

Development research in Sweden today

Funding and ways forward

Survey report

April 2024

**SW
DEV** SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT
RESEARCH NETWORK

This report summarises the findings of a survey carried out by the Swedish Development Research Network (SweDev), exploring reactions to the Swedish government's funding cuts announced in December 2022 and June 2023 and affecting U-Forsk grants from the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) and research collaboration aid funded through Sida. This summary report aims to capture the consequences caused by these cuts, as reported by development researchers, practitioners and policy makers in Sweden.

The survey was carried out digitally during February–March 2024. In total, 199 people (185 development researchers or those working in academia, and 14 people working with development practice or policy in Sweden) responded to the survey.

Main findings

- **53% of the respondents in research/academia have adjusted their research in response to the funding cuts.** 33% of respondents say they have changed their research topics, and 20% have shifted geographical research focus. **Respondents are reportedly shifting their research focus to topics more likely to attract funding and more relevant to the Global North.** Of those reporting changes to their research themes, multiple respondents report changes such as less focus on 'poverty', 'inequality', 'health and empowering women', 'job creation', 'rural development and knowledge transfer', 'circular sanitation', 'water access' etc. Themes that are given more priority now are topics such as 'climate change', 'justice', 'AI', and topics more relevant to Swedish context e.g. migration. Geographically, more researchers are now focusing on Europe or countries in the Global North and Sweden.
- **About two-thirds of respondents (65%) say their work was either discontinued or significantly altered as a result of the funding cuts.** Long-term projects, collaborative research with colleagues in other countries, and networks that have been built up over time are particularly impacted.
- **93% of respondents believe that the impacts of the cuts for the Global South are negative – both in the short and long term.** Many highlight the negative consequences for Sweden's position and reputation as a research partner and funder in global sustainable development. Negative consequences are also noted for aid effectiveness.
- **Still, 86% of the respondents have been able to sustain contacts with research partners in developing countries, while only 14% of respondents report that relations have not been maintained.** However, 67% say that their incentives to include researchers from the Global South were negatively affected and 38% reported that their research teams' structure has changed because of the funding cuts. Multiple respondents however highlight

that they still have on-going project grants so it may be too early to draw overall conclusions on this.

- **Of the respondents working in development policy and practice, 55% say that their work has been negatively affected by the cuts in funding.** Examples reported include higher levels of uncertainty, tougher prioritization, and cancellation of bilateral programmes.

Table of Contents

1. Data collection methodology	4
2. The consequences of research funding cuts for researchers	5
2.1 Applications to U-Forsk grant 2023	5
2.2 New funding sources	7
2.3 Adaptations made to research areas, methods and geographical focus	8
2.4 Relations with developing countries and set up of research teams	14
2.5 Consequences for Global South	19
3. The consequences of research funding cuts for practitioners	21
4. Conclusions and final remarks by authors.....	23
5. Annex: Overview of respondents.....	27
5.1 Research/academia.....	27
5.2 Development practice or policy	30

1. Data collection methodology

The survey was conducted using a Microsoft Forms online questionnaire, taking respondents approximately 7-10 minutes to complete. Respondents were contacted through SweDev's mailing list and the members' respective professional networks, encouraging forwarding of the survey with the aim to reach out broadly within the research community. The original survey included two parts: one with questions on the relevance of SweDev and its activities, and the other with questions about the consequences of the funding cuts. This report summarises responses in the second part – the funding cuts. The survey collected diverse answers generating both quantitative data, such as multiple-choice answers, and qualitative data, including open text. This facilitated an in-depth understanding of professional and personal experiences and the collection of significant input concerning the consequences of the funding cuts. In the subsequent analysis, the quantitative data are presented in figures. The qualitative data in open-text responses, have been categorized into relevant themes to show the trends in the data.

199 responses to the survey were received, 185 from development researchers or those working in academia, and 14 from people working with development practice or policy in Sweden. Among respondents from academia, the largest category of respondents are professors (36%) and between 49 and 58 years old (39%). The most common research focus of respondents from academia is Environment and climate change, natural resource management, land, and water issues (32%) and more than half of the respondents in academia work in the Humanities and Social Sciences (53%). Respondents from policy and practice work mainly in the public sector (29%), in civil society (28%) and as independent consultants (29%) and cover different roles such as Programme Managers and Directors, Senior Advisor and Head of Divisions. For more details about respondents, please see the annex.

2. The consequences of research funding cuts for researchers

2.1 Applications to U-Forsk grant 2023

This section describes the responses to the survey questions referring to the reductions in research funding from U-Forsk from the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) and research cooperation funded by Sida.

Note: Questions 2.1.1-2.5.1 were only posed to respondents who at the start of the survey had answered they belong to the category of researchers/academia.

2.1.1 Do you have an ongoing U-Forsk grant from Vetenskapsrådet/the Swedish Research Council?

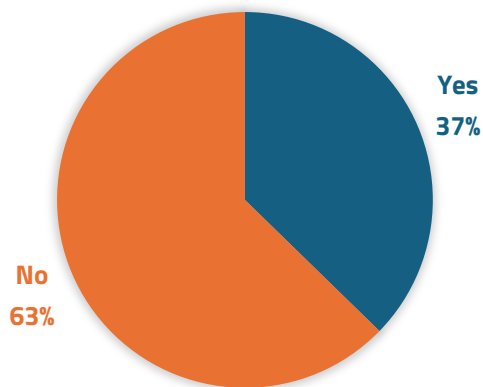


Figure 1: Share of respondents with ongoing U-Forsk grants. N=185

37% of the respondents have an ongoing U-Forsk grant (Figure 1).

2.1.2 Did you apply for a U-Forsk grant from Vetenskapsrådet/the Swedish Research Council in 2023?

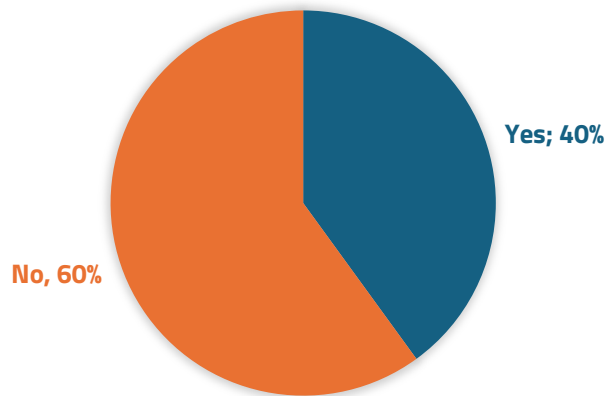


Figure 2: Share of respondents that submitted applications for U-Forsk grant in 2023. N=185

40% of respondents applied for a U-Forsk grant from Vetenskapsrådet/the Swedish Research Council in 2023, as illustrated in Figure 2. A follow up question was posed on whether they intended to re-submit the proposal to another funder.

