lower ranked university or college or seminar or private institute and so on, and you might even partly drag into the system a public directorate, or whatever…So by using the SS connection you can connect partners that wouldn’t qualify for a bilateral project. That’s interesting. Then you
also help train capacity, both scientific and administrative, at these institutions. So there are huge advantages to get out of it and you spread out competence (N.A1).

This opinion was reiterated amongst the Norwegian researchers as well. However, there is a strong belief that by allowing linkages to develop through shared academic interests and a drive for research excellence, a wider array of positive outcomes are capable of developing.

In the opinion of SIU staff, this type of academically motivated research project is best situated, and has been the most successful, to garner positive spillovers between Southern institutions; “we find (spin-offs) especially in the South-South projects where after one or two periods of NUFU cooperation they qualify for other support from other national authorities, from regional organizations. I think that the best quality and the best relevance you find in the SSC, definitely” (N.A2). This was echoed by another administrator, who stated, “I think the idea must be that it can add some value to the research, to the educational part, and also that it has something to do with sustainability, building networks that can last beyond the project period” (N.A4). One Norwegian researcher who had administered a regional research project between four Southern institutions indicated that the initial NUFU project had facilitated opportunities to receive additional grants from two bilateral agencies and one multilateral agency for further research. She commented, “I think we’ve become a lot more competitive in terms of other grants we try to access. I mean the NUFU has served as a facilitator to opening up channels to many other agencies” (N.R7). Though these types of spin-offs were not universal, they were relatively common amongst the interviews conducted.

Norwegian researchers involved in the case study project put forward similar beliefs regarding the long-term strategy and rationale for supporting South-South network partnerships, particularly in terms of the appropriate locus for intervention. In relation to increasing the institutional capacity building component of the NUFU program, specifically through network partnerships, one researcher commented:

If you really want to do the development of a university, as an institution, then you have to do it within different things other than 2 million (Kroner) here and 2 million (Kroner) there. If you really want to build institutions in somewhere like South Sudan, you have to put in billions in support over 20 years (NR.3).

In contrast to a top-down institution-driven mandate, researchers contended that the bottom-up, researcher-driven approach is NUFU’s greatest strength. One senior scholar involved in the first phase of the NUFU program contended, “The main track was to keep this program as a program for all disciplines, bottom-up, where the ideas started with the researchers and then we added
these institutional layer-by-layer to decide which one should be taken out of these good ideas” (N.R4). This analysis is picked up by another researcher in regard to the selection of institutions for regional partnerships:

You can’t second-guess world politics and all that, and you can’t say ‘well, I think this regime is going to go down the whole’… you need to look at it primarily in terms of mental capital and intellectual capital and intellectual capital development, and you hope that social capital between the Southern partners will come along and you hoped that there would be really good publications out of it (N.R6).

Considerations of institution- or individual-level regional partnerships spurred conversations about the importance of trust and trust-building processes in both North-South and South-South-North research projects. These ideas echo the previous comments made regarding the importance of research first and foremost as the initial impetus for research linkages. One researcher commented, “(SSC) is a whole other dimension which makes a faculty member, it turns them into aid workers in some regard because you’re managing relationships between individuals in two countries, two cultures, that you have no connection to, other than research” (N.R6). This sentiment was common throughout the interviews and highlights the importance of bottom-up partner selection processes, especially in network projects. When asked about the balance between institutional and individual engagement, one research commented:

It’s for all research, within environments where the critical mass is very small and that’s for many Norwegian environments, be it research with collaborators abroad or national collaborators, it is very personnel dependent…I mean, you could develop and use the same collaborators but researchers and their research are something living, it’s not sterile, you have the ideas, you have the chemistry of the people, you have the trust, and you have to have a fertile ground for that to fall upon before you can build something. I think it really is individuals in all these places and it’s almost nothing to do with institution or organization… If you want to achieve that institutionalization you need to have long-term sustained investment and then you probably would see it one day, but it has to be long-term. Then the younger people take over, they would then have been affected by somebody who was initially one researcher, but those people also need sustained investment otherwise they just disappear (N.R7).

Every Norwegian researcher interviewed in this study claimed that all of the regional research projects they have been involved in were successful primarily because they had solid relationships at an individual level with all of the involved partners.

In light of the strong individual component to NSRPs, particularly regional projects, the Norwegian researchers viewed their role primarily as that of a facilitator, creating spaces for
African researchers to come together and share ideas beyond the confines of their institutions and countries. One researcher commented:

Sometimes we wonder how we contribute, but we contribute by getting all of this to gel…it’s a very good example of this Southern-Southern links which surprisingly (in my field) were not existing before we actually sort of just cross-fertilized these environments, and now you actually see them; the (country A) now talk to the (country B) and asking for help in some aspects there. So there has been this, just getting to know people and making this group within where we work, sort of, simply, a well functioning group, essentially (N.R7).

This was elaborated upon by the project manager of the case study project, who conceptualized her role primarily as a facilitator of inter-personal relationships and the research design, with self-imposed limitations on intervention in the academic politics of the African stakeholders; “I absolutely felt that I could have some influence on the students I recruit on the Norwegian side, but I absolutely felt that I’m not a donor, I don’t want to mix in to their decision-making and I didn’t” (N.R9).

This facilitator role was recognized as being extremely significant in South-South-North networks due to the limited ability for many researchers in Southern universities to travel and access communities of other researchers within their regions. One senior Norwegian researcher recalled of a previous project:

We have been working in (country C) for many years with very good institutions, institutions which scientifically are better than us. At the same time, we started to communicate with (country D), which was on the other line, very weak institutions, few senior researchers, and we raised the question, ‘why should we let these candidates going for PhDs or specialist training come to Norway? The relevance of the content and the cost of it will not be optimal. So why can’t we use our partner which we have other projects with in (C) to partner up with (D)? That would be regional, it will strengthen the relevance and it would strengthen the collaboration between two countries which have not always communicated well (N.R3).

This participant considered the issue a more ingrained part of institutional cultures in Southern institutions, whereby:

When you are focusing on networks you see that there are nationally very low, weak culture of collaboration, and there are very weak incentives for collaboration… we saw that it was almost no communication, no collaboration, and how could we establish modalities that at least they could communicate within the country and between these regions? (N.R3).
This value is contained with the formal NUFU program documents, particularly in relation to supra-regional conferences instigated by the NUFU directorate in order to facilitate cross-national discussions and knowledge sharing (SIU, 2008, 2009a, 2009d).

The perceived added value created by building cross-national relationships was conceptualized as even more important by the Norwegian researchers due to the limited funds available through the NUFU program.

While some researchers were critical of the limited funds given to network projects, others considered the ability to leverage interpersonal relationships and the outcomes of the network project into other funding opportunities a strong outcome in and of itself.

One researcher commented with regard to regional travel, acquisition and distribution of infrastructure and technical equipment, and data collection procedures:

I think it’s a good idea to have the South-South, but it’s just that NUFU had no idea to start with how much more expensive it is, because I mean it’s so so much more (N.R9).

Similarly, another researcher commented:

It sort of pays dividends in the North also, right, because we suddenly have a facilitated access to genuine collaboration with strong players, which is not always a reflection of the money you invest actually (N.R7).

As has been analyzed in previous chapters, the issue of funding is central to all discussions involving both research and donor-funded programming. However, the ability to leverage funds between institutions was rarely raised by Norwegian stakeholders as a motivator for regional linkages, despite it being present in NUFU program documents as a core factor for supporting South-South-North collaboration (SIU, 1998, 8, 2007, 35).

The issue of financial resources will be examined in more detail in the second section of this chapter when the African perspectives are articulated, however, it is worth noting at this point that a common refrain from many of the Norwegian interviewees was the perception that Southern actors were extremely competitive and territorial over the funds they received from donors, not just from NUFU. One administrator commented:

In the South-South context this is part of why it’s difficult to mount network cooperation with multiple Southern institutions, because if I have a partner, they are not that interested in dissipating their few administrative resources on four others. Of course, they need extra external funding and why should they divide it with, on, four universities, see? (N.A1)
This was expressed not just in terms of resource dependency, but in terms of cultural or national conflicts between involved actors; “You see if you place a project, most of it, in (one country), you might meet national hostility when this university is going to manage projects in other neighboring countries with a, kind of, double set of attitude towards (that country); (one country) may be the dynamo, the magnet, but it’s also the old enemy, you see?” (N.A1).

A final rejoinder to the above thematic discussion is based on the NUFU documentation over the past five years (2006-2011). As previously indicated, the initial inclusion of the South-South-North modality in NUFU Reports occurred under the auspices of a regional development agenda that envisioned the long-term benefit of such linkages as a mediating factor against brain drain and an instigator of increased regional cooperation in other avenues. One comment that was made quite often in interviews, and which was reinforced in the 2009 evaluation, is that the goals and expectations of SSN projects are not adequately articulated by NORAD and SIU at an administrative level, which ultimately leads to confusion over the role and potential of the modality for individual researchers. As stated in the evaluation document:

At present the South-South-North collaboration is rarely based on a solid strategy and on clearly identified added value goals for the partnerships. Both among the recipient and the providing institutions and individuals, these concepts remain vague, highly ideological and theoretical more than practical, realistic and effective…South-South cooperation and South-South-North cooperation remain a partly unexplored opportunity and not a well-established and effective means of collaboration. But the programmes are rightly understood as potential vehicles for forging stronger links between research(ers) and institutions of higher learning (COWI AS, 2009, 30).

Based on the literature review of the NUFU documentation, this critique appears relatively justified, as references to network partnerships are limited to broad definitions of what the South-South-North modality entails and fails to elaborate on substantive elements of the modality, particularly in terms of the establishment and evaluation of the modality. As one document puts it, “the most powerful tool for promoting South – South collaboration in the NUFU Programme is regional network projects” (SIU, 2008, 37), with no further elaboration offered. This issue of ambiguity will be revisited in more detail in the following section of this chapter, where many actors problematized the structure and organization of NUFU’s SSN component.

Considered holistically, the above analysis brings together and makes evident a few general thematic issues regarding how the Norwegian stakeholders interpret the South-South component of the NUFU program: there is a strong belief in the role of regional networks to
build long-term linkages and spin-offs at either an institutional or individual level, with much stronger support being proffered for the primacy of the individual researcher and the central role that trust plays in successful linkages; there is an awareness that the role of Norway in regional networks is to facilitate opportunities for collaboration and spin-offs between Southern actors by opening spaces that would otherwise be unavailable; there is a recognition that the NUFU program is limited in its size and scope, especially in terms of the financial resources and personal commitment involved in supporting regional networks, and as such must stay within its means and not overreach in terms of the realistic possibilities; and finally, there is a recognition that complex issues are at play within Southern institutions and between Southern nations, particularly around the issue of identity and resource dependency, that Norwegian actors need to respect and temper their involvement in regards to. The following sections will take up the perspectives of the participating Tanzanian and South African actors in order to interrogate some of the above themes and to present new and alternative interpretations of South-South and regional processes.

**NUFU and the South-South Dimension: Southern Perspectives**

**Theme: Added Value**

First and foremost, African participants were concerned with the role that NUFU projects, and similar foreign-funded opportunities, play in fostering the professional development of researchers, graduate students, departments and institutions. This manifested in a variety of ways, some through publication opportunities, some through graduate training, and others through experience participating in a donor-funded collaborative project involving more than one SSA national context.

However, perhaps surprisingly, when relating these concepts to the South-South component of the particular project, interviewees rarely engaged with the idea of professional development in specific or detailed ways. When reflecting on their involvement in the project, academic training and professional development was expressed in very vague generalities, and almost never related to the South-South component. One researcher commented, “we are also building our capacity for publishing in the countries and some of our colleagues are now very good editors of books, because they are members of the program board and they have edited all
of these papers” (S.R1). Another researcher reiterated this; “I mean, the process of editing each others’ work increases the mutual sharing” (S.R4).

It should be noted that these types of comments appear to be more of a reflection on the increased publication opportunities stemming from the overall NUFU funding rather than in regards to explicit benefits coming from the interchange. Additionally, only two of the 15 African researchers noted as being involved in the project were involved in the editing of five academic books over a ten-year project span. Interviewees expressed that the majority, if not all, paper editing occurred at the sub-institutional level, so the idea of editing and publication as an added value of South-South cooperation was expressed as much less important than merely having resources to publish in the first place. Communication between participating researchers was predominantly limited to within home institutions, an issue that will be discussed in more detail in the Identity and Spatiality sections of this chapter.

The majority of the added value perceived as stemming from the regional networking was an intermixing of professional and personal themes. In many ways, the expansion of personal horizons was seen as a dual benefit; when individuals express a change in the way that they conceptualize and relate to their environment and personal conditions it can be argued that they benefit both as an individual and as a researcher. For this reason, personal and professional added value are combined under one thematic heading in the context of this study, as it is difficult to distinguish where one aspect of growth ends and the other begins. Therefore, comments made about personal edification are considered to contain an underlying professional dimension, and vice versa.

The most important form of added value expressed in the interviews was the expansion of personal awareness, both in terms of the day-to-day working conditions and broader political environments found in other African nations at the federal, local and institutional levels. One senior researcher passionately advocated for more South-South collaboration in terms of this personal dynamic:

I think that would be a very, very wonderful experience as far as I’m concerned, because I think we have a load to share and we have a lot to learn from each other. So, for example, in the case of let’s take our current collaboration with (country X), from a personal point of view, I always thought that if I would spend a month in (X), I would come back very rich in terms of the knowledge of the dynamics of that country (S.R5).

This type of personal experience was a common theme in almost all interviews:
My experiences, I would say that it actually widens your horizon…for me it was quite nice to go to (Y) and see the place and see, you know, how other people are working and the environment in which they work (S.R6).

The personal dynamic is amplified by an interest in learning about the conditions of work in other institutions, particularly with relevance to the economic and political situation in other SSA contexts. One professor argued for the contextual knowledge that comes through this type of linkage, as opposed to the particular academic training:

In this project I think that the link was made in part through a script that one wanted to compare what is going on in the two countries; we wanted to see the dynamics of the two struggles, how issues are addressed relating to the problem, what challenges are faced and so on (S.R4).

This professor goes on: “closer research has shown that there are a lot of paradoxes and that it’s actually not that simple in (Y), the situation is more complex than one has been lead to believe” (S.R4). Another senior academic stated; “We have through the office of the vice-chancellor sent out student-leaders into Africa, to the other African countries, and when they come back they have changed” (S.A4).

