

SAIH | Norwegian Students' and Academics'
International Assistance Fund

Education for Development Strategy

"Education for Liberation"

Development based on knowledge and solidarity
2008 – 2012

Adopted by the Annual Meeting 2007

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Education for Liberation.....	3
3. SAIH's Education for Development.....	4
4. Target Group and Overall Objectives	6
5. The Added Value, Partnership and Network of SAIH.....	7
6. Thematic Areas.....	8
6.1. Professional Enhancement and Democratisation of Education	8
6.2 Political and Social Participation	10
6.3 Crosscutting Thematic Issues.....	10
6.3.1 Women's Participation and Gender Equality	10
6.3.2 Sexual and Reproductive Rights.....	11
6.4 Activities that SAIH will support by exception only	11
7. Geographic Regions	11
8. Country Selection Criteria.....	12
9. Project Selection Criteria.....	12
10. Partner Organisation Selection Criteria	13
11. Transparency and Accountability.....	14
12. The Authorities and Other Stakeholders in the Country.....	14
13. Evaluation	15

SAIH's Education for Development Strategy replaces the previous education strategy 2003-2009 and is to be valid for all new projects and programmes from 2008 onwards. The Strategy is a tool to assist SAIH in its development work, and shall be used in conjunction with SAIH's other basic documents, such as the organisation's Programme Principles, Statutes, and Information Strategy.

1. Introduction

1.1 About SAIH¹

The Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund (SAIH) is the solidarity organisation of students and academics in Norway. The objective of SAIH is to contribute to political, civil, economic, social and cultural liberation in countries in the South. SAIH will accomplish this through education for development to partners in the South, and information and political advocacy work in Norway. SAIH considers education to be an important tool to achieve liberation. SAIH's slogan "Education for Liberation" is the basis for the organisation's activities.

SAIH's vision is a world in which everyone has access to education, where no group or individual is marginalised, and everyone is granted the opportunity to influence his or her community and situation. Active participation from groups and individuals ensures a sustainable, stable and welcoming society in which the content of "development" is defined given local requirements and contexts.

The core values of SAIH are democracy, participation, freedom, equality, respect and solidarity. Together with the Programme Principles, these values are crucial and form the basis of all the work of the organisation. Solidarity is an important part of SAIH's ideological foundation. According to SAIH, solidarity work implies making students and academics in Norway accountable. By solidarity SAIH means that students and academics in Norway do not contribute out of charity but out of common objectives; democracy, human rights and liberation.

SAIH is an organisation independent of political parties and religion. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the foundation of SAIH's work.

The organisation is governed by its member organisations and local chapters through the Annual Meeting and the Board elected by the Annual Meeting. The members of SAIH are Norwegian students' and academics' organisations and student democracies. Organisational democracy is important in SAIH and the members have great influence on the work of the organisation.

¹ Parts of the below wording are referred from the SAIHs Programme Principles 2006-2009 and the SAIH Ethical Guidelines

The development work is administered by the employees at the secretariat in Oslo.

SAIH was founded in 1961. The organisation has extensive experience with development cooperation and solidarity work. Up until 1997 SAIH sent Norwegian health personnel to Zimbabwe and Nicaragua and worked with health as well as education. From the 1990s until today SAIH has increasingly directed its development work towards education for development. SAIH has also extensive experience in direct cooperation with partners in the South and various triangle cooperations, which in addition to SAIH involves other Norwegian organisations and/or institutions.

1.2 The Strategy

This strategy will be a tool for the SAIH Board and the SAIH employees in the planning, implementation and evaluation of SAIH's development work. It defines target groups, geographical priorities as well as main thematic priorities for the work of SAIH during the period 2008-2012. The ideological framework of SAIH's activities is presented in the introduction.

2. Education for Liberation

SAIH has a broad concept of education, including formal education, informal training, and awareness building. Education is communication, administration and development of knowledge. This implies that primary, secondary, and higher education, research and informal education² must be seen in relation to each other. Informal education and training cannot replace formal education however it is a necessary supplement. Good and relevant education is a human right as well as a means to obtain liberation.

