

Development and Environment: The Challenges for Research Collaboration in and with Africa

This article builds on experiences within the Programme Board of "Norway – A Global Partner" (NORGLOBAL) at the Norwegian Research Council (NRC). These inspired some more general reflections on the opportunities and limitations of academic collaboration between North and South. The first cycle of the programme ended after more than five years in operation in mid-2014. It motivated the drawing of some preliminary conclusions and the presenting of some recommendations by the board members. This is the point of departure for the deliberations following, which put the case study within a more general context of North-South relations with a particular view on Africa in the academic settings of donor-funded activities. Hence the insights provided by the initial experiences of NORGLOBAL are used for a more principled engagement with the subject matter.²

North-South Collaboration Revisited

Current examples of collaboration between policy makers, development agencies, and funding institutions both in the spheres of development and research, as well as the scholars participating will offer differing results and conclusions, at times even among the direct stakeholders and actors involved in specific programmes implemented. But the trickier part – often not explicitly reflected upon – is actually the further exploration, to which extent European or Western frameworks are considered as universal and/or taken simply for granted as being hegemonic when it comes not only to applied but also to best practices. This at times is the invisible hand shaping exchanges within the frame of a mindset not (yet) emancipated from the paternalistic and patronizing undercurrents of an earlier period.

A recent study compiled by two members of the Executive Committee of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutions (EADI) has reconfirmed what many of us involved in these processes were aware

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of. The paper, based to a large extent on interviews with practitioners, documents that research partnerships "are far from immune to the tensions and conflicts permeating unequal power relations accruing from unequal access to funding, knowledge and expert networks."³

This reminds us once again that something being considered as international and seeking international cooperation – even when done with the best of intentions – is not protected from flaws, setbacks, and failures in terms of skewed forms of cooperation. Being inter-national in nature, outlook and practice does not mean being automatically good. It also does not mean that something international is necessarily all-inclusive and securing adequate representation. All too often inter-nationalism is confined in its main characteristics and with regard to main beneficiaries to those countries and their people inside the circle of power – in contrast to those remaining at the margins or outside and on the receiving end. Put differently: if European or Western or Northern or any other type of internationalism exercises a power of definition over others and imposes its values, norms, mindsets and views as particular (in our case Eurocentric) project on the rest of the world – as done far too long in the history of European colonial and imperialist expansion –, then this international dimension of European frameworks is of dubious value at least for others.

The "World Social Science Report 2010" therefore had not by accident as its subtitle that "Knowledge Divides".⁴ Especially the contributions to its chapters four and five provide sobering evidence to the fact that the current internationalization – like its preceding stages – tends to reinforce the dominance of the North. This does not exclude challenges also from within the belly of

the beast. The Enlightenment always had the ambiguity to establish on the one hand a rationality, which promoted a pseudo-scientific belief in mono-causal, linear progress and development as all-embracing concept to explain and master the world while at the same time providing the tools and instruments for emancipation based on questioning this claim. The era of Enlightenment to a large extent established a smokescreen to cover Eurocentric dominance through claims of universality. But the legitimizing humbug of such claims has been questioned not only from those raised at the receiving end of such introvert, self-centered mindset, but also from some of those socialized within the system and supposed to be an integral part of its reproduction. Emancipation from hegemony, power and subjugation is a collective effort, which crosses boundaries and is in itself internationalism in practice.

Being European or Northern or of any other descent does not pre-determine our worldview and convictions in an irrevocable manner, even though cultural and religious factors (and the privileges going hand in hand with the social positioning of many scholars in the Northern hemisphere) should not be dismissed lightly in the formation of identities and mindsets. But primary experiences and socialization processes do not deny us learning, changing, adapting and re-positioning. A continued supremacy of American-European social sciences, as diagnosed in the "World Social Science Report 2010", does not offer us any excuses to abstain from joining counter-hegemonic strategies also from within the dominant spheres of influence and knowledge production.