2.1.3 If yes, do you have plans to re-submit it to another funder?

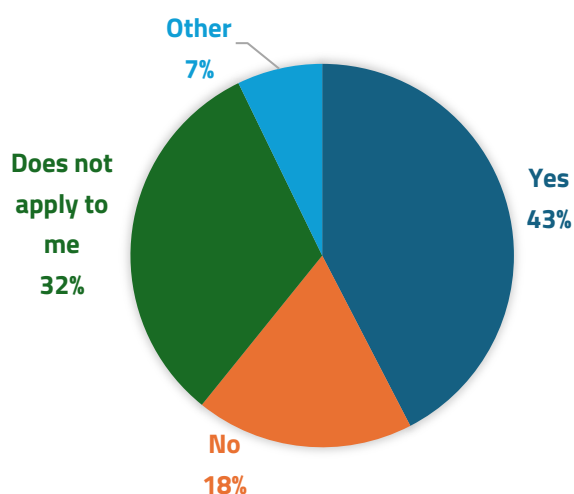


Figure 3: Share of respondents with plans for re-submitting application to another funder. N=125.

43% of respondents plan to re-submit their application to another funder. 18% say that they will not

re-submit their applications and 32% answer “Does not apply to me”. 7% answer “Other” (Figure 3). In the free-text responses, respondents share insights reflecting uncertainty of plans and the challenges of finding suitable alternatives. For example, one respondent highlights uncertainty about funding opportunities in Sweden and the potential to move research elsewhere:

“It really depends on how serious Swedish funders are to support development/climate related work. If they are not serious then I will go outside of Sweden to fundraise for research”.

Uncertainty about where to apply for funding seems to be a common denominator among the free text responses. One expressed “I would like to, but can’t find a suitable foundation/call.” Another expresses the challenges faced by early-career researchers in identifying appropriate funding opportunities:

“I am not sure where to submit it now. I am a junior researcher and there was a specific call (start-up grant) for which I applied.”

2.2 New funding sources

2.2.1 From which sources are you looking to apply for funding now?

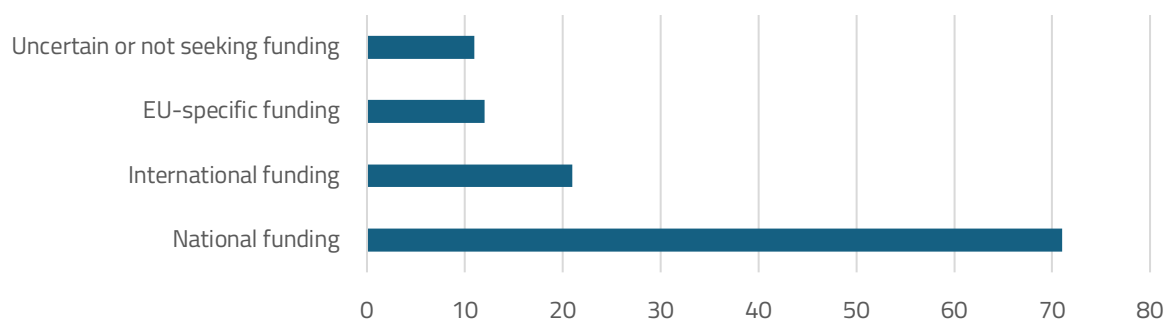


Figure 4: Number of respondents that indicate pursuing alternative funding mechanisms. N=116

When asked about alternative funding mechanisms, 61% of the respondents are shifting their focus to other national funding such as Formas, other VR calls, RJ and various private foundations (Figure 4). 18% are exploring international funding opportunities, including the Gates Foundation and IDRC. 10% of respondents are targeting EU-specific funding, with mentions of ERC and EU Horizon. And

10% of the respondents remain uncertain about their funding strategy or are not seeking funding at present.

Researchers targeting national funding highlight a range of national funders, such as Formas, VR, Åforsk, Vinnova, Swedish Research Council on Research Environment grant for Interdisciplinary research, Swedish Research Council on Medical Research project, Swedish Society for Medical Research (SSMF) Consolidator grant, and Riksbankens jubileumsfonden. One respondent states that they will target "other non-conventional research grants such as följeforskning in real-world development projects."

One respondent highlights a barrier with funding from Forte:

"Unfortunately, Forte does not welcome proposals focusing on Global South, despite allegiance to the 2030 global agenda."

Respondents looking towards international funding mention funders such as Gates Foundation, EU, Nordforsk, Biodiversa, Canadian Development funding, IDRC, international organisations. Some respondents highlight the barriers they face, such as:

"I have started to investigate international funding agencies, however, these are usually highly competitive and often quite narrow in terms of research topics"

"International funding - but this is extremely difficult to get for the 'mid-size' projects that were granted from VR"

"I have to apply in other countries (normally not allowing indirect costs in Sweden and having very limited available funds for salary for researchers in Sweden)."

2.3 Adaptations made to research areas, methods and geographical focus

Four survey questions focused on ways in which respondents have adapted their research.

2.3.1 Have you adapted your research area as a response to the funding cuts?

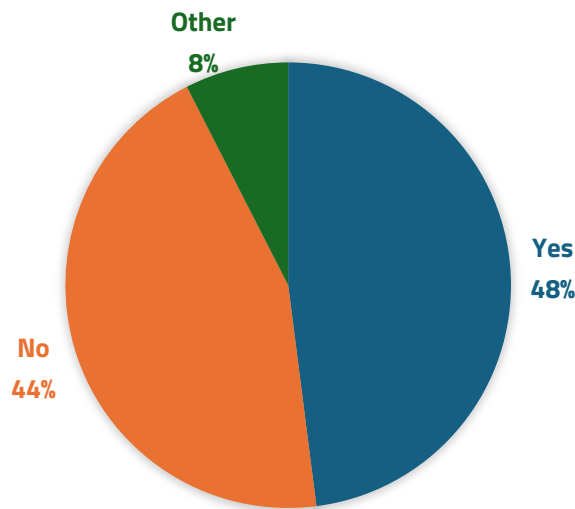


Figure 5: Share of respondents adapting research areas to funding cuts. N= 173 respondents

48% of respondents state that they have adapted their research area as a response to the cuts (Figure 5). 44% answer no, and 8% respond "Other", sharing reflections about the timeline and scale of adapting their research.

A follow up question was asked to those who stated that they have adapted their research area.

2.3.2 If yes, in what way have you adapted your research area?

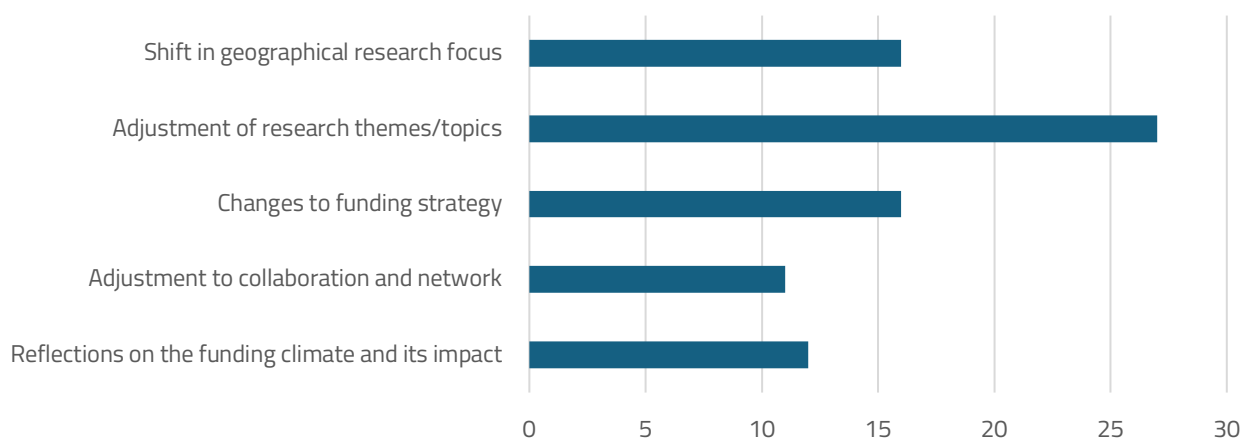


Figure 6: Number of researchers reporting how they have adapted their research areas. N=81

33% of respondents report an adjustment in their research themes or topics, and 20% report a shift in their geographical research focus (Figure 6). 20% of respondents report changes to their funding strategy and 14% report adjustments to collaboration and their network. Additionally, 15% report reflections on the broader funding climate and its impact on their current work.