The expansion of researcher understandings in regards to the broader societal contexts within which research occurs was similarly expressed by one participant who viewed ‘cognitive harmonization’ as a key opportunity for South-South linkages:

A project of this nature is to find cognitive harmonization, some coherence, in other words, the dialogue that one should engage in this initiative is to come up precisely with some sort of harmonization or some sort of understanding…when we get together for the workshop we are sharing these ideas, we are kind of networking, we are collaborating (S.R6).

What is expressed in these quotations is a sincere desire to learn about the conditions experienced not just by other African academics, but more generally by other African people. As articulated above, the personal experiential benefits should be considered as adding value on a professional level as well, regardless of discipline or subject matter.

**Theme: Organization and Structure**

One implication raised in the interviews in regards to the decentralized model of project management is the potential for limited engagement between the research units at the various African universities. As a part of the governance of each research project, a five-year plan of action was established at the outset of the linkage. However, it was noted by multiple
participants that each institution was responsible for their own plan of action and only had to present an overall plan to the other participating units. This dynamic elicited a variety of responses. On the one hand, it was assumed that each site, acting as autonomous entities with academic freedom and particular national and institutional conditions within their jurisdiction, should have control over their research plan, the distribution of responsibilities and building of internal capacity. One research expressed this as follows: “I still insisted that I want to develop my faculty…I want to develop a graduate community here” (S.R8). Another gave the following synopsis; “That five-year plan of action had nothing to do with the colleagues in (Y) or Norway. We sent them those of course, we discussed what was agreed upon, we discussed the critiques, but I think that was essentially not a matter that would influence what was going on here, that’s why it is different from the project in (Y), because they have a different focus” (S.R4)

However, the other side of the autonomy issue is the potential for disjuncture between the two sites, in terms of collaborative potential, the harmonization of ideas and possible synergies in the research being done at the respective sites. One researcher commented:

I would say that (unit X) remained within the brief and the (unit Y) moved out of the brief and kind of did the area that they wanted to engage with and research. That’s the kind of concern actually that I initially had with the project, that it’s supposed to be a joint collaboration project but it’s anything but a joint collaboration project (S.R7).

Another researcher similarly reflected:

In phase one coming into the project and listening to the kinds of debates that were taking place, it was quite clear and quite obvious that there was this, I wouldn’t say misunderstanding, but an unevenness in understanding of what the idea of the project, the expectations of the project… In the project, the South-South collaboration is at the steering committee level and at the financial management level. I think what seems to be missed are the researchers on the ground, consultancies, advisors (S.R6).

Unfortunately, this polarization was expressed more often than the need for institutional autonomy. While national context was expressed as a primary reason for this, often in an understanding tone, there was an acknowledgement by many that the divergence in contexts limited the collaborative potential of the individual project and required more consideration at the outset in order for the project to garner as many benefits as possible:

I think that more could have been achieved, there could have been more collaboration between the two countries, but I think the context said otherwise, you know, (X) context is that they are still battling with (certain national issues and actors). On the other hand, we are very concerned with what is happening on
the ground, what is happening in the chalk phase, you know, the implementation phase, and you can’t really do any comparisons… I will be straight. I don’t have a counterpart on the other side, there is no one I can network with…because they are following a different approach, a different agenda (S.R7).

This was re-iterated numerous times:

I just thought it was important to get people from (certain disciplines) involved as well, and in fact I was hoping that (the other unit) would do the same, which they didn’t… that we would have liked is to exchange teaching, going to each other’s countries, but I mean they don’t have a program (S.R8).

The above sentiments reflect the pitfalls inherent in a decentralized system that does not specify particular expectations and structures for South-South collaboration. This is not to say that more structure would not raise other issues, and that the open-ended nature of the program was not beneficial in some respects. However, in this case it appears as though the South-South component was not optimized from the outset of the project and that the disjuncture between the two sides was not dealt with adequately throughout the life of the project. In this sense, the conclusion expressed by the 2009 external evaluation, that the South-South component is an “add-on” and an “unexplored opportunity” (COWI 2009, xvi) appears accurate. As stated previously, the evaluation concludes that “the South-South-North collaboration opportunity is applauded by most stakeholders, but the value added in its present form of implementation is difficult to ascertain”; this bears out in the ambiguities inherent in the structure and organization allowed by the NUFU model, as expressed by numerous stakeholders in the case study project.

The general conclusion that can be drawn from these reflections is that the NUFU modality allows for a great variety of experiences that rely heavily on the organization of the individual project by the involved project coordinators. The intellectual freedom that is supported by the NUFU mandate should be supported by project leaders through a robust and detailed operationalizing of the South-South component in any given project. The absence of internal cohesion between the two African sites may engender ambiguity, confusion and tension over the expectations and goals of a project, which in turn may lead to lost opportunities and frustrated or disengaged participants. In the context of the particular project examined in this case study, the frustrations experienced were not sufficient to deter their interest in South-South collaboration, and in fact were primarily viewed as a learning experience for how to better approach future projects; “I think what I got out of it is how to generate a project based on the concept of collaboration in a way which is truly collaborative. I think that is what I took should I get a chance to run a South-South project” (S.R7).
**Theme: Resource Dynamics**

A logical corollary to issues of program and project structure and organization in a North-South or South-South development-oriented linkage is the issue of resources; are the resources provided adequate for meeting the expected goals, and how does the presence of a foreign funder impact the substantive and structural relationships between the participating researchers? These two questions are dealt with separately, despite their thematic overlap, in order to present a more comprehensive and nuanced analysis of the resource issue. As the broader issue of resources has already been engaged with in the previous chapter, the following section will examine the topic specifically in relation to the South-South-North context of the case study project. It is intended that through this examination specific insights will be uncovered as to how network projects differ from traditional North-South bilateral linkages and how the presence of a third party as the primary funder impacts the nature of the regional relationships.

**Sub-Theme: Resource Adequacy**

At a very simple level, participants questioned whether NUFU’s financial support adequately considered the costs involved in South-South projects. However, there were some conflicting opinions as to this issue. Some participants argued that high-level administrators at one of the participating African institutions were reluctant to involve themselves in South-South projects because there was not enough to be gained financially; “(The university) is not going to resist if I say that I am going to collaborate with my colleagues in (X) or (Y), but they know that at the end of the day there isn’t much in terms of what the university is getting financially, so that is not encouraged” (S.R1). A similar comment was made by an administrator at the same institution; “I must be very honest with you, (South-South connections are not encouraged), because our collaboration is very much driven by the need for funds, we want funds, you know, and when we are collaborating with our colleagues in the South it is not about funds” (S.A1).

This belief is re-affirmed by arguments that Northern funding agencies misunderstand the cost of South-South cooperation, as though there is a perception that this modality should be more cost effective. The opening contextual section of this chapter confirms this narrative within the multilateral community. One administrator commented on this point:
If the donors are serious about the South-South they have got to begin by putting in much more money in pure communications and being more strategic. You can do it now, but it costs much more money than what the donors are willing to put in (SA.5).

It is interesting and important to note that the Norwegian researchers and administrators interviewed in this case study put forward similar arguments that the financial structure of the South-South-North modality was not enough to adequately support a robust South-South component. One Norwegian institutional administrator stated:

If there are more universities involved, there would normally be a higher administrative cost because its more expensive or more time consuming also to have five nodes up and going than to have two… a network program is more time consuming and of course it costs more because of the costs of the project meetings and travel and all this. Network program is also bigger economically,…but when you have a network projects you have also more students, you have students from all over, you have research from all of them or most of them, and you normally try to distribute seminars and conferences to all of them, which means that activities take up all that extra money that is available, administration does not follow. So most of the administrative costs fall on the universities on all sides (N.A1)

Based on the above comments and others mentioned throughout various interviews, it appears as though there is a disconnect between the policy-level rhetoric and the on-the-ground realities for funding this type of research linkage modality.

A final dimension of the resource adequacy issue is the potential for regional resource tensions to become latently or explicitly manifest through the South-South modality. The issues of national identity and territorial sovereignty will be further explored in a subsequent section of this chapter, but the issue of sub-regional protectionism in relation to resources bears mentioning in this section. Under the topic of South-South brain drain, one administrator was very explicit when discussing the reluctance of African institutions to share resources with institutions in the region:

I hear people saying, ‘we pay for the education of these foreigners or international students…so we should at least have some reason to draw from the benefit from our investment, so to speak’. Once people decided to use that kind of language, you know that there is something going on that is maybe not so pure (S.A4).

His personal response to the issue was to say:

I personally talk about brain circulation, that’s the term I would use from my own work, because if you do that…you allow the student to go home and come back
if he or she wishes…. I appreciate the fact that they have a role to play in their country as well (S.A4).

Another researcher commented:

The tendency nowadays is that Africans are not interacting as well as they should, but at the same time the whole thing about finances, you see, if it’s South-South then (my country) would actually have to bear the brunt of financing those interactions. I don’t know whether we are willing and able to do that presently (S.R6).

The problem of resource adequacy can be hypothesized as rooted in a few factors based on these discussions; first, Northern partners, such as NUFU, may apply a general funding model to South-South partnerships that does not take consideration of the variability possible in both the size or logistics involved in South-South projects. For example, the NUFU program provides 6 million Norwegian Kroners to individual network projects over the course of each five-year period, regardless of the number of institutions involved or the distance between the institutions. A second hypothesis is that research in low-income countries is susceptible to extreme volatility, both in terms of the predictability of costs and institutional resource drains. The former issue in many cases was articulated as a simple problem of supply and demand; many SSA nations have poor access to technical equipment, poor general infrastructure and unstable working conditions, all of which combine to make research of any kind a much less stable process. The latter problem was expressed as a function of institutions and departments operating with insufficient funds to meet many basic needs, let alone being able to support research-oriented work time for faculty. As a result, there are many institutional factors that could divert or territorialize funds. This was not expressed as having occurred in relation to the NUFU programme, as their system of resource management was considered to be highly effective. However, in the broader context, there were concerns over the directing of funds at institutional levels.

This sub-theme highlights the tensions and conflicting interpretations over the efficacy and viability of South-South linkages, both when mediated by a Northern party and when originating within the South. There is a perception amongst the participants interviewed that the funding agencies do not understand the real costs of supporting South-South linkages and that the Southern institutional leaders are not willing or able to invest in South-South linkages themselves. This finding supports the conclusion of the previously examined literature that the economic conditions in SSA have historically been inadequate for initiating high-level regional
research activities in the higher education sector. The combination of the two indicates that without large-scale funding programs for regional research projects, this type of modality will more often than not fail to realize the full potential.

**Sub-Theme: Resource Dependency**

Based on the interviews, the more prominent of the two sub-themes is the impact of third party funding in the mediation and operationalizing of the South-South network. Outlined in the previous analysis of resource dependency in the bilateral model and the study’s contextual chapters, the conditions under which SSA actors are able to gain access to resources provided by non-African countries makes resources the most problematic issue for negotiating internal and external power dynamics in development-related projects. This is no different in a South-South-North network or a North-South linkage. However, based on the interviews conducted in this case study, there appear to be some noticeable differences in the tenor of the dynamic when situated in a SSN network.

As previously stated, the Norwegian presence in the case study project was primarily conceptualized as that of a facilitator or mediator; Norwegian researchers and NUFU funding are meant to help in the coordination, implementation and dissemination of intra-regional research projects, and not their top-down direction. As one researcher stated: “Norway, it’s not really researched in Norway, I think Norway is just the funders, but the Norwegian component is holding it together” (S.R7). One of the primary ways that this manifests is by supporting opportunities for face-to-face project planning and networking. This is one area that African participants were universally appreciative of; it was argued that without NUFU’s funding, consistent intra-regional meetings would not be a viable option. One researcher stated, “if you are going to Norway you are going to be meeting more African scholars than you had been wishing to meet if you come to (country X), because at (X) there is not as likely to be as many people because if it’s organized by (X) how are we going to get the resources?” (S.R4).

However, as with many other Northern-based funding opportunities, the participants constantly questioned the impact of this type of support on both the short-term project construction and the long-term viability of the project and the modality. While the issue of *Sustainability* is addressed in a subsequent section of this chapter, the resource dimension is inherently intertwined with issues of dependency. In terms of creating more autonomous research partnerships, the interviewees remained quite skeptical of autonomous research so long
as funding is derived from a funding agency, regardless of how symmetrically the program is structured. As one senior administrator stated:

As an initiative to try ourselves to have South-South and where the South-South is also self-sponsored, now that I think is usually the best, because then we have our research agenda, we know what we want and we do it the way that we want to do it without interference, because the moment you have North being a sponsor then definitely, whether you like it or not, the sponsor will have a say somehow. They can say, ‘no, I don’t want you to have a certain country in the team, because those guys are against our policies at home’. While we in the South thought that we have a scholar there who is so instrumental in the project that if this was for us then we wouldn’t care to involve someone from that country. So when you have this sponsor, the donor may not directly interfere with the project, but at some point there are areas where you are given this kind of limitation, that ‘yes, we are going to give you funds, but don’t do this or that’… where you have the South-South with sponsorship from the North, I say there you have much, much, say, danger, because you remain very much like a beggar, okay, and someone there is giving you the money, but there is no completely free, free money…when you have, say a South-South and the donor is in the North, always there are conditions that will come with this, and at that point the South doesn’t have much to say, you will have to comply with what the donor says even if the donor tells you, ‘ah, you know, this is completely free’, but still it is his money (S.A2).

This concern was further elaborated by two administrators and one researcher:

If you tell someone in Canada that they have to work with Mexico on something, you can only get money to do public health research in Canada if you do it in Mexico as well. Now there will be a group of public health researchers who won’t cope with Mexico but who ought to have gotten the money to carry on in Canada. So that’s the double-bind, that’s the one that is scary (S.A5).

Because of our poor economies we are so quick to become dependent on the North to sponsor regional projects…rather than taking the time to get the South-South self-sufficient and self-sustaining. So when you have these research or any other undertaking that is purely South-South but donor-dependent on the North, I find it is an inherent weakness (S.A2)

South-South cooperation is not a realistic goal, it’s just not very easy. Even to bring people from (X) to here or to (Y) we need to go to the donors to ask for one ticket at a time to fund the people…it is just a nightmare (S.R4).