As Ebrima Sall concludes from an African perspective: "The challenge of autonomy, and of developing interpretative frameworks that are both scientific and universal, and relevant – that is, 'suitable' for the study of Africa and of the world from the standpoint of Africans themselves – is still very real."⁵ His predecessor

as Executive Secretary of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) is as adamant in advocating a similar dismissal of foreign perspectives imposed upon the continent and its people as integral part of the "North-South asymmetries in international knowledge production".⁶ He criticizes that "mains-tream African Studies has constituted itself into a tool for the mastering of Africa by others whilst offering very little by way of how Africa might master the world and its own affairs".⁷ He further concurs with Mahmood Mamdani that "the culture of knowledge production about Africa ... is based on analogy: Africa is read through the lenses of Europe and not on terms deriving from its own internal dynamics".⁸ African Studies might indeed, more so than any other so-called area studies (which are as global as they are local), reflect the distortions rooted in a colonial perspective surviving in the times of what is dubbed post-colonialism, a term which tends to cover up for the continuities effectively impregnating the ongoing unequal relations between societies and people.⁹

This view is reconfirmed by the EADI paper, which identifies the notion of power as a necessary challenge in efforts to transform research into "transformational" research on global issues. Arguing that "there is no such thing as a-political research" the findings suggest: "Partnerships are embedded in a web of power relations while development-oriented research often implies conflicting and contesting objectives between scholars, aid agencies and development practitioners." This requires efforts creating an enabling environment for more equal partnerships, guided by the need to deconstruct an agenda claiming to be global, but in actual fact still being to a large extent driven by actors in the North.¹⁰ All too often, such efforts remain confronted with the dilemma, that even with the best intentions these are still based on and dependent upon Northern funding and Northern scholars, who might try to overcome the structural constraints but remain confined to operations rooted and embedded within a Northern setting. These undertakings often have hardly any direct Southern participation – neither in terms of funding nor by direct individual and institutional representation. Southern partners – individuals as well as institutions – remain at the receiving end as implementing agencies, often added on after

decisions are taken without them being adequately consulted. At best, they are invited to indicate their willingness to enter such forms of cooperation in funding applications, in which they had no say during the drafting process, to create the impression that this is about true partnership – while it clearly is not.

The Case of NORGLOBAL

NORGLOBAL (Norway – A Global Partner) was established by the Norwegian Research Council (NRC) in 2008/2009 and has been operational since February 2009.¹¹ The first Programme Board's term ended in June 2014. Based on a self-evaluation and other monitoring observations, newly appointed members of the Programme Board will be tasked to continue the work for a second term.

NORGLOBAL was established to strengthen Norwegian research on and for development in low- and middle-income countries and to contribute to additional research capacity in these countries. The programme has a special responsibility to generate new knowledge within the field of development in Norway. NORGLOBAL encompasses a number of thematic areas, including women and gender issues, health, food production and the effect of development cooperation, as well as issues relating to conflicts, climate, the environment and clean energy. These topics were among the priorities being addressed within the various thematic activities under the diverse NORGLOBAL programme calls. Most activities were funded following calls for proposals and applications within the thematic areas, while a few others were the result of a cooperation with other NRC programmes, for example through joint funding announcements. Several of the thematic calls have stipulated as a condition that projects are required to incorporate the active participation of researchers from countries in the South financed through the budgets applied to promote cooperation and strengthen capacity building in these countries.

In summary, the programme objectives have been designed and initiated to

- Strengthen research in Norway on development in developing countries, as well as ensure an effective, flexible, visible and coherent organisation of this research by consolidating much of the effort within the field of development

under a single programme, and through cooperation with other programmes.

- Strengthen research for development, through the integration of development perspectives into relevant programmes.
- Strengthen the research capacity of developing countries by enhancing research cooperation between researchers based at institutions in the countries in question and leading Norwegian research institutions and qualified scholars.

So far, the programme dealt with some ten thematic priority areas, for which calls were drafted and issued (often announced several times):

- Poverty and Peace (POVPEACE)
- CGIAR Fellowship Programme (CGIAR)
- Globalisation of Environment, Energy and Climate Research (GLOBMEK)
- Women and Gender (GENDER-EQ)
- Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics (ECONPOP)
- Western Balkan Countries Development Studies Programme (W-BALKAN)
- Tax Havens, Capital Flows and Development (TAXCAPDEV)
- Research on Humanitarian Policy (HUMPOL)
- Effect of Aid (AIDEFFECT).¹²

