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Transfer of Good Practices
& Reinforcement of
Internationalisation
Strategies in Kurdistan

EXTERNAL EVALUATION 2017-2018

ERASMUS+ KA2 586290-EPP-1-2017-1-DE-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP

CM CONSULTING

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INTRODUCTION

The present report is an essential component of the quality monitoring and control process of the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 projects for capacity building in higher education coordinated by Georg-August Göttingen Universität (UGOE). One of the advantages of the present assessment is that it can be used as a formative evaluation tool to review or correct processes that may hinder the achievement of project objectives.

The mid-term evaluation has paid attention to two main and distinctive areas of project development. On the one hand, the project seeks to develop international strategies at both national and institutional level with the autonomous region of Kurdistan. This is assessed through a tailor-made framework for internationalisation. Mapping of the current situation in Kurdish institutions is based on the results of questionnaires formulated to Kurdish partner members of the TIGRIS consortium.

On the other hand, the evaluation gauges the existing risks and project implementation of different Work Packages through a risk analysis conducted in Kurdistan as well as questionnaires and interviews to both EU and Kurdish partners. The data collected has been used to illustrate the perceived factors for success and failure in the project, identifying potential bottlenecks.

The present report should be seen as part of the Quality Plan designed at the beginning of the project.

A. ANALYSIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES IN KURDISTAN

Aims and Objectives

A first focus of the external evaluation is oriented towards assessing the preliminary plans for internationalisation from the Kurdish partner universities.

The Institutional strategic plan should have Internationalisation as one of its main themes and may outline one of the following aims:

To develop Kurdish institutions internationally strategies should:

- (a) enhance high quality, ground-breaking research that will have an impact on thinkers, policymakers, and business leaders locally, regionally and internationally
- (b) develop programmes that prepare students to succeed in the modern global economy
- (c) create opportunities for international exchange with high quality institutions, for both students and academic staff

(d) promote and publicise their strengths on the international stage. This strategy aims to help each institution achieve a deep-rooted and rewarding international culture, and global impact in its work.

Analysing their strategy is designed to help us bring about measurable benefits for each HEI in a wide range of educational areas, such as:

- Improved cultural understanding between Kurdish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and key international partners
- Increasing, sustainable and diversified recruitment of highly-qualified students
- Recruitment of high-quality staff internationally
- Research partnerships which may have intellectual value, longevity and impact
- Enhanced institutional reputation
- Increased international income through business, research, student fees, benefactors and alumni
- Better employment and exchange opportunities

The first analysis will help us to evaluate:

- Evaluate the quality and quantity of activities organized to strengthen organizational processes
- Evaluate the contribution of internationalisation to overall institutional goals, vision, and mission
- Evaluate the effectiveness of an international strategy
- Benchmark with other Kurdish universities
- Evaluate the internationalisation of existing institutional practices
- Make recommendations and action plans thru reviewing the current status of internationalisation
- Underlying key areas for improvement in second and third year.

The methodology to be implemented will help us to evaluate the contribution of internationalisation to overall institutional goals, vision, and mission (Evaluate internationalisation efforts as a component of overall institutional performance). Improvement should be a key driver for any type of measurement. The major goal of measurement is improvement.

At this stage, partners were requested to inform about their institutional development plans and each unit/coordinator was required to write strategic goals and objectives that were linked to institutional goals and objectives. A template to assess the strategies for internationalisation is offered in Annex 1. Note that institutional goals and objectives are not the same as strategic goals and objectives. Strategic goals and objectives derive from institutional goals and objectives. Because strategic goals may change from one planning cycle to the next, they can be viewed as aspects of the institutional goals that receive greater attention or emphasis for a short period of time in response to external events and conditions. Internationalisation standards require a clear link between the mission statement and institutional goals and objectives as well as links between the institutional and strategic goals and objectives.

Each strategy has been assessed in function of its mission and relationship to internationalisation, the link between strategy and development plan and how the university plan acts on the following 5 main goals of internationalisation:

Goal 1: to enhance the quality of education

Goal 2: to enhance the quality of research

Goal 3: to well-prepare students for life and work in an intercultural and globalising world

Goal 4: to enhance the international reputation and visibility of the institution

Goal 5: to provide service to society and community social engagement

For each goal, partners had to answer why it was important, what they wanted to achieve and what were the expected results (indicators). The assessment provided for each institution is the following:

1. UNIVERSITY OF SULAIMANI (UOS)

Mission: The realisation of the view aims at medium-long term. The view concerns several aspects of the organisation processes in terms of internationalisation.

Goal 1: Educational objectives are formulated. Institution uses a collective career profile. The institution has its own view on education. There is a common view on education and they use this view to compose branches of priority educational programmes. Institution takes content, objectives and work forms into account.

Goal 2: Research programmes are being developed on the basis of short-term targets. Research programmes are being developed on the basis of material which is collected by teams according to collective plans. On the level of organisation targets for short-term are formulated. Research seems to be seen process oriented.

Goal 3: Student activities organised in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: International cooperation is being developed. The organisation uses at least short-term aims for the international cooperation. Knowledge and experience from international cooperation is integrated into the institution.

Goal 5: Society and community service are being developed on the basis of a collective plan. Short term aims for societal service are being developed. There is a collective view on social and community service.

Link between strategy and development plan: The management has indicated some key processes in order to realise the strategy. Some critical success factors in connection with the internationalisation process are indicated. Some procedures to develop the strategy are being unfolded.