The above comments highlight the trepidation that many participants expressed regarding foreign funding of domestic research initiatives, regardless of their good intentions or open research framework. There was a consistent belief that even if an individual SSN project produces excellent research and is equitable in its governance, the overshadowing presence of
Northern funders is capable of either determining the course of research in significant, though subtle, ways, or perpetuating a dependent or supplicant mindset amongst African researchers.

**Sub-Theme: Sustainability**

The issue of sustainability was originally considered as a broader topic than as a mere appendage to resource dependency, particularly financial resources. However, it quickly became apparent that sustainability in the context of bilateral partnerships was almost solely considered in those terms. This conclusion was reinforced as the topic of South-South cooperation was broached in discussions with the participants. For this reason, the issue of sustainability is conceptualized as a sub-theme of resource dynamics. Though other aspects of sustainability were touched on during the interviews and will be raised in the section to follow, generally speaking participants indicated that issues of resource dependency and inadequacy were pervasive determining factors in almost all discussions of long-term sustainability.

As examined in chapters three, five and six, sustainability is one of the major sources for tension within the global development landscape, both at the policy level and within the academic literature. Development-related interventions and initiatives have long been criticized for the low levels of sustainability, and have in turn raised questions regarding the continued investment in such programs. In the scope of this case study, the issue of sustainability was likewise a key consideration for all of the involved actors, both in Norway and in the African contexts. Sustainability was passionately highlighted as the most problematic component in the South-South and regional dimensions of the NUFU program; without adequate financial support from either international or national actors, it was consistently argued that regional networks are destined to dissipate, regardless of the quality of work or the substantive contributions made towards addressing local, national or regional issues.

A large part of the issue may be the inadequate conceptualization by funding agencies regarding the resources required to initiate, operate and sustain regional networks. As mentioned in the previous chapter, NUFU does support some additional funding opportunities for minor project extensions (two or three years) through the Supplemental Funding program. However, many of the participants interviewed in this study, Norwegian, Tanzanian and South African, contended that without longer-term support, networks would not be sustainable due to the lack of domestic resources. One administrator lamented about a previous project:
We did the capacity building and now you need a short period of hand holding so people are then freed to move on their own, and I do think that that is the difficulty with projects of this nature, actually, that it gets you to a certain point but to go to full independence needs still some sort of support, and I thought that if NUFU had given us funding for another 2 or 3 years, of a lesser degree than what they have given us for the project, we would have reached what I call a full state of independence to allow us to move forward, because they get drained down by the work in their own institutions and also the network that was built can’t be sustained by the funding that people have available currently… they can’t think about how they can strengthen the networks that they started to build (S.A6).

This raises an extremely sensitive issue; how long must a project be sustained by foreign resources before it can be sustained locally? One researcher commented:

Unfortunately, it is towards the end of the project that (the South-South) is picking up, because I think in the first phase people were busy, there were so many people anxious if it’s going to work, how is it going to work, how is it going to be received, and I think now, after 10 years, people are beginning to see that it’s working and beginning to be open with each other, to appreciate one another and learn from each other… But collaboration means money and after the NUFU money ceases to exist the (university) doesn’t have any money for me to go to (X) to present a paper (S.R4).

Given the propensity for funding governments to work on short project cycles and with the expectation of immediate benefits and spin-offs, there appears to be significant disconnects regarding the goals of development-oriented research. Regardless of the context, research and building trust takes time, and this reality must be reflected in the designing and structuring of projects and programs alike. On the other hand, as discussed in Chapter six, sustainability is built into the NUFU program and structure with the expectation that after 5-10 years of funding individual projects or programs should be institutionalized.

If bilateral research projects are unlikely to be sustained after the external funding has been terminated, can regional research networks be expected to sustain themselves? It is quite easy to argue that this problem is not an issue with NUFU, other agencies, or the South-South dimension in general, as much as it is a problem with the overall state of higher education in SSA. If, as interviewees contend, regional collaboration is not supported at the institutional level in many SSA universities, then there is an inherent deficit when attempting to promote the modality from the North. As one administrator commented, if institutional leaders are content to accept Northern funding to support South-South collaboration as opposed to investing time and money to building up a self-sufficient network through local funds, the sustainability issue will never be successfully addressed.
Despite the acknowledgement of the above limitations and obstacles, participants were much more optimistic regarding the sustainability of the personal and professional connections outside of the specific project. One of the project coordinators stated:

If we’re very progressive and very aggressive, I don’t see a reason why (the project) should die away. The (project) acronym cannot die away; the idea has grown. Of course I have to say this, although I don’t usual believe in these things too much, but I should say that I wish we had funding (S.R1).

The participating researchers consistently invoked this concept, specifically advocating that the project had allowed for the burgeoning of both personal and professional investments in something bigger than the technicalities and quantifiable outputs of the project:

We think capacity was augmented and we think there is a spirit (S.A6).

I think we’re starting now to work as a family…at an individual level, without a structure, the individual may continue to pass notes to each other. If I have a paper I might pass it on to colleagues in (X) to ask for ideas, because already it’s very close, it’s like family (S.R4).

There are only so many things that you can do without thinking of money, but the debate can continue without money, the network that we have created can continue (S.R1).

The interviews indicate that while the formal structure of the regional network is unlikely to sustain itself, there is no reason that informal networks are not capable of being maintained and spun-off into other projects and linkages. This conclusion gets to the heart of the capacity building debate, as it contests the idea that institutionalization should be the targeted outcome of a North-South or SSN linkage. Spin-offs do occur, but given the inter-personal dynamics involved in creating and sustaining a research project, the long-term impacts of funding a regional component can’t be predicted, especially given the conflicting resource dynamics and contestations at play in individual SSA institutions and jurisdictions.

While the sustainability of a project may be difficult to predict, there are certain conditions that can be established at the outset of a project or at a programmatic level that may ensure a variety of compatibilities, which in turn can increase the likelihood of sustainability. As previously stated, some participants articulated frustrations over the absence of counterparts within the other African institution:

Interviewer - So when this project ends, you don’t see collaboration with the other side continuing?
Respondent - Well, speaking from my own perspective in terms of subject discipline, there is no collaboration. I will be straight. I don’t have a counterpart on the other side, there is no one I can network with in (my discipline) that I can speak with, so no (S.R7).

This issue is possible to address at the programmatic level through NUFU’s application evaluation and selection stages. The institutionalization of a compatibility or equivalency requirement within the application proposal, specifically in the research design section, may increase the potential for post-project sustainability.

The counter-argument to this type of pre-requisite is two fold, and has been articulated by both Norwegian and African participants alike; increased conditions in the project selection processes may negatively infuse a top-down dynamic that has little to do with the actual substance or quality of the individual research projects. Additionally, requiring a specific definition of South-South collaboration risks asking researchers to perform roles and functions that they are either not trained to do or are not interested in doing. As one Norwegian researcher stated; “I think that we should be very careful not to demand from a NUFU project too much… It’s my job as professor in the university of (X), I was not hired to promote (African) collaboration!” (N.R1).

In either of the two cases, it appears that the NUFU program requires a more robust conceptualization of the South-South component when it comes to sustainability; is the possibility of spin-offs and professional relationships a satisfactory outcome of the network modality or are more formal, institutionalized networks or research centers the targeted outcome? If it is the latter, then the issue of total financial resources requires addressing. This can come through a more comprehensive analysis of costs and the tailoring of network funding based on the unique conditions of the research network in accordance with geographical, institutional, or discipline-based considerations, or it can come through the formally articulated goals of the network modality and the internalization of these goals within the application and evaluation processes.

**Theme: Spatiality and Regionness**

The final major theme to be examined in this chapter falls under the broad heading of Regionness (Hettne & Soderbaum, 2000) and will explore the conceptualization and actualization of South-South regional linkages in SSA higher education from two perspectives; identity and spatiality. This study’s analysis is primarily interested in the role that higher
education institutions play in sustaining or challenging geo-political configurations of power and legitimacy, and invokes knowledge as a node of structural power, specifically through the proliferation of preferred knowledge forms and structures. A large part of the world-system narrative is that actors situated in the global core have supported the proliferation of particular identities and social orders in the global periphery in an attempt to sustain patterns of social, political and economic relations.

As outlined in the introductory section of this chapter, the neo-liberal orientation of regional economic communities and market integration programs can be argued to be a recent development used by the global core for perpetuating dominant ideologies within the global periphery. However, while this move has been primarily supported through the creation and propagation of economic organizations and financial institutions, if Hettne and Soderbaum’s (2000) concept of Regionness is invoked as a framework for regional processes, increased cooperation, integration, complementarity and converge within a particular cross-national geographical space should result in greater interaction and inter-subjective understanding across a number of societal layers (p. 460). Regionness questions the possibility to “determine the degree to which a particular area in various respects constitutes a distinct area which can be distinguished as a relatively coherent territorial subsystem” (ibid, 461).

Focusing on processes of becoming rather than fixed categorizations of being (ibid, 462), Hettne and Soderbaum construct a five-layer framework of regional integration or disintegration through the concept of Regionness: Regional Space, Regional Complex, Regional Society, Regional Community and Regional State. Linear or teleological models of progression do not define these possible manifestations of regional integration, but comprise an exploratory framework for how actors are capable of relating to one another through regional coherence or community (ibid, 462-467). This section does not systematically apply the Regionness framework to the case study SSN network, as that is beyond the proposed theoretical or technical scope of this study, but rather the concept of Regionness is invoked in order to frame the analysis of the socially constructed nature of regional identity within the higher education landscape of SSA, both from the perspective of individual actors within SSA universities and with an eye towards the exogenous support for regional systems by non-African actors, such as NUFU.

‘Region’, as either a unit of analysis or a theoretical construction, has historically suffered from both ambiguity in definition and purpose; what constitutes a region, how is a region operationalized in theoretical frameworks and applied interactions, and why do some
regions develop into more integrated formations? This section’s analysis is grounded in Hettne and Soderbaum’s conceptualization of regions and the contribution that regions can potentially make to processes of world order construction (ibid, 458). Grounded in Hettne and Soderbaum’s New Regionalism Theory (NRT), this study adopts a constructivist definition of regions, whereby:

The region constitutes an open process and can only be defined post factum. Regions are social constructions, which means that to observe and describe regionalization is also to participate in the construction of regions. Since there are no given regions, there are no given regionalist interests either; such interests and identities are shaped in the process of interaction and inter-subjective understanding. But no interaction is possible without some shared interests to start with (ibid, 459).

In light of this, the processes through which regional identities are supported through increased networking within SSA, ideally grounded in shared interests, and the ability or failure of such efforts in constructing particular identity narratives are of primary interest for this exploratory examination. Recognizing that the case study of one SSN network cannot be generalized in many meaningful ways, it is still argued that an exploratory case study of this nature offers starting points for further research into the impact and nature of regional identity at the individual level in the universities of SSA. This is of particular salience in relation to the impact of NUFU’s SSN research networks on the processes of regionalization, either as a latent means of increasing Regionness, or, as the analysis presented up to this point in the chapter indicates, as a second order process with only a broad, amorphous goals related to increasing the regional dimension of knowledge production or identity construction. The analysis of NUFU and the particular SSN research network case study presents one particular finding of note in regards to how the implementation of a South-South, regional networking modality negotiates a number of extreme conditions in order to attain the goal of sustainable networks that address regional issues. Regional identity may be an over-theorized concept that is inhibited from gaining meaningful traction due to both material and cultural conditions.

Sub-Theme: Identity

While the organization, structure, and management of the South-South component in the NUFU program have been examined in the sections above, a more fluid dimension of the regional project that requires investigation before any tentative conclusions can be drawn from the NUFU model is the issue of identity. Specifically, do the involved African actors consider
the regional dimension a significant or meaningful component of the SSN modality, and does
the working definition of South-South supported by NUFU facilitate the construction of
Regionness cross-nationally in the higher education sector? These questions are grounded in the
understanding that particular spheres of action or types of activities, in this case higher
education institutions, are one functional sub-layer of broader regional projects, and that “that
there are many regionalisms and regionalization processes, i.e. different regional projects and
different types of regional activities” occurring simultaneously at any given time (Hettne &
Soderbaum, 2000, 458).

Broadly speaking, regional identity was rarely raised as a possible outcome by the
Southern participants interviewed at either African institution. This finding was consistent
across both researchers and administrators. The previous sections in this chapter have explored
the perceived limitations in the project and program structures, as well as within the political
economy of SSA universities, and these limitations bear directly on the possibility of fostering
meaningful regional identification through collaborative research projects. Based on both
interviews and project documentation, it is apparent that the two research sites investigated in
this case study are involved in research projects that are more nationalistic than regional, and
that they are almost exclusively composed of individual researchers pursuing individual
research agendas under the extremely broad umbrella of a particular research issue. This
decentralized model of research organization and project management offers limited
opportunities for sustained or deep cross-national exchanges, and for those not involved in the
editing of books, interactions are limited to the exchange of individual research findings at an
annual project conference.

As already discussed, the implications for the creation of an integrated collaborative
network are severe; the South-South component is not a core component of the research project
as articulated by project leaders, and as such, individuals are not presented with meaningful
opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas, activities, or identities. The following exchange
summarizes the perception of one researcher:

It is as though there are two conversations happening in parallel, and we sat (at
the conference) as though there were two conversations, there was us on one side
and them on the other, and then the Norwegians sat apart from the two in the
middle, as though they were the bridge between the two or the facilitator (S.R7).

This comment reinforces a clear division in opinion between the two research groups; on the
one hand, researchers at one institution were interested in exploring the national context of the
research issue, with minimal expressions of interest in fostering more robust cross-national research or exchanges, while on the other hand, researchers at the other participating institution were consistent in their disappointment and frustration that such cross-national experiences were not explored and that the research project was silo-ized by each research unit. As one researcher from EAU stated, “it is important that each country have it’s own research agenda, because each research agenda is contextual, looking at the context, and each agenda was supposed to at least to solve the barriers that are there internally” (S.R1). Based on the aggregation of the interview data, it appears that the division over perspectives on the national/regional was consistent within each institution.