The Programme Board had a far-reaching mandate. It allocated research funds in principle (and depending on the specific call) for projects also including PhDs, networking, equipment and other costs related to a closer interaction between Norwegian and Southern partners as well as capacity building components both in Norway and in the Southern partner institutions and countries. Financial support was based on accepting an application submitted in response to Calls issued by the Programme Board. Applicants had to be individual scholars affiliated to Norwegian research institutions and universities. Collaboration with partners in the global south were in many cases a pre-requisite, so was the allocation of a certain proportion of the funds for partners there. The collaboration with African counterparts was among the priorities. Partner institutions

in a total of 16 African countries have so far been among the recipients of research grants under the different programmes: Benin, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The budget was to a large extent provided by NORAD as the specialized directorate under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with limited additional funds from the Ministry of Education and Research. Since its inception, the amounts allocated varied according to the specific areas and calls (listed above).¹³ NORAD had a representative as ex officio member in the Programme Board, but the board members' authority in decision-making remained fully autonomous. NRC staff members in charge of the sector(s) facilitate the informed decisions. They prepared, circulated and summarized the necessary information (including the reports and rankings compiled by individual reviewers or review panels, whose identity remains undisclosed to the Programme Board). They also submitted recommendations, while the board took final decisions as a result of its internal deliberations only. These were at times different from the views of NORAD or the NRC recommendations. But all the decisions were taken without any major dissent among the board members, in mutual agreement and on a consensual basis, at times after extended discussions guided by a remarkable degree of respect for diverse competences, differing arguments and approaches. The final decisions taken often also deviated from the rankings submitted by the reviews.

The board had in total eight members, of whom only the NORAD appointed representative and the chairperson were Norwegians. The other six members were scholars recruited from other countries to reduce the risks for any potential conflict of interest. They were competent in a variety of disciplines and areas, such as political sciences, sociology, development studies, social anthropology, economics, agricultural sciences, environmental sciences and human geography with a variety of practical regional experiences in different countries and continents. The Programme Board undertook a self-evaluation taking stock of the first five

years as an input for the formulation of the mandate, aims and goals of the next Programme Board's term, to be discussed and negotiated during the second half of 2014.¹⁴

Beyond NORGLOBAL: Lessons Learned

When NORAD during 2012/13 embarked on a research strategy process seeking to improve the current practices, the Programme Board was asked to offer its views. It recommended that the following priority areas should among others be considered with special preference:

- Natural resource and energy management/governance;
- Industrial policy and labour market dynamics; and
- Promotion of health.

It was also suggested that the creation and dissemination of knowledge should be considered in future research activities as a complementing aspect attached to the subject related analyses. Most prominently, the Programme Board emphasized that NORGLOBAL has already established research activities on the effects of climate change and already relates to the Global Environment and Climate (GEC) initiative and its activities. It also established a close alignment with the new "Future Earth" initiative. The board in its report therefore not by coincidence stressed as a priority, "that research in this area is continued and is linked to concerns specific to the global South and to development challenges. Research here could and should engage researchers in the engineering and technical communities as well as in biology and other relevant natural sciences, with a view to strengthen the notion of sustainability."

Sharing the understanding of the "Future Earth" approach¹⁵, this stresses the need for an alliance of different initiatives, working in a solution-orientated mode within interdisciplinary research on global environmental change for sustainable development. As the initial design of the "Future Earth" initiative summarizes:

"Future Earth will address issues critical to poverty alleviation and development such as food, water energy, health and human security, and the nexus between these areas and the over-arching imperative of achieving global sustainability. It

will provide and integrate new insights in areas such as governance, tipping points, natural capital, the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, lifestyles, ethics and values. It will explore the economic implications of inaction and action and options for technological and social transformations towards a low-carbon future. Future Earth will explore new research frontiers and establish new ways to produce research in a more integrated and solutions-oriented way."¹⁶

But such a noble statement, which links to the aims and aspirations also of NORGLOBAL, needs to be realistically interrogated. There is a need to acknowledge and implement in any research design that the global is at the same time local and vice versa. Much more awareness among scholars and donors alike should be fostered concerning the practical implications of the inter-connectivity between seemingly different worlds and social realities. Methodology as well as theory should consciously integrate such understanding in the approaches.

