DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ANNUAL REPORT 2024

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

DANIDA FELLOWSHIP CENTRE

MAY 2025

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BACKGROUND AND READING GUIDE

Support to development research has been an important component of Danish development cooperation for more than 40 years. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Danida (MFA) provides grants for development research activities as part of Denmark's international development cooperation. This support is explicitly mandated in §7 of the Danish Law on International Development Cooperation, with the aim of enhancing research capacity and generating new knowledge in developing countries. Denmark's current development cooperation strategy, "The World We Share," emphasizes the importance of partnerships between Danish universities and research communities in the Global South.

Currently the support to development research managed by Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) is implemented through three main modalities. 1) Support to research collaboration projects through a competitive open call (the FFU modality), and 2) Support to institutional capacity strengthening in selected universities (the Building Stronger Universities (BSU) IV programme).

While the MFA ensures that grants to development research align with the overall strategic priorities of Denmark's development cooperation, the more specific strategic considerations regarding the grant are a joint responsibility between the MFA and DFC. The Consultative Research Committee for Development Research (in Danish called "det Forskningsfaglige Udvalg (FFU)) provides advice the MFA and the DFC regarding the Danish support to development research. See the composition of the FFU here.

Each year, the majority of the research development funds are allocated to FFU research projects. Calls for research applications are issued annually. The rest of the funds are allocated to BSU, DFC administration, and Science Engagement activities and grants.

In 2024, DFC entered into a new agreement with the MFA to manage the full grant allocated for development research. The conditions of this agreement are specified in a set of administrative guidelines[1] which are updated annually. In 2024, the full grant was 220 million DKK and included funding for 20 new research collaboration projects.

The framework for support to development research is outlined in a **strategic guidance note** for Danish support to development research, published in March 2024[2]. The note outlines the guiding principles that underpin the choices and prioritization of funding in Danish support to development research. In short, the development research that Danida wishes to support:

1. Is of scientific excellence and practical relevance,
2. Is contextually relevant and engages stakeholders,
3. Pays attention to the multidimensional nature of sustainable development challenges,
4. Focuses on inclusion, human rights and local knowledge,
5. Supports Global South institutions and capacities,
6. Requires equitable research partnerships,
7. Involves critical reflection on development engagements and learning.

[1] Administrative guidelines for the administration of funds by the MFA
[2] See the note here.

In 2024, DFC started a process of developing a new framework for documenting results across the research-programmes including the FFU projects portfolio and the BSU programme. The aim is to for DFC to be able to meaningfully report on and select overall results across the areas identified in the strategic guidance note:

1. Production of new knowledge is applied in practice,
2. Strengthened capacity at individual-, partnership- and institutional level,
3. Strengthened research networks and collaborative learning.

With a focus on these three overall result areas, this report covers Danida funded research from the FFU modality, 2024. This includes key highlights from the large portfolio of research projects as well as from the support to and management of the research projects.

FFU projects (those granted under the FFU modality) included in this report fall into two categories: 1) Projects from the ongoing portfolio of research projects (active by December 2024). This group contains 111 projects. And 2) Projects that were closed in the DFC system in 2024 (narratively and financially approved). This group contains five projects. This means that projects that were not active by December 2024, but not yet closed, are not included in this report. The latter will be reported on when they are closed in the DFC system.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSU = Building Stronger Universities

DFC = Danida Fellowship Centre

FFU = Forskningsfagligt Udvalg, The Consultative Research Committee

FFU Call = Call for annual research proposals selected by the Consultative Research Committee

MFA = Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PI = Principal Investigator of FFU research project

SSC = Strategic Sector Cooperation

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the work of the DFC research team 2024 in regards to the FFU projects and management of these.

The FFU projects are versatile in a range of aspects. The calls are open to all disciplines and encourage interdisciplinariness, and the FFU projects cover almost every academic discipline. They are implemented across 18 countries, and include researchers on all different career levels. In total, 111 research projects were active by the end of year 2024. The total amount granted in the ongoing portfolio is just above one billion DKK.

The DFC management of the grant includes a) administration of the annual application rounds for research project grants, b) secretariat for the FFU, c) management of grants to ongoing FFU research projects, d) monitoring and reporting, and e) communication and science engagement activities.

DFC also manages the Building Stronger Universities (BSU) programmes. As separate reporting is made for these programmes, they are not included in this report. However, DFC support activities (see section 2.2. below) are administered to both FFU projects and projects within the BSU programmes. Find more information about the Building Stronger Universities programmes here.

The report is divided into two main parts: 1) Key highlights from the FFU research projects and 2) key highlights from DFC management and support activities. It is thus a report that reflects on both the research projects' results and activities (part 1) as well as on the key highlights and achievements from the DFC support to and management of these research projects (part 2). Both parts are structured around the three results areas highlighted in the strategic guidance note: Production of new knowledge is applied in practice, Strengthened capacity at individual-, partnership- and institutional level, and Strengthened research networks and collaborative learning. Furthermore three themes that in 2024 had particular interest to DFC research in the management of the portfolio are explored: Gender, PhD students' conditions and possibilities, and North-South partnerships.

Finally, the report contains four annexes. 1. Overview of the ongoing project portfolio. 2. List of closed projects 2024. 3. Application round 2024 in numbers. 4. Science engagement grants.

PART 1.
KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM FFU RESEARCH PROJECTS

Annual Report 2024
Development Research

DANIDA
FELLOWSHIP
CENTRE

PART 1. KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM FFU RESEARCH PROJECTS

In this part of the report, we present and discuss key highlights of the 111 active portfolio (active by December 2024) as well as from the five projects closed in 2024. Se annex 1 and section 1.2 for an overview of the ongoing and completed projects.

The first section zooms in on the three results areas and provide key insights into how the research projects contribute to these in the ongoing portfolio. The second section reports on the projects that officially closed in 2024 (financially closed). The third section explores key lessons learned across the portfolio. These are mainly drawn from DFC's ongoing work of support to and dialogues with grant holders, monitoring and learning visits to projects including the FFU travel to Kenya in January 2024, as well as from the projects' narrative reporting. Lastly, the section discusses key challenges, priorities, and considerations regarding the support to and management of the portfolio, and will pave the way for part two, where DFC management of and support to FFU projects will be presented and discussed.

1.1 Findings across the three result areas

1.1.1 Production of new knowledge is applied in practice

Key to the research projects funded by the FFU modality is that the knowledge produced is 'new' (fill a clear knowledge gap) and that this knowledge is relevant and 'actionable' to development agendas.

The outputs for the first result area are 1) production of high quality outputs (production of publications, PhD theses etc.) and 2) research products are prepared for use, influence and impact (the ability to integrate potential users into the research process, developing research and engagement strategies etc.).

In the still on-going projects, it is difficult to report specifically on the production of high quality research outputs (output 1) as research outputs are mostly reported on towards the end of a research project. In this report, therefore, the research outputs are mainly reported on in the finalized projects (section 1.2).

In terms of research products prepared for use, influence and impact (output 2) , much effort is put in by projects to integrate external stakeholders in the design and implementation of research projects. By engaging stakeholders throughout the research process, the likelihood of stakeholders' up-take of research results is increased. Stakeholder engagement is further elaborated in section 1.2 on some of the overall learnings from the research collaborations with the strategic sector cooperation (SSC) in countries where research is thematically linked to this type of Danish development cooperation (earlier called window 2 projects). But also projects that are not directly linked to the SSC themes provide many examples of timely engagement with key stakeholders. An interesting example of how this can be done is described in the following case which focus on how the project has managed to engage several stakeholders including local youth groups and local government in setting up the production of green charcoal which is a main component of the actual research project. Early engagement of key stakeholders has potentially led to a ban on black charcoal in the district.

CASE: RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT WITH POLICY AND PRACTICE

Project Unlocking the potential of Green Charcoal Innovations to Mitigate Climate Change in Northern Uganda (UPCHAIN)
UPCHAIN is a multi-disciplinary research project on the production and use of cleaner and greener energy in Uganda. The project is a partnership between Gulu University, Aalborg University and the University of Copenhagen.

The project primarily researches how it is possible to and use briquettes ("green charcoal") from agricultural residues as an alternative to firewood and black charcoal. It integrates socio-economic and cultural analysis on household and livelihood level on barriers and drivers of adaptation of green charcoal, with technological research on the practical development of green charcoal. As part of this, the project aimed at setting up a factory and developing a green charcoal production.

Solid fuel cooking, mainly firewood and charcoal, is a major source of carbon emissions, deforestation and respiratory diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, charcoal production is also an important economic activity and a major source of employment. Although the production technology and the commercial chains for green charcoal are the same as for producing wooden charcoal, it does not cause deforestation. Green charcoal production thus contributes to stopping deforestation, reducing smoke induced health issues as well as creating local employment.