The separation of research projects clearly filtered down into the construction of cross-national dialogue and identity, specifically by failing to embed the particular research sites in a comprehensive regional project. The impact of this on individual perceptions of the other partnering SSA institutions was severe in some cases. One researcher stated:

I would rather go to Norway than (country X), because other Africans always say that (we) tend to be arrogant… I’m very sensitive to issues of poverty and so on, and so many people that I saw in (the other country) made me see that (the other country) is not like (my home country). I said to my colleagues that I think we are lucky to have what we have (at home) and I hope that we don’t mess it up. The only place where you could be comfortable was the hotel. So I would rather go to Norway than to (the other country) (S.R6).

This type of comment supports a hypothesis proffered by one of the Norwegian actors; “you know in (country X) very many of the (people) think they are so much above other Africans that they would rather look to Europe instead of looking to Africa” (N.R9). This observation of inter-cultural relations within SSA is not meant to critique the interpersonal relations within the particular case study, but rather indicates a broader narrative of inter-African relations that maps onto South-South research linkages. In the case of this project, the two sites did in fact operate at varying levels of research, with one site at a more basic exploratory level and the other at a more progressive interventionist stage. As a result, it can be argued that national or cultural tensions were given room to root themselves within the project framework itself.

When considered at a macro-level, participants expressed frustrations over both the limited regional awareness, manifesting either as an ignorance regarding regional initiatives or projects, such as the mere existence of the AAU and its supported projects, and a lack of awareness regarding the political, economic and cultural settings in other SSA nations. The literature explored in this chapter indicates a presupposition that Southern nations are best suited
to link with one another in order to stimulate locally driven research, more from cultural synchronicity than from any other factor. However, the interviews carried out during this case study raise questions regarding this hypothesis, specifically regarding the threat of homogenizing distinct cultures and histories under the auspice of ‘African’ regionalism or various sub-regionalisms. The Added Value section highlights that the expansion of personal intellectual horizons is one of the most important contributions that a project of this nature can make at the individual level. However, the researcher responses fail to indicate a stronger awareness of jurisdictions within SSA as a priority over non-SSA nations, or that neighboring countries should take precedent due to similarities in conditions. In fact, there was more interest in learning about extra-regional conditions. As one senior researcher stated:

There is a lot of insularity in both the North and South, but especially in the South, engendered by lack of exposure to conditions of research and teaching in universities other than those in ones particular geographical sphere… If you are going to Norway you are going to be meeting more people that you had been wishing to meet than if you come to (X) (S.R4).

**Sub-theme: Spatiality**

Spatiality is the second major sub-theme that emerged through this study’s inquiry into participant conceptions of Regionness and the actualization of regionalization processes through the NUFU program. Participants were more fluid in their considerations of region when reflecting on their experiences through a spatial lens as opposed to an identity-based lens. This line of investigation highlights more than just the practical difficulties of cross-national linkages in sub-Saharan Africa, it questions the territorial system that frames SSA as a relatively discrete territorial unit and which forms the backbone for many South-South modalities, including NUFU’s SSN program.

Participants tended to reflect on this spatial construction through considerations of their relative isolation, geographical and intellectual, from the African partners that they were expected to interface with through the regional network. One researcher reflected:

I think the most important thing is that we are confined in our own spaces, we remain in (X) or do research in (X). You know, there is no penetration in terms of, for example, going over to (Y) and researching there or going over to Norway and researching there, we are confined in our own spaces (S.R5).
One administrator elaborated on this, specifically in terms of how Northern donors construct programs in order to facilitate regional collaboration in SSA:

There’s an ignorance about just what Africa is and just how poor Africa is. South Africa’s economy is the size of the 47 poorest African countries added together, Cape Town is the size of Angola and Kenya added together, that’s just one city. The travel within Africa is dangerous and difficult. So know what you’re asking for when you want South-South relations, and you often don’t, there is a foreshortening of the size of Africa. The moment you work with a flat map instead of a globe, you’ve got the wrong size of Africa (S.A5; emphasis added)

The final statement from the above quotation offers a concise evaluation of the problem as expressed by many interviewees. One aspect of the spatial ambiguity that is often overlooked by Northern actors is the fragmented nature of national education systems and the disjuncture felt within individual African nations, in addition to the disjunctures that exist between neighboring or distant African jurisdictions. One administrator commented:

But, you know, it’s not just other African countries. Our former minister of education, who is now the Minister of S&T, she would come in and she would listen to what we would have to say, but at one point she said to our rector, ‘why is it that I don’t read about you in the Northern provinces’ newspapers? You are not a regional university, you are not an international university, you are national university… So that is another challenge, how do we spread the knowledge? (S.A4)

These perceptions, coming from participants at both of the involved African universities, are emblematic of many discussions regarding the expectations, and more often the limitations, of a research university in a developing nation. As has been expressed throughout this section, numerous participants indicated that the national research dimension is a priority not only for administrative and government officials, but for the involved researchers.

The social construction of Africa as a discrete and coherent space capable of being targeted by broad development-related programs, with individual national or institutional jurisdictions sharing significant conditions, issues and experiences that support the formation of long-term research linkages was repeatedly questioned in this vein. The above administrator elaborates on this point:

The idea that you can have an African Union across the distances of Europe and Asia is pie in the sky stupid. I know why it is; Africa is extremely poor and needs some way to relate to the world. But the poverty of Africa and the fact that humankind is about to get another billion people means you must work together, but you must work together in bitable chunks (S.A5; emphasis added).
The italicized statement relates directly to the issues raised at the outset of this chapter, highlighting the hypothesis that regionalism in the global South may be driven more by a need for equivalency in the changing world order, with a Northern-driven focus on regional integration and regional markets, than by a bottom-up interest in creating regional identity.

Relating to the above contention, when questioned about other South-South or SSN projects occurring at the two participating African institutions, the six administrators questioned were only able to list Northern-funded regional projects. One administrator reflected upon this interest, and the attached conditions, to question the political motivations for these types of arrangements:

The sponsor will have a say somehow. They can say, ‘no, I don’t want you to have Zimbabwe in the team, because those guys are against our policy here in Canada, or our policy here in the UK to have any funds going to Zimbabwe’. While we in the South thought that we have a scholar there who is so instrumental in the project that if this was for us then we wouldn’t care to involve that member (S.A2)

This type of conditionality is currently being extended to the case of South Africa, as many funding agencies are beginning to withdraw certain types of support from the nation due to their supposed economic advancement. NORAD is one such organization that is currently re-evaluating their willingness to include South Africa in development-related programs. The reaction to this intervention is quite negative amongst the participants interviewed, as it is perceived not only as the politicization of aid, but the inappropriate homogenization of South African universities as all having attained a certain level of satisfactory development.

It can be argued that the unilateral decision to exclude a potential regional higher education hub from regional research networks undermines NUFU’s stated goal to help create universities that can be motors for regional development (SIU 2001-2005 Strategic Plan, 2006, 6). Actively denying the major regional source of research production from hosting SSN networks indicates a limited acknowledgment of the inhibiting conditions operating in regional research linkages in the SSA context, and under-appreciates the leverage that a relatively resource-rich nation such as South Africa can bring to creating sustainable regional research networks. As one administrator commented:

Cape Town to Luanda is four flying hours, that’s Toronto to Costa Rica. So how well can Toronto do local politics in Costa Rica? Not very well. In Africa, the communications and transportation are hugely worse, the road statistics and rail statistics are scary. You have countries that are, South Africa is twice the size of Texas and it is a small African country, so if the donors are serious about the
South-South they have got to begin by putting in much more money in pure communications and being more strategic (S.A5).

If Norway removes a strategic hub from network opportunities, the Norwegian conception of “Africa” requires serious interrogation. This type of unilateral decision-making, and the dependency that it is predicated on, indicates that Northern actors remain capable of influencing the development of Regionness through arms-length processes; if regional networking is supported under conditions dictated by exogenous political systems, then regional identity within the global periphery becomes dependent on very particular conceptions of the regional order supported by a limited number of actors, and not local regionalization processes or identities.

Summary

The past ten years has seen a rapid re-engagement in regional and sub-regional initiatives by the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Spurred by the economic developments in a number of historically less-industrialized states, such as China, India and Brazil, and the substantial evolution of South Africa’s economic status, many less-industrialized states and actors are increasingly looking to one another as opposed to traditional Northern partners for support. In addition to these economic factors, many of the world’s leading multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and an array of United Nations organizations, have begun to support South-South and regional cooperation as the next frontier of development assistance. Increased interest from endogenous and exogenous actors in the integration of emerging markets, both within and across SSA, is embedded in a geo-political landscape that is radically redefining the historical relationship between the global core and the global periphery. One research-funding agency that has heeded this call is the Norwegian Programme for Research, Education and Development (NUFU). By incorporating South-South linkages into its pre-existing North-South research partnership program, NUFU has become a leading supporter of regional research networks in SSA over the past 15 years, with roughly 55% of its overall budget currently being aimed at SSN partnerships.

The case study analysis of a single NUFU-funded network research project conducted in this chapter helps to clarify the potential benefits and limitations of NUFU’s SSN modality. While the ability to derive generalizable conclusions from the findings is limited by the targeted scope of analysis, the study nonetheless presents an initial window into gaining a better
understanding of how African stakeholders are negotiating and actualizing the opportunities available to them for regional collaboration. Furthermore, it presents an opportunity for African participants to voice their concerns over the mechanisms and rationales that appear to ground the modality’s implementation, both in terms of the NUFU model and the paradigm as a whole. A number of thematic and general conclusions are drawn from the case study research and analysis conducted in support of this dissertation project in order to problematize the nature of SS research collaboration within the universities of SSA.

At the most general level, many participants indicated that the modality possessed a number of elements that supported or augmented their professional and personal development, with the latter being a particularly salient outcome. The opportunity to engage with researchers and stakeholders in other African jurisdictions, including the ability to travel to foreign universities and research sites, was interpreted as one of the most important contributions that the modality could make to an individuals’ personal evolution. Given the highly fragmented conditions in SSA, such travel opportunities are extremely limited even for many senior scholars. This was particularly evident in Tanzania, where universities and researchers have access to significantly fewer resources than their counterparts in South Africa. Participants indicated that the restricting economic conditions limit their ability to conduct comparative research and create significant barriers to gaining first hand knowledge of the research conditions in other African jurisdictions. As a result, participants indicated that the opportunity supported by NUFU’s NSS modality helped to expand their conception of what it means to be an academic in another African jurisdiction, as well as supported their networking opportunities with other African researchers to some extent.

However, in regards to the NUFU NSS framework as a whole, the above added-value elements were highly contingent on the structure, scope and nature of the network collaboration as determined by the project coordinators, and were primarily limited to the personal development of individuals as opposed to aspects of professional capacity building. Participants indicated that inter-jurisdictional research opportunities were not supported in the case study project, and that collaboration between Tanzanian and South African researchers was not strongly integrated into the project design at any stage. While the three project coordinators were able to meet and collaborate a number of times throughout each academic year, particularly in relation to the annual publication of an edited book drawing on the research conducted in the project, for the rest of the participating researchers collaboration was almost entirely limited to the annual project conferences. As a result, the majority of the participants
felt that significant cross-site collaboration never occurred, and it was only at the end of the project’s tenth year that some spillovers began to be explored. Many participants indicated that while funds and travel represented the most significant obstacle to inter-jurisdictional collaboration, the project agenda itself was not set up to facilitate research collaboration between the two sites in any substantive way; from the project’s inception, the two research units operated in parallel to one another in terms of the driving research questions, the project methodology, and the scope and focus of analysis. In reality, the project behaved more like two projects than one. The above structure was lamented by a number of participants who felt that this was a lost opportunity for serious comparative research, particularly given the rarity of receiving this type of external support.

One of the major structural and contextual reasons that may have discouraged a more comparative approach to the overall research topic was the issue of resources; both dependency and adequacy were raised by participants as significant barriers to the development of robust and sustainable regional collaboration. While many senior administrators and researchers expressed a strong desire to promote regional research projects, neither of the participating institutions appeared to be able or willing to support long-term investments in regional networks due to the limited amount of funds available for basic research projects within their domestic research contexts. The implications of this for the NUFU project, and SS research projects more generally, was that once the project cycle was completed and formal financial support was withdrawn, the possibility of sustaining the project in an institutionalized form was not only seen as unrealistic by both Norwegian and African stakeholders, but it was deemed to be impossible. As expressed in chapters two and three of this study, the availability of resources has historically been the most important determining factor for the development of robust domestic research capacity in African jurisdictions, both in the short and long-term. The case study findings discussed in this chapter align with the broader conclusions found in the academic and development agency literatures; in the absence of significant domestic resources, foreign-funded research projects will be unsustainable in an institutionalized form. However, it appears that the sustainability of regional research networks is even more problematic than traditional NSRP projects for all of the above reasons.

In terms of how African participants conceptualized the intra-African relations and the ‘South’ as an identity characteristic, a number of conclusions can be drawn from the case study research. The strongest narrative that arose from the interviews was that Northern funding agencies, including NUFU, commonly operate with an overly reductionist conception of “the
South”, or in the scope of case study project of “Africa”. Many respondents indicated that while neighboring or regional jurisdictions may share common sectoral conditions, such as economic, infrastructure, or environmental, for example, just because countries are geographically connected or share common historical conditions does not make them well suited for partnerships, nor does it make them more appropriate partners than more industrialized countries. This was compounded by the fact that in regard to issues of professional development, many respondents expressed that they would much rather partner with researchers in the academic core than with peripheral African researchers. It was almost universally argued that partnering with researchers in Norway, or comparable countries, could facilitate access to additional resources, financial, material or knowledge-based, could provide networking and training opportunities with world leading researchers, and could facilitate the dissemination of research in high quality international media, particularly peer-reviewed journals. In regards to partnering with researchers in other African countries, while the expansion of personal horizons was lauded as beneficial, it was generally concluded that none of the above positive externalities could be reliably achieved through such partnerships. It was even asserted by a number of researchers that access to critical or alternative epistemological frameworks were greater when partnering with non-African researchers due to the often conservative, homogenous intellectual traditions present in many African universities.

The issue of inter-cultural understandings similarly revealed how the idea of an African or Southern identity or the desirability of South-South collaboration may be more of a top-down prescription than a bottom-up demand or interest. While many respondents appreciated the opportunity to travel to other African countries, it was also quite clear that just because the partnering nations were situated in Africa and emerged out of the colonial experience did not mean that cultural synergies would be naturally present or appropriate. In fact, it may be quite the opposite, as national and regional developments since the end of colonialism may have drawn countries into radically different societal trajectories along a number of lines. In general, the idea of regional identity and solidarity was rarely factored into the objectives and interests of interviewees and when these two issues were raised it was almost exclusively in relation to the nation-state, a sub-national region, or building institutional or department capacities. The majority of respondents were more focused on their local conditions and circumstances than on broader conceptions of geo-political identity.

