



THE NORDIC  
AFRICA INSTITUTE  
NORDISKA AFRIKAINSTITUTET

# Action Plan and Budget 2024–2025

Revised 2024-01-26

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## 1. The Director's introduction

Africa is increasingly at the centre of global politics and academic debates. Global powers are competing for economic, political, and strategic influence on the continent, while Africa itself has emerged as an increasingly powerful and confident actor on the world stage. The importance of becoming less fragile and to diversify partnership alternatives are being emphasized by many African leaders.

To navigate Africa in world politics, but also to strategically engage with a vibrant and fast-growing continent, deeper knowledge about the realities in Africa, what motivates people and their leaders to act in different ways, are essential to build future relations. For the Nordic region and Europe, Africa will be an increasingly important partner. Investments in research collaboration to address global challenges, but also to meet future aspirations of both continents, will be of central importance. The Nordic Africa Institute's mission gives us a unique opportunity to engage researchers and decision-makers, both among Nordic countries and in Africa, in an evidence-based dialogue and a joint knowledge exchange. Our institute provides reflective and analytical depth to relevant and strategic issues. Along with Africa's growing geo-political importance, as a Nordic based knowledge hub, we are well positioned to play a strategic role in analysing the challenges and opportunities facing the continent.

The annual Action Plan aims to operationalize our institutional strategy. The Action Plan for 2024-2025 reflects the third year of the implementation of our five-year strategy, and includes institutional targets for each operational objective. During 2024, our ambition is among other things, to continue to strengthen our engagement with African change makers, and to contribute to strengthening Africa-Nordic relations.

Contextualized understanding of the African continent continues to grow in importance. Challenging assumptions on how societal transformation actually takes place, but also inspiring new thinking and innovative ideas, lies at the very heart of what we do. I am looking forward to working closely with colleagues and partners to develop and strengthen the institute's role and contributions.

Therese Sjömander Magnusson

November 2023

## 2. Governance framework

### 2.1 Ordinance with instructions for the Nordic Africa Institute

According to the ordinance with instructions (SFS 2021:371) from the Swedish government, the Nordic Africa Institute shall contribute to a deeper understanding of modern Africa among Nordic decision makers by

1. conducting, making available and disseminating interdisciplinary research and analysis concerning relevant social challenges in Africa;
2. creating conditions for a research-based policy dialogue about Africa in the Nordic countries and on the African continent;
3. stimulating research concerning Africa in the Nordic countries and promoting research cooperation between Nordic and African researchers;
4. providing a library in order to acquire and make available literature and other information sources that are relevant to research and study of modern Africa.

Through its activities, the agency shall contribute to achieving the goal of international development cooperation as part of the implementation of Sweden's global development policy, and to implementation of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

### 2.2 Organisational structure of the Nordic Africa Institute

The Nordic Africa Institute is led by a Head of Agency, called Director. The Institute is organised into three core units: Research unit, Communication unit, and Library unit. A fourth unit, the Central Administration and Organisational Development unit, ensures good and effective working conditions, planning and follow-up processes.

The institute's current research capacity includes 12 senior researchers, 3 post-doc positions, 1 research assistant and 1 12-month African scholar. In addition, within our scholarship program we will have 8 three-month scholarship holders from Africa, 6 one-month scholarship holders from the Nordics, and 1 Claude Ake visiting chair during 2024.

The agency has an advisory body, the Programme and Research Council, that shall provide the Head of Agency with advice relating to the strategic direction and implementation of the agency's activities and field of research. Finland and Iceland contribute with funding to the agency and therefore have two council members each, of which at least one represents the country's research environment. Denmark has conveyed an ambition to deepen their engagement with NAI and have since August 2022 an academic representative on the Council.

### 2.3 NAI Strategy 2022-2026: From vision to impact

As a Swedish research-led public agency and as a beneficiary of several Nordic governments, NAI is uniquely positioned to play a strategic role in analysing the challenges and opportunities facing Africa. Specialising in the field of transdisciplinary social sciences, we work to co-create knowledge with partners in African and Nordic settings; act as a trusted institutional bridge spanning African and Nordic perspectives; and contribute a wealth of high-quality insights on contemporary Africa.

The Institute's five-year strategy (2022-2026) guides the agency's operations and clarifies how NAI co-creates, communicates and disseminates knowledge and ultimately contributes to a deeper understanding of Africa. The annual Action Plan is based on contributions to the operational objectives defined in the strategy.