This resonates strongly (and deliberately) with the "World Social Science Report 2013".¹⁷ Similar to "Future Earth", it seeks to reconcile and bring together the social, human and natural sciences and explicitly endorses the "Future Earth" approach as a like-minded (and joint) initiative, which "provides a unique and robust institutional basis for accomplishing something that has long been called for: research that brings the various scientific fields together on complex, multi-faceted problems. In addition, Future Earth fosters knowledge production, guided by a vision of science working with society to find solutions for global sustainability."¹⁸

However, by stressing "a vision of science with society", the potential collaborators should be daring enough to not only think outside of the box but also collaborate with those so far considered in their civil society and social movement roles of no direct relevance for closer interaction. The separation between the sciences as knowledge production from actors producing possibly less academic but as socially relevant knowledge has not yet been overcome. In reality, however, the results of these initiatives might stand the test and provide as relevant and useful insights, as the

example of the "Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives" might be able to show.¹⁹ Its major report so far had a measurable impact on the Rio+20 debates and engages with closely related issues.²⁰ Other earlier initiatives of The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation relating to its programmatic engagement over more than thirty years within the areas of "Another Development" and "What Next" testify to similar undertakings, directly linking to the approaches of the "Future Earth" initiative.²¹ Matters of climate change are indeed issues reaching far beyond the academic discourse and into the wider social movements for global change, which should not be ignored when it comes to further knowledge production and utilization, but – even more importantly – the related fundamental search for alternative concepts of development.²²

As the "World Social Science Report 2013" points out:

Global environmental change is about humans changing global environments, and about humans, individually and collectively, shaping the direction of planetary and social evolution. The social sciences therefore have a vital role in enriching society's understanding of what it means to live – and maybe thrive – in the Anthropocene, and in raising awareness of the opportunities, accountabilities and responsibilities this brings with it.²³

Challenges

The current (self-)critical examinations suggest, that the mainstream academic community is certainly not yet close to an amicable solution to overcome the dichotomies existing in the forms of knowledge production and the specific focus and nature of such common knowledge production within North-South interaction – also in isolation from other initiatives by NGOs.²⁴ The NORGLOBAL Programme Board diagnosed among others "a clear danger that partners in projects managed by Norwegian research institutions become junior partners who work in a fairly asymmetrical relationship with managing researchers". For the EADI paper the structural constraints show similar results by "often leading to southern partners becoming implementers of a northern agenda".²⁵ Overall, "collaborative North-South

research projects still tend to favour supporting southern researchers individually, but neglect broader institutional support that would be essential to enhance autonomous research capabilities of southern institutions".²⁶ The NORGLOBAL board, sharing a similar concern, therefore recommends: "Projects should also be monitored during their execution and evaluated after completion with respect to whether they lead to future collaborations, produce joint research reports or lead to subsequent research bids, and more generally contribute effectively to building sustainable research capacity in the South."

The problem is exacerbated by the dubious if not toxic so-called relevance criteria defined within the neo-liberal mind of those executing the power of governing. They are manifested in the shifts of emphasis towards so-called impact factors in scholarly production measured by indicators such as the number and ranking of publications. These dubious criteria, void of any concept of practical social or political relevance, are increasingly applied not only by those holding the power of definition over academic advancement and career but also by Northern funding agencies.

This provides an incentive for northern research institutions to seek collaboration with well-established (usually western) foundations rather than to engage in complex partnerships with southern partners involving capacity-building components. The tensions between short-term recognition of academic excellence and longer-term capacity building objectives lie at the heart of the North-South research partnership debate.

(...)

the more northern institutions put an emphasis on publishing numerous articles in renowned journals for their own survival, the weaker the incentive to invest in building effective partnerships that contribute to capacity building and inclusion.²⁷

In addition, funding tends to be project-related, which is not conducive to long-term planning and investment in human resources and institutional collaboration. This seems to be confirmed by the observation that "successes seem to be

more frequent when dealing with applied research geared toward the development of technical 'solutions' – for instance in the area of health or civil engineering – than in the case of more fundamental research in social sciences writ large."²⁸

Shifting the emphasis on a new alliance between scholars of a wider range of disciplines, connecting the human (social) with the natural sciences much closer, is however only one important aspect of the challenges ahead. Efforts seeking to address the fundamental obstacles towards sustainability should at the same time not risk to lose sight of imminent problems existing in terms of socio-economic realities produced by and testifying to the current reproduction of a fundamentally flawed and unsustainable form of human reproduction.

