

# Minutes of the NFU General Assembly 2007

Time: Tuesday 6 November 2007, 18.30-19.30  
Venue: CMI, Bergen

## 1. Constitute meeting and approve agenda

- Darley Jose Kjosavik was chosen as the chair of the meeting. Ragnhild Muriaas and Poul Wisborg were nominated as Reporters.
- The agenda was approved.

## 2. NFU Annual report 2007

The leader of NFU, Håkon Fottland, presented the annual report. The report was approved.

### *Evaluation of Norwegian development research*

Under point 5.3 (national initiatives to improve the conditions for development research), Jesper W. Simonsen, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) gave an orientation about the recent evaluation of Norwegian development research. Major conclusions in the report are that Norwegian development research is of high quality and policy relevance; it involves a high level of international cooperation, though relatively weak in the European area. The committee finds that the environment is fragmented and recommends mainstreaming of development research in the universities. It expresses that it finds development research to be well funded in Norway. Its development relevance may be too constrained by the priorities of financing ministry and Norad and therefore more focussed on the agenda of today than of tomorrow. The committee recommends, among others, a revision of the definition of development research, more funding for free, curiosity-driven research and a revision of the role of Ministries and Norad in programme boards.

Simonsen further reported that the report has been discussed in the RCN. Simonsen disagreed with the view that development research is well funded, if that is interpreted as “too well funded”. It is necessary to ask: compared with what? Simonsen stressed that it is necessary to invest in a building of capacity for development research in Norway. Norwegian funding of international development cooperation is substantial and should imply a similar effort to create research-based knowledge in the field of development. Norway’s other profiled ambitions and initiatives on the international arena also requires such knowledge. Ministries play a role in programmes because they have a responsibility for the generation of knowledge to match their current and long-term responsibilities and needs. There is a need to ensure a better match between funding from other ministries, such as for global health. The RCN also sees good arguments for increased funding for more free funds.

The RCN Division Board for Strategic Priorities concluded that: (1) There is a need to look at the definition of development research in light of, among others, the globalisation project; (2) the RCN will seek to obtain more funding for free, curiosity-driven research; and (3) one will consider models where ministries participate in programme boards but not in the selection of projects.

### *Nordic co-operation initiative*

Under point 5.7 (Nordic co-operation), Olav Stokke stressed that this should be a collective effort by relevant organisations in all the Nordic countries.

### **3. NFU Audited Accounts 200**

Guro Aandahl presented the accounts 2007 covering the period 01.08.2006 – 31.09.2007. The accounts and the audit report for 2007 were approved by the general assembly.

### **4. Accounts for NFU Annual conferences 2005 and 2006**

These have been sent to the Norwegian Research Council (NFR).

### **5. NFU Annual Conference 2007**

Application from NTNU (Trondheim): **National states and trans-national realities: Multilevel impacts of contemporary crises and migration flows.** The conference is linked to the Globalisation Programme and will be hosted by the Department of Geography. The application was approved.

### **6. Incoming business**

(None)

### **7. NFU Membership fees 2008**

The NFU board recommended that the fees remain the same as for 2007: NOK 400 for regular members and NOK 200 for students. This was approved by the general assembly.

### **8. Work plan and Budget for 2007**

#### *Work plan*

The NFU Chair presented the proposed work plan. A specification to the point about Nordic cooperation was suggested by Jan M. Haakonsen (RCN). An additional point was proposed by Kristin Ingstad Sandberg, Section for International Health, University of Oslo concerning liaison with the Norwegian Forum on Global Health Research.

The work plan (with the specification and additional point):

- Work to arrange the NFU Annual Conference 2008
- Promote the Forum for Development Studies
- Participate in national initiatives to improve conditions for development research
- Announce the NFU prize and the NFU Master Thesis Competition 2007-08
- Work to improve the website and the flow of information on development research
- Work with the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) through the Norwegian Executive Committee member and at the EADI conference in June 2008
- Follow-up the Nordic co-operation initiative and submit an application for Nordic networking to NORFORSK
- Liaise with Norwegian Forum on Global Health Research: information, cross-links, NFU-conference, etc.

### *Budget*

The Board proposed a budget with an income of NOK 75,100, expenditure of NOK 117,300 and a deficit of NOK 42,200 drawn from a balance of NOK 116,723. A question was raised on the long-term plan for bringing income and expenditure in balance. The Chair expressed the view that the organisation sees no need to maintain larger savings and that the proposed activities may attract new members. The budget was approved.

### **9. Elections**

The list proposed by the Nomination Committee was approved by the general assembly:

Board members:

*Håkon Fottland*, Semut, University of Tromsø (chair) (not on election)

*Guro Aandahl*, SUM, University of Oslo (not on election)

*Morten Bøås*, Fafo, Oslo (not on election)

*Tale Baadsvik*, Norwegian University for Science and Technology (not on election)

*Siri Bjerkreim Hellevik*, NIBR, Oslo (not on election)

*John McNeish*, CMI, Bergen (not on election)

*Poul Wisborg*, Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås (previously deputy)

*Kristen Nordhaug*, NUPI, Oslo (new, previously deputy)

*Vibeke Wang*, Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen (new)

Deputy board members:

*Camilla Brautaset*, Dept. of History, University of Bergen (new)

*Marit Solstad*, Bodø University College, (new)

*Marit Haug*, NIBR, Oslo (new)

*Frode Sundnes*, Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås (new)

*Anders B. Asphaug*, Department of Geography, NTNU, Trondheim, was elected as special deputy for *Siri Bjerkreim Hellevik* during her maternity leave. He will also facilitate coordination with NTNU regarding the Annual Conference 2008.

The chair and the general assembly expressed their warm thanks to the departing members and deputies of the Board: Darley Jose Kjosavik, Asuncion Lera St. Clair, Elisabeth Sandersen, Ragnhild Muriaas and Anne Cathrine Larsen.

The general assembly approved two new members for the election committee to replace Einar Braathen and Siri Gloppen.

Election Committee:

*Randi Kaarhus*, Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (not on election)

*Asuncion Lera St. Clair*, University of Bergen (new)

*Olav Stokke*, NUPI (new)

EADI representative:

*N. Shanmugaratnam*, Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (not on election)

Auditor:

*Hans Jørgen Oppi Christiansen*, SUM, University of Oslo (re-election)

Darley Jose Kjosavik closed the meeting and thanked the participants.