2. UNIVERSITY OF RAPARIN (UOR)

Mission: The realisation of the view aims at medium-long term. The view concerns several aspects of the organisation processes in terms of internationalisation.

Goal 1: The organisation provides a collective career profile. The goal is system oriented. The organisation involves all internal parties concerned, including students, in the development, actualisation and evaluation of educational view and objectives. Career view and educational view are basic principles of decisions about educational content, objectives and forms of training.

Goal 2: The organisation involves systematically external parties concerned in the development and evaluation of research. The view is integrated in general policy view of the organisation. The organisation compares its view on research with other organisations. Strategy appears to be chain oriented.

Goal 3: Student activities are reflected in medium-terms objectives. Student activities are based on the job and educational view. There is a systematic measurement of studies. Internal parties are concerned in the development, adjustment and evaluation of student activities.

Goal 4: International co-operation embeds the educational vision of the organisation. Knowledge and experience from international collaboration integrated in the education. Internal parties concerned involved in the development, evaluation and adjustment of the international co-operation.

Goal 5: Society and community service are being developed on the basis of a collective plan. Short-term aims for societal service are being developed. There is a collective view on social and community service.

Link between strategy and development plan: the key processes are evaluated and adjusted on regular basis. The organisation pinpoints to surplus values that are for key processes in different parts of strategy concerned. The organisation identifies internal and external parties concerned with different key processes.

3. KURDISTAN INSTITUTION FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (KISSR)

Mission: the mission mainly contains the short-term policy. The management implicitly disposes of a view on the future of internationalisation but as activity oriented.

Goal 1: The organisation provides a collective career profile. The goal is system oriented. The organisation involves all internal parties concerned, including students, in the development, actualisation and evaluation of educational view and objectives. Career view and educational view are basic principles of decisions about educational content, objectives and forms of training.

Goal 2: The organisation has a well-motivated collective view on research. Internal parties are involved in the development, execution and evaluation of research activities. The organisation works systematically on research programmes. The strategy offers measurements of performance.

Goal 3: Student activities organised in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: International co-operation embeds the educational vision of the organisation. Knowledge and experience from international collaboration are integrated in the education. Internal parties concerned are involved in the development, evaluation and adjustment of the international co-operation.

Goal 5: Society and community service are being developed on the basis of a collective plan. Short-term aims for societal service are being developed. There is a collective view on social and community service.

Link between strategy and development plan: The key processes are evaluated and adjusted on regular basis. The organisation pinpoints to surplus values that are for key processes in different parts of strategy concerned. The organisation identifies internal and external parties concerned with different key processes.

4. ERBIL POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY (EPU)

Mission: The mission mainly contains the short-term policy. The management implicitly disposes of a view on the future of internationalisation but as activity oriented.

Goal 1: Too generic and not answering the question. We assume it is activity oriented but lacks information on what concrete activities in internationalisation are planned to achieve something. Teachers regularly actualises study content and keeps informed about developments in the own field of study. The view on education refers to specific own subjects. Not clear how the curriculum is updated in international aspects.

Goal 2: Research programmes are being developed on the basis of short-term targets. Research programmes are being developed on the basis of material which is collected by teams according to collective plans. On the level of organisation targets for short-term are formulated. Research seems to be seen process oriented.

Goal 3: Tutoring happens ad hoc or not mentioned. No external parties involved in coaching. Student activities are executives based on individual ideas. Lack of links with internationalisation.

Goal 4: International cooperation is being developed. The organisation uses at least short-term aims for the international cooperation. Knowledge and experience from international cooperation is integrated into the institution.

Goal 5: Society and community service are being developed on the basis of a collective plan. Short-term aims for societal service are being developed. There is a collective view on social and community service.

Link between strategy and development plan: The management has indicated some key processes in order to realise the strategy. Some critical success factors in connection with the internationalisation process are indicated. Some procedures to develop the strategy are being unfolded.

5. UNIVERSITY OF HALABJA (UOH)

Mission: The management uses the view for the development, monitoring and adjustment of internal as well as external activities. The management is involved in improvement activities.

Goal 1: Educational objectives are formulated. Institution uses a collective career profile. The institution has its own view on education. There is a common view on education and they use this view to compose branches of priority educational programmes. Institution takes content, objectives and work forms into account.

Goal 2: Research programmes are being developed on the basis of short-term targets. Research programmes are being developed on the basis of material which is collected by teams according to collective plans. On the level of organisation targets for short-term are formulated. Research seems to be seen process oriented.

Goal 3: Student activities organised in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: International co-operation embeds the educational vision of the organisation. Knowledge and experience from international collaboration integrated in the education. Internal parties concerned involved in the development, evaluation and adjustment of the international co-operation.

Goal 5: View on social services is limited. Lack of measurable indicators.

Link between strategy and development plan: The development of strategy is left to chance. Not evident link between strategy and plan. Individual motivation determines the extent of contribution to the development of plans supporting internationalisation strategies.

6. SULAIMANI POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY (SPU)

Mission: The realisation of the view aims at medium-long term. The view concerns several aspects of the organisation processes in terms of internationalisation.

Goal 1: Educational objectives are formulated. Institution uses a collective career profile. The institution has its own view on education. There is a common view on education and they use this view to compose branches of priority educational programmes. Institution takes content, objectives and work forms into account.

Goal 2: Research programme is being developed on the basis of short-term targets. The research programme is being developed on the basis of material which is collected by teams according to collective plans. On the level of organisation targets for short-term are formulated. Research seems to be seen process oriented.