SAIH believes that education primarily is the collective responsibility of every society towards their young people for transmission of knowledge and culture. Furthermore, the authorities of a country have an overall responsibility for the implementation, quality and availability of education. Different interest organisations, teachers' unions, students' unions, institutes and independent institutions also play an important role as pedagogical alternatives, critics of and supplements to the public education. It is important to contribute to having a diversity of participants in civil society who are critical and engaged participants in the development of society.

² SAIH defines informal education as education taking place outside the formal educational system such as postgraduate college and university. Be it courses, seminars or other activities with a specific training and educational objective.

SAIH emphasizes education as an important means to obtain liberation. The slogan "Education for liberation" also reflects the Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire's theories on *pedagogy for liberation*, in which active participation will create increased political consciousness and provide every participant with greater opportunities for seeking solutions to their own problems. Education must be placed in a social context, where education will assist in creating a more just society.

Good education enlightens, raises awareness, develops and liberates individuals, groups and communities as well as providing people with the tools for critical and independent thinking. Awareness of one's own situation and role in society is a precondition for development and democracy. In order for education to have a liberating effect in a society it must be founded on local traditions and socio-cultural conditions.

Not all education is good education. It is important to be critical to what values and perspectives of society that are communicated and created through education. An educational system that is not based on local conditions can contribute to uniformity oppression and discrimination. Education alone cannot fight injustice and economic poverty, but good education can provide people with the necessary tools to tear down structures that create and maintain the situation. Knowledge can provide the power to fight unjust political conditions at the national and international level.

3. SAIH's Education for Development

By education for Development SAIH means development cooperation directed at education as a human right as well as education as a means for obtaining liberation.

Development cooperation alone does not result in liberation hence SAIH's work is a combination of education for development, information work and political advocacy. These three areas shall be integrated and the SAIH network of members and partner organisations is important in all this work.

With education for development SAIH will support activities through partner organisations within the educational sector or through organisations using education as a method, which are in accordance with our objectives. The development cooperation will be operated on a sound professional basis and in areas where we hold the necessary expertise. SAIH supports education for development in a limited number of thematic and geographic areas in order to ensure this and to contribute to synergies between the partners. The work of SAIH will be based on equal partnerships.

SAIH will support long-term development projects implemented by local organisations and institutions in the South. All the projects are to be within the

below-mentioned thematic areas, and contribute towards the objectives of one of SAIH's development programmes.³

The development projects supported by SAIH shall address the root causes preventing liberation, and not only towards treating the symptoms. The educational activities supported by SAIH shall promote development and sustainability, and respect and further develop cultural knowledge, and thus contribute to making development aid superfluous. SAIH shall ensure that all projects and programmes take into consideration national and local conditions in a respectful and professional way.

The most important aspect for SAIH is that the educational activities support a development process that promotes awareness raising, identity, individual development and self-respect, language, solidarity, unity, participation, engagement and community spirit. This forms the platform for enabling people to become genuine change agents by doing something about their own situation and working for social change. When SAIH considers what activities to support, it is of crucial importance that the education offered is strategically directed towards a positive social change as well as of value for the individual participant.

Being a small organisation, SAIH has to select specific geographic and thematic areas to focus on. However, it is important to be in dialogue with other stakeholders in order to ensure that a holistic perspective is maintained.

SAIH will focus its education for development on (1) the educational sector in a country and (2) projects that use education and training as means to obtain liberation:

1. The educational sector in a country

Education is a human right and SAIH wishes to strengthen the education sector in the countries where we work. The formal education in a country is the responsibility of the public authorities. It is important to have a holistic and integrated perspective on the educational sector that includes all levels of education and all involved parties. Active participation from different participants within the civil society is important within the educational sector.

³ SAIH's Programmes are adopted by the Board with a time frame of 3-5 years. In 2007 SAIH has the following programmes: Education for Liberation from Violence (financed by OD'2004 and FOKUS), Education for Liberation from HIV/AIDS (financed by Norad), Education for Participation and Social Mobilisation in Zimbabwe (financed by Norad), Education for Strengthening Indigenous and Minority Rights (financed by Norad).

