



# Development and Cooperation Strategy

February 2014

This strategy for Development and Cooperation is a revision of the 2006 KFH document "Applied Research and Teaching in Partnership with Developing and Transitional Countries". It has been designed for the Swiss Universities of applied sciences (UAS), but it considers the Universities of Teacher Education (UTE) as well.

## **Content**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL BACKGROUOND.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>LEGAL FRAME, ELEGIBLE COUNTRIES, PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PAST AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES IN THE DOMAIN OF DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION .</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL FORM .....</b>	<b>6</b>

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL BACKGROUND

Higher education in Switzerland fits into the general dual system<sup>1</sup>. The range from academic to applied studies is covered by three types of institutions with different training tasks. Twelve doctoral / research universities (ten Cantonal Universities and two Federal Institutes of Technology) offer theoretically-oriented, scientific bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs. Professionally-oriented studies are offered at the nine Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) and at the fourteen Universities of Teacher Education (UTE). All three types of universities have implemented the Bologna Declaration.

The Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts (KFH) encompasses the rectors of the UAS, which are acknowledged by the Swiss Confederation, and was established in 1999 in order to represent the interests of the UAS when dealing with the Confederation, the cantons and other institutions in charge of education and research policy, as well as the public in general. It works in partnership with the Council of the UAS of the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education and maintains close contacts with the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, which manages and cofinances the UAS on the national level.

## 2 LEGAL FRAME, ELEGIBLE COUNTRIES, PRINCIPLES

In the objectives defined by the Swiss Confederation, the Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts (UAS) shall intensify their special role as an engine of innovation at the interface between practice and science. They shall expand their cooperation with implementing agencies and other universities, network their research activities and assure the transfer of research results. UAS provide a practice-oriented education, accommodating the needs of both students and the job market. Highly qualified teachers who are often involved in research and/or professional practice represent a guarantee of cohesion with the local economy. All departments of the UAS also conduct research and offer services aimed at solving problems related to their respective professional fields. This makes the UAS an important link in the chain of innovation. Research and service supply at the UAS are also closely combined with instruction, enabling students to gain research expertise in their respective professional fields. These principles are established in the Swiss Federal Law on Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts<sup>2</sup>. Hence, applied research in cooperation with partners in developing and transitional countries offers Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts an excellent opportunity to position themselves within the international research environment and to intensify their international networking according to the KFH vision in the domain of internationalization of UAS<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, applied research provides the basis for making teaching and consulting activities responsive to requirements placed on graduates in an international environment. Recognizing the importance of development and cooperation (DC) issues within the international setting, the KFH has decided to implement these activities through an existing Development and Cooperation Office and a Expert group for development and cooperation within the Ressort Internationales (RInt).

---

<sup>1</sup> Studying in Switzerland, Universities of Applied Sciences. 2012, edited by Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences KFH, [www.kfh.ch](http://www.kfh.ch)

<sup>2</sup> Bundesgesetz vom 6. Oktober 1995 über die Fachhochschulen (Fachhochschulgesetz, FHS); Loi fédérale du 6 octobre 1995 sur les hautes écoles spécialisées (LHES); Legge federale del 6 ottobre 1995 sulle scuole universitarie professionali (LSUP). For updated versions of this law please refer to the Classified Compilation of Federal Legislation: [www.admin.ch/ch/e/rs/rs.htm](http://www.admin.ch/ch/e/rs/rs.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Internationalisierung der Fachhochschulen - Support durch die KFH, Grundsatzposition KFH 3. Mai 2012.

In the context of an increasingly globalized economy and society facing the failure of the globalized financial economy to address the true needs of developing countries confronted with increasing poverty, the international academic world should cooperate with D&T countries on teaching and research mainly focusing on: the Millennium Developing Goals and Sustainable Development Goals<sup>4</sup> as well as on the legal bases for Swiss development cooperation<sup>5</sup>. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality, reduction of child mortality, improvement of maternal health, combatting epidemics (especially HIV and tuberculosis), and ensuring environmental sustainability are all issues that should be addressed by the international research community. The common focus on these issues will significantly improve not only the personal enrichment of those individuals involved, but also enable both the prevention of international armed conflicts and the promotion of peace. This is the way towards assuming responsibility for balanced global development of researchers around the world. Interaction and cooperation among partner institutions in developing countries form the foundation on which students and teachers involved in both teaching and research can come to grips with cooperative development and, by doing so, acquire and deepen their competences in an international and intercultural context. The main concern when research partnerships are formed is to strengthen the total capacity of all those involved for carrying out effective research, both on the individual and on the institutional level.