A similar question was posed on whether there are some research ideas that respondents no longer work on.

2.3.3 Is there any research idea that you are no longer working on because of the cuts? If yes, which ones?

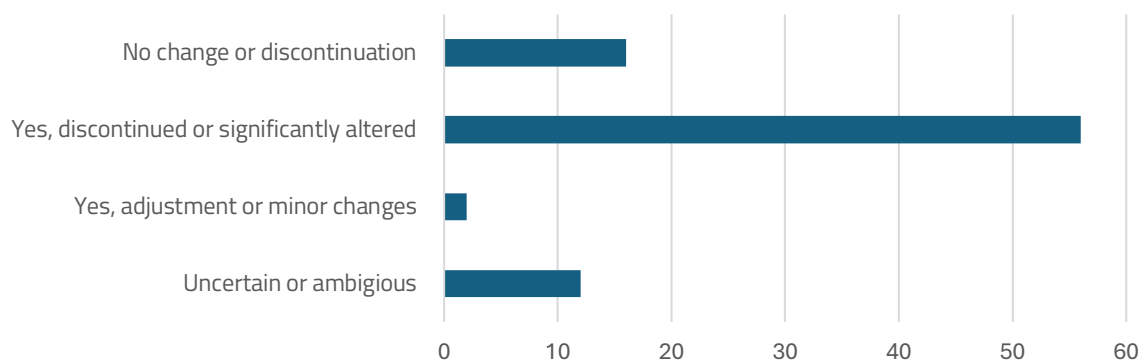


Figure 7: Number of researchers reporting if they have adjusted research ideas. $N= 86$.

65% of respondents report that their work was either discontinued or significantly altered because of the cuts (Figure 7). 19% of respondents indicate no change or discontinuation in their research efforts, and 2% report only minor adjustments or changes to their research. 14% of respondents express uncertainty and/or ambiguity regarding the future of their projects.

A question was posed on how work now is reframed.

2.3.4 In what ways are you reframing your work now to apply for funding?

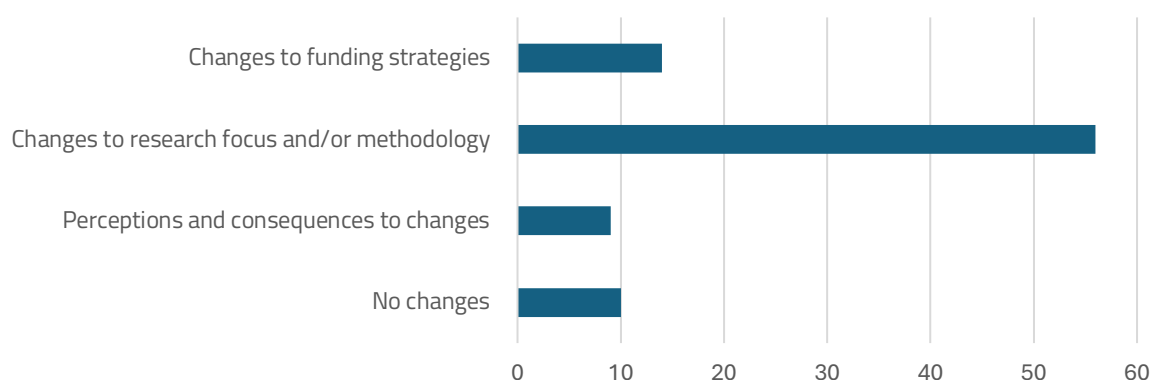


Figure 8: Number of respondents reporting how they are reframing work to attract other funding; N=94

60% of respondents indicate shifts in their research focus and/or methodology, 15% say they are making changes to their funding strategies and confronting challenges, and 11% note no changes in their approach (Figure 8). 10% of respondents provide comments on their perceptions and the consequences of these adjustments.

Free text responses under these three questions declare similar responses. Adaptations are noted in:

- 1. Research themes.** Multiple respondents highlight a move towards topics perceived as more likely to secure funding. Some examples given in the free-text responses are that there is now less priority given to health and empowering women, poverty and development, gender equality and reducing inequality, job creation in Africa, rural development and knowledge transfer, zoonotic diseases, natural resources and fiscal capacity, peacebuilding, circular sanitation and water access, reforestation and democratic transitions.

Areas that are mentioned as given more priority now are climate change and justice, AI, and topics more relevant to Swedish context, e.g. migration.

Multiple respondents detail the changes to their research themes to ensure broader applicability and alignment with funding priorities:

“Engaging with broader sustainability transition issues within Sweden and Europe and try to find fundings that support comparative studies with similar policy issues in the Global South.”

Some respondents see new thematic opportunities arising from this new funding landscape, as expressed by one:

“I'm now considering what practical challenges, theory and concepts can connect Global North and Global South to foster mutual learning in addressing interconnected development issues - not necessarily a bad thing.”

- 2. Research methods.** Several respondents state that they have changed how they plan to, or now are doing research. One respondent for example states that they will no longer do “highly applied and socially relevant research” but rather now focus on doing basic research. Another respondent says that they will do less field work and focus on desk studies with a quantitative focus. Another says that:

“I have revised last year's U-forsk grant application so that it focuses less on issues that are relevant from a practitioner-perspective as well as less on issues related to the SDGs. It is less development research and more mainstream political science [...]”

Another highlights the need to shift research work to master's students:

“I have to rely on master student projects for sampling and doing the analysis pro-bono. No long-term projects and no in-depth research is possible”

- 3. The geographical focus of research.** Responses also show that for some respondents, instead of focusing research on developing country contexts, their research focus is now on Europe or countries in the Global North, and Sweden. One of the respondents for example said that

“I will focus my research on Sweden related issues. It is not what I wish to do but I see no option at the moment unfortunately”.

Another respondent, who stated that they have applied and been successful with a funding proposal for studying inequality and loss under climate change in a European context instead of in a developing country context, discusses the challenges with this geographical shift for a researcher trained in development research methods:

“I was trained as an International Development scholar to become an expert on development/inequality and justice topics, however now I find myself carving out case study research in Sweden. [...] There are also risks to this model in that we may end up with a lot of empirical research on the same cases within Sweden which is a small country, and the research not that interesting for global networks. Not least losing our competitive edge globally. [...] The impact has consequences for the networks and work that we have built up with colleagues in Africa in particular.”