As the project is aimed at developing an actual production of green charcoal and innovation models and roadmaps that can be adopted by the private sector and public schools in Uganda, end-users and relevant stakeholders have been included in the project from the beginning. These include local authorities, local producers of black and green charcoal, schools, agricultural organisations, NGO's and entrepreneurs. Mid-way through the project it already shows interesting results. In the beginning of 2025, the project opened a briquette factory with a capacity to produce over one ton of briquettes in eight hours. The factory is operated by 27 young people from a local association Yele Ber Youth Group, under close supervision and guidance of experts from the Bio-Systems Engineering Department at Gulu University. The project thus creates jobs for young people. The machines at the factory have been designed and assembled at the University as a part of the research process but are now already in use. As a result of the research process of establishing a factory and developing a green charcoal production, the district commissioner is now looking at introducing a total ban of burning black charcoal in the district since there are now alternatives available. Read more about the opening of the factory here.

Most projects include non-academic partners in the research projects as secondary partners. These partners are important both as providers of input to the research processes but also as potential users of the research results. Some projects have reported difficulties in working with secondary partners such as NGOs. The reasons for this are manifold, however lack of initial and ongoing alignment of expectations and resources invested are cited by several projects.

How to support fruitful and equitable partnerships is a key concern for DFC and how to ensure meaningful engagement with external partners in FFU projects will be a consideration in the work of DFC going forward.

Under the DFC science engagement initiative, Danida supported researchers are trained in creating a science engagement plan at the onset of the research projects. Please see section 2.2 for more on this.

Meta study on the relationship between climate change and conflict

As part of the ongoing work of ensuring uptake of knowledge, DFC initiates meta studies on selected themes across ongoing and recently finalized research projects.

In 2024, we finalised a meta-study across eight Danida (FFU) supported research collaboration projects to produce a systematic synthesis of research findings and recommendations in order to increase the understanding of the relationship between climate change and conflict, including how conflicts are managed and mitigated in specific contexts. The meta-study covered projects implemented in Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somaliland and Myanmar. The conclusions drawn across the eight research projects were that climate change is not a causal instigator of conflict, but feeds into existing dynamics and historical tensions. Policymakers must recognise the intricate interplay between climate change and violent conflict. Each of the projects highlights the need for integrative thinking not just across crises, but also scale. Integrating conflict sensitivity into climate change policies is crucial to avoid exacerbating existing tensions and to foster sustainable mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The study was conducted by an expert at the Danish Institute for International studies (DIIS), Justine Chambers, and was presented at a DIIS conference at the end of May, 2024. It has furthermore been presented to the MFA on several occasions. The meta-study report and policy brief are available here.

1.1.2 Strengthened capacity at individual-, partnership- and institutional level

Capacity strengthening is an integral part of Danida-funded development research. As outlined in the strategic guidance note, this is done on three different levels: institutional level, partnership level and individual level.

In the FFU modality, individual and partnership capacity strengthening are in focus. Capacity strengthening of institutions is not explicitly covered beyond the notion that strengthened research capacities of individuals also strengthen the capacities of the institutions these individuals work in.

Strengthening Individual capacity

The capacity development of individuals, i.e. students and researchers, is an important and integral part of every research project. The capacities of researchers are strengthened by e.g. doing coursework, fieldwork and writing publications in collaboration with other researchers from the many different participating universities and research institutions involved in the projects. An integral part of many FFU projects is the training of PhDs at the South partner university/ies in collaboration with the Danish partner institutions.

Of the 111 active projects, 56 projects reported on the status of PhDs[3]. The 56 projects have enrolled in all 202 PhD students which is only 4 students short of the originally planned 206 PhD students.

The number of PhD students enrolled in a project vary greatly. Figure 1 shows a span of 1-11 PhD students in the 56 projects with a median of 4 PhD students per project. While a high number of PhD students can be viewed as a creating much value in terms of capacity strengthening, experience shows that this is not

[3] The remaining 55 ongoing projects are either Window 2 projects with no PhD's, or projects that have not yet submitted a narrative report.

necessarily the case. Supporting PhD students in the best possible way is time consuming for supervisors and other senior members of the research team, and it is important that enough time is allocated to each student. Furthermore, it can be constraining to include a large amount of people in the core research teams in terms of budgets, as less funds for the individual researchers might be available for conference participation, publication fees, travels etc. - all activities that contribute to capacity strengthening on both individual and networking levels. See also section 1.3 on lessons from the FFU trip to Kenya.

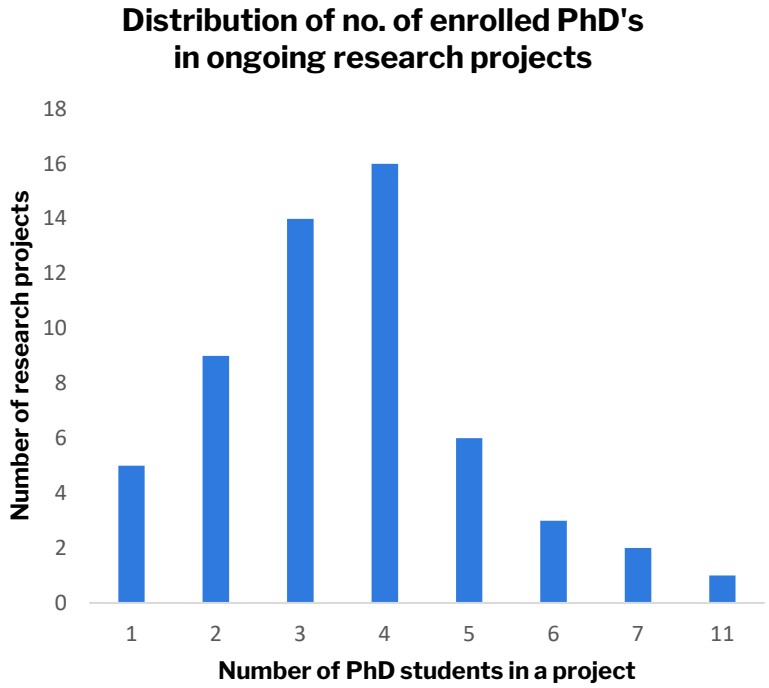

Figure 1 - Number of PhD students per research project in the ongoing portfolio

In the FFU calls for proposals and the DFC management of the FFU portfolio, there has been an increasing focus on ensuring that PhD students have the support needed for their researcher training. Among other things, this includes the possibility for PhD students to come to Denmark for study stays at the Danish partner university. Study stays in Denmark are expected and included in most projects as a 'sandwich programme' where PhD students study at the Danish partner university for a limited period of time. The study stays of PhD students in Denmark are administered by DFC to ensure that all PhD students are staying in Denmark under the same conditions. The administration of PhD study stays by DFC is highly appreciated by the research projects, as it makes the administrative process much easier for involved researchers and institutions.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	NO.
Tanzania	24
Ghana	18
Ethiopia	17
Uganda	15
Bangladesh	12
Kenya	8
South Africa	2
Burkina Faso	1
Myanmar	1

Table 1 - Country of origin for PhD Students on Study Stays in Denmark 2024

Study stays are thought to bring vital input to the PhD training of involved researchers, as this gives the PhD students the opportunity to learn from their Danish supervisor(s) and project researchers, be integrated into a different research environment, as well as have access to resources at Danish institutions (including libraries, labs, technology etc.). The study stays are

often integrated with other activities such as conference participation or seminar presentations. Furthermore, the study stays introduce the researchers to Danish culture and society and often lay the ground for future collaborations and networking between Danish and South researchers.

In 2024, 98 PhD students came to Denmark on study stays and six of these PhD students came to Denmark twice in 2024. Therefore DFC administered 104 PhD study stays in Denmark in 2024.

As seen in Table 1, Tanzania is the main origin country of PhD students on study stay in Denmark, followed by Ghana, Ethiopia and Uganda. The number of PhD students per country is more or less in line with the disbursement of projects across the countries.

To participate in courses in Denmark and interact with the Danish supervisors is considered an important part of the PhD education. And in DFC's assessment of narrative reports and conversations with project participants, Principal Investigators (PIs) and PhD students, it is clear that most projects are committed to sending PhD students to Denmark for study stays. However, as it has not been a requirement to include study stays of PhD students in Denmark in all research projects, not all project have included this as part of their education of PhDs. Some projects prioritize differently from the start or re-allocate funds for PhD study stays for other activities during the project period. In general, projects are expected to prioritize the study stays and DFC underlines this when engaging with projects. Call texts for FFU projects also state that PhD study stays in Denmark are expected.

An additional benefit of PhD study stays in Denmark is that they provide an important opportunity for PhD students to network and collaborate across projects and across countries. DFC supports the networking aspects by organizing facilitated PhD network events at the DFC hostel or elsewhere.