Goal 3: Student activities organized in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: International cooperation is being developed. The organisation uses at least short-term aims for the international cooperation. Knowledge and experience from international cooperation is integrated into the institution.

Goal 5: The organisation has a collective view on social service. There is a consistent programme developed for social and community services. Internal parties involved in development of social and community services.

Link between strategy and development plan: The key processes are evaluated and adjusted on regular basis. The organisation pinpoints to surplus values that are for key processes in different parts of strategy concerned. The organisation identifies internal and external parties concerned with different key processes.

7. DUHOK POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY (DPU)

Mission: The management uses the view for the development, monitoring and adjustment of internal as well as external activities. The management is involved in improvement activities.

Goal 1: Educational objectives are formulated. Institution uses a collective career profile. The institution has its own view on education. There is a common view on education and they use this

view to compose branches of priority educational programmes. Institution takes content, objectives and work forms into account.

Goal 2: The organisation has a well-motivated collective view on research. Internal parties are involved in the development, execution and evaluation of research activities. The organisation works systematically on research programmes. The strategy offers measurements of performance.

Goal 3: Student activities organised in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: Visibility strategy not clearly stated. Few indicators of measurement and just activity oriented.

Goal 5: View on social services is limited. Lack of measurable indicators.

Link between strategy and development plan: The key processes are evaluated and adjusted on regular basis. The organisation pinpoints to surplus values that are for key processes in different parts of strategy concerned. The organisation identifies internal and external parties concerned with different key processes.

8. SALAHADDIN UNIVERSITY (SU)

Mission: The management uses the view for the development, monitoring and adjustment of internal as well as external activities. The management is involved in improvement activities.

Goal 1: The organisation provides a collective career profile. The goal is system oriented. The organisation involves all internal parties concerned, including students, in the development, actualisation and evaluation of educational view and objectives. Career view and educational view are basic principles of decisions about educational content, objectives and forms of training.

Goal 2: The organisation has a well-motivated collective view on research. Internal parties are involved in the development, execution and evaluation of research activities. The organisation works systematically on research programmes. The strategy offers measurements of performance.

Goal 3: Student activities organized in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: International cooperation is being developed. The organisation uses at least short-term aims for the international cooperation. Knowledge and experience from international cooperation is integrated into the institution.

Goal 5: Society and community service are being developed on the basis of a collective plan. Short-term aims for societal service are being developed. There is a collective view on social and community service.

Link between strategy and development plan: The development of strategy is left to chance. Not evident link between strategy and plan. Individual motivation determines the extent of contribution to the development of plans supporting internationalisation strategies.

9. UNIVERSITY OF CHARMO (CHU)

Mission: The management uses the view for the development, monitoring and adjustment of internal as well as external activities. The management is involved in improvement activities.

Goal 1: The organisation provides a collective career profile. The goal is system oriented. The organisation involves all internal parties concerned, including students, in the development, actualisation and evaluation of educational view and objectives. Career view and educational view are basic principles of decisions about educational content, objectives and forms of training.

Goal 2: The view on research is individualised. The development of research programme depends on the wishes of individuals and available information. Research as activity oriented.

Goal 3: Student activities organised in the frame of a short-term policy. Lack of tutoring although involvement of external parties in the development, adjustment of the student career coaching.

Goal 4: International co-operation embeds the educational vision of the organisation. Knowledge and experience from international collaboration integrated in the education. Internal parties concerned involved in the development, evaluation and adjustment of the international co-operation.

Goal 5: The organisation has a collective view on social service. There is a consistent programme developed for social and community services. Internal parties involved in development of social and community services.

Link between strategy and development plan: The development of strategy is left to chance. Not evident link between strategy and plan. Individual motivation determines the extent of contribution to the development of plans supporting internationalisation strategies.

Conclusions

After evaluating each strategy, the message seems very clear:

