



NFU General Assembly 2012

Time: 26 November 2012, 16:45

Venue: CICERO

Agenda (item 1)

1. Constitute meeting and approve agenda

- Election of General Assembly Chair and two reporters
- Approval of agenda

2. NFU Annual Report 2012

3. NFU Audited accounts 2012

4. Annual plan and budget for 2013

5. Elections

- NFU board and auditor, presentation by the Nomination Committee
- Nomination committee, presentation by the NFU Board

6. Suggestion by NFU Board to change statutes regarding deputy board members

7. Incoming business

Item 2. NFU Annual report 2012

NFU Annual Report 2012

(Covering the period November 2011 to November 2012)

1. General

The current year covers the period November 2011 – November 2012. The General Assembly is as a rule conducted in connection with the Annual Conference and we have for that reason adopted flexible business years for reporting and accounts. NFU membership follows the calendar year.

2. The NFU Board members 2012

The NFU General Assembly 2011 was held at December 12th, 2012, at SUM, Oslo. Since the conference was held in Copenhagen (Nordic), the GA was held as a separate event. Following this meeting, the composition of the NFU Board has been as follows:

Board members

Håvard Haarstad, Department of Geography, University of Bergen (Chair)

Ingunn Bjørkhaug, Fafo, Oslo

Darley Kjosavik, Noragric, Oslo (on election in 2012)

Kristen Nordhaug, Oslo University College (on election in 2012)

Knut Gunnar Nustad, NUPI/UiO, Oslo (on election in 2012)

Maren Aase, SUM, University of Oslo (on election in 2012)

Hanne Haaland, Agder University

Thomas Sætre Jacobsen, NTNU, Trondheim

Ingvild Skage Agedal, University of Bergen

Deputy board members

Camilla Brautaset, University of Bergen

Nomination Committee

Petter Andersen, UiB

Morten Bøås, Fafo

Trond Vedeld, NIBR

EADI representative

Kristen Nordhaug

Auditor

Hans Jørgen Christiansen, SUM, UiO

3. Progress towards Annual Plan for 2012:

NFU Board meetings

We have held the planned number of Board meetings. The NFU Board has met five times since the last GA (February 7 by VC, March 12 by VC, June 25 by VC, August 21 at SUM, and October 29 at SUM). Including the GA, this equals the number of meetings suggested in the statutes.

It seems that about six meetings per year, including the GA, is reasonable and sufficient. But it could have been beneficial to have a face-to-face meeting sooner after the last GA, to meet new Board members as soon as possible.

NFU Membership: increase the benefits to, and number and activity level of members

We had the ambition of increasing membership to 220. By November 15, 2012 NFU had a total of 135 paying members. In comparison, NFU had 166 paying members by the end of last period (31.11.2011). Instead of increasing, our membership has decreased this year.

A relevant and high quality conference that provides the main networking arena for Norwegian development researchers is, along with subscription to Forum for Development Studies, the main means for attracting and retaining members. There are always a significant number of members who don't renew their membership early in the year, probably because many primarily sign up for NFU membership in connection with the conference. This points to the importance of the annual conference for the overall functioning of the NFU.

We have put significant effort into this year's conference, and the spike of membership payments towards the end of the year indicates that the conference has attracted many of the paying members. The conference promises to be a successful event, and we are grateful for all the contributions from our members in submitting proposals for panels and papers. We are particularly grateful to John-Andrew McNeish, Asuncion St. Clair and Siri Eriksen for taking it upon themselves to organize the conference, and to Cicero for hosting it.

Active members have received the Forum for Development Studies. Old members remain on the email list, and have received news and announcements. We have attempted to keep the website as a relevant source of information about events, as a service to members and a way to attract new members.

The NFU Master's thesis award will be presented at the annual conference. The award committee consisted of Darley Kjosavik, Ingvild Skage Aagedal and Hanne Haaland.

We decided to discontinue the NFU Article Award. A major reason was funding, but also that we did not think it served the function of gaining visibility of NFU in the same way that the Master's thesis Award does.

The plan for 2012 was to increase membership levels of students through targeted activities. The Master's thesis competition has likely gained the visibility of NFU among Master's students and supervisors. As planned, we asked the organizers of the

NFU conference to make an effort to include Master's students. In the call for papers, panel organizers were encouraged to include at least one Master's student in the panels. This seems to have worked well, and Master's student participation at the conference seems satisfactory. Knut Nustad is also holding a workshop on scientific publishing at the conference, aimed at students and young scholars. Plans of holding specific Master's student events outside of the annual conference have not been followed up, due to lack of capacity.

Procedures and strategy for strengthening role of NFU in relevant public hearings

There have not been any opportunities for participating in public hearings. See point below about the NORAD conference.