Strengthening partnership capacity

Equitable partnerships are imperative for mutual learning and knowledge creation that have an impact for the researchers involved, their institution and users of the research findings. The equitability of partnerships is not easy to measure in quantitative terms. Annex 1 shows a list of main institutions and South partners. The list reflects that some institutions have many (often long-held) partnerships with specific Danish or South institutions respectively. Experience shows that projects based on long standing relationships between researchers and institutions tend to have good collaborations and run into fewer challenges regarding management of the project and partnerships.

Equity in research partnerships covers a range of aspects, including the development of the research proposal, the management set-up of the research and work package leadership, the implementation of the research in each work package, the coordination and dialogue amongst the research partners, the joint PhD supervision, the interaction with stakeholders, etc. Also, for research to be equitable, considerations about (first) authorship is crucial, not least in support of the PhD students.

PIs are asked to include in the narrative reporting a reflection on the processes contributing to or challenging equitable partnerships. The case below shows how equity in a research project is assessed by the PI for the project.

CASE: EQUITY IN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

Project "Building climate-resilience into basin water management (CREAM)"
The project, investigates how water resources management in two water basins in Ghana, can be understood and improved through cross-disciplinary and integrated approaches. The PI of the project provides the following useful reflections on the project set-up and processes contributing to an equitable research partnership:

"Partnership among the CREAM project partners is largely equitable. Work package leadership was decided during the preparation of the application and was based on the expertise, experience and availability of each partner. [..] it was ensured that all the partners were leads for one or more activities under the work packages. Several activities [...] within the work packages were jointly implemented by two or more partners, while stakeholder engagements for capacity development, results sharing and knowledge exchange involved most partners from Ghana, Denmark and Australia.

Several measures and platforms have been put in place to ensure constant dialogue among project partners. These include monthly/bi-monthly work package meetings, quarterly project coordination meetings for work package leaders and representatives of partner institutions that are not package leaders, quarterly meetings for PhD students and their supervisors and annual project meetings [...]

First authorship decisions were first made at the work package level and were subsequently discussed and agreed on at the project level. At the work package level, every partner was given the opportunity to share their list of proposed publications based on their activities within the work packages. The PhD students were also given the opportunity to do the same. The proposed publication lists were discussed, modified where necessary and agreed on. Considering that each partner's activities have significant interactions with those of other partners, all the published articles and those planned to be published by the partners are co-authored by other contributing partners who may not be working in the same work packages."

Read more about the project here.

DFC has a continuous focus on supporting partnerships to be based on equity and reciprocity. To draw lessons concerning equity in research partnerships across research projects, a DFC study on North-South partnerships is in the design phase. See also section 1.3 on lessons learned – North-South Partnerships.

1.1.3 Strengthened research networks and collaborative learning

FFU projects include a range of participants and institutions, they are highly collaborative in nature and they involve the creation and strengthening of networks among the actors involved. Project participants conduct joint fieldwork, participate in conferences and trainings together, visit each other's' institutions, and co-produce articles and other outputs from the research projects. All of these activities contribute towards shared goals of strengthened networks and collaborative learning in FFU projects.

Networks are not only created through partnerships in the projects, they are linked to several other activities such as conference and seminar participation, research stays, fieldwork and not least DFC-organized activities such as science engagement days or science engagement seminars at the Danish

Embassies (see section 2.2). During study stays in Denmark the DFC hostel is a key point for interaction and engaging with other researchers and stakeholders.

Some institutions hold a long history of working with each other and it is clear that the collaboration from one project can extend into networks across the institutions and their collaborators, and sometimes these can evolve into new partnerships.

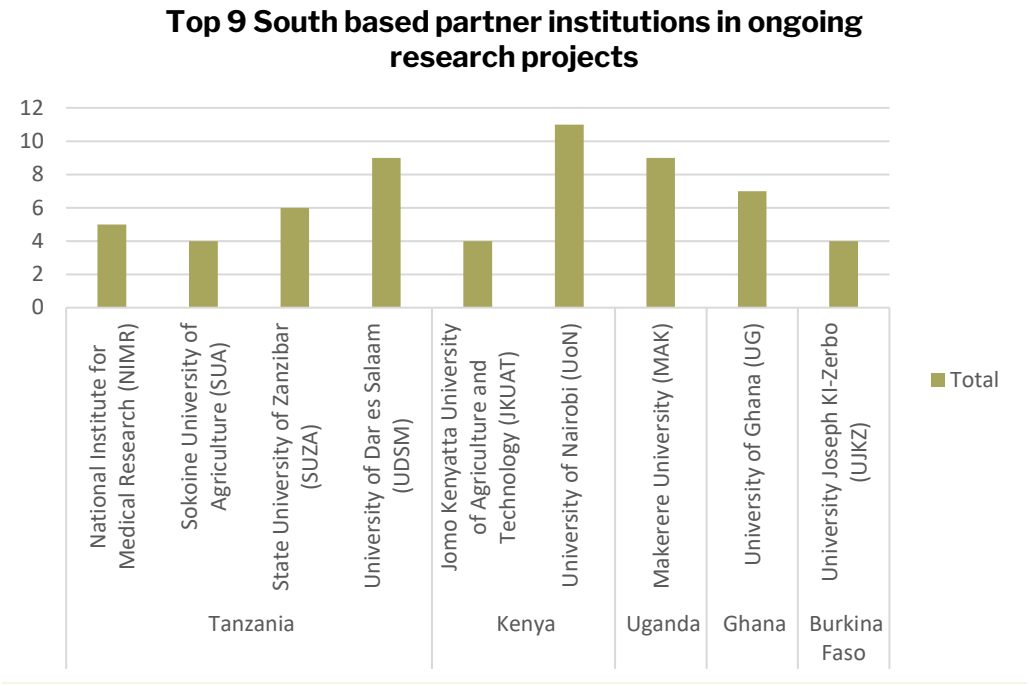

Figure 2 - Overview of top 9 South based partner institutions in ongoing research projects

Tanzanian institutions hold a long history of collaborating with Danish research institutions. Long term research collaboration between Danish researchers and Tanzanian researchers has especially been established in the area of agriculture with Sokoine University of Agriculture and with the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College in the area of health.

The FFU funded projects also open doors for other research funding opportunities through networks. The case below shows how the project “Coastal Community Resilience to Climate and Diarrhoea” secured funding from EU as a result of the FFU project collaboration.

CASE: FROM FFU PROJECT TO EU-FUNDING

Project "Coastal Community Resilience to Climate and Diarrhoea (C2RCD)"
C2RCD aims to build resilience to climate change and improve diarrhoeal management in coastal communities in Ghana.

The project has successfully built networks. DFC visited the project led by University of Ghana and Aarhus University in June 2024, where the project reported that a new EU-funded project had been secured based on the collaboration in the FFU project. The new project is titled: Supporting Policy Regulations and Interventions to Negate aggravated Global diarrheal disease due to future climate Shocks (SPRINGS). The SPRINGS project will bring together case studies from Ghana, Tanzania, Romania, and Italy to understand and address climate-related diarrheal risks.

The SPRINGS project is carried out by a Consortium of 13 partners, where the University of Ghana is lead in a work package building on the on-going Danida-funded research in Ghanaian coastal communities. It aims to translate findings into economically viable interventions for decision makers. Without the FFU project, the SPRINGS consortium could not have been established in its current form. Read more about the project here.

1.2 Projects finalized in 2024

Five FFU projects were administratively finalized in the DFC systems in 2024. These are:

- Health and Antibiotics in Vietnamese Pig Production (VIDA-PIG), Vietnam
- Pathways to Water Resilient South African Cities (PaWS), South Africa
- Salmonella Control in the Colombian Pig Industry (SalPork), Colombia
- Reintegration Through Active Labour Market Reforms (REALM), Myanmar
- Integrative Green Infrastructure Planning (GRIP), South Africa

This rather small number of administratively finalized projects can be attributed to significant delays in approval of accounts at DFC, caused by illness in the DFC research management team. By comparison, in 2023, DFC administratively finalized 10 research collaboration projects.

All the five projects that were administratively finalized in the DFC systems in 2024 are projects directly linked to the themes of the strategic sector cooperation (SSC) under the 'Window 2' modality. See annex 2 for information on the Window 2 modality and further information about the projects.

All five projects in this portfolio have had to work under the difficult conditions of Covid-19 and all projects had to be extended due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In total, the five projects were extended with 66 months, which amounts to 13.2 months in average.

The projects dealt in different ways with the constraints on research implementation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Some fieldwork activities were transferred into online formats, these included surveys, focus group discussions and trainings. Still, delays in some project activities could not be avoided due to lockdowns and other restrictions.

The case below shows how external factors influenced the implementation of a project.

CASE: HOW EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCE RESEARCH IMPLEMENTATION

Project "REintegration through Active Labour Market reforms in Myanmar (REALM)"
The REALM project aimed at developing a roadmap for coordinating and implementing labor market reforms in Myanmar, especially with an aim to support inclusive development with a focus on vulnerable groups.