2. Education and training as a means to obtain liberation

Through informal education and training SAIH will contribute to liberation through strengthening the ability of individuals and groups to function as change agents in their societies. Different forms of participatory methods are important in this work. SAIH wishes to raise awareness of and fight structural hindrances to real social and political participation in the target group.

4. Target Group and Overall Objectives

Target Group

The main target group for SAIH's education for development is students and young people between the age of 15 and 35. A secondary target group outside this age-span is educational personnel and other academics related to the educational sector. Within the target group women and girls will be prioritised. In Latin America indigenous people is a prioritised group.

Overall Objectives

The objective of SAIH's education for development is that:

- Members of the target group are important change agents to achieve social, civil, economic, political and cultural liberation in their countries
- The members of the target group have strengthened their active participation in social processes at local, regional and national level as a result of their involvement with several organisations
- The target group has an increased influence on its everyday life and future, as well as increased opportunities for making own choices
- A greater number of persons have access to good and relevant education based on their own terms
- The partner organisations in the South are spokesmen for the opinions of the target group towards the country's authorities, and SAIH presents its partners' perspectives to Norwegian authorities
- SAIH and partner organisations in the South have a real partnership, based on mutual respect, transparency and exchange of knowledge
- The target group participates actively in the development and implementation of the projects and has access and insight to the professional and financial aspects of the projects

5. The Added Value, Partnership and Network of SAIH

The organisational democracy of SAIH and the active participation of its members characterize the organisation, and is an important added value of SAIH's development cooperation. The partners in the South, together with SAIH's members⁴ and institutions, as well as organisations linked to them, represent an important part of SAIH's network. SAIH will interlink these professional environments and facilitate the exchange of expertise and experience within the network. Through visits, exchanges and organisational and professional cooperation, SAIH will provide for the exchange of knowledge for the benefit of all. Contacts will be established between people to inspire a professional and economic cooperation, also beyond the cooperation in which SAIH takes part.

SAIH will facilitate cooperation between different project partners with diverse administrative experience and capacity, in order to obtain the best possible project results. All project partners will be followed up by the SAIH employees at the Oslo office. SAIH will be a discussion partner for our cooperation partners, stimulate critical dialogue concerning conditions for development cooperation, and participate in the exchange of experience and knowledge.

SAIH will also contribute to the exchange of experiences and knowledge between different project partners. Cooperation with relevant organisations in Norway, both within and outside the SAIH network, is a part of this. In particular, SAIH realizes that we can play a role by interlinking Norwegian student organisations and institutions of higher education with relevant partner organisations in the South. The objective of this cooperation will be development in the South and enhanced international solidarity. Face to face meetings and in depth knowledge of the environment in which the partner organisations operate is fundamental for solidarity, both in the South and the North.

SAIH is a solidarity organisation and wishes to be an equal partner, not only an economic contributor. It is important to be aware of the unequal power relations between the North and the South and that economic transferences can contribute to increase this asymmetry. Partnerships must be founded on mutual respect and a wish to obtain common objectives. The opinions and

⁴ National student and academic unions, local student democracies, university boards and SAIH local chapters represent the SAIH members. Go to www.saih.no for list of members.

perspectives of the partners will be included in the information work of SAIH and presented to Norwegian decision makers.

In addition, there is a special added value in that SAIH:

- Will have long-term cooperation
- Will have in depth knowledge of the geographical areas as well as of the thematic topics of the projects, and also be an active professional partner
- Will contribute to network building between partners in the South, as well as between partners in the South and organisations and institutions in Norway
- Will be a flexible and result-oriented partner, within an economic and administrative framework that is necessary for good professional and financial project management
- Is an organisation with knowledge of democratic participation and management of organisations, which makes SAIH a professional partner for dialogue within this field of work

6. Thematic Areas

SAIH has two main thematic areas with two underlying, crosscutting thematic issues. All SAIH projects and programmes shall be education for development for the target group and fall within either of the two main thematic areas:

- Professional enhancement and democratisation of education
- Political and social participation

In addition, the two underlying themes are to be crosscutting in SAIH's development work:

- Women's participation and gender equality
- Sexual and reproductive rights

6.1. Professional Enhancement and Democratisation of Education

Strengthening formal education is vital in order to develop change agents. Change agents can create social change and make governments accountable; this applies both for students and academics. Educational institutions in themselves are not sufficient. To ensure that education becomes a mean for liberation it is critical to also consider: the quality of the curriculum, teaching methods and research, as well as the students' and pupils' opportunities to take part in, and influence the decision-making.