The absence of geo-political interests or inclinations is an important observation in relation to the regional emphasis of the NUFU program and in the context of the regional
theoretical framework that prefaces this chapter. The fact that participants all expressed strong connections to their national circumstances, with a strong desire for the research produced by the NUFU project to impact national policy makers, international donor agencies, and other pertinent stakeholders, supports the contention that the economic, educational and political volatility and deterioration that has occurred in many African jurisdictions since the immediate post-independence fervor remains the most pressing interest for many African researchers.

Resolving national development-related issues and augmenting institutional or departmental capacities was by far the priority over any extra-national objective. While this case study examines only one project, these observations and conclusions indicate that there may be a significant disconnect between the theoretical or geo-political interests of policy makers and academics and the pragmatic interests of faculty members and practitioners on-the-ground in African jurisdictions.

In terms of the NUFU program as a whole, the observations, analysis and conclusions put forward in this chapter support the critique made by the 2009 COWI AS evaluation of the NUFU program that the South-South component is an add-on to the main NUFU modality that lacks adequate conceptualization and integration into NUFU’s overall mandate and objectives. In general, the absence of a substantial regional component in the case study project appears to be a function of both the NUFU structure and the individuals involved in the case study project; on the one hand, the NUFU framework does not mandate particular south-south processes or outcomes, leaving the door open for fragmented projects that operate as SS primarily in name alone. As previously referenced, the stated NUFU objective for South-South collaboration is as follows:

NUFU’s programme board will concentrate on selected universities and university colleges in the South. In time, such core institutions can be become the “motors” and “coordinators” for regional cooperation in the South that will support the development of South-South relationships (SIU, 2004b, Appendix, p. 6; emphasis added).

The above quotation is the most precise mission statement found in the entire catalogue of formal NUFU documents examined during this study, and signifies the absence of substantive objectives and indicators laid out by the NUFU administration for the SS component. On the other hand, individual project coordinators are capable of manipulating this structural absence in order to design projects that don’t explicitly incorporate inter-jurisdiction or comparative research processes that are grounded in comparative methodologies. The combination of the above factors suggests that the SS dimension of NUFU’s modality is under-conceptualized,
lacks targeted and measurable goals and objectives beyond the most general level, and is an ancillary component of the NUFU model as a whole.

To this point, many of the Norwegian researchers and administrators interviewed for this study were cognizant of the modality’s limitations, and were critical of the way that it was being implemented in both the program framework and individual projects, including the case study project. However, the argument put forward by many Norwegian and African stakeholders did not advocate the removal of the South-South component from the overall NUFU structure, but rather contended for a more thorough and comprehensive evaluation of appropriate and feasible expectations for the modality; the dimension was recognized as having a number of positive potentialities that are currently being overlooked or inadequately incorporated into the primary NUFU mandate and structure. The limitations and obstacles highlighted in this chapter are not an argument for the modality’s ineffectiveness in and of itself, but rather a suggestion that it requires additional exploration and analysis in order to refine and tune it within the scope of the NUFU’s broader programmatic strengths, limitations and objectives. Despite the limited scope of the case study’s SS dimension, participants expressed that the component still made a number of positive contributions to their personal and professional development.
Chapter Eight: Conclusions, Discussion and Implications

At the end of the day, a dissertation project creates more questions than answers. While I had an inkling of this reality when I first set out five years ago in pursuit of definite answers to an array of questions, at each stage of my investigation the reality became ever more apparent. The conundrum can be quite discouraging, as many a struggling doctoral student can attest to, but I’ve come to accept that the process of coming to terms with the indefinite aspects of qualitative research, particularly when looking at processes that span geographic locales, political horizons, cultural particularities, and vast economic structures, is an equally important part of the doctoral process as the research itself. Taking a snapshot of phenomena that are years, if not decades or centuries, in the making and which are the result of an indefinite number of contextual factors can seem like a lifelong project, one that cannot be restricted to 300 pages of exposition and analysis. However, despite the ever-present pull to keep writing, another reality of the doctoral process is that all things must come to an end and the narrative produced must be bounded in order to draw some meaning from the experience. In pursuit of that goal, the concluding chapter of this study revisits the initial queries put forward in the study’s introduction and restates the contextual and theoretical frameworks that ground the study’s guiding research questions before taking a step back and presenting some consideration on the significance of the study’s analyses and findings. As part of this summary, some of the questions raised during the research process will be put forward for future consideration. It is hoped that this piece of work will adequately feed into the pertinent literatures in order to spur future research and support those individuals who are seeking to gain a better understanding of the continually evolving role of knowledge in the prevailing international order.

Revisiting the Principal Research Questions

The introductory chapter of this study put forward two research questions:

1) To what extent does the NUFU model support the development of equitable and sustainable research linkages and capacity building programs, specifically autonomous research capacities, methodologies and epistemologies, in the higher education institutions of less-industrialized countries?
2) To what extent does NUFU’s South-South component, operationalized in the program through North-South-South networks, present opportunities for achieving the programs’ goals through the addition of a regional or cross-regional dimension?

In pursuit of answers to these questions, the researcher undertook a qualitative case study of one North-South-South research network project supported by the NUFU program and involving researchers from one Norwegian university, one Tanzanian university and one South African university. In order to adequately contextualize the questions, two literature review chapters were undertaken. The first examined the socio-economic origins and structural determinants of the current geo-political configuration, with a specific focus on the role that the production and management of knowledge has played in this configuration. The second examined the systems and mechanisms that have historically been implemented in order to redress, or perpetuate, depending on one’s analytical position, the knowledge production imbalance that resulted from the intersecting historical processes.

By presenting a broad contextual horizon of the role that knowledge and development-based initiatives have played in the establishment of international social, political and economics orders, specifically between the more industrialized countries of Europe and North America and the less industrialized, formerly colonized countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the subsequent analysis of NUFU’s NSRP program is framed by, and more open to, a holistic examination of the historical conditions that have determined the evolution of knowledge-based institutions and initiatives on the African continent since the end of the Second World War. The literature review chapters established the study’s two driving questions, as it was only through an adequate understanding of the history of North-South academic relations in SSA that a comparative lens could be brought forward in regard the NUFU program’s guiding rationales and project modality. In order to situate the conclusions drawn from this study within the meta-narratives of colonialism and development, the conceptual and historical background that frame the study’s investigation and analysis are summarized below.

Revisiting the Conceptual Framework: The Geo-political construction of knowledge and development

The following section explores the conceptual and historical frameworks that guide this study’s two primary research questions and the subsequent analysis of the NUFU program carried out through the case study project. The conceptual underpinnings of the study
specifically highlight the intersection of global, regional, and national power structures as they relate to the dominant regimes of development and knowledge within the respective international hierarchies and orders. As evinced in the second and third chapters of the study, the primary research questions are based on a string of conclusions espoused by the critical development community, including both academics and practitioners, who problematize the fundamental nature and structure of the post-WW2 international political economy in the following ways: in the context of development-related discourses and policies, research and knowledge are embedded in geo-political power dynamics that stretch beyond mere procedural aspects, such as inputs, processes and quantifiable outputs; North-South research partnerships embody and reflect an array of multi-layered meta-processes that construct and, to a great extent, predetermine the nature, scope and impact of research projects before they even begin; and lastly, the social, political and economic parameters and processes found within the international order and within domestic contexts structurally determine the nature of development-oriented relationships and contextualize the application and interpretation of policies and programs across global, regional, national, and local planes of activity.

The conceptual and empirical basis of the above narratives emerges from the critical analyses undertaken over the past 60 years regarding the post-WW2 development policies, initiatives and discourses. In the scope of this study, the focus of such discourses and policies has been on the higher education and research sectors of sub-Saharan African jurisdictions, both national and regional. This analysis intersects with a broader historical narrative that regards the constitution of the global political economy as the guiding construct of core-periphery relations in general, and one that is particularly based on the dominance of both Realist and neo-liberal ethos in mainstream development-related programming. The study has also been grounded in World-System and critical political economy theories that conceptualize bilateral and multilateral development-related programming as key sustaining mechanisms for an international order that is inextricably embedded in a polarized and predominantly bifurcated socio-economical world-system.

Over the last 60 years, this landscape has been characterized by two factions: on the one side there exist governments and corporations of the world’s most industrialized nations who attempt to control, accumulate and exploit the natural and human resources present within peripheral territories and jurisdictions in accordance with the ideology of neo-liberal capitalism. As a result of this structurally exploitative dynamic, the other side of the polarity is represented by states and individuals who have become systematically incorporated into a world-system that
renders their labor and knowledge subservient to the needs of foreign states, industries and other agents, primarily through resource exportation, as sites of cheap labour, and through the imposition of exogenous epistemological and ideological lenses as mediated by formal educational systems. As a result of these intersecting structures and systems, peripheral national, institutional and local actors have rarely, if ever, been the drivers of knowledge production policies and activities in their own domestic universities, let alone within global fora, and have almost exclusively remained passive recipients of foreign knowledges and social orders.

The central argument of this study rests on two propositions: one, that an economic world-system exists that separates, determines and for the most part maintains the relational position of individual countries within a broader geo-political framework; and second, that knowledge acts as one of the key supporting foundations for the current manifestation of such a world-system. Dating back to the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974a, 1974b, 1980, 1984), and continuing through the work of the *dependencia* (dependency) school of economic theory (Prebisch, 1950, 1981, 1984; Galtung, 1971; Cardosa & Falleto, 1979; Frank, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1981) and contemporary world-system theorists (Chase-Dunn, 1978, 1995; Arrighi & Silver, 2001), the first proposition contends that a core-periphery dynamic has historically bifurcated the international arena according to the economic functions of the constituent jurisdictions. This core-periphery framework manifests in a variety of formal and informal structures, most forcefully through international markets, international political relations (soft power), military and security based relations (hard power), and the burgeoning multilateral system (Strange, 1988, 1996; Cox, 1981, 1987, 2002; Nye, 1990, 2004; Escobar, 1995). With regards to the African continent, the current core-periphery dynamic is mapped onto the colonizer-colonized polarity of the 17\(^{th}\), 18\(^{th}\), 19\(^{th}\), and mid-20\(^{th}\) centuries; the former colonies were exclusively situated at the periphery of the world-system, while the dominant national powers, both the former colonizers and the post-World War 2 superpowers, represented the core actors of the international system and dictated the frameworks of action and the sets of relations therein.

The second framing proposition contends that the current world-system structure has been, and continues to be, supported by an array of power sub-structures, one of which is the global knowledge regime. The essence of this argument posits that an international knowledge hierarchy has developed inorganically through both explicit and tacit construction and manipulation by institutions and stakeholders in the global core. These systems are then filtered down into the institutions and social systems of peripheral jurisdictions. The outcome of this process is that a select configuration of actors in the core has been responsible for the
construction and dissemination of ‘legitimate’ and ‘valid’ knowledge systems and policies, in service to their own best interests. In sub-Saharan Africa, this has manifested through colonial education policies that restricted access to higher education and advanced training and which shaped the tenor and scope of curricula for the limited populations able to gain access to higher education. In the post-colonial era, the majority of SSA governments and higher education institutions have remained almost entirely dependent on Northern development-related agencies for funding basic and applied research, with the policies that determine and govern such initiatives remaining predominantly embedded in the interests of the core.

In line with the above propositions, traditional funding nations and their various agencies have created a variety of mechanisms during the post-colonial era that have for the most part sustained the inequitable dynamics of the core-periphery divide, despite quite often possessing more benevolent intentions. In the higher education sector, an array of modalities have been implemented over the past 60 years in order to support the development of universities and research institutes in peripheral jurisdictions. However, the impetus and rationales for such programming have often fallen in line with the dominant development ideologies, narratives and structures espoused and determined by actors in the core. This interpretation does not discount the positive externalities that have emerged at particular sites and institutions, however, it operates in accordance with a line of argumentation that contends the overall impact of the international development architecture, as initiated and perpetuated by the global core, has ultimately stifled opportunities for authentic peripheral researchers to develop, conduct and disseminate the findings of demand-driven research initiatives and knowledge-based processes within the universities of the global periphery.

**North-South Research Partnership Programs: Maintaining the Knowledge Divide?**

In order to further the analysis of North-South research programs and contribute to the critical development literature examining North-South and South-South relations, an in-depth qualitative case study of the Norwegian Programme for Education, Research and Development (NUFU) was conducted. NUFU is a North-South research partnership (NSRP) program established in the late 1980s and supported by the Norwegian government in collaboration with Norwegian universities, colleges and academic faculty. Its aim is to support the sustainable development of research capacity in the universities of industrializing countries, with a specific
geographical focus on sub-Saharan Africa. The driving questions of the study, stated at the outset of this chapter, focus on NUFU’s chosen NSRP modality, a decentralized model, as a means of assessing the extent to which it provides a flexible structural and substantive framework that can effectively support demand-driven and sustainable research capacity development. One of the primary research questions highlights the South-South dimension of the NUFU program, as NUFU has increasingly supported and integrated South-South and regional collaboration into their overall program mandate and framework over the past 15 years, to the point that in the 2007-2011 project cycle roughly 55% of their total project support was directed to network projects.

Norway was selected as the jurisdiction for analysis due to its historical separation from the dominant capitalist world-system. A former Danish and Swedish vassal state that was firmly entrenched in the global periphery for close to 500 years, Norway has only recently ascended through the semi-periphery to the semi-core over the latter half of the 20th century, Norwegian society as a whole has placed a remarkably strong emphasis on engaging actors with the global periphery over the past 60 years. NUFU, as the primary mechanism for North-South collaboration in higher education and research, was selected as the unit of analysis for this study as a means to analyze the extent to which Norway’s geo-political history and the socio-cultural characteristics infused in its domestic political economy have resulted in a more flexible and demand-driven development-related research modality than other predominant models of the post-war era. Operating under a rubric of helping peripheral jurisdictions help themselves, the NUFU program has focused on training individual researchers across all levels of the university, including the various academic pathways (masters, doctorates, post-doctorates and faculty members) and administrative avenues (research management, institutional planning, etc.).