## Vision

*African and Nordic decision-makers work effectively together to improve the equality, dignity and welfare of people across contexts in Africa*

## Mission

*Provide deeper understanding amongst Nordic decision-makers and associated change-makers of contemporary African perspectives and societal dynamics*

NAI's mission statement captures its intended contribution to effective and informed decision-making, centered on deepening understanding of African perspectives and societal dynamics among Nordic decision-makers and associated change-makers. NAI is constantly attempting to extend its reach to wider target groups, including those on the African continent.

## Operational objectives

To enable the institute to fulfil its mission and to contribute to its vision, three interlinked outcomes will be pursued throughout the strategy period: a knowledge-generating profile; a policy-informing role; and an established position within the Nordic region as a collaborative and learning knowledge hub.

In order to reach its three interlinked outcomes, the following overarching operational objectives are set:

- Strengthen its capacity for knowledge co-creation between Nordic and African partners;
- Strengthen its bridging role between African perspectives and Nordic policy audiences;
- Strengthen its cross-unit collaboration and learning, including through digitalisation

## Impact areas

In order to realise effective policy relevance, the institute will work to generate policy impact in five areas (listed below). Each impact area contributes to understanding relevant to the fundamental principles of the United Nation's Agenda 2030 and the aspirations of the African Union's Agenda 2063.

1. Equality, Social Justice & Inclusion
2. Governance, Citizenship & Participation
3. Economy, Employment & Mobility
4. Climate, Natural Resources & Sustainability
5. Peace, Security & Human Rights

Leadership at NAI is trust-based, and the institute strives to uphold a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion. Embedded within this are the three C's of NAI's HR policy and strategy, representing the main parts in our collective effort:

- Culture - a collective responsibility for contributing towards a fulfilling workplace, which enables individuals to fulfil their duties to the highest standard.
- Competence – each employee has equal opportunities for personal growth, skills and knowledge development within their respective role.
- Capacity - employees have clear roles, take responsibility for their job tasks and get the support they need.

## 2.4 Building our impact – Stories of Change

To fulfil our mission, we recognize that knowledge generation interacts with policy making through non-linear processes with many potential causes and drivers of change. Our strategic inspiration is to be policy-informing, drawing on our excellence in social science and transdisciplinary knowledge production to provide credible, legitimate and relevant knowledge to Nordic decision-makers and associated change-makers.

The institute's mission of deepening understanding among Nordic decision-makers of contemporary African perspectives and societal dynamics requires, first, excellent research, and second an in-depth understanding of our primary target audience's needs and priorities. Researchers and communicators at NAI work closely together to identify, develop and implement the most effective methods and formats for sharing knowledge and informing key processes. Additionally, further target groups are integral to building knowledge; including people on the African continent who can provide vital understanding of issues based on their lived experiences. Our engagement with the academic community on the continent and through wider networks is also key to knowledge generation. The Institute considers policy-makers and thinkers on the African continent, scholars and academic communities in the Nordics and in Africa, the media, and change-makers within the private sector and civil society, as both partners in knowledge building and target audiences.

Included in processes of policy influencing is our emphasis on co-creation, through which we can bring forward different framings of issues related to contemporary Africa, and how these framings influence change. Important to this is our understanding of how different kinds of 'policy spaces' are relevant, to greater or lesser extents, for researchers looking to inform policy debates and action on contemporary Africa. Moreover, these different policy spaces require different forms of engagement from research institutions and contribute to different forms of impact.

To illustrate how we contribute to impact, we intend to develop 3-4 stories of change for the remaining period of the strategy i.e. 2024-2026. These cross-organisational stories will be followed-up through our MEL framework tool, which includes components of learning, outcome assessment, documentation and sources of verification. A separate monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework was implemented as a pilot in 2022, and in 2023 the framework was tried and refined and will in 2024 be used more regularly in monitoring progress. In parallel with the mapping of stories of change, the unit for central administration and organizational development will design a NAI model for internal learning and knowledge sharing, to strengthening our systematic feedback loops.

### 3. Institutional targets with activities

Four of the cross-organisational targets from 2023 have been re-prioritised – with minor adjustments - as the annual targets also for 2024. These targets are complemented with unit wise priorities, which encompass both regular planned activities and activities in response to different demands throughout the operational year. All units are also engaged in cross-unit work processes e.g. sustainability issues, crisis management, information handling, travel security, information security, and work environment.