- 4. The funding strategy.** As mentioned above, several mention adjustments made in the funding strategy. Many researchers report additional work to explore other funding opportunities and adjusting proposals to fit other funders' criteria. One notes pessimism when trying to do doing this:

“I tried to fit the proposal into the VR social science (anthropology) call. However, after reviewing the group of reviewers there, I don't have a lot of expectations that I will get funded. [...]”

Another says that:

“I am focusing more on targeted calls, technology, and topics that are 'hot' in news and literature. I am thinking of branching out into non-development research here in Sweden just to keep my job.”

- 5. Partnerships.** Adjustments made by researchers furthermore include rethinking collaboration and networking strategies. Several respondents describe challenges in maintaining international partnerships due to funding constraints. Among these, two respondents share the direct impact on collaborative research efforts:

“For the first time since 2008 I have no projects with collaborators in Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania (none in sub-Saharan Africa), and we have abandoned a new collaboration started in 2022 in Uganda, for lack of funding.”

“Reduced time for mutual exchange and partnership with long standing collaborative partnerships in Somalia and Uganda”

See more on partnerships under 2.4 below.

- 6. Too early to say.** Some respondents say that they have not yet made any adaptations. One respondent for example states that “Not yet. It is extremely difficult to do this as a junior researcher.” Another says that “I haven't done so yet, because I have ongoing funding for my developing research but when it is finished this year, I will not be able to continue the collaboration.” Similarly, another notes:

“I am not. The research framework is set, as there is a Ph.D. student engaged in the project, and it would not be wise to change the project.”

- 7. Changes in personal career.** Several researchers respond that the changes necessitate a re-evaluation of their research focus and career trajectories. One respondent for example says that “Lack of funding creates limitations in all aspects.” Others highlight more concretely the impact of the funding cuts for their personal careers, for example “There is limited chances to continue the research in my field after VR U-forsk is terminated” and “Realising it will be difficult to continue getting funding for development I will try to change my career path.” Several mention that future career possibilities have been affected by the cuts. One respondent says that they now have to look for other jobs, and one that they are leaving a field they have been engaged in for 15 years. One of the respondents states that:

“As an early- to mid-career academic without a permanent position, the decision to cut the earmarked funding has seriously impinged on my possibilities to continue my academic career.”

2.4 Relations with developing countries and set up of research teams

Four survey questions focus on the relations in developing countries, and set-up of research teams.

2.4.1 Have you been able to maintain your research contacts in developing countries after the cuts?

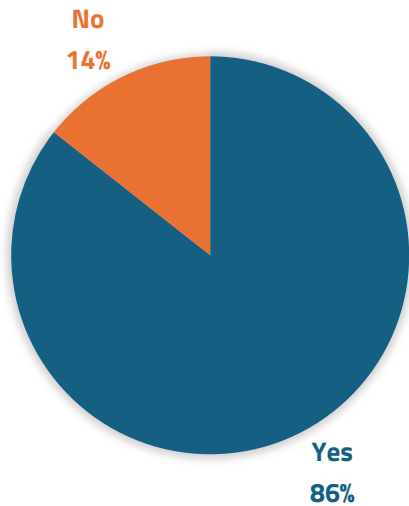


Figure 9: Share of respondents reporting ability to maintain research contacts. N=153

86% of the respondents confirm their ability to, at least in the short term, sustain contacts in developing countries, while 14% of respondents report that they could not (Figure 9).

A follow-up question was posed to those responding yes.

2.4.2 If yes, how?

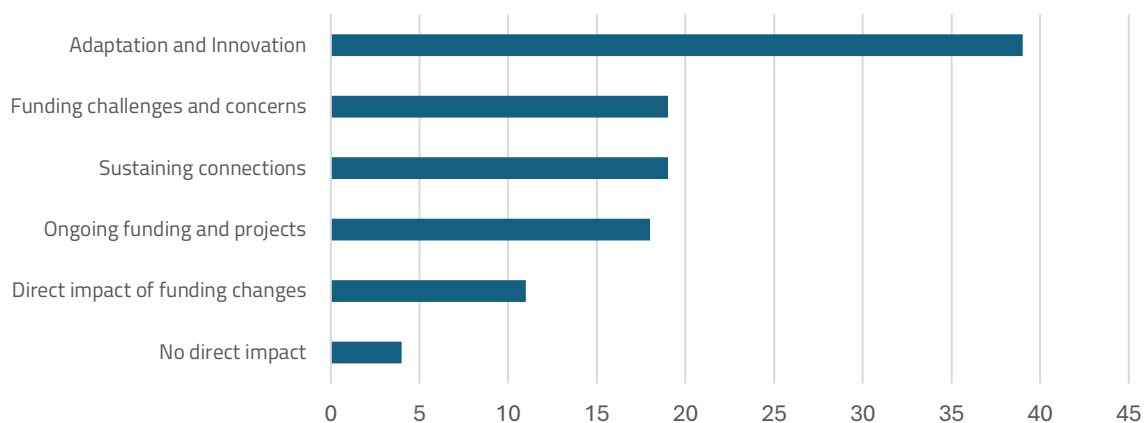


Figure 10: How contact with researchers in developing countries is maintained. Number of responses categorized into themes. N=111

Overall, 35% of respondents report having to adapt and use alternative methods to maintain their contacts, such as employing digital tools and alternative funding sources. 16% of the respondents rely on other ongoing funding and projects to sustain their collaborations, and 17% of respondents emphasize the role of sustaining connections through established relationships and mutual interests. 4 respondents (4%) report no direct impact on their ability to maintain contacts (Figure 10).

2.4.3 Has the current structure of your research teams changed after the cuts?

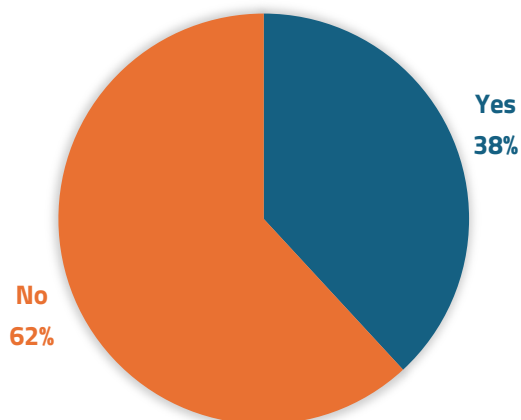


Figure 11: Share of respondents reporting changes in research teams in response to cuts. N=139

62% of respondents report no change in their teams' structure. 38% say that their research teams' structure has changed as a result of the funding cuts (Figure 11).

2.3.4 Do you believe the cuts have affected your incentives to include researchers from the Global South in project applications?