The REALM project was implemented in Myanmar from 2019-2022. The original lifespan for implementation was 2019-2021. It was funded under the Window 2 modality linked to the SSC theme 'Occupational health and safety and labour market reform'. During the lifespan of the project, it had to navigate within the influence of two major external factors, namely the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21 and the coup d'état in Myanmar in February 2021.

As a result of these external factors, adjustments had to be made to the project. The project was extended to cope with the delays caused by Covid-19. A positive but unintended effect of the project operating during Covid-19 was its advocacy support to various government bodies on the labor market impacts of Covid-19. Especially during the early stages of Covid-19, the REALM project contributed actively to the debate in Myanmar.

The coup in 2021 impacted the partnership with the research partners in Myanmar. One of the collaborations had to be put on hold, but given the fact that most of the fieldwork had already been carried out successfully, and the collaborations established with independent researchers and international institutions working in Myanmar, the project managed to publish in peer-reviewed journals and to conclude most of its expected outputs.

1.2.1 Four lessons learned from cooperating with the SSC programme

As all five projects collaborated with strategic sector programmes (SSC), some cross-cutting lessons from these are highlighted in the following: 1) Early engagement of end users and SSC, 2) New knowledge is applied in practice, 3) Strengthening skills of researchers, and 4) Strengthened networks and collaborative learning.

Early engagement of end users and SSC
In their reports, several of the projects emphasize the importance of establishing good working relations with the SSC representatives early on in the project period. One project experienced that the SSC program they were connected to changed focus as the research project embarked. The project, therefore, had to rebuild trusting relations with new SSC representatives. Early meetings between relevant representatives in the SSC programme as well as sector counsellors at the embassy are important in order to ensure that the research projects are aligned with the activities and focus of the SSC program. Furthermore, the projects also learned the importance of engaging end-users of the research early on in the project in order to make the best possible conditions for research-based evidence to be used by industry and policy makers.

In general, the window 2 projects have collaborated closely with a number of different partners; governmental institutions, the private sector, local communities as well as relevant Danish institutions. New partnerships and networks have been established – some of these partnerships are already engaged in new projects together and others are planning to do so.

The five projects have, in cooperation with their partners, made significant contributions to policy as well as provided stakeholders with concrete designs and tools for practice. In the window 2 modality, the close collaboration between the research projects and the strategic sector programmes stands out in a positive way. In general it appears that the research projects have not only tapped into the existing SSC networks but also developed them and engaged with them in new ways.

The case below shows how a project worked closely with an SSC programme.

CASE: RESEARCH LINKS TO SSC AND OTHER END-USERS

Project "Salmonella Control in the Colombian Pig Industry (SalPork)"
The SalPork project was aimed at raising the food safety standards in the Colombian pork industry. The country is facing a growing production of pork but at the same time the industry is affected by pathogens such as salmonella and struggling to meet international food safety standards.
The research took a point of departure in understanding primary contamination risks and ways to reduce them through (cost-)effective surveillance and control strategies.

The project was instrumental in facilitating and strengthening research collaboration between government institutions, universities and the private sector in Colombia. The research team mainly collaborated with Porkcolombia, which is a private sector organization representing more than 80% of the country's pig producers.

The Colombian partners in the SSC programme (ICA, INVIMA and Porkcolombia) as well as the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (DVFA) were also research partners in SalPork. Thus, SalPork had throughout the planning and implementation of the project a well-established and close coordination and collaboration with SSC partners, including the Sector Counsellor at the Embassy in Bogota who facilitated and took active part in meetings. In Denmark, the PI from the University of Copenhagen had regular contacts with DVFA in Glostrup, and staff from DVFA also provided teaching inputs on DFC courses implemented by the University of Copenhagen. More than 30 people from Colombia from SSC partners, universities and pig farmers took part in such training courses.

SalPork and the PI were instrumental in establishing contact between Porkcolombia, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS) in Denmark. This has meant that ICARS provides technical and financial support to large projects in Colombia aiming to reduce the use of antimicrobials in the country's pig sector and strengthen the use of disease diagnostics.

New knowledge is applied in practice

Publications are the main output when measuring new knowledge produced in research projects. The quality of the knowledge produced can, of course, not be assessed through the number of publications produced. However, the number of publications produced can be an important measuring stick in terms of assessing the project's potential for impact in the scientific community. The projects produced 98 publications across the five projects. Across the five projects, 41 peer reviewed publications were published in international journals, six articles were published in peer reviewed regional/local journals. In addition to the 98 already published publications, the projects have two publications accepted, four under review, three submitted, and 23 in preparation.

In addition, publications are an integral part of building capacity at universities both at individual and institutional level. It is a basis for researchers to attract external funding and for institutions to advance.

The projects have in general made significant contributions regarding the application of research-based knowledge in practice with external stakeholders. This has been done through policy recommendations, as seen in the "Health and Antibiotics in Vietnamese Pig Production (VIDA- PIG)" project, which provided input to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Vietnam on new legislation on prescribed veterinary medicine as well as on legislation banning antimicrobial growth promoters.

Other examples of applying knowledge in practice from the finalized projects, include preparing design proposal booklets on green infrastructure planning and providing them to the City municipality as was done in the project "Integrative Green Infrastructure Planning", as well as establishing a collaborative design process with local residents as was done in the "Pathways to water resilient South African Cities (PaWS)" project, which resulted in the construction a storm water management hub with multiple functions. The following example illustrates the benefits of close collaboration between the research project and the SSC, seen from the point of view of the SSC.

CASE: COLLABORATION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND THE SSC IN SOUTH AFRICA

PROJECT "INTEGRATIVE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (GRIP)"

The GRIP project was an interdisciplinary research project that aimed to provide new knowledge on urban green infrastructure (GI) in South Africa. The research project focused on knowledge exchange and capacity building to improve the coordination, planning and maintenance of urban GI in the administrative capital of South Africa, the City of Tshwane.

The project managed to establish a close working relationship with external partners, not least the SSC, from the onset. The benefits of the close contact with the SSC has been underlined by the sector counsellor for sustainable urban development at the Danish embassy in South Africa.

He explains how the research has provided new insights, tools, frameworks and methodologies to the city-to-city collaboration between the city of Tshwane in South Africa and the City of Aarhus in Denmark. He also explained how the benefits of links between research projects and SSC go both ways: "While the strategic sector cooperation has opened doors, provided strategic advice and direction, and sourced numerous city officials to the research project, the researchers, in return, have generated new knowledge that is relevant to the sector cooperation. The knowledge provided by the researchers is useful because the research addresses and offers solutions to the day-to-day challenges that the city officials have to deal with". Read more here.

Strengthening skills of researchers

Unlike the other research funding modalities, Window 2 projects do not include funding for PhD students. PhD students may be included with direct input to the research, but there is no funding for PhD education as such. Capacity strengthening is achieved through the collaboration and the development of new skills and expertise, new networks formed for future collaborations, publications and attraction of new funding. Some of the results are visible at the project closure.

The project "Health and Antibiotics in Vietnamese Pig Production in Vietnam (VIDA-PIG)" provides a good example of several ways that national researchers have strengthened capacity through the strong partnerships established throughout the project which has further materialized in networks. Senior researchers in VIDA-PIG are now members of various national committees and efforts to prevent and control antimicrobial resistance. It should also be mentioned that all researchers from the project have been retained at their institutions thus continuing to contribute with the expertise gained from the research project.

Strengthened networks and collaborative learning

Due to the close collaborations between the research projects and the SSC, several of the projects highlight the strong networks they have built throughout the project period. As highlighted above, these networks have in some instances continued to be connected into other projects or national committees.

One example of this is how several partners from the project "Salmonella Control in the Colombian Pig Industry" together with University of Copenhagen are now collaborating on two new projects to reduce antimicrobial consumption in the pig sector. Three out of the five projects have furthermore received additional FFU funding for, either a direct continuation of their projects or a project building on the previous project (VIDA-PIG, PaWS, GRIP) where they continue to collaborate with partners from previous projects. In PaWS, working with stakeholders was a key component and they built a network of practitioners which they in the following project will develop further into a community of practice.

1.3 Lessons learned, challenges and best practices

DFC is committed to learning and continuously develop our work to manage the large and growing portfolio of FFU projects. In this section, we highlight three different thematic areas of this work, were we in 2024 had a heightened awareness: 1) gender, 2) PhD students' conditions and possibilities, and 3) North-South research partnerships.

1.3.1 Gender

Since 2024, it has been a main theme in DFC's work to focus on gender balances in research teams and ensuring gender sensitivity in research projects.