A single activity aiming for a certain target may contribute to one, two or three operational objectives, given that the operational objectives are interlinked. The targets and the activities, and how they correspond to the operational objectives, are presented in the matrix below.

As a reminder, NAI's three interlinked operational objectives are:

- Strengthen its capacity for knowledge co-creation between Nordic and African partners (OO I)
- Strengthen its bridging role between African perspectives and Nordic policy audiences (OO II)
- Strengthen its cross-unit collaboration and learning, including through digitalisation (OO III)

Annual target 1: Strengthen engagement with Africa-based stakeholders					
Justification for target					
Central to the NAI strategy is our bridging role between African and Nordic perspectives and between research and policy. By closer involvement and engagement with key change-makers on the continent, NAI will be able to strengthen the African perspectives in the science to policy outreach.					
Activities	Indicators	Data	OO I	OO II	OO III
Deliver at least one science-communication workshop with a research institute on the African continent.	2 examples of how participants have used new learning.	1 page report on 6-month follow-up with participants.	✓	✓	
NAI academic publications demonstrate knowledge co-creation between Nordic and African scholars.	At least 10 academic publications co-authored with scholars from Africa-based institutions.	DiVA publications list.	✓	✓	
Annual target 2: Create the best possible conditions for creating new and relevant knowledge					
Justification for target					
NAI strives to be a conducive environment for knowledge-sharing and academic exchange, as well as enhance the co-creation of knowledge that research mobility leverages. During 2024 we will give special attention to developing our digital platforms and tools in order to improve remote access and participation in the co-creation of knowledge.					
Activities	Indicators	Data	OO I	OO II	OO III
Develop and implement a template/format for event evaluation.	1 template for evaluation of events	Intranet	✓	✓	✓

Improve library support/information to Africa based scholars/partners	1 web page with library information for users based in Africa	NAI web	✓		
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### Annual target 3: Deepen academic collaboration and policy exchange across the Nordics

#### Justification for target

There is value of strengthening academic collaboration across the Nordics. NAI will continue to strengthen its engagement with both academia and policymakers in Sweden, Finland and Iceland, while we will work to deepen our research collaboration with academic institutions in Denmark and Norway. Furthermore, we will use our convening power and extensive network to provide strategic opportunities for Nordic policy makers based on the African continent to engage in relevant knowledge exchanges with NAI and its partners.

Activities	Indicators	Data	OO I	OO II	OO III
Plan and deliver at least one Nordic-African dialogue event in Africa with researchers and Nordic diplomatic missions.	Event co-organised with at least two Nordic missions in Africa.  Feedback from participants.	Invitation and program for event.  Surveys.	✓	✓	
Engage on Africa issues through teaching, learning events and joint research thwii Nordic Universities to ensure new generations of scholars are aware of NAI, including the Nordic scholarship program and NAI library resources.	At least 5 seminars and/or guest lectures delivered at universities in at least 2 different Nordic countries on African issues.  Zoom introductions to e-resources as follow –ups to scholarship applications.	Lecture / seminar program.  NAI website under events.	✓		✓
NAI researchers collaborate with scholars in the Nordics through academic publications.	Nordic researchers are included as co-authors on at least 5 publications and/or related research outputs.	DiVA publications list.	✓		