Norway’s engagement and incorporation of Southern interests, needs and demands within their own domestic political economy after the Second World War indicates that the NUFU story is more than just a case study of a government-administered organization; it is tied to the socio-cultural identity of a country that was in any ways a colony of its Scandinavian neighbors for 500 years and that has only recently experienced significant economic development throughout the late-20th and early 21st centuries. As a nation situated in the global periphery up until the early 1960s, Norway’s engagement with the international arena has been radically different from the traditional European superpowers; the country has evolved along an alternative development trajectory at a distance from dominant geo-political conflicts and tensions. Having been absent from the land-grabbing colonial experience, despite participating
in a quasi-colonial missionary tradition, the past 60 years of Norway’s history have focused on extending support to the “poorest of the poor” in an effort to augment sustainability across political, economic and social sectors in the nations of the global periphery.

In support of this investigation, an extensive literature review process was undertaken in order to roughly determine the key themes and properties that have characterized NSPR programming over the past 60 years. The review process resulted in the construction of an ideal-type, termed Coercive, which outlines the prevalent dynamics that have become systemically embedded in the majority of NSRP modalities. While the ideal-type was intended to function as a discursive tool for analyzing NSRP programs, it is recognized that there is no definitive form of partnerships, linkages, networks or collaboration across all disciplines and jurisdictions; there are only snapshots and interpretations of particular modalities and contexts. As such, the construction of an ideal-type for the sake of methodological analysis was based on the understanding that ideal-types need not have a complete empirical referent or manifestation, but that such functional, yet purely representational, models can facilitate a reasonable comparative mechanism that is both general and cohesive in nature and definition.

For the purpose of this study, the constructed ideal-type facilitated the exploration of general themes regarding the nature and scope of NSRP dynamics and processes, as opposed to the formal structures implemented by particular organizations and agencies, in order to establish a general understanding of the central themes involved in a North-South research linkage, construed as a particular manifestation of broader North-South geo-political dynamics and trends. Rather than creating a checklist of indicators for evaluating a particular project or program, the ideal-type approach offered a more holistic and open-ended engagement with the issues and dealt with discursive issues as much as with practical or technical considerations. The analytic framework was put forward as a fluid and open tool for analysis that is capable of future adjustment based on emerging circumstances, contextual factors, or more comprehensive understandings of the particular NSRP programs or the NSRP phenomena writ large.

Out of this exercise, seven themes were highlighted, two that were purely conceptual and five that were deemed to be directly relevant to the actual implementation of NSRP projects. The first two, partnership and ownership, were deconstructed and problematized in terms of their discursive impact and influence over the mainstream development-related international aid regime. Both terms have become catchall buzzwords of the late 20\textsuperscript{th} and early 21\textsuperscript{st} century that incorporate, and often co-opt, problematic relationship dynamics within powerful narratives that legitimize and normalize the institutionalized inequalities. According to the literature review
conducted in chapter three to construct the *Coercive* ideal-type, both of the above concepts are strongly contingent on the ideals, norms and values established and espoused by Northern actors and exported to Southern actors through heavily conditioned development-related policy frameworks. The concepts are incorporated into the critical analysis of the ideal-type and require critical interrogation when invoked in NSRP policy and practice in order to unpack the sub-layered meanings that make up the particular application within individual contexts.

The five remaining themes engaged, defined and codified key structural and substantive properties of NSRP programs and projects as interpreted by the author, in order to establish a framework for analyzing the NUFU program and its project modality as they exist both on paper and on the ground. Program and project selection criteria and processes, project agenda setting processes, resource management, knowledge management, and sustainability and capacity building are all facets of NSRP programs and projects that mediate the relationship between Northern and Southern actors in both the near and long-term. Chapter three constructed these five themes as part of the analytical tool that was subsequently applied to the NUFU program in general and a case study project of a singular regional research network supported by the NUFU program and operationalized in accordance with the NUFU modality. The following sections present the major findings and conclusions of the case study analysis, both in terms of the overall NUFU modality and with regard to the South-South component that has become a core component in the majority of NUFU’s projects.

In order to examine and analyze the aforementioned research questions, the *Coercive* ideal-type was constructed and applied as a key analytical tool for interpreting the case study findings. The objective of this process was twofold; a) to define and deconstruct the NUFU program’s objectives, driving rationales, support mechanisms and organizational structures; and, b) to gain a better understanding of how African stakeholders in one NUFU-supported project interpret the NUFU modality, in terms of its North-South and South-South dimensions. The study’s research methodology was designed with the aim of analyzing the formal program documents produced by NUFU, it’s administering organization, SIU, and other pertinent government bodies, and engaging the key stakeholders at the NUFU and SIU headquarters, as well as at the participating Norwegian, Tanzanian and South African universities, through a series of in-depth qualitative interviews. These interviews were conducted with stakeholders across all levels of the participating government agencies and universities, including institutional leaders, senior administrators, faculty researchers, and graduate students. The following sections summarize the major case study findings of the NUFU program through
three sub-headings: a) the perspectives of Norwegian participants, b) the perspectives of African participants regarding the North-South component; and c) the perspectives of African participants regarding the South-South component.

**Norwegian Perspectives on the NUFU Modality**

Since the end of the Second World War, an array of international and regional actors and organizations have been responsible for shaping the parameters of ‘legitimate’ knowledge and research in service to development-oriented policies and practices in both Northern and Southern nations. As outlined above, the structures developed in that time have, for the most part, explicitly constrained the types of research supported in peripheral jurisdictions by normatively sculpting educational and development-related narratives and discourses, at both policy and practitioner levels, and undercutting domestic research capacity in industrializing jurisdictions through thematically-limited support, inequitable linkage modalities and structures, and, most significantly, macro-economic loan programs imbued with neo-liberal conditionalities that required the radical reshaping of public investment in higher education in recipient nations.

The founding of the Bretton Woods organizations at the end of the Second World War, the establishment of regional initiatives on the African continent, such as the African Union, the Association for African Universities and the post-colonial East African University, and the evolution of national bilateral funding agencies and institutes situated in core industrialized nations with the intent of bringing ‘development’ to peripheral industrializing nations, have all played a role in the co-construction of the research agendas and, more importantly, the modalities through which research is funded and operationalized in the universities of the global periphery, particularly in the nations of sub-Saharan Africa. Global knowledge hierarchies and regimes, grounded in core values, epistemologies, languages, institutions and methodologies, have impacted the nature and mission of higher education and research in SSA for as long as post-secondary institutions have been in place on the continent. It is clear that agents operating at the supra-national level have exerted significant influence upon endogenous actors in the various jurisdictions of SSA, and furthermore, there has been minimal reciprocity in that influence from the bottom-up.

The findings of this case study indicate that over the past 20 years, NUFU administrators and researchers have established robust policy spaces through a persistent engagement with the
Norwegian political apparatus, external experts, and Southern stakeholders. This concerted effort has allowed the program to construct and implement an NSRP modality that provides condition-free, thematically-open funding opportunities for faculty members in recipient universities, with the aim of supporting demand-driven research activities and capacity building initiatives. In contrast to the rigidity historically present in the majority of NSRP programs, NUFU has made significant allowances in order that researchers can produce a variety of media whose ‘utility’ and ‘value’ may not coincide with mainstream or traditional development paradigms. In order to ensure the equitable distribution of control over program criteria and project processes, the NUFU administration has re-worked the programs’ selection processes in response to external feedback.

However, while global and national pressures, particularly in regard to changing political and economic conditions, have been considered by the NUFU administration, in the construction of the program’s structure and mandate, and by Norwegian academics, in the implementation of the NUFU modality, the case study findings indicate that NUFU and the constituent Norwegian universities are increasingly limited in their ability to resist changing norms: faculty members are under considerable strain to investigate areas of research deemed more valuable by government and institutional leaders; faculty members are increasingly required to tailor research dissemination to particular media; and both the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-Operation (NORAD) have increasingly bypassed traditional governance processes in order to unilaterally establish NSRP programs that are parallel to the NUFU program but that are not governed by the same demand-driven ethos.

Based on the case study findings, the changing domestic context and conditions have begun to take their toll on the program’s constitution and on the willingness of Norwegian academics to participate. Much to their disappointment, many of the senior academics and administrators interviewed who have been involved in the NUFU program since its inception indicated that skepticism had grown within the Norwegian academic community regarding the future potential of the program. This skepticism was not directed at the nature of the program as currently instantiated, but at the sense that the program was less resistant to political pressure than in the past and that its independence and autonomy was potentially at a tipping point.

The major implication of these findings is that global and regional influences and pressures may have begun to erode and compromise Norway’s unique political economy, particularly in relation to its engagement with Southern jurisdictions vis-a-vis development-
related programming. The Norwegian ethos that enabled the evolution of alternative
development trajectories throughout the latter half of the 20th century appears to be changing in
response to shifting economic conditions and in alignment with mainstream development
narratives. The latter possibility is most problematic when considering the NUFU program, for
the majority of the case study participants interviewed indicated that the reluctance of
Norwegian politicians and public policy makers to acquiesce to global development paradigms
has been one of the enduring positive aspects of Norway’s development assistance modalities, a
conclusion that was extremely salient amongst the Norwegian faculty and academic staff
interviewed.

With regard to the NUFU modality’s project structure, the findings indicate that
Norwegian participants and stakeholders believe that NUFU’s decentralized, bottom-up
modality presents an open and transparent NSRP framework. However, one implication of the
model is that the inter-personal dynamics at play within individual projects, manifesting most
prominently through the relationships of project coordinators, represent the most significant
determining factor to the equitable or coercive nature of a project. Through the decentralized
program structure, project coordinators are empowered with high-levels of control and
autonomy once a project has been accepted for support by the NUFU board and central
administrative unit. This reality is a double-edged sword; while it is possible for true
partnerships to become established based on mutuality and trust, it is equally possible that
Southern stakeholders may find themselves in the traditional subservient role, as discussed in
chapters two and three. Despite these concerns, based on the data collected in this case study,
and through previous external evaluations of the NUFU program, it appears that the Norwegian
experience within the NUFU structure has, on the whole, resulted in extremely positive
externalities and opportunities that have facilitated open and demand-driven research projects in
line with the research priorities of selected Southern academics.

In response to the study’s first research question, the majority of the Norwegian
participants interviewed expressed a strong belief that the NUFU model supports the
development of equitable and sustainable research linkages and capacity building programs,
specifically demand-driven research capacities, methodologies and epistemologies, in the higher
education institutions of less-industrialized countries in the global periphery. Despite the
pressures threatening the program’s long-term viability in its current form, there was widespread
support for the NUFU modality in accordance with the major themes constructed through the
Coercive ideal-type. While some concerns were raised regarding the resource support pathways, Norwegian participants were almost uniform in their support of the NUFU modality.

**Southern Perspectives on NUFU’s North-South Dimension**

The sixth chapter of this study focused on analyzing the perspectives, interpretations and narratives expressed by participating faculty members, administrators and graduate students at the two SSA universities participating in the case study project, one in Tanzania and one in South Africa. Based on the data collected through document analysis and participant interviews at both university sites, it appears that the NUFU modality structure and framework are open and receptive to the needs and interests of Southern participants and their home institutions, and that demand-driven research has been successfully promoted as a result of twenty years of programmatic evolution.

In accordance with the ideal-type themes, the following conclusions are made: Southern institutions are significantly incorporated into the decision-making processes at both program and project levels; NUFU-funded projects are thematically open and free from significant structural conditionalities; resources distributed to the Southern stakeholders can be used for a wide array of activities and initiatives; the knowledge and research produced as a result of NUFU project funding can be disseminated through the appropriate media for both professional and policy-related development, as determined by the participating researchers; and, NUFU’s long-term investment window allows for the sustained development of institutions, faculty members, graduate students and programs.

In the case study project, these dynamics have resulted in extremely positive interpretations of the modality as a whole, with the majority of participants expressing the view that the project was implemented and based on relatively open and trusting inter-personal and professional relationships and was engaged with, and driven by, a substantial number of the participating researchers. However, the open and flexible structure of the decentralized modality, in conjunction with the aforementioned individual-driven nature, results in a framework that is almost completely dependent on the participating individuals, particularly the project coordinators, to ensure the implementation of an equitable and transparent collaborative research project. While some commentators may critique the NUFU program for focusing on individuals as the crux of research capacity building within Southern universities, specifically in
that the model appears to concentrate a significant amount of power in the hands of a select few individuals and within a system with limited checks and balances, the case study findings indicate that when the model works to its potential it is a worthwhile approach. By facilitating the creation of autonomous research spaces within Southern universities, and focusing on graduate training as a necessary corollary, the NUFU model is ultimately capable of empowering Southern researchers and graduate students in their personal and professional development.

**Southern Perspectives on NUFU’s South-South Dimension**

The seventh chapter engaged the South-South-North dimension that has become a cornerstone of the NUFU program over the past 10 years. In contrast to the above findings, which express optimism and a high level of satisfaction and clarity regarding the benefits and intentions of the North-South, the case study findings indicate that the South-South elements require additional clarification and development before they can reach their full potential. The renewed interest in regional and South-South collaboration within the international development regime is still in its incipient phase, particularly when it comes to multilateral research partnerships. The case study findings indicate that while the above narratives have ascended in mainstream development discourses, the ideas remain somewhat under-conceptualized in terms of their practical implications. In a continent as geographically large, culturally diverse, and economically under-developed as Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, the concept of South-South cooperation appears to be more beneficial and positive on paper than in reality. While NUFU has engaged in this type of research partnership for over fifteen years, the case study makes it clear that significant obstacles continue to exist in the implementation of the modality. While it has been acknowledged previously that the generalizability of conclusions taken from a single case study project can be limited, over the course of the research project it became clear that the issues embedded in the South-South dimension are so fundamental to the SSA context that the thematic conclusions are likely to be indicative of larger systemic issues.

While many of the African case study participants expressed the view that the SS component presented possibilities for their professional and personal development, the majority also indicated that it failed to add significant value to the North-South dimension of the NUFU framework as actualized within the case study project. This general conclusion supports the
opinions expressed by many Norwegian participants and the analysis conducted of NUFU’s official program documentation. It also corroborates the conclusions presented in the 2009-2010 external evaluation of the NUFU Program, which devoted a sub-section to the South-South component. The following conclusions were drawn from the findings.