Strengthen and consolidate the Nordic Networking

Representing the Board, Knut Nustad has worked with sister organizations in the Nordic countries on the 2013 Nordic conference in Helsinki. A bi-annual Nordic conference is considered a useful way for us to strengthen Nordic cooperation, both between NFU and the sister organizations, and between researchers in general. The organizing of the 2013 conference is well under way, yet still hinges on funding. A report on Nordic development research is presented under the 2012 NFU conference.

Improve communication and the visibility of the NFU and development research

Rather than sending out periodical newsletters (the plan was for 4 each year), we have sent out email communications to members about relevant events when appropriate. We have updated the website and Facebook page with the relevant events, although both could have been used more actively. The frequency of updates depends on capacity. Even though having a coordinator has freed up capacity for the Chair and the other board members, this has mostly been used on other tasks. This suggests that the Board should have a discussion on what we want to achieve through these communication channels and how to prioritize it.

Consolidate the functioning of the NFU Board

Before the beginning of the year it was decided that NFU would seek an assistant/coordinator to help with administrative tasks. Ulrikke Wethal has done this job well, and the Board is of the opinion that having a coordinator is critical for the functioning of the NFU. The coordinator has updated the accounts, sent out emails to members and done other administrative tasks. Ulrikke is leaving this post to focus on her PhD, but an agreement has been made with a replacement (Christian Bull).

Accounts 2012

Lower membership has resulted in lower income, but we have also had somewhat lower costs than expected. The lower costs are primarily due to the fact that we did not spend the NOK 16 000 set aside for student activities.

The accounts do not fully reflect the spending, since last year's GA dinner came on this year's accounts, and since we have not received a bill from Routledge for Forum for Development Studies. Taking these into account the deficit would have been

roughly NOK 10 000 higher. We would still be below the budgeted deficit of NOK 31 500. We still have a healthy outgoing balance.

The auditor Hans-Jørgen Oppi Christiansen has approved the accounts.

	Budget	Accounts
Income		
Membership fees	80000.00	52749.39
Interest	300.00	264.97
Other	0.00	2415.00
<i>Total income</i>	<u>80300.00</u>	<u>55429.36</u>
Expenditure		
Board meetings	8000.00	14721.00
Forum for Development Studies	25000.00	0.00
NFU Web-site	10000.00	7500.00
EADI/Nordic cooperation	5000.00	3953.63
Awards	20000.00	20060.00
Award event	0.00	0.00
Honorarium auditor	1000.00	0.00
MA student activity	16000.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	2500.00	3620.00
Bank fees	300.00	26.00
Coordinator	24000.00	24000.00
<i>Total expenses</i>	<u>111800.00</u>	<u>73880.63</u>
Result	<u>-31500.00</u>	<u>-18451.27</u>
Balances		
Incoming balance 31.10.2011	174613.71	
Outgoing balance 15.11.2012	156162.44	

4. Other activities (not specified in the annual plan)

- **Fundraising for the annual conference:** Uncertainty regarding funding for the annual conference held us back, delayed planning and took time away from other activities. We stayed in contact with our contacts at Norad and NFR to secure funds, and were in the end successful. While in previous years we have more or less counted on financial support for the conference, it appears that in coming years this will be less certain.

- **Assessing funding opportunities for NFU:** We have had an on-going discussion on alternative sources of funding for the NFU, but so far this has been inconclusive.

- **NORAD conference:** The Chair took part in the organizing committee for the conference 'Research for Development', held at Litteraturhuset November 1, 2012. Other organizers were Norad, NFR, Det kgl. Norske Videnskapers Selskab and Norges Tekniske Vitenskapsakademi. Board members provided input on the conference program, which was taken up by the program committee. More than 160 people registered for the conference, which seems to have been a success. Kristen Nordhaug represented NFU at the conference. We deem it important to take part in

shaping policy-related events where practitioners participate, and through this, strengthen the connections of NFU to Norad, NFR and the practitioner community.

Permanent panels at the annual conference: At the last GA it was suggested that we establish ‘permanent panels’ at the conference, panels that run for at least 3 years to ensure continuity of participation and themes at the conferences. We enlisted three research groups to organize pilot permanent panels at this year’s conference. One of them will instead start up next year due to a leave of absence. If the arrangement is deemed successful, we plan to issue open calls for more permanent panels at future conferences to allow all members to submit proposals.

National Council for Development Studies (Nasjonalt fagråd for utviklingsstudier): The council suggested that NFU has an observer representative at its meetings, which we have accepted. We have agreed with them that the task of quality controlling the list of publication channels for development studies is something we should cooperate on in the future.

EADI

The NFU is represented at the board of the European Association of development Research and Institutions (EADI). EADI publishes the *European Journal of Development Research*, and organizes the EADI Conference along with inter-European workshops between these conferences. Kristen Nordhaug represented the NFU in the EADI Board meeting in Ankara 18-19 April.