SAIH will contribute to:

- Develop pedagogical alternatives (participatory methods among others).
- Support educational projects that make use of local knowledge, cultural traditions and safeguard the identity of minorities; bilingual and multicultural education is critical in this respect, as well as the development of pedagogical plans, curriculum, and material in accordance with the above.

- Support activities that enhance the participation of students and professional employees at educational institutions and within the educational sector.
- Develop and support genuine student democracies⁵ and students right to be consulted in regards to the development of the curriculum and the study environment
- Facilitate for South-South, North-South and triangle cooperation between institutions, primarily within higher education, with the objective of professional enhancement. It is important that the development of the institution in the South becomes a central and absolute objective for all participants.

SAIH can also support research projects when these are related to our partner organisations and within our thematic priorities, or when they can be linked to cooperation with educational institutions in Norway.

SAIH will not function as a service provider. However, SAIH can support pilot projects or alternative activities within formal education. Alternative activities are defined as activities where the interests of particular target groups are safeguarded in a better way than through the formal educational system, or activities where alternative pedagogical methods and approaches are used. In that case, the project will include specific plans on how the activity can be included in the country's public educational system.

In general, SAIH will not support scholarship programmes for individuals. Under special circumstances, SAIH can support scholarship programmes on the condition that this is implemented at the local level as part of a major project, or is organised as one component within a project with organisational and institutional support⁶.

With own funds, SAIH can support short-term projects or activities such as travel-allowances, conferences, seminars or other activities with the objective to strengthen solidarity and participation among students and academics, on the condition that the application is presented by organisations or institutions that SAIH are in contact with.

⁵ Democracy is understood as more than the right to vote: Equal possibilities and rights to participate in informed decisions, often referred to as "thick democracy", are important elements of democracy.

⁶ SAIH wishes to support projects that are strategically directed towards social changes. See item 3.

6.2 Political and Social Participation

A diversified civil society is a precondition for a well functioning democracy. The possibility to influence political decisions that affect one's living conditions is an important precondition for a just social development. SAIH addresses root-causes that prevent social and political participation. Thus, SAIH shall support informal education and training in order to ensure increased political and critical participation among the target group.

SAIH will:

- Strengthen the target group's opportunities for participating in social and political processes in society at the local, regional and national level
- Support the target group's opportunity to participate in organisations that are based on democratic principles in order to voice the interests of the group
- Support the inclusion of marginalised and stigmatised groups that experience hindrances to genuine participation, such as LHBT (lesbians, homosexuals, bisexuals and transgender), people living with HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities
- Support the target group's use of media and alternative communication channels.

In some situations it may be relevant to support advocacy towards relevant local and national decision-makers related to or as a natural continuation of training activities.

6.3 Crosscutting Thematic Issues

6.3.1 Women's Participation and Gender Equality

Big structural differences between women and men do also exist in countries in the South. Structures of power and oppressive cultural and social practises prevent women from participating in society on the same footing as men, and expose women to discrimination and violence. This is also valid for the educational sector.

Gender relations and women's rights will be emphasized in all project work. In addition, SAIH will have projects directed exclusively at strengthening the position of women.

SAIH will contribute to:

- Enhance women's possibilities to participate in society and influence decision-making processes and power structures
- Provide leadership training to young women
- Improve women's possibilities to complete higher education
- Provide women with formal and informal training in human rights and participation in decision-making processes
- Counteract and address violence against women, especially in close relationships.

6.3.2 Sexual and Reproductive Rights

In order to become an agent of change and make use of one's capacities and opportunities, the right to decide over one's own body and to increase the knowledge of asserting this right, is critical. Through this, people will be able to make informed choices and increase the awareness of their own social existence and the society's social development. In Southern Africa this is closely related to the effects of HIV/AIDS on individuals as well as on society. The young and productive part of the population, the future leaders, are the ones most exposed and hardest struck by this pandemic, and education is an important tool to fight it.