Therefore, the new forms of collaboration should not abandon engagement with other issues, which impact on the mind set, the dominant configurations in societies and global orders and the continued abuse of natural resources as well as a further promotion of inequalities. Some of the current issues requiring consideration by concerned social scientists would include the discussion about social protection floors as much as a critical interrogation of the emerging hype on the assumed positive role of the middle classes²⁹ as well as the potential governance options by means of a taxation policy, to mention only a few of the relevant issues. These are intrinsically related to concepts of social policy, justice and sustainability. Their discussion by a group of gender aware scholars of both sexes representing different disciplines, cultures, religions and regions would be able to create new insights to be linked with the search for future models of social reproduction seeking to secure sustainability and a point of departure also for the next generations.

If the social sciences are indeed useful in efforts to "untangle the processes by which global environmental change affects societies, and thus help them to respond to it in context-sensitive ways"³⁰, then a mere "switch" from rigorous social analyses (including class analysis) towards environmentally oriented research is not a solution. While it might be a correct observation that there exists a continued lack of interest among social scientists in global environmental change and disciplinary barriers are prevalent

also with regard to other sciences³¹, this cannot result in abandoning the original strength of the disciplines. As the same "World Social Sciences Report 2013" recognizes:

The insights of traditional social sciences have often been dismissed as value-laden, contextual, and therefore unreliable. Yet attention to context and values may be precisely what is needed to lead humanity out of its current predicament. The growing engagement of the social sciences in global change research is a sign of their readiness to deliver. This engagement now needs to be accelerated.³²

The relevance of social sciences within an integrated global change research has been stressed in an initiative under the GEC framework. Climate and global environmental change are understood as a central concern and subject also for social sciences and global change as organic to this field of science. This is emphasized by stating the obvious, that "the simple recognition that if the fundamental causes and consequences of global change are social, then so must the solutions be".³³ Such a perspective was also the common understanding at a meeting of some 70 participants representing international, regional and national development aid agencies and research funding agencies, along with African scholars and scientists.³⁴ They reiterated the crucial role of social scientists in issues related to sustainable development research, since the resulting challenges are to a large extent the consequence of social activities and behavior. This also impacts on the perceptions and strategies how best to address the challenges. After all:

"Critical to a social-ecological perspective is the role of humans as reflexive and creative agents of deliberate change. Understanding how values, attitudes, worldviews, beliefs and visions of the future influence system structures and processes is crucial. It challenges the idea that catastrophic global environmental change is inevitable, and directs attention to possibilities for acting in response to such change."³⁵

As the World Social Science Report also notes:

Global environmental change is simultaneously an environmental and a social problem. Social science

research helps us to comprehend the complex dynamics of 'social-ecological' or 'coupled human-natural' systems, and can help explain how these systems unfold and inter-connect across space, from the local to the global, and in time, from the past and present into the future."³⁶

Concluding Reflections

"Future Earth" suggests being a pioneering initiative to bridge the North-South divide in the face of meeting the challenges for global survival in times of devastating effects of climate change. At the same time, however, it remains confronted with the lasting structural disparities the initiative seems to be aware of and seeking to at least reduce if not to overcome. In early July 2014 the alliance that initiated "Future Earth" announced the results of an open bidding process for the hosting of the five global hubs. These will be established to function as a single secretarial entity. The status was awarded to research institutions in Canada, France, Japan, Sweden and the United States. They will be complemented by four regional hubs in Cyprus, Japan, the United Kingdom and Uruguay – as the only location out of nine representing the global south. Strikingly, the African continent is not in any institutional form represented in this configuration, while being widely considered as the world's region, whose people are most dramatically affected by the environmental shifts as a result of climate change.

In response to a critical article voicing frustration by mainly Asian observers over the Northern bias³⁷, members of The Science and Technology Alliance for Global Sustainability (an informal international partnership of sponsors of "Future Earth" composed of members from research, funding and the international sectors dubbed "the alliance"³⁸) stated "that work is ongoing to address this important issue, particularly in terms of the development of strong regional hubs that will become part of the secretariat".³⁹ This seems to be not an ideal start and might confirm reservations as to the genuine motives of the initiators. On the other hand, they might have well reasons to bemoan the lack of serious bids presented from institutions located elsewhere, offering the opportunity to allocate more responsibility (and funds) to southern agencies. If, as a result of the disproportionate means, the limited

capacity or maybe even the prevailing suspicions that a competition is anyway not fair and favourable to southern bidders the potential players from these regions abstain, the end result is another self-fulfilling prophecy.⁴⁰ This experience suggests that even the most sensible insights are not yet a cure to the quagmire when it comes to the practical steps of implementation of a sound idea.