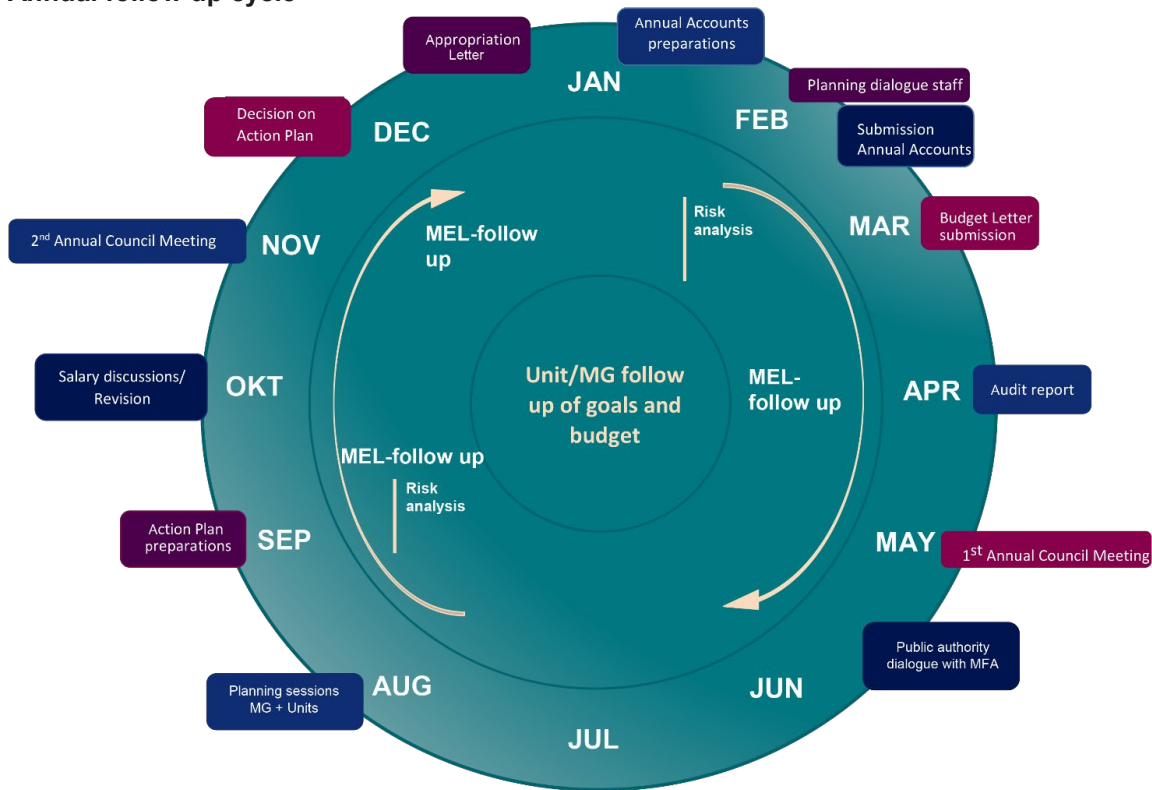
Annual target 4: Through increased visibility, raise awareness of the institute’s relevance across policy spheres			OO I	OO II	OO III
<b>Justification for target</b>					
NAI expects that increased visibility will raise the awareness of the institute’s relevance across policy spheres and thereby strengthen its role and image as a go-to partner of choice. Being active in several academic and policy contexts, and also itself taking initiatives to link these two collectives for effective knowledge exchange, during 2024 NAI will continue to enhance its virtual and physical visibility in several ways on the African continent and in the Nordics.					
Activities	Indicators	Data	OO I	OO II	OO III
Plan and deliver a pilot version of a Nordic Africa Dialogue between research and policy, back to back with the physical POF-meeting in November.	At least two events of varying sizes and thematics - linking the scientific and policy-making collectives - held in the week of the PoF meeting in November 2024.	Programmes of events, participant lists.	✓	✓	✓
Produce at least one film (or other format) from research fieldwork showing “research in progress” and the topic’s relevance for deepened understanding of contemporary Africa.	Trip conducted and audio-visual material produced and published in NAI channels in 2024.	Film and related materials.	✓	✓	✓
Increase policy content on NAI web site.	Search strings directly to policy content on library section of NAI web site.	NAI web.	✓	✓	

## 4. Annual follow up and the organisational monitoring, evaluation and learning framework

The annual follow-up cycle below visualizes the Institute’s processes for planning, implementation and monitoring, including annual institutional processes to comply the governance of Swedish public agencies according to for example The Swedish National Financial Management Authority.

The follow-up cycle is integrated into the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework in order to follow-up on the Action plan and institutional strategy. It will also feed information and understanding into the agency’s annual planning and budget cycle. Annual follow up processes are aligned with and carried out on an individual, unit and institutional level.

### Annual follow up cycle



Picture: Annual follow up cycle for planning, implementation and monitoring, including annual institutional processes

## 5. Risk matrix and risk mitigation plan

In carrying out the annual operations of the Nordic Africa Institute, the following main risks (below) and risk mitigation strategies have been identified.

The management team systematically follow and assess the geopolitical situation in the neighborhood of Sweden. The Director of the Institute is part of overall government coordination and information sharing meetings.

The situation is difficult to foresee, but it might influence the work of the institute during 2024. The management team continuously revisit the institute's crisis management, and crisis preparedness, and will use scenario planning. These measures aim for enhancing a strong safety culture through the entire organisation.