Participants indicated that inter-jurisdictional research opportunities were not supported in the case study project, and that South-South collaboration was not strongly integrated into the project design at any stage. While the three project coordinators were able to meet and collaborate a number of times throughout each academic year, particularly in support of the annual publication of an edited book drawing on the research conducted in the project, for the rest of the participating researchers collaboration was almost entirely limited to the annual project conference. As a result, the majority of the participants felt that significant collaboration never occurred, and it was only at the end of the project’s tenth year that some spillovers began to be explored by individuals. Many participants indicated that while funds and travel represented the most significant obstacle to inter-jurisdictional collaboration, the project agenda itself was not set up to facilitate research collaboration between the two sites in any substantive way; from the project’s inception, the two research units operated in parallel to one another in terms of the driving research questions, the project methodology, and the scope and focus of analysis. In reality, the project behaved more like two projects than one. The above structure was lamented by a number of participants who felt that this was a lost opportunity for serious comparative research, particularly given the rarity of receiving this type of external support.

In terms of how African participants conceptualized the South-South relation, and the ‘South’ as an identity construct, a number of conclusions can be drawn from the case study research. The strongest narrative that arose from the interviews was that Northern funding agents, including NUFU, commonly operate with an overly reductionist conception of ‘the South’, or, in the scope of the case study project, of ‘Africa’. Many respondents indicated that while neighboring or regional jurisdictions may share common sectoral conditions, such as economic, infrastructure, or environmental, for example, just because countries are geographically connected or share common historical conditions does not make them well suited for partnerships, nor does it make them more appropriate partners than more industrialized countries outside of SSA. This was compounded by the fact that in regard to issues of professional development, many respondents expressed that they would much rather partner with researchers in more industrialized countries. It was almost universally argued that partnering with researchers in Norway, or comparable countries, could facilitate access to
additional resources, financial, material or knowledge-based, could provide networking and training opportunities with world leading researchers, and could facilitate the dissemination of research in high quality international media, particularly peer-reviewed journals. It was generally concluded that none of the above positive externalities could be reliably achieved through partnering with researchers and institutions in other African jurisdictions. It was even asserted by a number of researchers that access to critical or alternative epistemological frameworks was greater when partnering with Northern researchers as opposed to African researchers due to the often conservative and homogenous intellectual traditions present in many African universities.

The issue of inter-cultural understandings revealed how the idea of a Southern or African identity or the desirability of South-South collaboration may be more of a top-down prescription than a bottom-up demand or interest. While many respondents appreciated the opportunity to travel to other African countries, it was also quite clear that just because the partnering nations were situated in Africa and emerged out of the colonial experience did not mean that cultural synergies would be naturally present or appropriate. In fact, it may be quite the opposite, as national and regional developments since the end of colonialism may have drawn countries into radically different societal trajectories along a number of lines. In general, the idea of regional or Southern identity and solidarity was rarely factored into the objectives and interests of interviewees and when these two issues were raised it was almost exclusively in relation to the nation-state, a sub-national region, or building institutional or department capacities. The majority of respondents were more focused on their local conditions and circumstances than on broader conceptions of geo-political identity.

The research findings presented above, and throughout chapter seven, indicate that NUFU’s incorporation of South-South collaboration into their NSRP modality is predominantly under-conceptualized as a rationale for partnership and, as a result, has not been adequately integrated into the project modality as a whole. While the idea of South-South and regional collaboration was lauded by a number of Southern participants, it was also clear that the current manifestation does not ensure the desired outputs, even as stated in the most general terms. However, the literature on the history of regional collaboration in SSA indicates that this problem does not rest solely with NUFU, but is rather a systemic issue that has impacted regional initiatives since the early 1960s. The political economy of research in the majority of SSA nations has not provided significant support for these types of initiatives, and as expressed throughout this study, long-term sustainability relies predominantly on local and national
capacities and support; in the absence of national funding opportunities, NSRP programs and projects are extremely difficult to institutionalize and sustain. This is not to say that the NUFU model cannot be augmented, but rather that it should consider the historical context of such initiatives in its conceptualization and implementation in order to avoid the problems that have historically undermined regional cooperation.

**Reflections on NUFU and the World-System**

At the most general level, the findings arrived at through this study’s analysis of the NUFU program, including the literature review examining the historical record of NSRP programming in general, support the conclusion made by many critical higher education and development scholars that exogenous actors and processes continue to shape, directly and indirectly, the nature, form and impetus of development-related research in the majority, if not all, SSA jurisdictions. This conclusion is based on the assertion that the global knowledge and development regimes and architectures continue to be the driving normative mechanisms of research agendas in SSA universities. While the systems of control were more direct during the colonial eras, in that colonial powers were able to determine the structure and nature of SSA education systems and their institutions, as of the late 20th and early 21st centuries the means of influence have become more refined; the controlling dynamics of colonialism have been replaced by a coercive framework of development based on conditionalities and socially constructed norms and agendas. Over the past 60 years, Northern governments, agencies, academics and other stakeholders have constructed the discourses of development through a variety of powerful systemic apparatuses, including the professionalization of developmentalism and developmentalist ideologies in both governments and academia, the creation of core-dominated multilateral agencies with significant influence over policy-making in peripheral nations, and the establishment and perpetuation of a global knowledge regime that privileges the knowledge systems, epistemologies, and development-related narratives of select researchers, institutions and publications.

The research conducted in this case study indicates that despite the seeming omnipresence of such restrictive global systems, spaces for alternative pathways have existed in the past and continue to exist in the present. As an example, the NUFU program has presented a more nuanced demand-driven approach to NSRP programming over the past 20 years.
However, despite the unique approach constructed and implemented by NUFU, it remains a minor player in the global higher education development landscape, both in terms of its financial weight and in terms of its influence within the dominant policy circles.

Part of the impetus for this study was a belief that the developmental models promoted by Scandinavian agencies, such as NUFU, have been critically under-examined within the mainstream literatures. Despite the historically high levels of equitable engagement with stakeholders in the global periphery, the Scandinavian models remain distanced from global development norms. The Norwegian political economy, which places North-South relations and the multilateral arena at the center of its foreign policy platforms, seems to be a relatively unique historical manifestation that was made possible only through the combination of the country’s strong domestic economy, its distance from historical geo-political tensions and conflicts, and its history within the global periphery nation. Lying on the precipice of the semi-core/semi-periphery since its independence, Norway’s political leaders have conscientiously selected a developmentalist agenda as the primary mechanism for international engagement. As such, Norwegian actors and agencies have traditionally paid more attention to garnering international support through highly responsive and benevolent development activities.

The impact of Norway’s drive for equitable core-periphery engagement, or at least the promotion of this perception by Norwegian stakeholders, on the NUFU program has been high-level institutional support for its demand-driven and flexible approach to development-oriented research in peripheral universities and jurisdictions. However, the continued existence of such a model has been contingent on the maintenance of the domestic political economy in its current configuration, and, as evidenced by the analysis of the changing Norwegian context, the NUFU program appears to be at a crossroads; domestic and international economic and political pressures appear to be infringing on the program’s core objectives and structures for the first time in a substantial way. In a global higher education environment that is increasingly dominated by neo-liberal ideology and associated public policies, the relatively unique NUFU model, characterized by a decentralized, demand-driven framework for NSRP programming, appears to lack the necessary indicators demanded by government stakeholders for more efficient and quantifiable returns on investment. A corollary of this shift may be a decreased interest in supporting South-South collaboration, as the benefits accrued from such processes are unlikely to be captured by traditional evaluative metrics unless radically re-envisioned.

In terms of the world-system, the aforementioned shifts in Norwegian public policy appear to be symptomatic of a general decline in the value and prominence of alternative
development pathways, not just in the global environment, but stretching into the domestic affairs of sovereign nations. The ascent of neo-liberal globalization during the final decades of the 20th century has had significant implications for development-based programming in all sectors, including higher education and research. As the expected outcomes of public investment have shifted and government support for traditionally public institutions and processes has declined, such as for higher education and basic research, the rationale for North-South support has shifted in kind. For the most part, this has resulted in the expansion of neo-liberal ideologies into development programming and policies, such as more thematically limited support, an increased emphasis on public-private partnerships, and a desire for more market-oriented initiatives. While the discourse of development has been repositioned under the less threatening rubrics of partnership and ownership, the majority of multilateral and bilateral programs have maintained or strengthened the presence of top-down controls. The relative homogenization of policies within the global development architecture appears to be expanding the influence of the global core over even the most de-linked countries of the semi-core and semi-periphery. While over the past 60 years, Norway has resisted the majority of global trends in this vein, the above global movements represent a growing existential threat to programs like NUFU that value and support the creation of autonomous and independent spaces for both basic and applied research. That is not to say that such spaces will no longer exist, but rather, as evidenced by the Norwegian context, the spaces will have to be fought for in new and innovative ways.

Despite the restrictions highlighted throughout this study, the various global power structures are also at a point of significant disruption that may lead to more opportunities for alternative pathways. Fluctuations within the global economy, the ascent of traditionally peripheral countries, such as China, India, and Brazil, and the proliferation of innovative and open avenues for knowledge dissemination all represent potential sources for radical transformations within the current world-system, and it is unclear how education and research will come to be factored into the new landscapes that may emerge. Moving forward, these new horizons will provide researchers, practitioners and policy-makers new opportunities for engaging non-traditional actors and sites in order to re-conceptualize how social, economic and political problems can best be engaged. It is possible that the new configurations of power that emerge as a result of potential system-level shifts will be more open to alternative epistemologies and methodologies, or may be grounded on entirely distinct theoretical suppositions and foundations.
With regard to NSRP programs such as NUFU, their future in a multi-polar world is uncertain, and the possibility for new configurations of linkages between traditionally peripheral and core jurisdictions is extremely likely. To wit, the traditional definitions of South and North may face a radical reconstruction in light of potential geo-political transformations. However, despite the possibility for an inverse in traditional roles, it is equally likely that the core-periphery divide will continue to exist, if only with new actors shifting within the various categories. If the world-system is on the verge of what Arrighi and Silver (2001) term a hegemonic transition, whereby the world-system is re-organized under new leadership in order to maintain the expansion of the system as a whole, then the outputs and spillovers of the new hegemonic order will necessitate analysis. The role that knowledge, research and higher education systems play in the legitimization of dominant ideologies within the world-system may shift in tenor, discourse, and even the mechanisms through which the processes are undertaken. All of which will pose an array of questions for researchers as they seek to gain a better understanding of how knowledge, in all its forms, impacts the global political economy.

**Contribution and Future Research Areas**

This thesis has raised a number of issues relating to the incorporation of formal knowledge systems within the social, economic and political machinations of various world order structures. The intention of the study was to explicate how knowledge has historically played a divergent role in the formation and reification of geo-political and socio-economic roles and positions within the broader world-system. Analyzing the NUFU program, and the Norwegian context, provided an entry-point for understanding how these meta-narratives and constructs trickle down into the day-to-day realities of development-oriented research linkage programs and the individual projects that they comprise. Through this process, this thesis has contributed to the three intersecting branches of literature highlighted at the outset of the study; critical development studies, comparative and international development education studies, and international political economy. While it is not necessarily possible to disentangle the intersecting strands of argument presented in this paper in correlation to the three distinct bodies of literature, some general conclusions can be made regarding the study’s contribution to overall narratives concerning both higher education development in sub-Saharan Africa and North-South research programming as a means of capacity building and/or paradigm maintenance, in sub-Saharan Africa.
At the broadest level, the NUFU case study has presented a depth of analysis that is predominantly absent from the literature. While overarching issues of knowledge dependency and asymmetry are regularly invoked in discussions of brain drain and research capacity, for example, robust micro-level analyses remain few and far between. Partially in response to the empirical deficit, this study has provided an in-depth understanding of how researchers and administrators involved in the NUFU program have conceptualized and incorporated NSRP programming into the realities of their professional and personal lives. While higher order programmatic reviews and evaluations are needed to understand the construction of comparable modalities, it is the personal stories and reflections that give credence to higher level critiques and observations. This type of analysis has implications for both the bilateral and multilateral communities and individual academics and administrators in both the core and the periphery. It is important to understand that these types of project have significant implications for individuals within all jurisdictions, and that the consequences of NSRP support quite often emerge in unintended ways. The individual remains the linchpin of research and capacity building endeavours, and more attention needs to be paid by political and bureaucratic administrators in order to maximize the possible outcomes of such support.

Nowhere was this more apparent then in reflections on the South-South dynamic; it was quite clear that despite the good intentions of all involved, a number of key implications were not thoroughly considered in the drive to support regional research networks. On some level this can be expected, as the most recent era of South-South and regional cooperation is in its nascent stage, and the motivations and consequences of such support are only beginning to be explored. In addition, as mentioned above, the geo-political construct of the “South” is being challenged and radically redefined in conjunction with significant shifts in the international arena. Recognizing the limited generalizability of a single case study, this study has nonetheless put forward a number of questions to the academic and development communities regarding what this reconstitution may mean for individuals on-the-ground in the world’s least developed jurisdictions. The complexities brought forward in the case study indicate that while increased South-South collaboration and the disintegration of a unipolar world order dominated by neo-liberal policies and Washington Consensus processes, may be fascinating topics for academics, the reality in many jurisdictions may not correspond to shifting geo-political conditions at this point in time; the rise of China, India and Brazil may not bear fruit for individuals in SSA for a number of years, if ever, and just as Africa should not be homogenized as one entity by
researchers interested in the postcolonial experience, so too should the South not be homogenized when considering the implications of the shifting global economy.

All of this is not to say that such developments may not take place in the near or distant future, but rather that this study has reinforced the fragmented nature of “the South” as a construct, particularly in the African context, and has problematized the use of such terminology in general. The debate over whether the intersecting historical conditions in various jurisdictions warrant a shared designation despite the numerous limitations and problems inherent to such a homogenization has been present in the literature for some time, and this study reinforces the problematic nature of this construction. In the context of the contested discourses of ‘partnership’ and ‘ownership’, South-South linkages add another complex layer, one that will expand in both scope and complexity as the modality becomes more prominent in step with the increased influence of emerging nations such as India, China, Brazil and others.