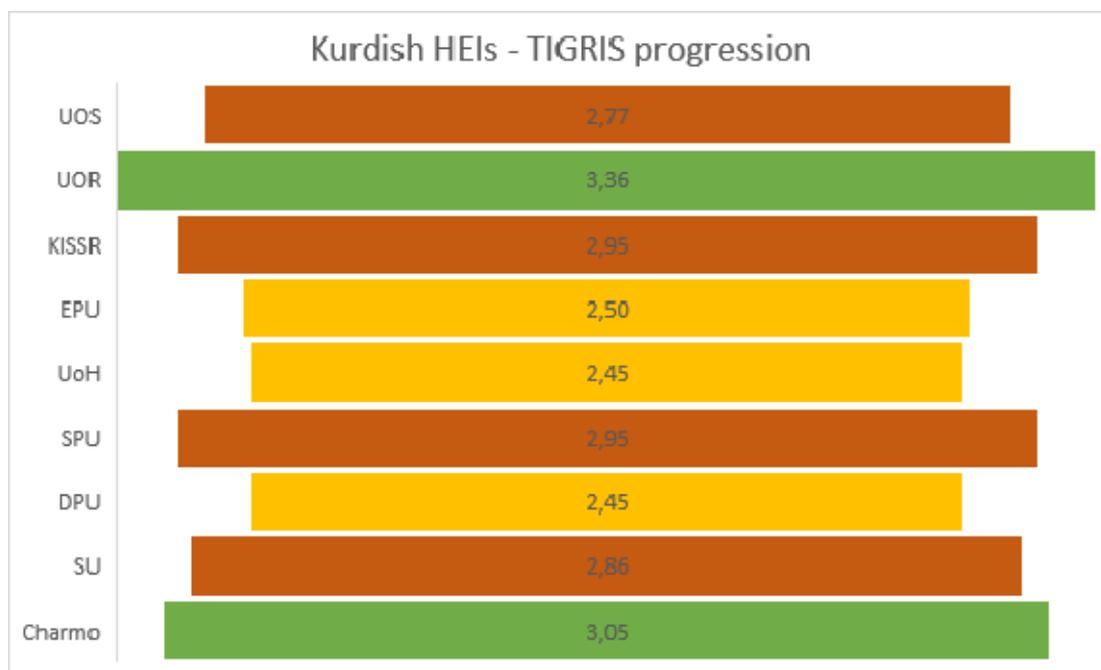
- To be fair, should we assess according to European standards, none of the participant institutions would perform at level 4 of DAC criteria - if used on a normalised scale; but taking into consideration the regional context we could state that quite a few HEIs achieve green assessment in individual aspects (see comparative table below).
- Two institutions achieved a green overall result – UOR and CHU - (i.e. with average between 3.01 and 4; yellow is 2.01-3, red is below 2). SPU, KISSR, UOS and SU are bordering on overall green with averages very close to 3.
- Most answer the “why” question satisfactorily for most goals but practically all are below standard with defining measurements/indicators/benchmarks.
- Many have problems to define concrete actions and goals, especially in the goal dimension 5, that is, to provide service to society and community social engagement.
- They often confuse strategy (i.e. stating what they plan to do) with reporting (telling what they already did); It could be assumed that this is simply not standard in Kurdistan yet - arguing that one usually defends what one did and does not plan ahead that much.

- Many of the authors have problems to see that there needs to be a clear link between an activity/action to a result to an indicator/benchmark and back: i.e. no activity without a directly related result, no result without directly addressing indicators/benchmarks, no indicator without benchmarks, and backwards: no indicator/benchmark that has no result which it measures, no result that is not related to an action. That hinders the assessment on how strategies contribute to the final outcomes.

Overall speaking, the result is above expected although with need of improvement and rework so as to turn their strategies into proper texts later in the second year.

Each Kurdish University received personal feedback to the input received until now. An overview with all the comparative result by Kurdish HEIs is offered on page 11. Given the different background and resources of the partner HEIs in Kurdistan, we could infer three levels of different progression. UOR presented the clearest vision on what the strategy on internationalisation should represent at institutional level and how to measure the different indicators proposed. Four HEIs (UOS, KISSR, SU and CHU) offered also some positive results in terms of their vision on strategies for internationalisation with some areas for improvement.

Other universities (orange) should examine how their institution's international strategy aligns most effectively with national policies. Some recommendations would be to involve stakeholders in the design of these institution's internationalisation strategy. Likewise, they should set an evaluation framework and define a wider range of evaluation instruments so as to assess the impacts of these institution's internationalisation strategy. Particularly, a close follow-up should be pursued by the project coordinator to institutions like EPU, UOH and DPU. We infer there is a direct relationship between their profile as institution, the resources at disposal and their understanding on the role of internationalisation as a mapping route for their evolution.



University	Describe the mission of the university in general	Goal 1: to enhance the quality of education				Goal 2: to enhance the quality of research				Goal 3: to well-prepare students for life and work in an intercultural and globalising world				Goal 4: to enhance the international reputation and visibility of the institution				Goal 5: to provide service to society and community social engagement				How shall the internationalisation strategy link to the university development plan?	Average	
		Why is it important?	What does the university plan to do to achieve it?	What are the expected results (impact)?	How will you measure the results (which indicators)?	Why is it important?	What does the university plan to do to achieve it?	What are the expected results (impact)?	How will you measure the results (which indicators)?	Why is it important?	What does the university plan to do to achieve it?	What are the expected results (impact)?	How will you measure the results (which indicators)?	Why is it important?	What does the university plan to do to achieve it?	What are the expected results (impact)?	How will you measure the results (which indicators)?	Why is it important?	What does the university plan to do to achieve it?	What are the expected results (impact)?	How will you measure the results (which indicators)?			
		UOS	3	4	2	2	2	4	3	3	2	4	3	3	2	4	3	3	2	4	2	2		2
UOR	3	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	2	4	3	2	2	4	4	3,36
KISSR	2	4	2	4	3	1	1	4	4	4	2	4	2	3	4	3	3	4	1	3	3	4	4	2,95
EPU	2	4	1	2	1	4	1	2	3	4	1	3	1	4	1	4	3	4	1	4	3	2	2	2,50
UoH	4	4	3	4	1	4	1	4	3	1	1	4	1	4	4	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2,45
SPU	3	3	4	2	3	4	4	2	2	4	2	2	2	4	3	1	2	4	4	4	2	4	4	2,95
DPU	4	4	3	2	2	4	4	4	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	2,45
SU	4	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	2	4	3	2	1	4	3	1	3	4	4	1	1	1	1	2,86
Charmo	4	4	4	4	2	4	2	1	1	2	4	2	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	1	1	3,05
	DAC scale																							
very good	4																							
good with reservations	3																							
average, needs improvement	2																							
insufficient	1																							

B. ANALYSIS ON THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DURING YEAR 1

This part of the report presents the results of a risk analysis conducted in Kurdistan in September 2018 as well as mapping the existing processes based on the information supplied by EU and Kurdish partners in a focus group held in Kurdistan as well as questionnaires distributed online. The interviews provided a qualitative approach to obtain data and embrace more informal elements of quality assessments to identify elements or factors not included in the written documentation that could help to understand the process of implementation of the project hitherto.