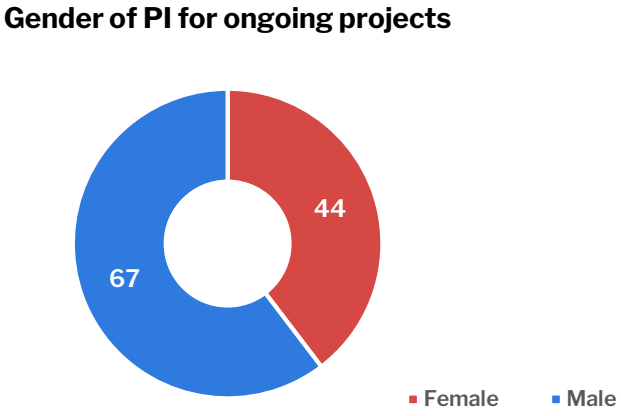

Figure 3 - Gender of PI for ongoing projects

In the 2024 application round, there was a general focus on gender balances and gender sensitivity. As a first step, the guidelines for the phase two application round were assessed by a gender consultant - as well as a partnership consultant - to identify gaps, biases, and areas for improvement. The quality of the guidelines were heightened from these consultations.

As a second step, a gender specialist gave a presentation on gender sensitivity in research proposals and projects to the FFU, in order to provide to the members of FFU a deeper and shared understanding of how to approach the issue of gender in research. A key highlight from the presentation and following discussion was how to move the discussion away from (mainly) focusing on gender balance in the research teams and into the gender sensitivity or gender responsiveness of the research proposals.

As a third step, all 2024 phase two applications were assessed by a gender specialist. After an original pilot phase in the 2023 application round, it was decided that a gender assessment should also be included in the 2024 application round. The gender specialist assessed all the project proposals and provided the FFU with a guidance note on how to assess the applications in terms of gender sensitivity. The FFU reported back that the gender reviews were relevant and consistent across the applications. Overall the assessments resonated well with the FFU.

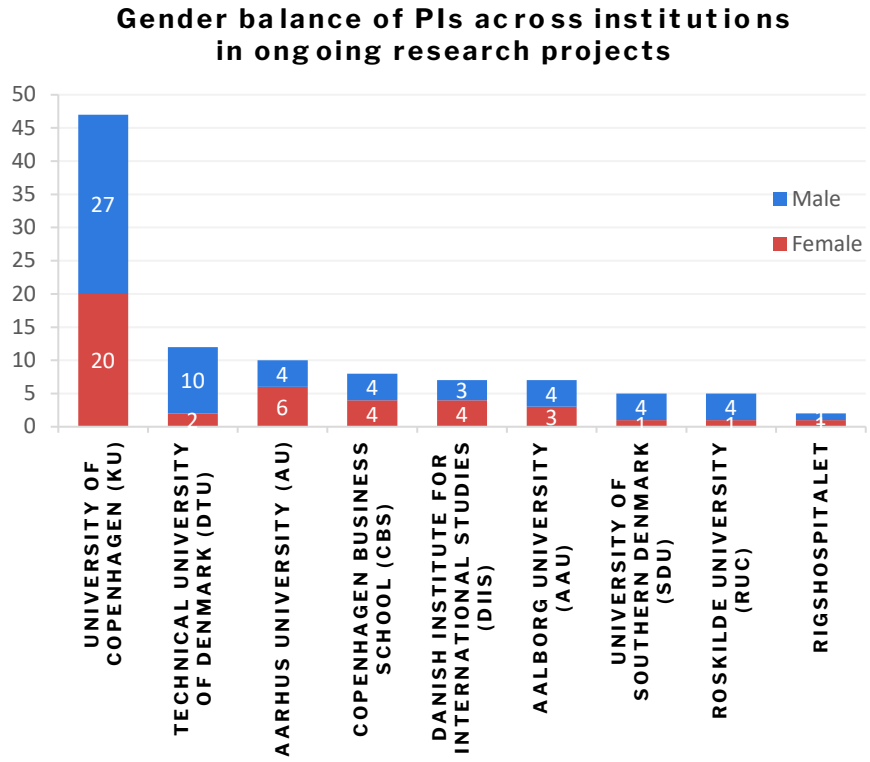

Figure 4 - Overview of gender balance of PIs across institutions in ongoing research projects

The figure shows the balance between male and female PI's across institutions with two or more ongoing research projects as per December 2024.[4]

The annual DFC science engagement days in March 2024 focused on the gender imbalances in research. Here, 50 women researchers convened at MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation (TCDC) in Arusha, Tanzania, for a seminar entitled '"More Women in Research". See more in section 2.2.

The "More Women in Research" seminar produced a number of key recommendations for donors[5]. The recommendations provide tangible inputs to how DFC can continue to work with gender inclusion. Not all items on the list of recommendations can be adopted within the framework of the FFU grant, but there are important elements, where DFC/MFA, through the FFU modality, already take action or can strengthen action, e.g. by paying attention to research team composition, gender sensitivity in the research proposals or gender sensitive project budgets.

1.3.2 North-South research partnerships

As part of the secretariat function for the FFU, DFC arranged a country visit for the FFU to Kenya in January 2024. The FFU, alongside with staff from the MFA and DFC, visited eight research projects in

[4] Institutions with fewer than two ongoing research projects are not included in the diagram. These institutions are:
Institutions with only one project (female PI): University of Ghana (UG), Mzumbe University.
Institutions with only one project (male PI): Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Water Research Institute (WRI Ghana), University for Development Studies (UDS), Kilimanjaro Clinical Research Institute (KCRI), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA)
[5] See pp 15-16 in the manifesto, which can be found here.

Kenya. This visit provided a valuable opportunity to explore FFU research projects across different thematic areas and modalities on the ground. Such visits are vital for the FFU when evaluating research applications and monitoring the progress of ongoing projects.

Important lessons learned from the visit to projects were that capacities are best strengthened through well-functioning North-South research partnerships. Key factors for success include:

- A shared understanding among partners of an equal partnership as the foundation of collaboration. This includes joint development of the project proposal, ensuring that the process is not "owned" solely by the Danish main applicant.
- The importance of clear agreements regarding joint activities, such as fieldwork and academic publications, to ensure mutual responsibility and commitment.
- A strong focus on capacity-building, particularly concerning PhD students.
- Continuous and effective interaction between Danish and Kenyan researchers at both senior and junior levels.
- The integration of scientific and social activities as a core element of the partnership.
- Ensuring mutual benefits for both Danish researchers and researchers in the partner countries, combining access to new research methods and contextual knowledge, as well as access to informants and data.
- Opportunities for exposure to international research networks and international visibility through conferences and seminars.
- Partnerships with relevant national and international research institutions, as well as private sector organizations.
- In some cases, the introduction of a North-South-South approach, which has proven beneficial, e.g. through collaboration with other research institutions in the region.

Highlights from the FFU trip to Kenya can be found here.

A lesson learned from the FFU visit to Kenya was that in countries/regions with several ongoing research projects, it would be beneficial to arrange online or in-person knowledge sharing meetings. DFC will look into the possibilities to facilitate such meetings to promote mutual learning and coordination across projects within the same thematic area/country/region.

1.3.3 PhD students' conditions and possibilities

PhD education is a vital part of capacity strengthening in the FFU projects. Most ongoing projects (with the exception of Window 2 projects see section 1.2) include PhD students. The official requirements and conditions for PhD students vary largely from one institution to another (sometimes between departments or even projects) and from one national context to another.

Currently, the General Conditions for the FFU grants state that, "The educational grants for PhD students must follow the relevant [local] rules and regulations. The grant is placed at the disposal of the enrolling institution and is intended to cover expenses incurred in connection with the PhD degree, i.e. supervision, courses, brief trips and study periods at other institutions. PhD candidates included in the project must

be enrolled at a university in their home country or, alternatively, at a university in the region. Enrollment in Denmark can only be considered in extraordinary circumstances and when enrollment in the partner country or region is impossible. In such cases, enrollment must be approved by DFC."

In 2024, DFC's attention was called to PhD students' conditions, constraints and possibilities in FFU projects, in significant ways:

- During the FFU travel to Kenya, dialogue with the projects underlined that education of PhDs is regarded as the main element of capacity strengthening in the projects. FFU members met a large number of very committed PhD students. The visit highlighted how important it is to empower early carrier researchers through strong and encouraging supervision and to provide opportunities for training through international networks. While good PhD supervision appears important, so is time allowed to search for their own theoretical pathways and inspirations without rigid requirements to follow the theoretical ideas of the PI/supervisors.

- Some PIs have raised concerns over problems of finding suitable candidates to enroll as PhD students in local universities and wish to enroll the students at Danish Universities. The explanation given to DFC was that qualified students are not interested in enrolling locally claiming that a European PhD degree will give them more merit globally, and the conditions for PhD students are better in Denmark than in their own countries. Other projects share information about PhD students dropping out, when they receive other, more attractive, possibilities for PhD scholarships (e.g. in other countries or through other funding mechanisms). In some of these cases, PhD students' stipends, while following local rules and regulations, may be too low to financially sustain a student relying solely on the income from the stipend. This latter point does not only relate to the students who leave projects, but cut across FFU projects.