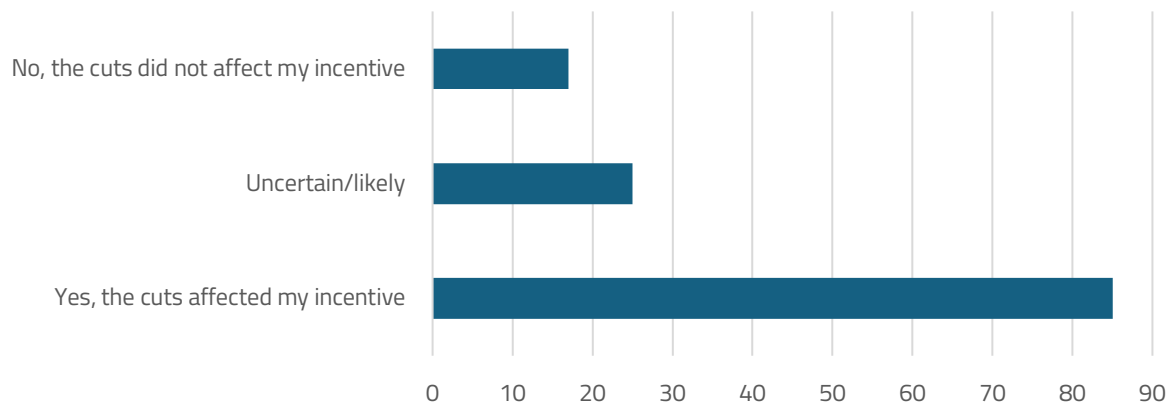


Figure 12: Impact of cuts on incentives to include Global South researchers. Number of responses categorized into themes. N= 127.

67% of respondents felt their incentives to include researchers from the Global South were negatively affected, 20% of respondents were uncertain or expected it to be likely to happen, and 13% answered No (Figure 12).

In the free-text responses we note the following:

1. **Among those who note that relations have been affected** one respond for example says that in-depth case studies where researchers from the Global South are crucial actors will be more difficult to do now. Another says that the cuts have implied that “my frequent collaborators have stepped away”. Another says that:

“Of course. When Sweden was investing in development research, then it was important to include researchers from the global South. If Sweden no longer values development research one can feel confident that Sweden no longer values researchers from the global South. It took a long time to get to the point where we could use Swedish money to properly fund researchers from developing country universities. Finally, when we were doing it, it looks like it is on the way out. Will keep trying though.”

One respondent highlights how funding cuts are affecting students and teachers, leading to significant socioeconomic repercussions:

“A related issue is the increased difficulties for ‘international’ students, PhD-students and teachers to receive a permit to stay. We have seen a clear increase in

restrictions to where students from the global south cannot come to the classes they have paid for (sometimes even by the family selling their house). In the long run, this too will add to the lessening of knowledge exchange between over-consuming countries and countries in socioeconomic poverty.”

Another respondent sees potential benefits in the new funding landscape for partnerships:

“In all honesty I think the research grants for ‘development’ created perverse incentives to work on less beneficial projects with partners that couldn't maintain an equal footing in research projects. So, depending on how funds are allocated in the future this may actually be beneficial.”

- 2. Among those who note that relations have not yet been too affected many bring up that that they is uncertainty about the future.** Some report that several relations are still ongoing for example through “ongoing research project funded by VR before the cut” or internal university funds allocated for travelling. Some respondents however emphasize the struggle to sustain connections based on established relationships, such as:

“I maintain them right now but foresee this will be difficult in the future. We have spent years to build trust and establish robust research consortia that now risk to disappear. We will lose new generation of researchers in the global south”

“I have my connections with ‘developing countries’ through research platforms at the university and through international networks established a long time ago, but I can see how colleagues are worried that opportunities for cooperation, collaboration and researcher exchanges will decrease profoundly as funding runs out.”

For some, the consequences are not yet clear:

“I hope not - I will do what I can to write them into the project - but I am not sure if or how this will be possible.”

- 3. New forms of interacting with researchers in the south have been established.** Multiple respondents outline the adaptation and innovation measures used to maintain contacts, including connecting digitally through web-platforms. One respondent for example states:

“Email, Zoom and meeting at conferences. This will of course only continue for a relatively short time after the funding has dried up, as our colleagues have to find other partners that can supply the funding needed to do essential research. [...]”

2.5 Consequences for Global South

2.5.1 How do you view the consequences of these cuts for the Global South?

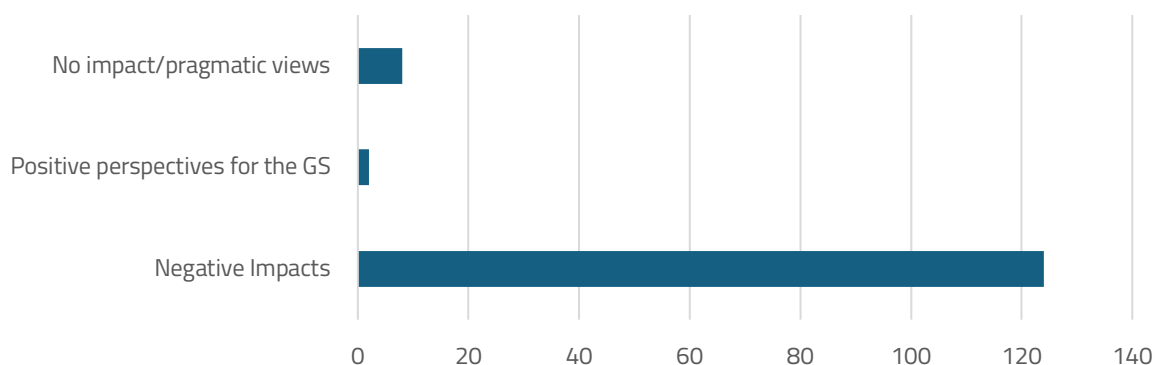


Figure 13: Consequences of cuts on the Global South. Number of responses in each category N=134

93% of respondents believe that the impacts of the cuts for the global South are negative. Only 2 respondents (1%) see the cuts as potentially positive. 6% have a pragmatic or neutral viewpoint, suggesting either minimal impact or a belief that research could continue under other funding categories or through open calls (Figure 13). An additional question posed in the survey was “Any other comments to the cuts”. We will account for some of the answers from both questions below.

Respondents who believe that the consequences are negative reflect on both short-term and long-term consequences of the cuts for the sustainability of research, but also for **already established collaborations between researchers globally:**

“Less research will be conducted in the Global South by researchers based in Sweden. Collaborations with institutions in the Global South will be ruined. Competence and capacity building in the Global South will be negatively affected. In the long run, there is a risk that knowledge and solutions needed to meet contemporary challenges - ecological, economic and social - in the Global South will not be produced in the extent it could have been done, because of these cuts in funding.”

"The negative effects on mutual learning and cooperation processes back and forth between research and interaction in the global north and global south will be experienced on both 'sides'. Joint research between researchers from different socioeconomic contexts, and between researchers and people/issues contributes to mutual understandings and to a preparedness to meet challenges of global interdependence. To cut these efforts is counterproductive to what the world today needs."

"In the current moment of heightened geopolitical tensions, increasing climate change, and a regression on many of the SDGs, countries in the Global North need to take larger responsibility for funding research, capacity building, and building strong democratic institutions. Not less."

Another respondent mentions the consequences of being able to evaluate the **effectiveness of aid**:

"Absolutely tragic for several reasons. First of all, it is impossible to talk about 'effective' aid and then making it impossible to evaluate which interventions that are best. Further terribly short-sighted given our legacy as a solid partner."

"Cutting well-established research is drastic and unnecessary. It destroys what has been established for decades for no apparent reason or goal at all. As a consequence, Sweden will know less about the wider world, and the development aid spending which remains will become less effective."