It is worth reminding that the main objective of TIGRIS is to contribute to the modernisation of the universities in Kurdistan region through the strengthening of its management structures and services for international relations and building advance strategic polices related to internationalisation in education, research, mobility and services that bring them closer to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The TIGRIS project pursues as well as the enhancement educational legislation in the autonomous Iraqi region of Kurdistan that contributes to the process of internationalisation of Higher Education and research by facilitating the recognition of studies and study credits with EHEA.

The key milestones identified had been the completion of WP1 by May 2018; WP2 by April 2020; WP3 by July 2020 and finalisation of the project with achievement of objectives by October 2020. On a continuous basis, Kurdish HEIs should develop/update their internationalisation strategies in collaboration with EU partners. Likewise, key staff will be formed in relevant aspects of management that helps them run more efficiently the International Offices.

The main components of the strategy to deploy along the TIGRIS project can be summarised as stated below:

Strategy Executive summary

 Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve internalisation process and strategies in HE system of Kurdish region (Iraq).
 Outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernisation of higher education system in Kurdish autonomous region Individualised internationalisation strategies in 8 HEIs, 1 research institute and MHER
 Educational Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of internationalisation strategies to Bologna process Flexible strategies according to institutional requirements and priorities Different approaches/orientation in each Kurdish HEI Opportunity for international cooperation Professional student services
 Enablers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of strategies by national educational authorities (MHER and institutional) Alignment to European standards (compatibility with European qualification frameworks and Bologna system). Train-the-trainer sessions to form Bologna experts in each HEI Increasing cooperation between different stakeholders (private sector, student associations, etc) Strong communication and management within the consortium Professionalisation of International Offices and dissemination of project outputs and results
 Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely submission of internationalisation strategies for official approval Provision of external stakeholder network portfolio Awareness raising of existing project within Kurdish HE system Project monitoring and check-up with duly controls Piloting of ECTS, learning outcomes and competences according to European standards Operational guidelines for International offices

When analysing the level of achievement of TIGRIS according to the original proposal there are some strategic considerations to ponder. There are three deliverables that the consortium should pay attention to:

1) WP1 should have finished by November 2018. The input of EU experts, with support of Kurdish HEIs and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR), to get strategies validated is very much highlighted. Consequently, as result of the material collected, interviews undertaken and information provided by the project coordinators and partner members, the strategy for the TIGRIS project in the next months should concentrate on finalising WP1 and the need analysis linked to validation of internationalisation strategies by MHESR and internationalisation strategy of MHESR.

2) Right personnel should be appointed to participate in the training sessions to be organised during year 2 of the project. They are expected to be finalised by June 2019. Furthermore, although we acknowledge the cultural context of the region, higher female participation within the Kurdish consortium should have been – if not enforced – endorsed.

3) It has been observed the attempt to organise piloting activities (e.g. on curriculum design according to Bologna system) without proper quality monitoring and control and rather disorganised. This represents a high risk for the project since partners can adopt decisions without proper understanding of the Bologna process. Given that an essential component of internationalisation strategies is the recognition of studies, for that, assessment of the learning outcomes and competence-based framework according to Dublin descriptors should be made by a professional core group based under the umbrella of MHESR. The design of piloting projects within Kurdish HEIs should be synchronised and verified by EU experts.

After consultation with all the partners, a SWOT analysis has been conducted (table attached in following page). The main elements included there may serve the consortium to allocate its efforts during the second and third year of the project.

The main Work Package development issues previously mentioned should be used to rapidly immerse the group or team into a situation for problem-solving and creation. It has been observed that lack of planning within Kurdistan has caused alternative initiatives to be created so as to fill the gaps (e.g. in terms of knowledge on Bologna issues). A dissemination strategy needs to be put in place during year 2. An information management system – including a collaborative environment for international offices – needs to be developed by now. Efforts should be made to define a platform that create an interaction among different International Relation Offices in Kurdistan and also the MHESR – as described in the proposal.

One particular aspect that needs to be intensified during year 2 is the contribution of all EU partners in coaching process. Resources and support at institutional level in Kurdistan seems to be in place. Some trainings in Europe were not so productive according to evidence collected. As result of strategies introduced in internationalisation processes, a piloting of one programme per HEI with revision of course/module descriptors and learning objectives matrix should be undertaken and externally reviewed so that there is an adequate alignment with Bologna standards, Dublin descriptors and European qualification frameworks. A coordinated effort within the Kurdish group should guarantee efficiency of resources and effectiveness in terms of results.