RESOURCES AND PROCESSES	THREATS	CONSEQUENCE (1-4)	PROBABILITY (1-4)	RISK MITIGATION MEASURES
Duty travelling	Travel security challenges linked to a deteriorating image of Sweden globally.	4	2 (3)	<p>Travel security training for all staff, and active support from “2Secure” NAI’s travel security company.</p> <p>Start implementing and continuously update NAI’s new internal travel guidelines.</p> <p>Pro-actively ask for advice from Nordic embassies in the countries to be visited before duty travel is commenced.</p> <p>The management group monitors and discuss systematically the image of Sweden on the African continent.</p>
Information storage and handling	As an organization that manages research data and sensitive personal data, there is a high risk that NAI is being attacked and/or sabotaged, leading to information loss or involuntary dissemination.	3	3	<p>Continuous enhancement of NAI’s safety culture.</p> <p>Ensure that employees do information classification and establish routines for handling classified information.</p> <p>Spread knowledge about how to prevent the intrusion of malicious code and preventing the hijacking of usernames and passwords.</p>

				<p>Have routines for updates and back-up of computers and other IT equipment.</p> <p>Have specific routines considering IT security while travelling.</p>
Finances	Insecurity of long-term sustainable organisational growth linked to availability of funding due to possible changing political priorities in the Nordic countries and spill-over effects from an uncertain geopolitical situation.	3	3	<p>Continue to increase NAI's policy relevance and collaborate with other government agencies. Nurture close relationships and proactive dialogue with the Nordic MFAs across policy areas.</p> <p>Strengthen connections with academia and policy makers in Denmark and Norway and with Nordic diplomatic missions in Africa.</p> <p>Continue to develop the institutional work of successful research grant proposals, monitor external funding opportunities and explore collaboration with partners to develop proposals.</p> <p>Systematic budget follow-up supported by the instrument 'Financial Information Center'.</p>
Physical presence on the African continent.	Due to escalating costs, challenges of being present and more visible on the African continent to effectively co-create knowledge with partners	2	3	<p>Build on relations with strategic partners in Africa, strengthen researchers' individual networks and support the work of research groups with geographical spread.</p> <p>Consolidate capacity for production of high-quality empirical research from a range of data sources.</p> <p>Develop plan for enabling short-term mobility of</p>

				NAI staff to partner institutions in Africa.
Credibility	<p>Manipulation of digitally published materials, leading to misrepresentation of NAI.</p> <p>If NAI is expected to rapidly scale up or down, risk that capacity and/or expertise is not adjusted quickly enough, leading to distrust of NAI's capacity.</p>	3 (4)	2 (1)	<p>Monitor NAI's digital output, raise internally and externally if manipulation detected.</p> <p>Effective scenario planning in MG.</p> <p>Continue to systematically fact check and verify the quality of our outputs.</p>
Recruitment	Increased competition in attracting and retaining skilled and experienced staff.	3	2	Use HR and institutional strategies as communication tools in recruitments, employer branding, staff retention, assessment of competence needs and strengthening of individual and institutional capacity through early planning.

## 6. Budget and finances 2024–2025

### Finances and annual budget of the Nordic Africa Institute

In addition to Swedish funding, the Nordic Africa Institute receives annual contributions from the governments of Finland and Iceland for programme activities within research, communication and the library. The Institute is mainly financed from the Swedish government's development aid budget through two different allocations, one for programmatic activities, and one for administrative/management and running costs. The institute's financial resources also include an annual contribution earmarked for library acquisitions from Uppsala University.

Externally funded research projects are ongoing and will still be part of NAI's budget in 2024. The budget line for external research funding is preliminary as most grants are decided upon late in the year or in the beginning of 2024. As a consequence of the number of new external grants NAI received in 2023, new research teams were formed under the leadership of three NAI researchers, including newly recruited postdocs and research assistants.

As a public agency the Institute receives next year's budget allocation for programmatic use in the Letter of Appropriation decided upon by the government around 20<sup>th</sup> December. This means that the budget in the Action Plan is based on this year's indicative budget for 2024 from the government. To adapt to possible changing circumstances, the management team also uses a 'shadow' scenario budgeting process to accommodate a possible decrease or increase in financial allocation.

The tables below present the expected income and itemized expenditures for 2024, and for comparison a preliminary income budget for 2025 is presented.