SAIH will contribute to:

- Provide training in sexual and reproductive rights from a gender perspective
- Strengthen the participation of HIV-positive people in the projects and the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS
- Provide training about social, economic, cultural and political rights for people living with HIV/AIDS
- Provide young people with knowledge and leadership training about reproductive rights and HIV/AIDS. This work will lead to enhanced awareness and behaviour change, as well as counteract stigmatisation
- Provide good and varied HIV/AIDS information to the educational sector, for professionals as well as for pupils and students

SAIH will mainstream an HIV/AIDS-focus into all its programmes.

6.4 Activities that SAIH will support by exception only

SAIH wishes to focus on the content of formal and informal education. Support can be given to infrastructure and equipment in those cases where it is part of a major educational project within institutional building and organisational support.

SAIH will only in exceptional cases support humanitarian aid and emergency assistance if our local partners have the capacity and/or our target groups and partners are struck by disaster.

7. Geographic Regions

Within the strategy period SAIH will have programmes and projects in Latin America and Southern Africa.

8. Country Selection Criteria

Countries for development cooperation are approved by the SAIH Annual meeting according to the following criteria:

- There must be a need for SAIH or the capacity of the SAIH network within the thematic areas
- It must be possible to cooperate with organisations rooted in the target group.
- There must be an opportunity for building networks and positive synergies with SAIH's partners in other countries in the South or with the SAIH network in Norway.
- There must be an interest in the SAIH network in Norway and scope for the information work of SAIH.
- SAIH must be able to procure financing for projects in the country.

These criteria should be fulfilled before SAIH decides to establish development cooperation in a new country.

9. Project Selection Criteria

In a given country SAIH shall only support projects that meet SAIH's thematic areas, country strategy⁷ and programme. Within this framework the political, economic, social, and cultural situation in any project country will be vital in deciding the specific projects that SAIH chooses to support. In addition SAIH will consider the public and private education already offered in the country, and SAIH's professional competence. SAIH does not implement its own projects but supports projects through local partners. SAIH does not normally have overseas staff.

Within the thematic areas SAIH uses the following criteria to approve new projects:

- The projects are to focus on education as a right and/or a mean to obtain liberation.
- The target groups of the projects will have the opportunity to actively participate in the planning and the evaluation of the project.
- The projects are not organised on behalf of oppressed groups, but in cooperation with organisations where the target groups have a real co-determination.

⁷ SAIH will develop separate country strategies for the project countries. These will be finalised in 2008.

- The ownership of the projects lies with the target groups.
- SAIH's partner organisations comply with the SAIH criteria for the selection of partner organisations.

10. Partner Organisation Selection Criteria

SAIH's work is a combination of advocacy, professional cooperation, and financial support to education for development. The relation between SAIH and its partners in the South is based on equality, respect and trust. SAIH strive to establish a genuine partnership between itself and its partners. This implies that the criteria for partners in the South are also valid for SAIH.

SAIH will cooperate with both CBOs (community based organisations) and NGOs (non-governmental organisations) rooted in local communities. It is important for SAIH to facilitate local organisation, especially for marginalised groups.

SAIH will select partners based on the following criteria:

- The organisation is founded on democratic processes, where the members and the target groups are included in the project planning, implementation and evaluation.
- The organisation has good relationships with, knowledge of, and trust within the target group
- The organisation has both professional competence and administrative capacity to implement the relevant project activities
- The organisation aims to fight discrimination based on for example gender, ethnicity, religion, disabilities or sexual orientation, and will facilitate for an active participation of women, minorities and marginalised groups
- The organisation works for transparency and access at all levels of its work, including financial matters, to prevent corruption and to ensure accountability towards the target group
- The organisation aims to contribute to democratic and just processes in its own country
- The organisation and SAIH will as partners have an added value that goes beyond mere financial support
- The cooperation can create synergies within the SAIH network.