INTERNAL FACTORS

WEAKNESSES	STRENGTHS
IDENTITY AND COMMUNICATION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lack of visibility of project activities among some EU partners2. Intensive use of video-conferences for internal communication3. Visibility of the project (leaflets, posters, banners, internal links) not fairly available in all institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Excellent sense of ownership (from Kurdish perspective)2. Regular meetings and discussions (delivery of minutes and memos) intra-partners and inter-partners3. Kurdish HEIs committed to the project
TRAININGS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Not all information provided on time2. Difference of standards and resources between Kurdish HEIs3. Not everybody benefitted from trainings in Europe due to visa problems.4. The project could be a more relevant driver towards internationalisation (only limited people involved so far)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Kurdish partners starting purchase of equipment and software2. Competences and learning outcomes verified with industry3. Commitment to understand how to apply correctly learning outcomes and ECTS by Kurdish partners
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Need of increased awareness of the MHESR as key stakeholder2. Need for setting-up adequate working groups and support structures for the drafting of national and institutional strategies for internationalisation and related action plans3. Need to strengthen sense of ownership among some Kurdish partners (from EU perspective)4. Uneven contribution from EU partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Flexibility from EU partners to adapt to Kurdish needs2. Better understanding of what Bologna system means and the project entails3. Trainings within WP2 to be built in consultation and cooperation with Kurdish partners
COOPERATION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lack of formal agreements between EU and Kurdish partners which hinder future initiatives (e.g. Erasmus + KA1)2. Limited internal resources to support parallel activities (e.g. academic exchanges)3. Links for other academic and research opportunities not thoroughly explored	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Observation of existing good practices between Kurdish and EU partners2. Willingness to strengthen cooperation with EU partners from Kurdistan3. Close cooperation between KISSR and Kurdish partners
ORGANISATION, HR and MANAGEMENT	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gender Balance2. Not enough financial resources and management capabilities across all HEIs3. WP Leaders not strong enough to respect deadlines (delays in WP1 cause bottlenecks in WP2 and WP3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Low turnover which facilitates sustainability of the project2. QA processes3. Appreciation of good work done by project coordinator4. Adequate strategy towards financial management

In function of the SWOT analysis previously identified, there are five key enablers we believe the consortium should sustain in order to make successful the TIGRIS project.

1. Approval of strategies by national educational authorities (MHESR and institutional level). MHESR should have stronger active role in the project. There is a tacit support from the Ministry since it is a partner in the project but it is not visibly involved yet at all stages of development.

2. Alignment to European standards (compatibility with European qualification frameworks and Bologna system). Train-the-trainer sessions to form Bologna experts in each HEI should facilitate this process.

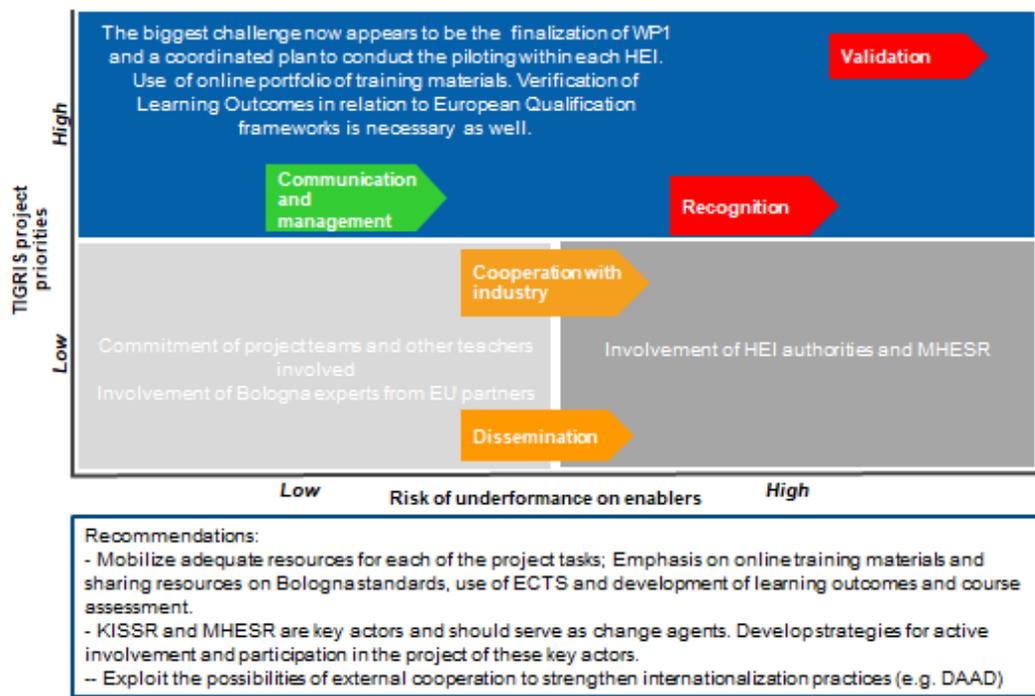
Increasing cooperation between different stakeholders (private sector, student associations, etc) is necessary for a good alignment towards Bologna process. This is not clearly evident during the first steps of WP for development.

3. One particular aspect that is relevant for curriculum development and alignment to Bologna standards is the enhancement of competence-based approach to education, which is lacking in Kurdistan. This will prompt necessary reforms within the Higher Education system of Kurdistan. The lack of industry and services to guarantee practice for every student in the region is an obstacle that cannot be obviated too. This is a scope that may surpass the project itself.

4. Strong communication and management within the consortium are necessary. There are good coordination efforts from UGOE side. Feedback and prompt answers from Kurdish side is sometimes lacking. We expect to see during the second year of TIGRIS higher professionalisation of International Offices and dissemination of project outputs and results.

5. There seems to be still internal communication issues between Kurdish partners. KISSR and MHESR are two key role players in the project and their engagement is vital to make the project a success. By now, discussions on the format for an online environment for data collection on internationalisation processes should have already started. Changes within the MHESR and political issues (like general elections) creates uncertainty towards project results.

Positioning of enablers & priorities



The previous graph helps us to understand the priorities for the partners and how the time/efforts should be allocated to enable those priorities to be fulfilled. Efforts have been made to maintain rationale within the consortia. Fluent communication stemmed from management structure. However, HEI decisions should be aligned to mainstream project development. Individual initiatives may jeopardise the effectiveness and impact of the project.