### NAI Overall budget 2023–2025<sup>1</sup>

#### Income

Source Numbers in TSEK	2023	2024	2025
Sweden Administration (Government contribution 07 1:3 ap1)	16 889	17 320	17 320
Sweden Programme (Government contribution 07 1:1 ap8)	17 600	22 000	22 000
Finland	5 450	5 000	TBD
Iceland	330	330	330
Uppsala University	500	500	500
External research funding (estimated)	13 408 <sup>2</sup>	TBD	TBD
External project overhead disbursements	600	TBD	TBD
Transfer remaining funds (Government contribution 07 1:3 ap1)	1 865	505	TBD
<b>Total income</b>	<b>57 454</b>	<b>46 825</b>	<b>40 150</b>

<sup>1</sup> According to known conditions as per 15 November 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Including roll-over unspent funds from 2022.

## NAI itemised expenditure budget 2024

Operational area	TSEK	Operational area	TSEK
<b>Management and Administration</b>		<b>Research and Capacity Building</b>	
Salary Director	1 890	Salaries (core funding)	13 170
		Salaries (external funding)	TBD
Activities MG (incl. NAI Associates)	250	Activities researchers + "internal grants"	1 478
Incoming and outgoing mobilities	100	African Scholarships (8 positions)	900
		Nordic Scholarships (6 positions)	200
		Claude Ake Chair	75
Programme and Research Council	75	Commissioned Research	200
Salaries admin staff	5 860	Detailed activities within externally funded research projects	TBD
		<i>Sub-total research:</i>	<b>16 023</b>
Office (rent, maintenance, furniture, cleaning, supplies)	4 705	<b>Communication and Policy Dialogue</b>	
IT/telephony, digital services	2 200	Salaries	6 170
State Service Centre and Audit	2 000	Web/digital services	200
		Publications (NAI & co-published)	310
Security	100	Dissemination/marketing	250
		Policy dialogue/Ambassador coaching	330
Staff related costs: health, well-being, planning days	250	<i>Sub-total communication:</i>	<b>7 260</b>
		<b>Library</b>	
Competence development	100	Salaries	3 300

		Acquisitions	1 200
		Electronic library	15
Other institutional running costs (insurances, legal, procurements, bank fees, memberships, recruitment processes etc.)	50	Activities (meetings, networks)	25
		<i>Sub-total library:</i>	<i>4 540</i>
Instalments and depreciation	245		
<b>Total administration</b>	<b>17 825<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Total programme*</b>	<b>27 823</b>

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<sup>3</sup> Unused funds in 2023 can partly be transferred for use in 2024. Therefore, management/administration budget is higher than the committed funding from the government.



## Externally funded research projects at NAI 2023 – 2025

Numbers in SEK

Funding Agency/Project Title	2023	2024		2025
	Incoming funding 2023 and roll over from 2022	Roll over from 2023	Incoming funding 2024	
Swedish Research Council (VR) / Soft Infrastructures: Labour mobilities across and between secondary cities in West Africa	1 477 255	-	-	-
Riksbankens Jubileumsfond / Changing Urban Residency: migration, temporary settlement and new urbanisms in Africa	1 800 000	-	-	-
Swedish Research Council (VR) / From Climate Change Adaptation to Climate Resilience – Identifying the missing links (network grant)	102 793	-	-	-
Swedish Research Council (VR) / Shattering glass: How elected members of the UN Security Council fight for women, peace and security	2 030 611	Information in Feb.	-	-
EU Horizon 2020 - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships for Gudrun Fridriksdottir (University of Iceland) / The role of socio-economic status in experiences of displacement: The case of displaced Burundians in Kigali	1 380 158	Information in Feb.	-	1 243 700 (107 000 EUR)
ClimBeR / The Building Systematic Resilience against Climate Variability and Extremes (ClimBeR) is a three-year project (2022-2024) involving research in Kenya, Zambia, Senegal, Morocco, Guatemala and the Philippines	1 389 826	Information in Feb.	2 500 000 (230 930 USD)	-
Making Politics Safer: Gendered Violence and Electoral Temporalities in Africa	1 400 000	Information in Feb.	1 600 000	839 000
Natural hazards and migration in Madagascar. Towards an Integrated Monitoring and Modelling for Mitigation and Adaptation	2 981 501	Information in Feb.	1 407 499	-
Swedish Research Council (VR) / Contested Elections and Street Politics	747 828	Information in Feb.	739 701	-
FORMAS / Building a Research Network on the UN Security Council's Elected Members to Enhance Africa's Peace and Security Architecture	98 266	-	-	-