The Norwegian Financial Mechanism shall contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and to strengthening the bilateral relations between Norway and the Beneficiary States. The programme area shall contribute to these two overall objectives.

**Objective**

Strengthened institutional capacity and human resource development in public institutions, local and regional authorities in the Beneficiary States within the agreed priority sectors through cooperation and transfer of knowledge with similar institutions and authorities in Norway.

**Expected outcomes**

- Increased and strengthened cooperation between public institutions, local and regional authorities in the Beneficiary States and similar institutions and authorities in Norway.
- Enhanced institutional capacity and human resources development in public institutions, local and regional authorities in the Beneficiary States.
- Enhanced capacity and quality of the services provided by public institutions, local and regional authorities through enhanced institutional capacity and human resources development.
Relevance of support

Public institutions and local and regional authorities play a crucial role in any country. Public institution-building through institutional capacity-building and human resource development is one of the principal tools in improving the services they provide to a country's population.

Institutional cooperation between Norway and the Beneficiary States should aim to assist in the development of modern and efficient administrations, with the structures, human resources and management skills needed to implement their designated tasks to a high standard.

This programme area will facilitate the exchange of experiences and learning between partners in Norway and the Beneficiary States. It provides the framework for administrations and public authorities in the Beneficiary States to cooperate with their counterparts in Norway, with the aim of developing modern and efficient administration. The cooperation between Norway and the Beneficiary States would contribute to the development of networks and exchanges of knowledge and the dissemination of best practices with regard to the above-mentioned outcomes.

Suggested activities

- Measures to strengthen institutional capacity
- Measures to strengthen human resources development
- Measures to improve the quality and accessibility of the services provided by public institutions and local and regional authorities
- Training activities
- Measures to strengthen systems such as quality assurance systems, IT-systems, etc.
- Exchange of personnel on long, medium or short term

All relevant, capable and interested public institutions working within the agreed priority sectors could be eligible for this area. A list of potential Norwegian partner institutions will be developed.

Programme area specificities

- Programmes may be operated directly by the National Focal Point
- Particularly relevant for pre-defined projects
- Only Partnership projects

Reduce economic and social disparities
Strengthen bilateral relations