Several respondent express views on Sweden's **role and reputation** because of the cuts. As expressed by one respondent:

"The Global South will be fine. Much of it is on the way up. They will be bad for Sweden. Sweden had a name for both being reasonably competent and humble, and for being associated with certain values - broadly democracy, human rights and good governance. The way the development research funding was ditched suggests a wish to damage Sweden's old name. If the new approach is to be nationalism, self-interest and a cavalier disregard for what foreigners think, then we are unlikely to be leaders in the field, and we probably won't be accumulating much social capital internationally. Not amongst our old civil society friends, and not either among the populists and violent leaders, who won't believe that we are properly tough despite the 'hard grip' rhetoric of our politicians."

Some respondents also express that the cuts open **new possibilities**. One for example states that “The money is far better used in open calls. There is no reason to impose a developmental restraint.” Another reports a rather pragmatic view by reporting:

“I think researchers can still apply to VR in the Social Science category. I do not agree with the publicly stated motivations for the cuts, but I understand the general trend towards more spending on security (this will for instance affect all Swedish government authorities on a quite deep level, and I think academia is lagging in an understanding of these effects) and also spending on Ukraine.”

3. The consequences of research funding cuts for practitioners

Question 3.1 was only addressed in the survey to the respondents working in development practice or policy.

3.1 Has your work been affected by these cuts? If yes, how?

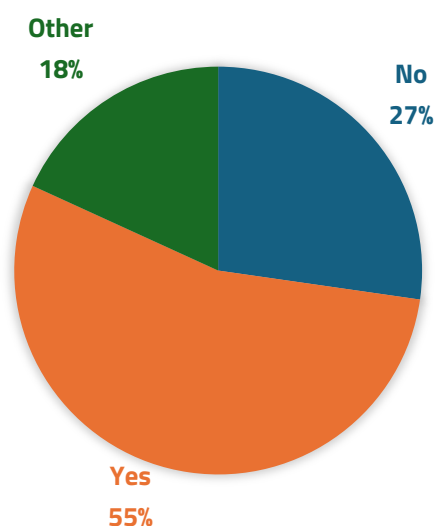


Figure 14: Share of people working in development policy or practice whose work has been affected by the cuts. N=11

55% of the respondents say that their work has been affected by the cuts. 27% say no and 18% answer Other (Figure 14). Four respondents mention for example that cuts affect their work

through uncertainty, tougher prioritization and cancellation of bi-lateral programmes. One respondent reflects on how the cuts in research affect the evidence base that is relevant for their work "a radical cut in prospects for future evidence-based knowledge of relevance to my work".

One respondent says that their own work is not affected, but that the organisation they are working with is:

"Not my work but the NGO that I am chair of has been greatly affected and we are working hard to find new means of funding to not have to shut down the organisation"

However, one respondent believes the changes and cuts empowers their work through local innovation and entrepreneurship:

"By transferring funds to f ex SwedFund, the government empowers innovation and entrepreneurship in lower income countries and thereby an opportunity for poor people to be employed. Also, the local governments receives a tax income that re-establishes a social bond between the government and the people which the aid sector has broken. Moreover, the local communities can buy local products and services that they request, produced by local companies. This is how Sweden came out of poverty and what Sweden can help with. I work with empowering local research and enterprising and the change of policy empowers my work."

Additionally, 7 respondents in *Development policy or practice* answered the question "Do you have any other comments?". One respondent suggests an optimistic outlook on the future of aid and its impact on developing countries:

"It's not cuts, it is a re-orientation of funds, allowing poor countries to come out of the aid dependency and get wealthy. Development institutions in Sweden should support and not fight the change. As a result of aid, the number of extremely poor people in sub-Saharan African countries is increasing with 5 million every year. To be extremely poor is extremely difficult and to maintain business as usual after 60 years of aid, is totally disrespectful to the poor."

However, most reflect concerns over the negative impacts of these funding adjustments:

“Many NGOs and research institutes work like a web, we're interlinked with so many different people, organisations, groups and institutions. Cutting down funding not only affects the direct beneficiaries but also our web of organisations whom we've helped and supported. They in return also support local projects and hires local people. All of which are affected by these cuts.”

Further concerns are raised about broader societal impacts:

“We risk a democratic and human rights, gender, equity downhill structure in many countries. Sustainability on our planet can have a big drawback.”

4. Conclusions and final remarks by authors

In this report we have summarised findings from a survey carried out by SweDev exploring the consequences of, and reactions to, the Swedish government's funding cuts introduced in December of 2022 and onwards which has affected U-Forsk grants from the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) and research collaboration aid funded through Sida. While consequences are still unfolding, we note some trends in the answer from the survey respondents. The cuts have reportedly led to several negative consequences, including changes in:

- **Research areas, geographical focus and methods.** The responses to the survey indicate a real impact on the type of research being pursued by Swedish development scholars. Less focus is now directed towards research areas such as poverty and development; methods such as applied and socially relevant research and fieldwork. Geographical focus has shifted from Global South to Europe and the Global North, and Sweden.
- **Funding strategies.** Most researchers are today actively applying for funding from the other national funding calls from Forte, Formas and Vetenskapsrådet. Many are also applying or planning to apply for funding from international funders such as the EU, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Nordforsk. Barriers reported are that a lot of work is needed to adjust the research projects to fit the criteria of other funders. As a consequence, some report that they have totally quit doing research and are applying for other jobs.
- **Relations with researchers in Global South.** Whilst majority report that that they still are maintaining their contacts with researchers in the Global South, two thirds of the respondent's report that incentives to include this group of researchers in proposals has

been negatively affected. There is thus a large uncertainty regarding how relations between researchers in Global North and the Global South will be upheld in future.

- **Relations with other actors such as NGOs.** Among the respondents from the practitioners, we note changes such as reduced joint activities and changed forms of relationships with other actors such as NGOs and business.

The survey and this report have been compiled by a team at Stockholm Environment Institute (Amani Abdulqader, Annika Hilgert, Alice Tunfjord, Janet Vähämäki). It has been proofread by SweDev's Executive Committee (Jesper Sundewall, Emma Elfverson, Veronica Brodén Gyberg and Bengt Ove Turesson). SweDev's Steering Committee has given input to the report.

As noted by SweDev in earlier reports¹ we believe that the findings of this report are important to consider in future discussions on research in and for global development. As shown in this report the cuts have already now seriously affected the research community in Sweden which implies the need for a "renewed strategy for research on global development" as argued by SweDev in our input to the forthcoming Research Bill.²

¹ A. Ioannou, J. and Vähämäki (2021). *Increasing the use of research in Swedish development policy and practice*. Swedish Development Research Network, Stockholm. <https://www.swedev.dev/increasing-the-use-of-research-in-swedish-development-policy-and-practice/>

C. Strand, J. Vähämäki, F. Söderbaum, E. Bjarnegård, J. Ewald, F. Hajdu, M. Jirstrom, R. Lalander, H. Melber (2020), *Development Research in Sweden – a dispersed research community under pressure*, EBA Working Paper, April 2020, Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA), Sweden. https://eba.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Development-Research-in-Sweden-EBA-FINAL_WEBB2.pdf

SweDev and the Government Offices of Sweden (2022). *Bridging research and policymaking to achieve the 2030 Agenda*. https://www.swedev.dev/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SweDev-report-from-DevRes_7-September-2022.pdf

² SweDev (2024). *Ny strategi för forskning om global utveckling behövs*. <https://www.swedev.dev/nya-strategi-for-forskning-om-global-utveckling-behovs/>

About SweDev

SweDev – the Swedish Development Research Network – is an initiative with over 200 active network members in Sweden. The aim is to connect development researchers across Sweden to further strengthen collaboration between the research community, practitioners and policymakers. SweDev aims to support the use of research-based knowledge for efficient policymaking and practice among Swedish actors working for the 2030 Agenda.