Annual Plan 2013 (item 3)

1. NFU Board meetings

The Board will have 5-6 meetings in 2013. We will continue to use videoconference when appropriate, which is cost- and time effective, but also have face to face meetings.

2. NFU Membership

The Board has the ambition of reaching a membership of 200 in 2013. We hope that a high quality 2012 NFU conference will convince old and new members to renew their membership in 2013. We hope to retain most of those who became members to participate in this year's conference, but recognize that it may be an extra challenge to maintain members in a year when the annual conference is organized outside the national borders. Regular email announcements, an updated and relevant website, relevant events, and the offer of Forum for Development Studies will be key.

3. Increase the benefits to, and number and activity level of NFU members

NFU will continue to offer Forum for Development studies to its members, maintain an updated website, offer regular email announcements, and take part in relevant events.

The NFU has its 30-year anniversary in 2013, and we will consider organizing an event to mark this.

We will continue to offer the Master's Thesis Award to outstanding work in development studies.

We intend to organize a specific event targeted at Master's students, in order to increase visibility and relevance of NFU among Master's students.

We will begin planning for the annual conference in 2014 and issue a call for conference organization, as well as contacting possible organizers directly.

4. Procedures and strategy for strengthening role of NFU in relevant public hearings

We will continue to provide input to hearing documents when we are asked for input, and will be better at drawing on the broader membership in providing this input. We will also strive to have panels that include policy makers and development practitioners in the annual conference.

5. Strengthen and consolidate the Nordic Networking

The Nordic conference in 2013 will be an opportunity to strengthen our ties to Nordic sister organizations, and provide an arena for Nordic networking among development researchers. We will contribute to planning this event and mobilize our members to participate.

6. Consolidate the functioning of the NFU Board

Maintaining a coordinator function is intended to make the Board operate more professionally and efficiently. This will help us keep the website more updated, send out the newsletter more regularly, and enable the Board members to focus more on organizational rather than administrative tasks.

7. National council on development studies (Nasjonalt fagråd)

We will work with the council to improve the quality of development studies, and to quality control the list and ranking of publication channels.

8. Budget

The past few years we have run a deficit. This has been necessary in order to update the website and transfer most of the administrative tasks to the coordinator. This has reduced our balance to about NOK 150 000. From 2013 we will strive to balance income and expenses, and the budget for 2013 is an attempt to reflect this. We have cut Nordic cooperation, hoping that this will be covered by the conference budget, and we have cut the Article Award. We retain 3000 for student activities. We expect a large bill from Routledge since we did not receive one in 2012, so expenses incurred in 2012 will likely prevent us from balancing the 2013 budget.

	Accounts 2012	Budget 2013
Income		
Membership fees	52749.39	75000.00
Interest	264.97	300.00
Other	2415.00	
<i>Total income</i>	55429.36	75300.00
Expenditure		
Board meetings	14721.00	8000.00
Forum for Development Studies	0.00	35000.00
NFU Web-site	7500.00	7500.00
EADI/Nordic cooperation	3953.63	2000.00
NFU Awards	20060.00	10000.00
Award event	0.00	0.00
Honorarium auditor	0.00	1000.00
Nordic cooperation	0.00	0.00
MA student activity	0.00	3000.00
Miscellaneous	3620.00	1500.00
Bank fees	26.00	100.00
Coordinator	24000.00	24000.00
<i>Total expenses</i>	73880.63	92100.00
Result	-18451.27	-16800.00
Balances		
Incoming balance 15.11.2011		156162.44
Outgoing balance 31.10.2013		139362.44

Item 4: Proposal to amend statutes regarding deputies on the Board

The current statutes stipulate the following:

5. The Board

The NFU Board is in charge of all NFU matters between the General Assemblies.

- The NFU Board is constituted by a Chair, 8 members and 4 deputy members. It ought to include members from different disciplines and regions. At least 3 of the board members and 2 of the deputy members should come from research environments outside Oslo/Østlandet.
- If a parity of votes occurs, the Chair has a double vote. Deputy members have the right to attend all meetings, but can only vote if replacing a board member.

We find that this arrangement with differentiated voting rights to be overly rigorous and formalistic. We try to work through discussion and consensus rather than voting. Also, with the current arrangement the Board is constituted by 13 members, which presents problems of finding enough members and inviting them all to board meetings. The past years we have not had more than 1-2 deputies, and they have not participated much in the activities. We find it more appropriate to only have full Board members. We therefore suggest that the statutes are amended to state the following:

5. The Board

The NFU Board is in charge of all NFU matters between the General Assemblies.

- The NFU Board is constituted by 8-10 members, including a Chair. It ought to include members from different disciplines and regions. At least 4 of the board members should come from research environments outside Oslo/Østlandet.
- Decisions in the Board should be consensus-based, and voting should be used only as last resort to reach agreement. If parity of votes occurs, the Chair has a double vote.