Validation and recognition (in red) is a high priority, which has not been fully achieved. Two particular areas for improvement (in orange) with relatively importance for the partners are cooperation with key stakeholders and raising awareness of project products and outputs. The former one is necessary for the sustainability of the project results.

In addition to the SWOT analysis, a risk assessment was conducted in function of the impact and likelihood to analysis the backlogs for the project implementation during the first annual project management meeting in Kurdistan, September 2018. We used a scale of 1 to 4 based on the impact of the risk and likelihood for it to happen (as we can see in the matrix beneath).

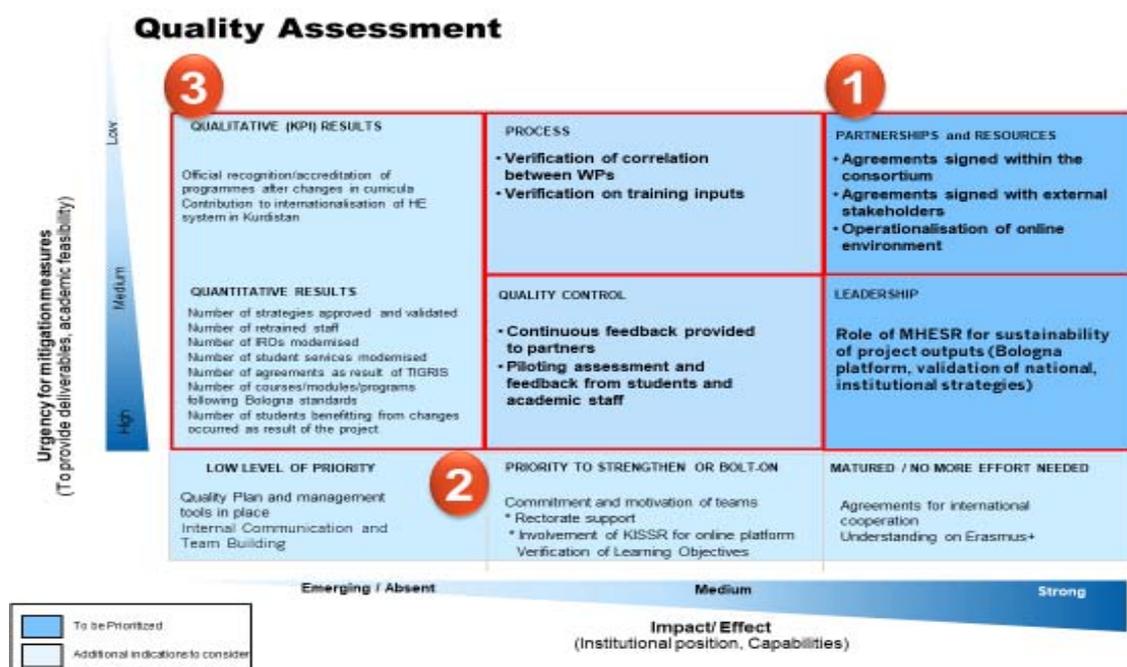
Impact description				Risk Matrix			
Reputation Operations, Compliance H&S	> USD XXX (15% of XXX)	Critical	4	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
	USD XXX- XXX (5% - 15% of XXX)	Major	3	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME
	USD XXX- XXX (1% - 5% of XXX)	Moderate	2	LOW	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
	< USD XXX (1% of XXX)	Minor	1	LOW	LOW	LOW	MODERATE
If more relevant Other Impact Criteria	If applicable Financial impact	Likelihood Description	1	2	3	4	
			Unlikely (<10%)	Possible (10% - 50%)	Likely (50% - 90%)	Almost Certain (> 90%)	
			The event could occur in unusual circumstances.	The event might occur at some point.	The event will probably occur.	The event is unavoidable or nearly unavoidable.	

The main results and observations are presented hereunder.

Probability of happening/ Impact	Unlikely < 10%	Possible 10%-50%	Likely 50%-90%	Probable > 90%
Critical	Inadequate working groups and lack of support structures for the drafting of national and institutional strategies for internationalisation and related action plans	Level of engagement from the Kurdish partners, which can apparently be seen in some universities, very few people are involved in and know about the project.		

Major	Implementation of trainings foreseen for WP2	Poor collaboration with external stakeholders	Lack of awareness of the MHESR and its role as key stakeholder	Potential changes in the MHESR
Moderate	Cultural differences	Staff readiness and university environment	Sense of ownership on the side of KRG partners (incl. the MHESR) KRG partners' understanding of the project's objectives	
Low		Sophisticated handling of project-management-related & reporting tasks by KRG partners		

Using the EFQM model (based on 9 factors – 4 of them related to results) we positioned different elements encountered within each factor according to their impact and mitigation effect.



At this stage, inputs (1) in the project should be prioritised through emergency measures (2) so that final expected results (3) can be achieved. Items identified in the lower left quadrant should be prioritised.

Strong mitigation effects are actions delivered by the consortium that helped to correct potential risks within the project. For example, verification of training results can help define future trainings where gaps were identified either funded by the project or co-funded. The platform for data collection is yet to be operationalised. It is not a critical element at this stage, but it will be if it is not already discussed and development plans are presented before the intermediate report. The website

is adequate but there is a need to more intensive information campaign using other means of (social) media to promote the project within academic world and external stakeholders.