SweDev is funded by institutional support membership fees from the institutional support members, and three universities at central level (Uppsala University, Umeå University and Linköping University), and led by a steering committee consisting of representatives from Swedish academic institutions.

5. Annex: Overview of respondents

185 respondents (93%) work in *research/academia*. 14 (7%) respondents work in *development practice or policy* (Figure 1).

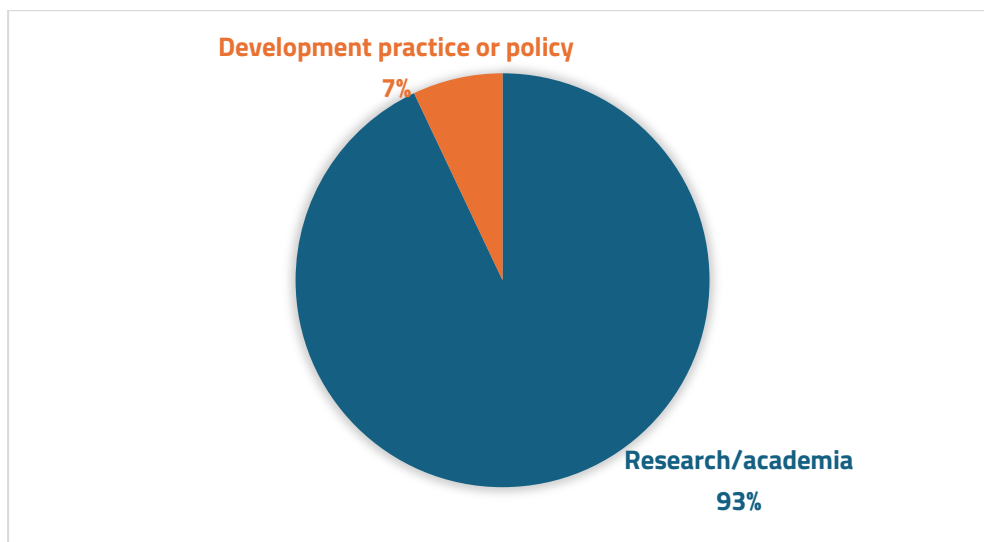


Figure 15: Share of respondents in each sector (*Development practice/policy* or *Research/academia*). N= 199.

5.1 Research/academia

The following section describes the 185 respondents in **Research/Academia**.

5.1.1 University or research organization

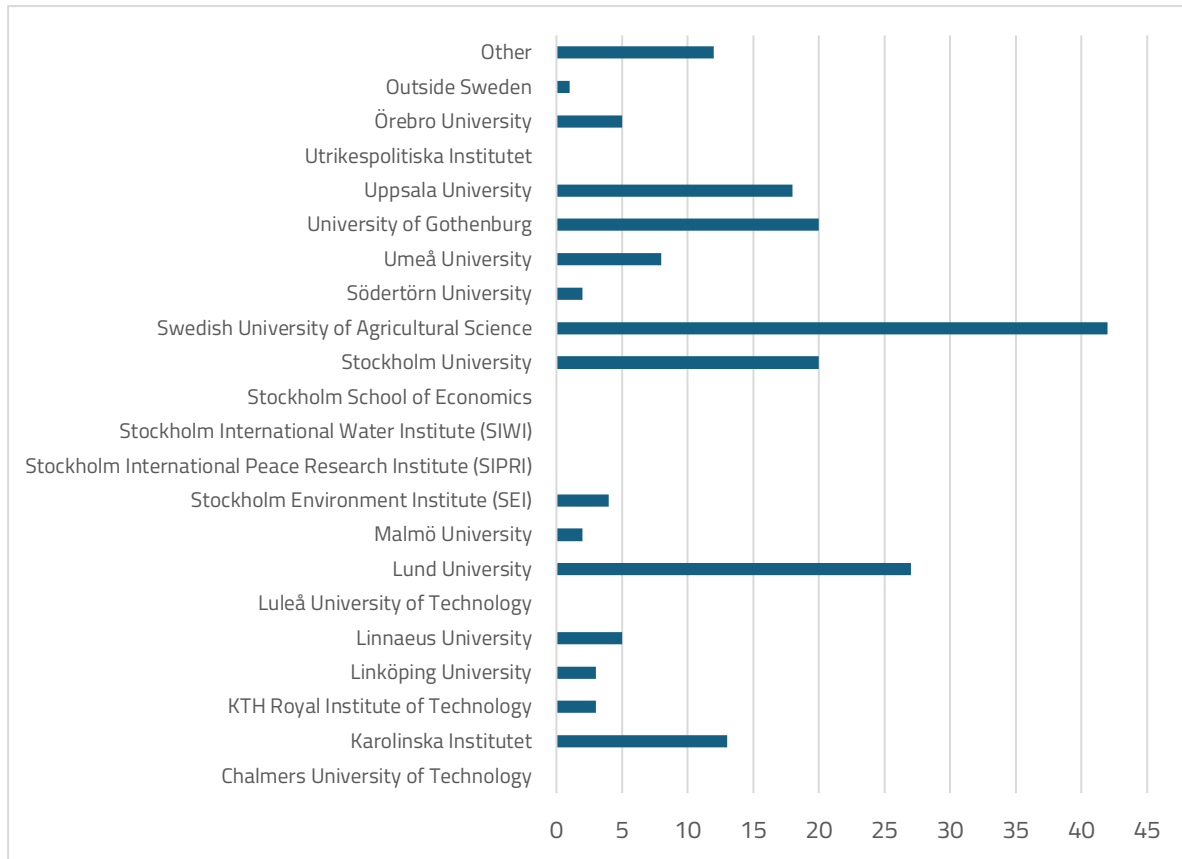


Figure 16: Number of respondents from each research organisation or university. N=185.

The respondents come from a broad range of research institutions in Sweden (See figure 16). The "Other" category includes 12 respondents (6%) from Marie Cederschiöld University, Dalarna University, the Nordic Africa Institute, SMHI, Blekinge Tekniska Högskola, Statens Veterinärmedicinska Anstalt, and Jönköping University. 172 of these respondents (93%) are employed by their institution. 11 respondents (6%) are affiliated with their research organization. The category "Other" represented 2 respondents (1%), including distinct roles such as Professor Emeritus and Professor Emerita at KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

5.1.2 Demographic of respondents

Most respondents are researchers with a PhD (82%). Among the respondents 36% are professors, 34 % are "Researchers", 19% Associates or senior lecturers, 3% PhD students.

The category "Other" represented 3 respondents (2%), including roles like emeritus professor and research consultant.