In terms of the contribution that this study makes to the literature on NSRP modalities, the ideal-type constructed, and the categories therein, consolidate a significant amount of the academic and development literature in order to present one interpretation of the systemic and structural issues involved in NSRP programming as a whole. As previously mentioned, this work has not been put forward as a closed system of analysis, but rather is a comprehensive attempt to bring some sort of logic to understanding how and why various NSRP modalities have historically been administered and what the implications of those formations may be for future partnership programs. By testing the NUFU program against the ideal-type construct, this study presents one possible method of analyzing and comparing similar programs in the future. It also identifies and highlights the contours of one robust alternative that succeeded, to a degree at least, in spite of the power of the dominant and well-entrenched paradigm. The construction of a counterpart ideal-type that is driven by peripheral interests makes for a logical next step of research. While this study eschewed such a construction, it would make an important contribution to resolving aspects of the Ganuza dilemma and reconciling conflicting stakeholder agendas within peripheral jurisdictions.

However, despite the hopeful contribution that could be made by the construction of an opposite ideal type, the overall project requires repetition and comparison in order to assess its potential. Indeed, in the absence of repeated systemic analyses of different NSRP programs and modalities, the literature will remain a fragmented snapshot of activities and initiatives that will lack a coherent message for reform. Regardless of the focused nature of this case study, it is clear that systemic issues affect NSRP programs across all jurisdictions, and furthermore, that
governments have predominantly refrained from implementing significant modifications to redress these issues. Given that the early 21st century is characterized by regimes of public accountability and austerity, in addition to the pervasive economic crises affecting the majority of the world, it is likely that donor governments will increase the conditions attached to NSRP funding and limit the control that recipient actors have over such funds. As such, providing empirical evidence of the impact that structural asymmetries bear for such partnerships may be more important than in previous generations of programming.

While all of the above presents an array of fruitful topics for further analysis, the key issue arising from this study may be that in the absence of significant domestic support for research, both political and financial, NSRP programs will remain a short-term bandage on a more fundamental wound. The international aid regime in conjunction with domestic mismanagement limits or fundamentally prevents the possibility of sustainable investments in publicly funded research universities in the nations of the global periphery, particularly in SSA. The implications of this on further studies is that the relationship of researchers and academics to the state in many SSA jurisdictions is not, and has rarely been, an academic or technical problem; there are robust and entrenched power structures that inhibit the potential of SSA universities and their researchers.

In this regard, the issue is fundamentally political, and the intersection of knowledge and power within individual jurisdictions requires explicit analysis: how is knowledge mobilized in support of or resistance to particular political, social and economic factions? To what extent are universities used as a tool of political suppression? Are they formally incorporated into the official political apparatus or are they implicated through a variety of arms-length interventions? How are international bodies and organizations engaging with governments in support of knowledge-based development-related initiatives and what are the conditions for such collaboration? Lastly, what types of foreign support are most successful in facilitating alternative epistemic communities in Southern jurisdictions? This last question lies at the crux of this entire study, for while it is clear that the majority of foreign support towards knowledge-based activities in post-colonial SSA have led to increased dependence, it is equally clear that domestic influences have moved to inhibit the production and dissemination of critical scholarship in the majority of SSA nations. There is a role for foreign allies to play in the evolution of SSA states and societies, however, the form and scope requires significant critical examination, grounded in critical reflections on the motivations of Northern support. These are but a sample of questions related to the role that knowledge and knowledge production plays in
regime maintenance, both in SSA countries and within the global order. They require continued examination and cross-jurisdictional comparison by critical third parties in order to support informed analysis, critiques and engagement.
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Appendices

Appendix A – Request to Participate Letter with Consent Form (Individual)

OISE
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

To the participant in this study,

I am a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Currently I am conducting research for my doctoral dissertation on bilateral development assistance to higher education institutions and their research units, specifically examining how the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) is incorporating South-South collaboration into their South-South-North regional research networks programme. The title of my project is South-South-North Research Partnerships: A Transformative Development Modality? The study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Ruth Hayhoe.

The study looks at the role of bilateral development assistance in supporting context-sensitive knowledge production processes in the higher education institutions of developing countries. There are three points of data collection in my study: collecting organizational documents for textual analysis, direct observation at participating research sites, and key informant interviews of personnel at NUFU headquarters and participating universities involved in the regional research networks programme.

This international study will be carried out in Norway and select African countries involved in regional research networks. The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis under the supervision of Professor Ruth Hayhoe, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. It may also be used for subsequent research articles. Dr Hayhoe and myself are the only researchers with access to the collected data.

Participation in this study can benefit you and your organization through the opportunity it provides to investigate the consequences of this international development practice. Because of the newness of the regional networks modality, having an on-the-ground perception of the research site activities can clarify how the modality supports the development of increasingly autonomous Southern research units and more context-driven development practices. With limited research available on this topic, this study intends to fill some of the gaps in the scholarly literature and help the academic and development communities gain a deeper understanding of the South-South-North development practice in higher education institutional partnerships. Site observations and participant interviews will help me identify research project dynamics and participant thoughts and perceptions of South-South collaboration and Norwegian
development assistance practices. Participation in this study may facilitate a reflective process that will be useful to your professional development and may allow you a safe space to reflect upon your role within local, national and regional development processes.

Our interview should last between 45 and 90 minutes. I would like to tape our interview, with your permission. If you would prefer that I not tape our session, please let me know before our interview. The questions will focus on the structure and organization of the regional research network, as well as the initiation, design, implementation and research dissemination practices and processes in the specific research projects. I am also interested in learning about the challenges to implementing multi-site research projects, the organizational or institutional rationales behind development research programmes, and related questions regarding the field of international development assistance. As the interview proceeds, I may ask questions for clarification or further understanding, but my part will be mainly to listen to you speak about your views, experiences, and the reasons you believe the things you do. After the interview, I will write brief notes that will be used to assist me in remembering the surroundings of the interview (i.e., characteristics of the site).

You are under no obligation to participate in my study. During our interview, you are free to refuse to answer any of the questions that you are not comfortable answering. You may at any time refuse to answer a question or withdraw from the interview process without consequence. If, after our interview, you decide to withdraw from my study, please contact me and I will destroy my notes and all data collected. At no time will value judgments be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of your effectiveness in your organization. At no time will you be at risk of harm.

It is the intention that each interview will be audio-taped and later transcribed to paper. In order to keep the interview anonymous, in my personal notes I will assign a number to you that will correspond to your interviews and transcriptions. If you wish, I can send you your transcript in order for you to add any further information or to correct any misinterpretations that could result. All information will be reported in such a way that individual persons cannot be identified. Your identity will be kept confidential and not used in the final study, in publications or presentations, unless you wish that your name be used. At the bottom of this form there is a place for you to indicate if you are interested in having your name used in my study. I will also make every effort possible to protect participants from knowing who the other participants are. When the results are written up, the organization of the participant may be mentioned if several people from the same organization were interviewed and cannot be individually identified through their comments. When the name of their organization will jeopardize their anonymity, I will not disclose it in the results. All raw data (i.e. transcripts, field notes) will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

If you would like to have summary of the study results sent to you upon the completion of the study, please indicate so at the end of this document.

The tape and transcripts will be kept in a locked cabinet in my home office for further analysis. Only my supervisor and myself will have access to the tapes and transcripts.

Upon completion of the study, I plan to post the research on a website. When that time comes, I will notify you of the URL, so that you have access to the final results.
Please feel free to share this information letter and website with your supervisor and/or others in your organization.

My contact information as well as the contact information of my advisor and the ethical review board at the University of Toronto is as follows:

Julian Weinrib  
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Canada  
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Professor Ruth Hayhoe,  
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education,  
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 6th. Floor  
University of Toronto  
252 Bloor St. West  
Toronto, ON M5S 1V6

The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study please contact the Ethics Review Office at the University of Toronto at 416 946 3272 or, ethics.review@utoronto.ca

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Julian Weinrib

By signing below, you are indicating that you are voluntarily willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above.

Name: __________________________________________________________________

Signed: ____________________  Date:_________________

Please initial if you agree to have your interview audio taped: _____

Please initial if you agree to have your name used in the study: _____

If you would like to have summary of the study results sent to you upon the completion of the study, please check here: □
Please keep a copy of this letter for your records.
Appendix B – Request to Participate Letter with Consent Form (Organization)

OISE
ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Dear <Name of Director or Sponsor>

My name is Julian Weinrib and I am a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Currently, I am conducting research for my doctoral dissertation on bilateral development assistance to higher education institutions and their research units, specifically examining how the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) is incorporating South-South collaboration into their South-South-North regional research networks programme. The study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Ruth Hayhoe.

The study looks at how NUFU’s regional network model is operationalized within Southern research universities, with a specific focus on how the increase in project autonomy and responsibility is impacting the various network actors. There are three points of data collection in my study that require your institutional consent: access to organizational documents relating to the organization and administration of the research project for textual analysis; access to observe pertinent research project processes, including research activities and operations, project administrative meetings, should they arise, and intra-institutional meetings, again, should they arise. Observation is meant to gain a better understanding of how the research project carries out its day-to-day operations, how decision making processes are undertaken in the various administrative avenues of the project, and how individuals within the project relate with one another within their respective program sites and across sites. The identities and institutions of meeting and project participants will be kept anonymous. If the direct observation results in the collection of pertinent information from a specific participant, individual consent will be requested through a formal consent form that outlines the nature and scope of the dissertation project and that informs participants of their right to anonymity, withdrawal, and access to project results; and key informant interviews of personnel at participating institutions in the regional research networks programme, with names and contact information gathered through publicly available websites and documents, or inter-institutional references. Interview participants will be formally recruited through an in-depth consent form that highlights the core research issue and the parameters of their participation. All participation will be voluntary and at no point will participants be judged, evaluated or put at risk of harm. All participants may withdraw at any time without consequence. All interviews will be audio-taped only with the permission of the individual participants. This letter is to request your consent for me to access and collect data through participant observation and interviews on or between <dates> at <institution/location>.

Participation in this study can benefit your organization in the opportunity it provides to investigate the consequences of a new international development practice. The call for increased Southern participation and ownership of development assistance practices and rationales
requires attention. Because of the newness of the regional networks modality, having an on-the-ground perception of the research site activities can clarify how it is supports the development of increasingly autonomous Southern research units and more context-driven development practices. With limited literature available on this topic, this study intends to fill in gaps in the scholarly literature and help the academic and development communities gain a deeper understanding of the South-South-North development practice in higher education. Site observations and participant interviews will help me identify research project dynamics and participant thoughts and perceptions of South-South collaboration and Norwegian development assistance practices.

The identities of the participants will be kept anonymous, although I would like to report the names, locations, and dates of the observations and interviews in my study. Anonymity is assured in all group settings, such as meetings, where field notes will be used to discern general substantive and procedural issues. Individual anonymity is guaranteed should the data collected be used in subsequent publications or public presentations. I will make every effort possible to protect participants from knowing who the other participants are. When the results are written up, the organization of the participant may be mentioned if several people from the same organization were interviewed and cannot be individually identified through their comments. When the name of their organization will jeopardize their anonymity, I will not disclose it in the results. I intend to observe activities and ask questions in discussions of project operations, as well as take notes of comments and questions made by other participants.

The notes gathered from the participant observation will be kept in strict confidence and stored in a locked cabinet at my home. All data collected will be used for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles. All raw data (i.e. transcripts, field notes) will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study. Upon completion of the study, the research will also be hosted online and participants will be notified of the URL in order to have access to the final results. Participants can also request a copy of the study results by indicating their e-mail address on the consent form.

If your organization voluntarily agrees to allow me access to the involved research unit, please sign the letter below and return it to me in the envelope provided. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My supervisor, Dr. Ruth Hayhoe is also available for questions regarding my study. Our contact information is below. Dr. Hayhoe and myself will be the only individuals with access to the collected data. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

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The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study please contact the Ethics Review Office at the University of Toronto at 416 946 3272 or, ethics.review@utoronto.ca

By signing below, <Sponsors Name> is willing to allow the researcher to conduct a participant observation study at <event> on <dates>. <Sponsors Name> has received a copy of this letter, and it is fully aware of the conditions above.

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Position: ______________________________________________________________

Signed: ___________________________ Date:________________________

Please keep a copy of this letter for your records
Appendix C – Key Informant Interview Guide

Sample questions:

For Administrators and Researchers situated in Southern universities:

- In your opinion, who were the driving forces behind the research network being established and how were network member sites and researchers selected?
- Who has taken the lead in establishing the research objectives and procedures?
  - To what extent has your site been involved in these processes?
  - To what extent has NUFU been involved in the processes?
  - Are there restrictions or limitations imposed by the NUFU framework in this regard?
- What types of administrative and management responsibilities has your site or network taken on?
  - How has NUFU prepared your site for the added responsibilities, either financially or in practice?
- What are some of the challenges that your site has faced within a multi-party network?
  - How has your site dealt with both Norway and other African country representatives simultaneously?
  - What forms of collaboration have been supported between you and the partner sites? Do you think this will be sustained after the official NUFU support has ended?
- How does your site distinguish between the local, national, and regional objectives of the research project or the different needs of individual sites and researchers?
- How are the research publications being managed and disseminated within the network?
  - Who is taking the leading role and how are the practices being discussed?
  - What goals were established at the outset of the project for dissemination? Is funding conditional on meeting these goals?
- What are some of the unique aspects that your site brings to the network?
  - Professional specialization, epistemologically and methodologically, or through specific resources?
- To what extent and through what means are local actors, community leaders, and civil-society organizations consulted throughout the process?
  - Which sites or actors have taken the lead in these consultations?
- What does the term ‘Global South’ mean to you? What does South-South collaboration mean to you?

For Norwegian Administrators and Researchers situated in both the NUFU organization and Norwegian Universities:

- In your opinion, who were the driving forces behind the research network being established and how were network member sites and researchers selected?
- Who has taken the lead in establishing the research objectives and procedures?
  - To what extent has your site been involved in the processes?
- How have you negotiated organizational needs and Norwegian foreign policy prescriptions with the needs of the Southern sites and actors?
- How often is your site in contact with Southern sites?
- Which southern sites are most actively engaging with your site?
- To what extent is the Norwegian side of the network in a position to engage and manage inter-network disagreements and conflicts?
- How would you characterize the assistance being given by the Norwegian side of the network? What does assistance mean to you?
- What does South-South collaboration mean to you?
- What is the current state of NSRP funding opportunities and development-related research in Norway?
- How have the recent policy changes governing Norwegian higher education impacted development-related research?