

## SUDAC Programme

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## COFER Innovative Financing in Education and Development: Case Studies and Multi-Media Material for E-Learning

### Summary

The proposed COFER project focuses on a topic that is severely under-examined in development studies yet has been elevated to a key feature of the SOG 2030 agenda: private sector involvement in development. The new innovative financing modalities, which often explore avenues to raise financing from private sources or at minimum use market-based approaches, have the potential to become a significant source of financing for development. They are supposed to help close the funding gap that yawns from relying exclusively on public funds, that is, funds garnered either from governments in low and middle income countries or from bilateral and multilateral donors. These traditional forms of financing are supposed to be complemented by a wide array of innovative financing mechanisms and sources, including results-based financing, philanthropic giving, social corporate responsibility programs, remittances, diaspora bonds, social impact bonds, just to name a few.

The debate on innovative financing is heated with proponents pointing at the need for non-traditional and innovative means of financing and opponents high-lighting concerns of equity and quality when development work follows the logic of a market. Education is an attractive arena for private sector engagement, where both philanthropic and profit seeking activities have considerably increased over the past few years. The private sector, in fact, has discovered schooling as a terrain in which huge profits can be made given the right to education legislation in different parts of the world and the limited capacity of governments to provide education for all without additional financial sources.

In this COFER project, seven consortium partners join their varied expertise, net-works, and experiences to develop case studies and multi-media material on innovative financing in education. The material will be used for a post-graduate/executive education courses with a blended learning design (including e-learning), which will at a later stage be used as a foundation to develop a full-fledged MOOC on the topic.

Three of the consortium partners are based in Switzerland:

1. University of Fribourg - Head of COFER
2. The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, NORRAG (Network for international policies and cooperation in education and training), Geneva - Project Lead
3. Zurich University of Teacher Education

Four of the partners are based in the global South:

1. Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India
2. University of Cape Town, Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, South Africa

3. Beijing Normal University, Institute of International and Comparative Education, PR China

4. Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Buenos Aires, Argentina

There is a history of close institutional cooperation among several of the consortium partners.

This COFER project will specifically address the following two Sustainable Development Goals (SDG):

- SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (specifically the role of the private sector in the SDG implementation and the development financing component) Both research and teaching constitute the core components of the proposed project. The case studies, carried out in countries and regions where innovative finance has been tried, represent applied research on the topic and at the same time serve to develop teaching material on the topic. The consortium representatives have disciplinary backgrounds (economics, political science, comparative education, development studies, sociology) that all bring extensive development experience to the project.

The expected outcomes of the COFER are an inventory and typology of innovative financing tools, a compilation of six in-depth, multi-media case studies (developed through field research), 14 course modules with an e-library and e-resources, systematic literature review, and 1-2 publications in peer-reviewed journals.

NORRAG, the Associate Program of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies serves as the project lead and ensures the continued collaboration of the consortium partners beyond the year 2020.