- As part of the management of ongoing grants, DFC conducts visits to ongoing FFU projects. In June 2024, the DFC research management team visited three South-led research projects in Ghana, where we had the chance to engage with project participants, leaders and financial staff. The visits in general touched upon project progress, project management and finances. While more visits are needed to draw conclusions across the projects, some overall learnings came from these visits. Regarding PhD students, it was clear that the terms and conditions differed greatly between the institutions in Ghana, and that in some cases it was difficult to see how the stipends offered could cover the costs of living. In other cases, special attention to PhD study stays and the importance of prioritizing these were discussed. While all of the projects acted in agreement with the General Conditions, the visits provided insights into the difficulties PhD students may face in FFU projects nonetheless.

As a consequence of the above mentioned attention points, DFC is looking into how to ensure the best possible conditions and possibilities for PhD students in FFU projects.

PART 2.
DFC MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Annual Report 2024
Development Research

DANIDA
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CENTRE

PART 2. DFC MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

In 2024, DFC entered into a new agreement with the MFA to manage the full grant allocated by the MFA for development research through the annual call for development research proposals (the FFU modality).

The new agreement also introduces several administrative changes that affect both DFC and the research grant recipients. Among these changes is a new requirement that all research institutions receiving Danida-funded research grants must have their own anti-corruption and PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment) policies, with which all project partners must comply. Additionally, DFC is strengthening its monitoring of research project implementation through more visits to Danida-funded research projects.

This part of the report highlights the main activities and results of the DFC management and support activities in 2024, including how DFC enhances research outreach and science engagement.

2.1 DFC management

The DFC research management team has expanded over the past two years in response to the growing number of assignments and responsibilities. In 2024, the team comprised five programme managers, four administrative officers and two financial controllers. DFC coordinates closely with the MFA and the FFU in carrying out the management task.

DFC's secretariat function for the FFU includes support activities to application rounds and meetings.

In the management of ongoing grants, DFC is in continuous contact with PIs concerning the administration of the grants, including possible changes in the projects. DFC introduces all new projects to the General Conditions for the administration of grants, and receives and assesses the narrative reports before FFU members review the scientific quality of the project progress or results. DFC receives and examines annual and final accounts and disburses project funds to the projects.

In 2024, a monitoring visit by a DFC programme manager and financial controller to two universities and one research institution in Ghana was conducted to explore whether the FFU projects at these institutions were implemented according to plan, how the research collaboration/partnerships work and whether the projects are implemented according to good administrative and financial practices.

- "Climate Change Resilience of Ecosystem Services", University for Development Studies
- "Coastal Community Resilience to Climate and Diarrhoea", University of Ghana
- "Building climate-resilience into basin water management", Water Research Institute, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

In addition, DFC participated in the final conference of the project "Domestic Security Implications of Peacekeeping in Ghana", led by DIIS.

Overall the visits showed progress of the projects, and provided an opportunity to engage with key researchers, PhD students as well as financial staff. Cross-cutting learnings from the visits include considerations concerning PhD students, partnerships and gender, as highlighted in section 1.3, as well as considerations regarding how to best equip grant holders outside of Denmark to adhere to the General Conditions.

Result of annual satisfaction surveys

Since administering the application rounds and managing ongoing grants are core responsibilities of the DFC management team, an annual survey is conducted among applicants and research grant holders to assess their level of satisfaction with DFC's management and services.

The surveys show a general satisfaction with DFC's administration of application rounds and with DFC's services, administration and communication with/to ongoing grant holders. In both surveys (application rounds and ongoing grants, respectively) the level of satisfaction shows an average above 4 (measured based on score 1-5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied).

Despite an overall satisfaction with DFC's management, there is room for improvement. Especially the 2024 delay in approval of financial accounts resulted in critique.

2.2 DFC support activities - Danida science engagement

Danida science engagement aims at supporting the process of making research findings from Danida-funded research accessible to policymakers, practitioners, communities, and the public. It facilitates an interactive dissemination to, and involvement of, relevant users of information and beneficiaries, fostering mutual learning, participation and interaction.

Danida science engagement aligns with the DFC strategy of supporting the transformation of knowledge into action as well as with the results areas outlined in the strategic guidance note for Danish support to development research (see background and reading guide), particularly the associated output areas: 1) Research products are prepared for use, influence, and impact, 2) Strengthened individual research capacity and 3) Researchers network and collaborative learning.

2.2.1 Support to prepare research products for use, influence, and impact

The Danida science engagement supports the ability of researchers to integrate potential users into the research process and develop engagement and dissemination strategies, including looking at timeliness and diversity of communication methods.

Science engagement training
Science engagement trainings are offered to Danida supported researchers at strategically important points in the life of a research project. Training in making an engagement plan is offered as a mandatory course at the beginning of a research project, while communication training is offered later when the results of the research start coming in.

In September 2024, four online training sessions were held for 32 Danida supported researchers from Denmark, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa and Vietnam. 17 different research projects were represented at the training. The participants included junior and senior researchers from both North and South. The training introduced the researchers to what engagement is and what it can achieve. It also covered stakeholder analysis, engagement tactics and how to bring research into action by involving policy makers.

The training includes science engagement examples from FFU research projects in areas relevant to the training, i.e. examples of researchers' engagement with policy makers and practitioners during project implementation. The participants in the training get practical guidance to making a science engagement plan, which is also the concrete output of the training.

Out of the 80 projects (of the 111 ongoing projects) that have handed in a narrative report, 53 have developed an engagement strategy and 50 of these report that the strategy is in active use. DFC believes that it is very important for projects to have an engagement plan from the onset of the project, but also recognizes that the interest in engaging with stakeholders varies amongst researchers. While it is encouraged that the PI attends the training in 'engagement for influence and impact', it may in some cases make more sense that other project researchers (e.g. younger researchers or PhD students) attend the training if they have an interest in bringing this agenda forward and actively using the engagement strategy.

Science engagement grants
Science engagement grants are offered by DFC to promote uptake of science based knowledge and results and to strengthen the link between Danida supported research and end users of the research outputs. These small supplementary grants of a maximum of DKK 80,000 are provided on a competitive basis and was awarded once in 2024 with a total amount of 400.000 available for funding. As something new in 2024, to promote outreach for uptake after completion of a research projects, applications could be submitted by principal investigators of Danida funded research projects completed within the last two years. Five of the ten applications were selected for funding of which two where from PIs of finalized projects.

The grants approved for funding in 2024 cover science engagement activities in Uganda, Ghana and Tanzania in the areas of gender, commercial culture of bonytongue fish, healthcare, charcoal conflict, and empowering traditional rulers in local climate change action. In 2024, five finalized science engagement grant projects were closed in the DFC systems. See annex 4.

The case below shows how a project communication knowledge from the project to a broader audience through podcasts.

CASE: SHARING KNOWLEDGE ON MILITARIZATION IN UGANDA THROUGH PODCASTS

Project "Militarization, sustainable growth and peace in Uganda"
The project's overall goal was to examine the concept of militarisation in Uganda and its implications for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

The main aim of the science engagement grant given to the project "Militarization, sustainable growth and peace in Uganda" was to enhance knowledge exchange and networks across sectors and/or disciplines and to kick start public engagement and reach to a broader public audience. The science engagement activities were implemented by researchers in the second half of 2023 and finalized in the DFC systems in 2024. The grant was amongst other activities used to produce podcasts, engaging hosts with diverse professional backgrounds.

The podcasts cover a range of topics, capturing historical, anthropological and economic aspects of militarization in Uganda. They are available on the YouTube page of the Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC) at Makerere University: Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC) - YouTube

2.2.2 Support to the strengthening of individual capacity of researchers

DFC supports the ability of researchers to produce, document and disseminate research findings to audiences outside academia.

In May 2024, a training in popular science communication 'Bridging the Gap. Science for the Public' was conducted online for 31 researchers. The participants were researchers from Denmark, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Indonesia working in 18 different research projects. The seminar aimed at providing practical tools, paving the way for increased research and science reporting and deepening the impact and uptake of Danida funded research projects. The training included the preparation of a press release/popular science article for every research project to practice the participants' writing skills. The training was implemented in collaboration with Videnskab.dk and for the first time, the training in 2024 included a social media component.

2.2.3 Support to research networks and collaboration

DFC provides platforms for researchers to benefit from synergies with other research projects and different Danish research support modalities, and to collaborate and learn across South-South, South-South-North and South-North research networks. Below we have highlighted three different types of DFC-supported activities aimed at creating networks and collaboration: 1) Supporting more women in research, 2) collaboration with embassies, and 3) PhD networking events.

Science engagement days – More Women in Research
DFC conducts annual science engagement days to support research along the lines of the guiding principles of the Danish support to development research, e.g. equity in North-South research partnerships and improving women participation in research.

