

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Danish Universities in Ambitious and Innovative Cooperation with Universities in Developing Countries**

Danida, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, has approved a 60 Million DKK (11.5 Million USD) grant to the first phase of the Universities Denmark initiative, "Building Stronger Universities in Developing Countries." The programme is a joint initiative between the eight universities in Denmark and selected universities in Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Nepal. The program is aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity, including development of PhD programmes, and the research based educations.

"By strengthening research and education at the universities in the partner countries we support not only poverty eradication and economic development, but also the democratic development in the partner countries", Søren Pind, Minister for Development Cooperation, states. The Minister also appreciates that the eight Danish universities co-fund the initiative and that they for the first time engage in a large, joint research cooperation with the partner countries.

At Universities Denmark expectations are high. "Danish universities have many excellent researchers, who with this programme will better be able to cooperate to strengthen the capacity to develop and undertake qualified research, education and dissemination of findings at our partner universities in the South", states Rector Jens Oddershede, University of Southern Denmark, who is the spokesperson for Universities Denmark.

The Universities Denmark initiative is built on four thematic platforms: Growth and Employment, Human Health, Environment and Climate, and Stability, Democracy and Rights. The programme has been developed in close cooperation with selected universities in the partner countries and will begin on 1 August 2011.

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