55% (102 respondents) of the total respondents are women and 44% (81 respondents) are men. Two respondents (1%) prefer to not disclose their gender. Most respondents are between 49-58 years (39%). The youngest group, aged 18-28, represents 1%. The 29-38 age group represents 10%, the 39-48 group makes up 28%. The age group 59-68 represent 17% and the group that is over 68 represent 5%

5.1.3 Disciplines

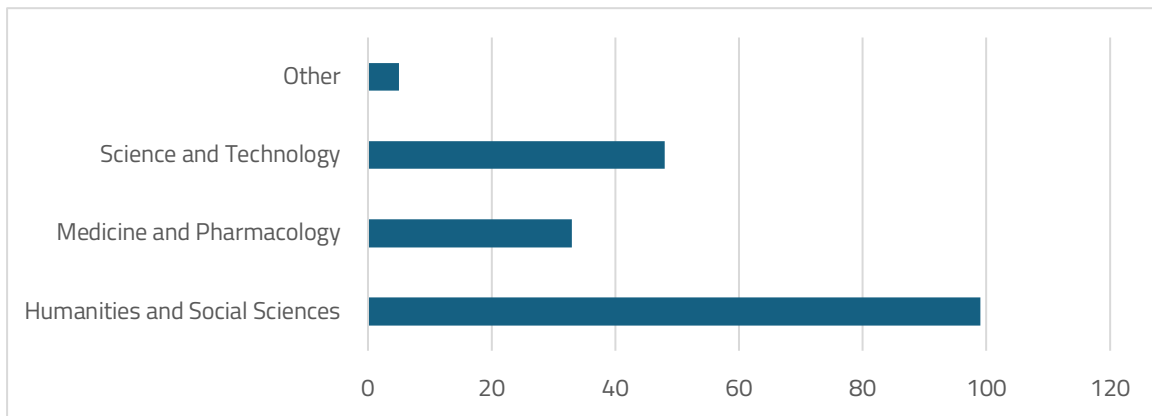


Figure 17: Number of respondents working in each discipline. N=185.

53% of respondents work in Humanities and Social Sciences, 26% work in Science and Technology, 18% in Medicine and Pharmacology. Disciplines in the "Other" category include Sustainability Sciences, Agriculture, Plant Breeding, Environmental Studies, and Veterinary Medicine.

5.1.4 Main research focus

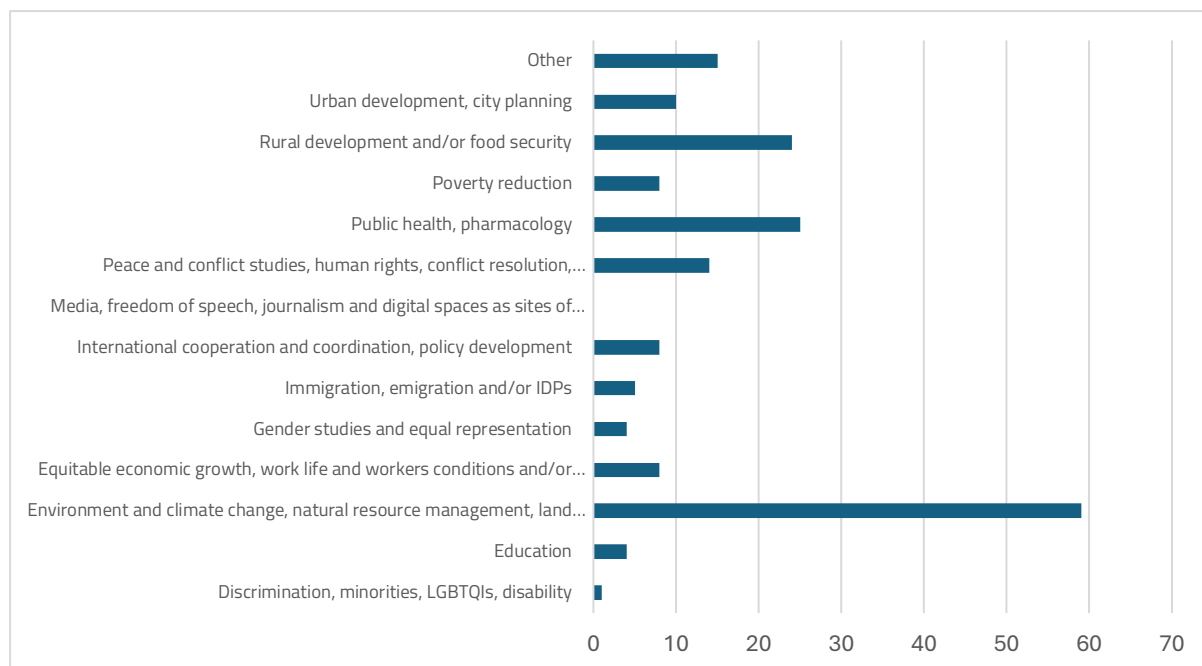


Figure 18: Number of respondents in each research focus. N= 185.

32% of respondents focus their research on Environment and climate change, natural resource management, land, and water issues, followed by Public health and pharmacology (14%), Rural development and food security (13%) and Peace and conflict studies (8%). The "Other" category includes research in Development economics; Everyday politics of state - society relations; Corruption, Public services; Global health; Surgery; Virology; Disease vector ecology; Surveillance and control; Genetics; Scientific research in plants, animals, insects and other living organisms; Management; Basic life science research in molecular microbiology; and Implementation science (See figure 18 for details).

5.2 Development practice or policy

The following section describes the personal information from the 14 respondents in *Development policy or practice*.

5.2.1 Sector and roles

28% of the respondents in this group work in the civil society. 28 % work in the public sector and independently, each. 14% work in the private sector (Figure 9). The respondents have roles such as Programme managers, Advisor for Grant Administration and Agreement, Administrator, Program Director, Associate Professor combined with Founder, CEO and Deputy Programme Director, Researcher, Senior Advisor in Marine and Fisheries, Head of Division, Development Policy Advisor, and Technical Expert.

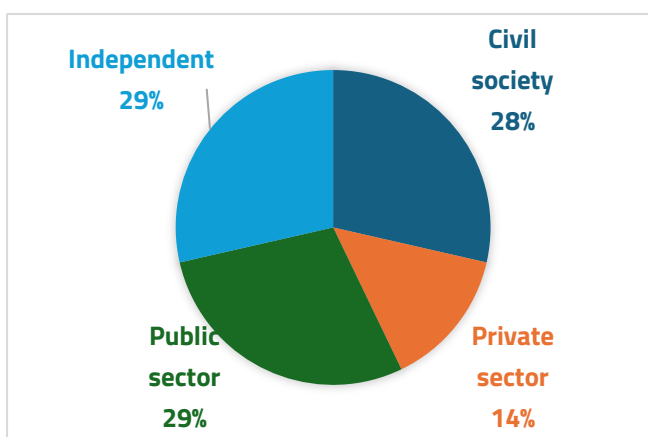


Figure 19: Share of respondents in each sector (Independent, Civil society, Public Sector, Private sector). N=14.

50% of respondents are women, and 36% are men. 7% identify as non-binary and another 7% prefer to not disclose their gender. Most respondents are between 59 and years old (43%), followed by the age groups 49-58, 29-38, 39-48 and over 68. No one is between 18-28 years old.