In 2024, the annual DFC science engagement days focused on the gender imbalances in research and gathered 50 women researchers at MS Training Centre for Development Co-operation (TCDC) in Arusha, Tanzania. The participants were from 12 different African countries, the USA, The UK and Denmark and represented 22 Danida-funded research projects and programmes (FFU and BSU), as well as representatives from MS TCDC's network of researchers. Participants included both junior and senior researchers. The seminar covered a range of topics and included training in concrete skills such as how to engage in policy work, how to undertake gender sensitive research, how to get published and how to apply for research funding. There were also inspirational talks and advice on how to break the academic glass ceiling.

CASE: MORE WOMEN IN RESEARCH MANIFESTO – FROM CONCEPT TO EXECUTION

More Women in Research seminar in Arusha, Tanzania
During the seminar in March, the participating researchers drafted a manifesto outlining key actions for eight stakeholder groups: universities, governments, funders, media and others. The key recommended actions were formed to promote gender balance in research and challenge the status quo. The manifesto was further refined during an online dialogue on 3 November, where over 270 women, primarily from Africa, contributed with their insights.

The Manifesto was officially launched in November at the YouLead Africa Summit 2024, where 300 young leaders from across Africa gathered to discuss the future of education.

Since then, the participating women researchers have launched various initiatives in their own contexts. For example, Hargeisa University hosted a series of seminars and public talks in 2024 under the themes Women Leading Research and Empowering Women in Research, inspiring young women to pursue academic careers, read more.

From concept to execution, these activities have been organized in partnership with MS TCDC and driven by the dedication of women researchers who recognize that increasing women's representation in academia is key to making higher education and research more inclusive and reflective of society's needs. See the YouTube playlist on the whole More Women in Research journey.

To amplify the call for more women in research, the seminar included an Arusha debate, a debate concept created by MS TCDC. It was streamed online and made available for especially young audiences. Media representatives from leading media houses in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania covered the event.

Collaboration with embassies
To support researchers in sharing their knowledge with Danish development cooperation practitioners, DFC collaborates with the Danish embassies in organizing science engagement seminars during DFC country visits. In June 2024, DFC co-hosted a science engagement seminar with the Danish embassy in Accra, Ghana. The seminar brought together researchers from four different Danida funded research

projects working on water-related issues and the maritime environment in Ghana.[6] The goal of the seminar was to strengthen networking and knowledge sharing between research projects and the embassy and to investigate the potential for new or consolidated collaborations. Each project shared key research insights and related these to the ongoing SSCs between Danish and Ghanaian authorities on water and maritime issues. Important links were established between the researchers and sector counsellors, and thereby improving opportunities for use of the research findings in the strategic sector cooperation. Researchers participating in the event provided very positive feedback, and in general they expressed the wish for more locally held DFC activities, events and trainings. DFC is considering how to further strengthen the collaborations between embassies and research projects, and this will be a point of attention in 2025.

PhD events

It is a DFC priority to promote networking and collaborative learning among PhD students while they are on study stays in Denmark. Knowledge sharing meetings for PhD students were held at DFC Frederiksberg in June and December. 20 PhD students from 12 different research projects in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Ghana and Bangladesh participated in the first meeting. This meeting presented good advice to the use of library resources (incl. digital) by a Copenhagen University librarian. The presentation and the opportunity to engage with other PhD students was very well received by the participants. The second meeting gathered 12 PhD students across 7 different research projects in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Ghana and Bangladesh. This meeting focused on match-making and sharing experiences of being Danida funded PhD students, and similarly had a very positive response from participants. Due to the very positive feedback we received at both meetings, we will continue to host events for the PhD students in 2025. The plan is to arrange 2-3 meetings with different topics for the PhD students during 2025.

[6] Projects represented: Multiple waterscapes in urban Ghana (MUWUG), Building climate-resilience into basin water management, Coastal Community Resilience to Climate and Diarrhoea, Hotspot of multiple stressors (HOTSPOT2), and Port Effectiveness and Public Private cooperation for competitiveness (PEPP II))

PART 3.
ANNEX

Annex 1. Overview of ongoing project portfolio

Annex 2. List of closed projects 2024

Annex 3. Application round 2024 in numbers

Annex 4. Science engagement grants

Annex 1. Overview of the ongoing project portfolio

Modalities

The ongoing FFU research projects cut across window 1, window 2 projects granted in different years as well as the general 'FFU projects' portfolio' from 2023 and onwards (after projects were no longer divided in window 1 and 2). See table 2.

Funding mechanism	No. of projects	Total grant amount
2017 W1	2	19.993.829 kr.
2018 W1	9	100.122.611 kr.
2018 W2	1	4.848.030 kr.
2019 W1	12	139.820.353 kr.
2019 W2	3	14.674.396 kr.
2020 W1	12	143.860.639 kr.
2020 W2	8	39.613.765 kr.
2021 W1	11	131.716.149 kr.
2021 W2	12	59.915.574 kr.
2023 FFU	21	210.610.399 kr.
2024 FFU	20	201.545.909 kr.
TOTAL	**111**	**1.066.721.654 kr.**

Table 2 - overview of funding mechanisms covered by this report

Funding for larger strategic research collaboration projects (FFU research projects) in countries with Danish development collaboration has been a key funding mechanism for support to research projects of 5 years duration and up to 10 million DKK (Up to 12 million DKK in 2019-2021) for many years. In 2017, this funding mechanism came to be titled 'window 1' to separate it from the "window 2" mechanism which was introduced in 2017. The window 2 was introduced to promote research linked to the strategic sector cooperation in countries with this type of development cooperation with Denmark (see more information in annex 2) The split of funding for FFU research projects in two windows and two separate calls lasted until the call for applications in 2022, in which both mechanisms were introduced with the same duration and funding framework while still split between research in countries with 'expanded' (bilateral cooperation) and 'targeted' (SSC) development cooperation with Denmark. In 2020 and 2021, FFU research projects funded under window 2 could apply for an extension project within the scope of the calls, still with a time and funding limitation of 3 years and 5 million DKK.

Geography
In 2024, the FFU projects spanned 18 countries.

Bangladesh	8	Myanmar	2
Brazil	1	Niger	1
Burkina Faso	7	Nigeria	1
Egypt	2	Somalia (incl. Somaliland)	3
Ethiopia	9	South Africa	8
Ghana	15	Tanzania	29
India	2	Uganda	13
Indonesia	5	Vietnam	7
Kenya	16	Zambia	1
TOTAL NO. OF COUNTRIES			**18**

Table 3 - Overview of countries involved in ongoing projects (December 2024)

The eligible countries for research projects have changed through the years, as political priorities and geopolitical situations have shifted. Some countries have continuously been present in the portfolio, like Tanzania and Ghana, while others have been included at different points of time.

Themes
Since 2020, the FFU Call has been focused on Climate Change as a main theme, with the possibility of choosing up to three subthemes for projects.

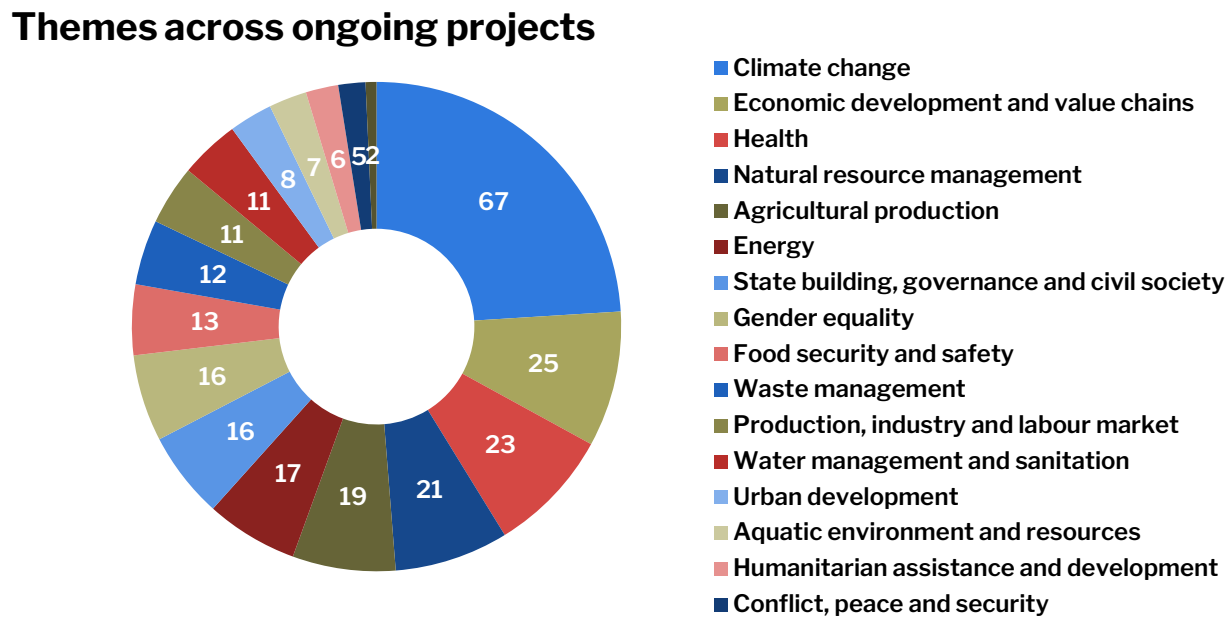

Figure 5 - self reported themes of FFU projects

The focus on Climate Change has resulted in research that covers a wide array of disciplines and sub-themes, under the main theme of Climate Change. However, it has been noted by researchers, the FFU and the Council for Development Policy[7], that the exclusive focus on Climate Change entails some risks. First, Climate Change is but one of many development challenges, and central concerns like health issues, conflict, displacement, or poverty (alleviation) also need research and knowledge-based solutions and perspectives. Second, the research communities lack resources to continue or follow-up on previous research work collecting important data and creating knowledge for years if not decades. Therefore, the MFA led the process of opening up the call to other themes and in 2024, ahead of the launch of the call 2025 in November of 2024, it was decided to include a second theme of Global Health in the 2025 call.