It may be a challenge to cooperate with CBOs that often require a closer administrative and professional follow-up by SAIH in order to comply with the administrative demands that accompany financial support from Norway. In this respect, the administrative capacity of SAIH will be a limiting factor for the number of CBOs that SAIH can support.

Support to national organisations that do not originate from the project area can be considered if they have a good knowledge of the geographic and thematic area they are working in, in addition to having the trust of the target group.

Primarily, SAIH does not wish to have direct project cooperation with transnational organisations.

11. Transparency and Accountability

SAIH works in some of the countries in the world that are most exposed to corruption. The financial resources administered by SAIH are intended to strengthen the target group. Corruption and economic crimes are first and foremost theft from the target group. Hence, SAIH practices zero-tolerance for corruption, both in Norway⁸ and in the South. Suspicion of corruption will be addressed immediately with the partner. The form of reaction will be decided upon in each particular case. Through administrative and financial routines SAIH will try to ensure that all resources administered by the organisation reach the target group.

The cooperation between SAIH and partners will take place on as equal terms and principles as possible, and be based on mutual trust. Hence it is critical to have established processes for disclosing corruption and economic crimes. In addition to a thorough local audit and regular reporting, field visits and audits in Norway, SAIH believes that the most important step for avoiding corruption and economic crimes is to make all financial and professional documents available for those affected by the project. In this way, a continuous local control is ensured.

SAIH will strive for transparency and openness at all levels of its organisation. This implies that all budgets, accounts, applications, reports and evaluations will be public. SAIH will encourage its project partners to do the same. SAIH will have access to its partners' relevant plans, budgets and financial records. It is important to ensure broad participation by local communities and target groups in the project and financial planning.

12. The Authorities and Other Stakeholders in the Country

SAIH recognises the role and responsibility of the state – particularly within the educational sector. Hence it is important for SAIH to stay updated on the policies and strategies of local and national authorities within our thematic

⁸ SAIH has financial and ethical guidelines that, among other things, regulate this.

areas in a given country. SAIH does not consider national and local authorities for direct funding for development cooperation..

SAIH's project partners can and should have contact or cooperate with the national and local authorities whenever possible. In order to strengthen SAIH's partner organisations' influence on the policies and priorities of the government, SAIH will play an active role in strengthening the contact between civil society and the local and/or national authorities.

SAIH will be updated on different national strategies and international agreements within SAIH's areas of work. SAIH will also map out what other organisations and institutions that are working within the same geographic and thematic areas, and seek to coordinate the activities where this is appropriate.

13. Evaluation

Evaluation of the Project Work

SAIH monitors the implementation of its projects in various ways. Annually, the partners are required to submit activity plans, budgets, and audited reports. In addition SAIH is in regular dialogue with the project partners through email, phone and field visits. Evaluations of projects and partners are important tools in the dialogue between SAIH and its partners. The evaluations take different forms depending on what kind of information is needed. There may either be an informal review or a formal independent evaluation. An evaluation shall point out potentials for improvement and give direction for development of both the project and the cooperation.

Further, organisational ownership of the evaluation process is important. SAIH finds the participatory methodology useful in achieving this ownership, as well as in the dialogue with its partners.

It is essential to SAIH that the evaluations and reviews are based on a good dialogue between SAIH and its partners. Both evaluations and reviews aim to increase competence within the partner organisations, SAIH and the local chapters as well as the networks of both organisations. Evaluations shall also be used in SAIH's information work directed towards students and academics in Norway.

SAIH's objective is to evaluate all projects regularly, at least with a mid term- and final evaluation.

The Strategy and Our Work

SAIH's education for development strategy is part of SAIH's result-oriented development work. The strategy is to be used when assessing partners and projects, and in developing programmes and country strategies. In order to

establish solid partnerships the strategy will be made available to the partners both in Spanish and English.

The education for development strategy will be used as a tool for annual reviews of SAIH's project portfolio. In these annual reviews the focus of the assessment will be whether or not the projects are run according to the strategy, which elements in the project cooperation need to be changed or whether the support to individual projects should be terminated as they do not fall in line with the objectives of the strategy.

SAIH's education for development strategy will be reviewed mid-way in the strategy period in order to consider potential changes.