The countries eligible for a partnership within the frame of the present strategy should be those more affected by poverty, the OECD DAC-List<sup>6</sup> being the reference list for such partnerships. Furthermore, the present strategy should consider both the list of priority countries stated by the Ressort Internationales and the official list of SDC's areas of deployment.

The 11 principles and 7 questions for research partnerships, developed by the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE)<sup>7</sup> are adopted in the present strategy. Words like *mutual, together, share, transparency, collaboration, equitably* are relevant for the philosophy adopted by KFPE as well as for the philosophy of this strategy, regardless of whether collaboration is in the pedagogical domain or in the fields of research and service supply. Projects should present a high degree of originality while also including an approach to the development of relevant issues as well as the development of individual and institutional capacities. Applied research should be preferred over fundamental research. In other words, project outputs should favor application-oriented issues rather than increasing the citation index of authors. The valorization of results should be promoted in a sustainable manner (i.e. one which allows for wider distribution, practical application, political development, and replicability), and with respect for gender issues. Furthermore, while internationalization of universities represents a great opportunity for the academic institu-

---

<sup>4</sup> MDGs were and are an important instrument for the mobilization of support in development and cooperation of the civil society and politics in partner and donor countries. The debate on post-2015 MDGs and the SDGs (according to Rio+20) is taking place and will be part of the present UAS strategy in development and cooperation.

<sup>5</sup> Bundesgesetz vom 19. März 1976 über die internationale Entwicklungszusammenarbeit und humanitäre Hilfe; Loi fédérale du 19 mars 1976 sur la coopération au développement et l'aide humanitaire internationales; Legge federale del 19 marzo 1976 su la cooperazione allo sviluppo e l'aiuto umanitario internazionali. For updated versions of this law please refer to the Classified Compilation of Federal Legislation: [www.admin.ch/ch/e/rs/rs.htm](http://www.admin.ch/ch/e/rs/rs.htm)

<sup>6</sup> The DAC List of ODA Recipients shows all countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance (ODA). These consist of all low and middle income countries based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as published by the World Bank, with the exception of G8 members, EU members, and countries with a firm date for entry into the EU. The list also includes all of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as defined by the United Nations (UN). [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org).

<sup>7</sup> Bruno Stöckli, Urs Wiesmann, Jon-Andri Lys, 2012: A Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships: 11 Principles, Bern, Switzerland; and Urs Wiesmann, Bruno Stöckli, Jon-Andri Lys, 2012: A Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships: 7 Questions. Bern, Switzerland. Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE). [www.kfpe.ch](http://www.kfpe.ch)

tions of industrialized countries in terms of visibility and image, any type of international exchange program (e.g. student exchange, research partnership, educational or teaching programs, provision of services and consultancies) should be based on strong ethical principles.

It is mandatory that competitive research in the domain of development and cooperation should include all of the above principles and substantive criteria in order to guarantee at least a minimum degree of ethical philosophy<sup>8</sup> and equitable final results for the partner country. All actions implemented together with other Swiss partners such as other academic institutions, the federal, cantonal, and communal administrations, NGOs, and industry/private sectors should share the philosophy of “Swissness”.

### 3 Past and future activities in the domain of development and cooperation

Partnerships with developing countries have been established by UAS and UTE already in 2001, since their very beginnings, both institutions traditionally implement exchange programs for teachers, researchers and students. Many research projects have been promoted through this fruitful partnership. A wide program<sup>9</sup> of applied research in developing countries has been conducted from 2007 to 2013 by means of an important direct funding instrument supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). This research program was based on competitive criteria compatible with those in use by calls for proposals of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). Within this program, 186 projects have been submitted for evaluation in the frame of 8 calls for proposals, 44 projects encompassing all UAS, were funded and implemented with success in 28 different developing countries eligible to receive official development assistance according to OECD DAC list. Every project received in average approximately 50'000 CHF, half of the total budget, the rest was covered by the financial participation of the single schools. In addition, the program has received a positive external evaluation<sup>10</sup>.

In 2012 a new instrument for financing research in development and cooperation has been launched jointly by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). The *Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development* supports relevant research for development aimed at solving global problems in poor countries (see [www.r4d.ch](http://www.r4d.ch)).