Lead institutions

In Denmark, the University of Copenhagen (UCPH) is the main grant holder, with a striking 43 per cent of all ongoing projects. In terms of institutional size, DIIS stands out with the same amount (7) or more projects than large Danish universities. While the focus of the institutions and departments of course play an important role in whether applying for a research grant from FFU is an interesting possibility, it is also clear that some institutions have made a clear focused and dedicated effort to secure FFU funding. In the experience of DFC, the most successful institutions, in terms of granted funds, are those who focus on development research, has strategically prioritized development research on an institutional (sometimes departmental) basis, and not least, those who have internal support and quality assurance mechanisms in place for proposal writing. DFC has a continued focus on supporting institutions in securing funding from the FFU modality, not least in order to have a wide representation of researchers and research communities in the FFU portfolio. Because diverse approaches and perspectives bring diverse solutions to the complex issues facing the world. DFC does this through e.g. formulating and sharing documents, such as 'how to write a good application', and information videos, such as 'gender sensitivity in research projects', an annual online information meeting about the call with the participation of the FFU, the MFA and DFC.

[7] DFC participated in the April meeting with the Council for Development Policy, where support to development research was discussed

LEAD INSTITUTION	NO. OF PROJECTS	% OF TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT IN PORTFOLIO
University of Copenhagen (UCPH), Denmark	47	43,79%
Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Denmark	12	9,44%
Aarhus University (AU), Denmark	10	9,53%
Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Denmark	7	6,57%
Aalborg University (AAU), Denmark	7	4,59%
Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), Denmark	7	7,38%
Roskilde University (RUC), Denmark	6	5,26%
University of Southern Denmark (SDU), Denmark	5	3,28%
Rigshospitalet (RH), Copenhagen University Hospital, Denmark	2	1,87%
University of Development Studies (UDS), Ghana	1	1,12%
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana	1	1,10%
Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Tanzania	1	1,12%
University of Ghana (UG), Ghana	1	1,12%
Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), Denmark	1	0,47%
Mzumbe University (MU), Tanzania	1	1,11%
Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ghana	1	1,12%
Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC), Tanzania	1	1,12%

Table 4 - Overview of lead institutions in ongoing projects

Annex 2. List of finalized projects 2024

All the projects finalized in the DFC system in 2024 was under the Window 2 portfolio

When the window 2 modality was introduced in 2017, it aligned with the then new strategy for Danish development cooperation and humanitarian action, The World 2030, in targeting a part of the research funding more closely to Danish strategic interests and 'Danish strengths' in areas such as water, energy, health, and food safety. The window 2 modality introduced a separate window for support to research in countries with strategic sector cooperation (SSC). The themes defined for the window 2 research calls were defined in consultation with the sector counsellors at the Danish embassies and linked to the themes of the SSCs. Under this modality, funds were provided for research projects of up to three years duration and up to DKK 5 million. Due to the shorter duration of these project, education of PhD students was not included.

DFC No.	Principal Investigator	Responsible Institution	Partner Institutions	Project title	Theme	Start date	End date	No-cost ext. in months	Granted amount DKK	Actual spending DK
17-M06-KU	Anders Dalsgaard	University of Copenhagen	Danish Agriculture and Food Council, Denmark, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Vietnam, National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Vietnam, National Institute of Veterinary Research (NIVR), Vietnam	Health and Antibiotics in Vietnamese Pig Production	Food safety	02-01-2018	31-12-2021	23	4.999.418	4.784.452
18-M05-KU	Lise Herslund	University of Copenhagen	University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa	Pathways to Water Resilient South African Cities - PaWS	Water management	01-05-2019	31-10-2022	6	4.979.683	4.947.265
18-M07-KU	Anders Dalsgaard	University of Copenhagen	Universidad CES, Colombia | Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia, Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario (ICA), Colombia, PorkColombia, Colombia, Danish Agriculture and Food Council, Denmark	Salmonella Control in the Colombian Pig Industry	Veterinary and food safety	01-05-2019	31-01-2023	21	4.995.300	3.872.424

18-M08-KU	John Rand	University of Copenhagen	Centre for Economic and Social Development (CESD), Myanmar	Reintegration Through Active Labour Market Reforms (REALM)	Labour market reform	01-01-2019	31-12-2022	12	4.978.650	3.604.510
20-M09AU	Jens-Christian Svenning	Aarhus University	University of Pretoria (UP), South Africa, Habitat Landscape Architects (Pty) Ltd., South Africa, Marianne de Klerk Architects and Urban Designers, South Africa, Civil Concepts (Pty) Ltd, South Africa, NIRAS A/S, Denmark	Integrative Green Infrastructure Planning - GRIP	Environment, including manufacturing, urban development and waste	01-03-2021	30-06-2023	4	4.976.218	4.912.237
Total								**66**	**24.929.269**	**22.120.888**

Table 5 - List of projects finalized in 2024

Annex 3. Application round 2024 in numbers

The application round 2024 ran from November 2023 to December 2024, with final grant commitments in January 2025 under the 2025 Finance Bill. The application process consists of two phases: Phase 1, a prequalification phase where applicants submit project ideas, followed by Phase 2, where those who prequalified in Phase 1 are invited to submit fully fledged project proposals. Applications are submitted by Danish research institutions with research partners in the countries where the research is to be implemented.

In Phase 1 in 2024, 121 applications were received by deadline in February. Of these, 111 complied with formal requirements and were assessed by the relevant Danish embassies for relevance and assessed by the FFU. 43 applications were invited to Phase 2 and 41 full project proposals were received by deadline in August. These applications were assessed by international peer reviewers, a gender specialist and the FFU. In November 2024, 21 new FFU research projects were selected for funding and the result endorsed by Innovation Fund Denmark. These new projects started 1 April 2025, see list of projects here.

Annex 4. Science engagement grants

Science engagement grants approved in 2024

24-SEG01-AU Lotte Meinert, Denmark	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 17-07-AU Gender Futures film and essay writing at Ugandan schools, Uganda
24-SEG02-KNUST Daniel Adjei-Boateng, Ghana	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 16-18-GHA Developing the Commercial Culture of the African Bonytongue Fish, Ghana
24-SEG03-KU Dan Meyrowitsch, Denmark	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 18-08-KU Co-creating health: Disseminating the power of participatory approaches in healthcare interventions, Tanzania
24-SEG04-KU Ole Wæver, Denmark	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 23-07-KU Theory and Epistemology Seminar for a project titled: "Charcoal Conflict in Climate Change's Decarbonisation Dilemmas: Knots of Livelihood, Nutrition, Communities, Gender, Migration & Energy in East Africa, Uganda"
24-SEG05-UENR Peter Sanful, Ghana	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 18-02-GHA Empowering Traditional Governance System to Enhance Research Uptake for Local Climate Action, Ghana.

Table 6 - Science engagement grants approved in 2024

Science engagement grants closed in 2024

22-SEG06-UDS Felix abagale, Ghana	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 20-13-GHA Communicating Science Using Local Knowledge Systems for Climate Change Resilience, focus on indigenous tree conservation, Ghana
22-SEG07-UENR Peter Sanful, Ghana	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 18-02-GHA (and 13-P04-GHA, and 14-08AU) Knowledge sharing across three research projects on lake water resources and climate change, Ghana and Tanzania
22-SEG02-KU Ole Wæver, Denmark	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 18-04-KU Engaging local communities, key informants, stakeholders and civil society, Uganda
22-SEG03-KU Helle Samuelsen, Denmark	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 17-06-KU EMERGING EPIDEMICS (early detection of infectious disease outbreaks): From research to action through stakeholder engagement in Burkina Faso
22-SEG04-RUC Simon Bolwig, Denmark	Science engagement activities linked to ongoing research project 20-M05DTU Knowledge sharing and documentary concerning circular bio economy principles in the food-processing industry in Kenya

Table 7 - Science engagement grants closed in 2024

KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION

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