Final recommendations

Additional to some of the recommendations cited in the SWOT analysis and other sections of the present document, we could infer that some partners would wish stricter rules for WP leaders where eventual financial consequences could be levied if agreed by the consortium. Hence, probably more short-term control should be exerted by the coordinator (monthly) in the project activities. Many of the partners are new for this kind of project and they might be confused with the work, expectations, outcomes etc. In order to solve visa issues more interaction with EU embassies and diplomatic bodies should be done by both European partners and MHESR. A good strategy was to invite all concerned embassies to the first dissemination event in Erbil so that they are aware of the project activities and European partner involvement.

A point for future agendas could be to make it mandatory for partners that different people attend different events, with an eye on gender balance. Some expectations are related to reinforcement of their capacities through:

Training staff who are involved in internationalisation of the university.

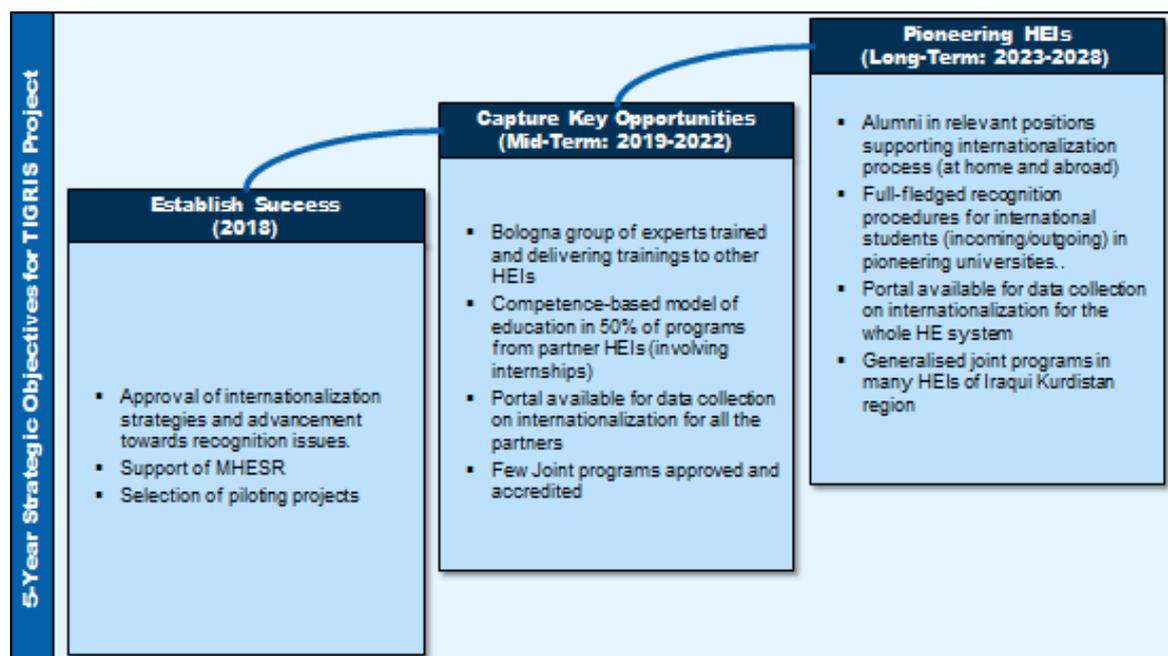
Training staff for electronic management.

Leadership capacity building towards internationalisation.

Improving e-library and more access to international journals and E-books.

To facilitate collaboration and partnership agreements with EU universities where internationalisation is already adequately implemented.

To modernise successfully internationalisation strategies in the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan, TIGRIS must scale up from single piloting initiatives. Looking at the long perspective, members of the consortium should set as main goals the following indicators embedded in a 3-step global strategy as indicated below.



ANNEX 1. INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGIES

Template for the universities:

Name of the university		
Person responsible for the submitted texts	Name	Email :
Describe the mission of the university in general (Max. 200 words)		

How does the university plan to act on the following goals of internationalisation		
Goal 1: to enhance the quality of education	Why is it important? (max. 100 words)	
	What does the university plan to do to achieve it? (max. 200 words)	
	What are the expected results (impact)? (max. 200 words)	
	How will you measure the results (which indicators)? (max. 200 words)	

Goal 2: to enhance the quality of research	Why is it important? (max. 100 words)	
	What does the university plan to do to achieve it? (max. 200 words)	
	What are the expected results (impact)?	

	(max. 200 words)	
	How will you measure the results (which indicators)? (max. 200 words)	

Goal 3: to well-prepare students for life and work in an intercultural and globalising world	Why is it important? (max. 100 words)	
	What does the university plan to do to achieve it? (max. 200 words)	
	What are the expected results (impact)? (max. 200 words)	
	How will you measure the results (which indicators)? (max. 200 words)	

Goal 4: to enhance the international reputation and visibility of the institution	Why is it important? (max. 100 words)	
	What does the university plan to do to achieve it? (max. 200 words)	
	What are the expected results (impact)? (max. 200 words)	
	How will you measure the results (which indicators)? (max. 200 words)	

Goal 5: to provide service to society and community social engagement	Why is it important? (max. 100 words)	
	What does the ministry plan to do to achieve it? (max. 200 words)	

	<p>What are the expected results (impact)?</p> <p>(max. 200 words)</p>	
	<p>How will you measure the results (which indicators)?</p> <p>(max. 200 words)</p>	
<p>How shall the internationalisation strategy link to the university development plan? (max 200 words)</p>		