Currently there are over 50 UAS and UTE branches/departments/institutes involved in cooperation with developing countries, some of which already have competence centers specifically dedicated to DC issues. The UAS cooperate both with universities as well as with private enterprises and NGOs. In Switzerland, this results in cooperative endeavors between universities and companies. This cooperation leads to greater competence in the management of research projects both within the Swiss UAS and the DC partners. It permits student exchanges and the establishment of new courses. Frequently, it results in a modification / enhancement of curricula and teaching methods and an strengthening of the bond between research and

---

<sup>8</sup> Valsangiacomo C., 2009. Ethical aspects of applied research in developing and transitional countries: time to switch to true partnerships. In: " Internationalisation of Higher Education and Development - Zur Rolle von Universitäten und Hochschulen in Entwicklungsprozessen" pp.115-121 Österreichische Forschungsstiftung für Internationale Entwicklung. ÖFSE Edition 15, 224 pp. 1. Auflage – Wien: Südwind-Verl., 2009, ISBN: 978-3-9502487-7-7

<sup>9</sup> Applied Research in Development and Cooperation - A Program of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts (2007-2013). Published by the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts, 2013, Bern. [www.kfh.ch/dc](http://www.kfh.ch/dc).

<sup>10</sup> Program for the Promotion of Research Partnerships of Swiss Universities for Applied Science and Institutes in Developing and Transition Countries- Evaluation of Phase III (2007 – 2010). M. Engler, F. Kehl, F. Wigger, KEK – CDC Consultants, Zurich 2010. [www.kfh.ch/dc](http://www.kfh.ch/dc)

teaching.

Besides this direct, practical benefit for the UAS, cooperation with developing and transitional countries also promotes ethical solidarity and aspects of foreign policy (e.g. the international position of Swiss research).

Experience in the competition for research funds available from SDC and SNSF for projects with developing countries reveals the potential of applied research (as a comparative advantage of the UAS), in comparison to fundamental research within this domain. Furthermore, besides the area of research, the improvement of competencies in teaching, consultancy and transfer technology represents an important future challenge for UAS and UTE in the domain of development and cooperation.

## 4 Organizational form

### General

For the implementation of the strategy the KFH has provided for two measures expressed graphically below:

1. Expert group for development and cooperation (until 2012 named “Steering Committee”) within the Ressort Internationales<sup>11</sup>.
2. Development and Cooperation Office hosted by a UAS (existing since 2007 at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, SUPSI).



### **Expert group for development and cooperation: tasks, functioning and composition**

The Expert group has a role of support and guidance, helping the Development and Cooperation Office in networking with the UAS. In this role, it does the following:

- Implements the network within the single schools and the institutional network in the DC domain.
- Interacts with other working groups of the RInt: Communication, Priority Countries, Common Projects, Networking.
- Develops thematic areas (engineering, social, pedagogical, life sciences, ...)
- Supports the DC Office strategically (defines focal points, drafts development plans, etc.)
- Reviews budgets and accounts and communicates these to the KFH through the DC Office.
- Holds meetings 2-4 times/year
- Composition: representatives defined by each school as having a “strong voice” are able to network within the school, with proven competence in development and cooperation, covering the different mandates (research, teaching, consulting, technology transfer), in a manner which is gender balanced and covers relevant DC geographical areas (Africa, South America, Asia, East Europe). COHEP defines its own representative.

### **Development and Cooperation Office: location, activities and human resources**

#### Location:

- The Development and Cooperation Office is located by contractual agreement at a UAS (actually at SUPSI).

#### Activities:

- Represents the network to the public and leads the Expertgroup for development and cooperation
- Maintains and updates the Internet page [www.kfh.ch/dc](http://www.kfh.ch/dc).

<sup>11</sup> Dt. Fachgruppe Entwicklungszusammenarbeit; Fr. Groupe d'expert-es pour développement et coopération, It. Gruppo di esperti sviluppo e cooperazione.

- Maps out DC competencies within UAS: Database/platform of DC activities and competencies to be uploaded to the web page
- Organizes one information day per year.
- Organizes meetings of the Expert group for development and cooperation
- Maintains a presence and lobbies at UAS during main events and networks with other organizations in Switzerland (Federal Offices, UNIs, ETHZ/EPFL, NGOs, etc.)
- Is present at important international events or specific DC situations in developing countries.
- Facilitates the access to project funding, e.g. through SNF instruments (visits to schools on a regular basis in order to determine competencies, best practices, funding sources).
- Maintains contact with other institutions and networks with a similar or identical orientation, especially with those in university environments.

#### Human resources:

- Head of Office: academic profile with experience in development and cooperation issues (degree of employment approximately 30%)
- Scientific collaborator: academic profile with experience in development and cooperation issues (degree of employment approximately 20%)
- Administrative collaborator (degree of employment < 5%)