While we might be aware of the asymmetrical North-South relations, we face the risk that these are perpetuated even within our own settings, as long as the historically rooted animosities prevail. In addition, as concluded by the recent insights into the continued limitations of scholarly collaboration, local policy priorities impact on the agenda. Bridging the scholars – consultants – donors divide remains under these circumstances a challenge. Academic criteria guiding career planning in a scholarly environment – such as the infamous "impact factor" of publications – often overrule practical or even policy relevance, and the North-South cooperation remains still in the hands of Northern partners with Southern counterparts as a fig leaf or a junior partner reduced to an implementing agency for local empirical studies and data collection, which after completion of the local service functions are later owned by the Northern "big brother/sister".

As a result, at times indeed relevant insights for local policy-makers and communities in the South generated by new research end in peer reviewed journals, whose commercial publishing priority remains prohibitive for access by those who might benefit most from it. Often, research projects awarded with the necessary funding, are not even tasked or expected to share their insights with a wider audience as the potential beneficiary of the new knowledge created. Similar to the lack of investment into institutional capacity building as part of such research collaboration, the publishing of the results remains in the Northern domain. Instead, one could make provisions that research results are supposed to be published in accessible ways in a local context, and provide the necessary funding for this as an integral part of the project. This would at least be a deliberate effort to address the imbalances by putting money where the mouth is.

We need to equate sustainability with notions of justice, equality and civil as

well as political and socio-economic rights for individuals and collectives within a world of cultural and religious diversity impacting on and shaping norms and values as well as life perspectives. We have to pursue the same goals with differing but complementing responsibilities and transcend borders not only geographically but also mentally and beyond narrow disciplinary confinements, while paying respect and giving recognition to diversity and otherness when seeking and establishing common ground. Last but not least, despite all these demanding aspects, we should never compromise on quality, but rather re-define the criteria for meaningful quality and relevance - for both, knowledge and life.

Notes

1. Director emeritus/Senior Adviser of The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in Uppsala/Sweden; Extraordinary Professor at the Department of Political Sciences of the University of Pretoria and at the Centre for Africa Studies of the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein; and former research director of The Nordic Africa Institute. This is the revised version of a paper presented to a meeting on "Enhancing collaboration between the development aid and the global environmental change communities to achieve development goals in Africa", organized by the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the Swedish Development Agency (Sida) on 5/6 May 2014 at the Soweto Campus of the University of Johannesburg.
2. I thank Inger-Ann Ullstein, Jan Monteverde Haakonsen and their colleagues from the NRC and Kevin Noone and other members in the Programme Board of NORGLOBAL, for the fruitful cooperation during the last years and all the indirect inputs to this paper. I am grateful for the opportunity offered by CODESRIA to share these reflections with a wider audience.
3. Gilles Carbonnier/Tiina Kontinen, *North-South Research Partnerships: Academia Meets Development?* Bonn: EADI (EADI Policy Paper Series), June 2014, p. 3.
4. *World Social Science Report 2010. Knowledge Divides*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Social Science Council (ISSC) 2010.
5. Ibid., pp. 44f.
6. Adebayo Olukoshi, "African scholars and African Studies", in: Henning Melber (ed.), *On Africa. Scholars and African Studies. Contributions in Honour of Lennart Wohlgemuth*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute 2007, pp. 7-22 (here: p. 17).
7. Ibid., p. 15.
8. Ibid., p. 18. Cf. Mahmood Mamdani, "African Studies Made in USA", *CODESRIA Bulletin*, no. 2, 1990; and "The Challenge of the Social Sciences in the 21st Century", in Ruth Mukama/Murindwa Rutange (eds), *Confronting 21st Century Challenges: Analyses and Re-dedications by National and International Scholars*. Volume 1. Kampala: Faculty of Social Sciences/Makerere University 2004.
9. For some critical reflections on the contested notion of African Studies from the perspectives of an European scholar see Henning Melber, "The Relevance of African Studies", *Stichproben. Vienna Journal of African Studies*, vol. 9, no. 16, 2009, pp. 183-200, and Henning Melber, "What is African in Africa(n) Studies? Confronting the (Mystifying) Power of Ideology and Identity", *Africa Bibliography 2013* (forthcoming).
10. Carbonnier/Kontinen, op. cit., p. 15.
11. Further details at: http://www.forskningsradet.no/prognettnorglobal/Home_page/1224698160055. The designed first chairperson of the newly established Programme Board, Carl-Erik Schulz, died in a tragic accident while mountain hiking at Table Mountain on 30 November 2008 and was denied to take up this function. I dedicate this article to his memory.
12. In addition, NORGLOBAL cooperated occasionally with other programmes in the Research Council, such as INDNOR on India. The programme board has also handled a limited call sponsored by the Norwegian embassy in Malawi, which allocated funds to research projects aimed at presenting findings to strengthen political governance.
13. In 2013, NORGLOBAL had a disposable budget of some NOK 153.5 million (around US\$ 25 million), of which for the first three months some NOK 51.5 million (around US\$ 8.5 million) were used.
14. The report was drafted in August/September 2013 by the board's chairperson Helge Hveem, based on the inputs of the other board members.
15. See www.icsu.org/future-earth and www.futureearth.info.
16. Future Earth, *Future Earth Initial Design: Report of the Transition Team*. Paris: International Council for Science (ICSU) 2013, p. 11.
17. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Social Science Council (ISSC), *World Social Science Report 2013. Changing Global Environments*. Paris: OECD Publishing and UNESCO Publishing 2013.
18. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 5.
19. See <http://www.reflectiongroup.org/>.
20. *No future without justice. Report of the Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives*. Uppsala: The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation 2012 (development dialogue, no. 59). Accessible at: <http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd59/>.
21. See for a summary on some of the contributions *50 Years Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation*. Edited by Henning Melber. Uppsala: The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation 2012 (development dialogue, no. 60). Accessible at: <http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd60/>; and more specifically *What Next Volume III: Climate, Development and Equity*. Edited by Niclas Hällström with Robert Österbergh. Uppsala: The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the What Next Forum 2012 (development dialogue, no. 61). Accessible at: <http://www.dhf.uu.se/publications/development-dialogue/dd61/>. The Foundation's web site offers access to several more related publications.
22. See Henning Melber, 'Whose World? Development, civil society, development studies and (not only) scholar activists', *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 6, 2014 (in print).
23. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 4.
24. This observation does by no means suggest that the NGO-interactions are immune against paternalistic forms of collaboration. Rather, they reproduce to a large extent similar problems and challenges as the collaboration among scholars and academic institutions.
25. Carbonnier/Kontinen, op. cit., p. 10.
26. Ibid., p. 9.
27. Ibid., pp. 5 and 7.
28. Ibid., p. 16.

29. See for a critique Henning Melber, "Africa and the Middle Class(es), *Africa Spectrum*, vol. 48, no. 3, 2013, pp. 111-120.
30. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 14.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
33. Heide Hackmann/Asunción Lera St. Clair, *Transformative Cornerstones of Social Science Research for Global Change*. Paris: International Social Science Council, May 2012, p. 8.
34. "Enhancing collaboration between the development aid and the global environmental change communities to achieve development goals in Africa", conference held at the University of Johannesburg, Soweto campus, 5-6 May 2014.
35. *World Social Science Report 2013. Summary*, p. 7.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
37. SciDevNet, "Future Earth's 'global' secretariat under fire", 23 July 2014, <http://www.scidev.net/global/sustainability/news/future-earth-global-secretariat.html>.
38. Core members include the ICSU, the ISSC, the IGFA/Belmont Forum, UNESCO, UNEP, UNU and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
39. "Future Earth's globally distributed Secretariat designed to be flexible and diverse", 7 August 2014; <http://www.futureearth.info/news/future-earths-globally-distributed-secretariat-designed-be-flexible-and-diverse>.
40. China, for example, reportedly took an explicit decision not to bid to host the secretariat, while potential Indian partners did not respond to invitations to participate in the bidding process. Nor was there any African organisation willing to act as a host for a hub or to coordinate a bid.