



TOOLKIT WP3

GUIDE FOR PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Souliya Mounnarath, Nanludet Moxom, Khamphout Panyaseng, Thongkham Hungsavath, Vanglee Phengxay, Palitha Douangchack, Nu Nu Lwin, Aye Thu Htun, Naw Si Blut, Aye Aye Thant, Hnin Yu Lwin, Lu Zaw Myo, Osantha Thalpwila, Samanthi Jayawardena, B. A. Hirindu Kauwshala, Shameen Jinadasa, Upul B. Dissanayake, Nimal Dharmasena, Giovanna Filippini, Franca Maria Mura, James Kennedy, Lucia Ippolito, Elisa Cau.

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the implementing partners of the TOOLKIT project and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

This Guide was developed within the framework of the TOOLKIT project (“Designing and managing international relations, educational projects and mobility schemes in Asian Universities”), financed by the European Union, Erasmus+ Key Action 2 Capacity Building in Higher Education program.

TOOLKIT’s main aim is the enhancement and modernization of the internationalization strategies pursued by Asian universities, especially in terms of the capabilities in building up an “Asian way” to internationalization. The framing of a more advanced and internationalized HEIS, in each of the Asian Countries involved, may contribute to amplify the cooperation on a regional and global level, creating wealth and wellbeing. From a social point of view, the development of a strongly internationalized University system may be conducive to the advancement of multiculturalism and offer a unique opportunity to both local students and Faculty members to confront and learn from other international HE Institutions.

TOOLKIT is a multi-country project, which comprises Higher Education Institutions from Laos, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. The Toolkit Consortium includes 3 European Universities – The University of Bologna (UNIBO), Uppsala University (UU), Vilnius University (VU); 2 Laotian Universities – National University of Laos (NUoL), Souphanouvong University (SU); 3 Myanmar Universities – University of Yangon (YU), Yangon University of Economics (YUEco), Yezin Agricultural University (YAU) and 2 Universities from Sri Lanka – University of Peradeniya (UoP) and University of Kelaniya (UoK).

The drafting of this Guide represents the most valuable product of the tasks and activities performed under the framework of the project’s Work Package 3: Effective project writing and management in Asian Universities. The University of Bologna took the lead in coordinating all the activities organised in WP3, however all Asian partners contributed to this real cooperative effort (see more information on the TOOLKIT project activities here: <https://site.unibo.it/toolkit/en/results/wp3-effective-project-writing-and-management-in-asian-universities>).

The objective of this Guide is to provide a useful tool for International Relation Offices, and support universities’ internationalization through the building of a common expertise in effective project writing and management in Asian Universities. The promotion and spreading of the culture of good and effective project design and management will hopefully serve as encouragement to gain expertise in writing and managing projects.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
CHAPTER 1: Strategic Priorities for the Development of Higher Education.....	2
Laos	2
1.1 Introduction to HE in Lao PDR.....	2
1.2 Issues of Higher Education in Lao PDR.....	2
1.3 Three strategic areas of intervention	2
1.3.1 Offer more international programs	2
1.3.2 Quality assurance (QA)	3
1.3.3 E-governance	3
Myanmar.....	5
1.4 Introduction	5
1.5 Project of Training for Trainers on Outcome Based Education & Student-Centred Learning	6
1.6 Projects to Implement Joint Research	6
1.7 Projects to implement student mobility	7
Sri Lanka.....	8
1.8 Introduction	8
1.9 Six thematic areas	8
1.9.1 Professional Training in Career Guidance	8
1.9.2 Need for Internationalising Postgraduate Education	8
1.9.3 Strategies for Implementation	8
1.9.4 Excellence in Global Standards	9
1.9.5 Quality Assurance and Accreditation.....	9
1.9.6 Postgraduate Studies and Research	9
CHAPTER 2: Main Donors active in the Asian Region and analysis of their work	10
Laos	10
2.1 List of Donors for the Project of International Programs	10
2.2 List of Donors for the Quality Assurance Capacity Building.....	12
2.3 List of Donors for E-Governance	13
Myanmar.....	14
2.4 List of Donors for the Project of TOT on Outcome Based Education & Student-Centered Learning	14
2.5 List of Donors for the Joint Research Project.....	16
2.6 List of Donors for Student Mobility.....	17
Sri Lanka.....	18
2.7 Excellence in Global standards.....	18
2.8 Professional Training in Career Guidance	20

2.9	Postgraduate Studies and Research.....	21
CHAPTER 3: Roadmap for project proposal writing.....		23
3.1	The decision-making process	23
3.2	The funding organization	23
3.2.1	Different types of calls for application.....	24
3.3	Consortium setting.....	25
3.4	Concept note	25
3.5	Project proposal writing.....	26
3.6	Assumptions and risks.....	28
3.7	Logical Frameworks.....	29
3.8	Work packages	30
3.9	WP Evaluation	31
3.10	The role of the IRO	32
CHAPTER 4: Project Management Cycle		33
4.1	Project management.....	33
4.2	Project Management Cycle	33
4.2.1	Project Organization Structure	34
4.2.2	Contractual procedures	35
4.2.3	Financial management.....	35
4.2.4	Equipment and Subcontracting	36
4.2.5	Dissemination and Exploitation	36
4.3	Main challenges	37
4.3.1	Challenges rising from the partners.....	37
4.3.2	Challenges rising from the financial management and budget	38
4.4	Challenges rising from external unpredictable events	38
GOLDEN RULES FOR PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT		40
ANNEX 1: Example of Kick-off Meeting Agenda.....		44
ANNEX 2: Example of Logical Framework Matrix.....		48
ANNEX 3: Example of Concept Note		55

Introduction

The Work Package 3 aim was to enhance and improve the ability of Asian Universities to write and manage international projects and to encourage the promotion of Asian partners' international dimension. Through the activities carried out, partners were expected to acknowledge common expertise in project writing and management, with the aim to promote the development of effective practices of project management in the Asian context.

The work package was designed according to the activities rooted in the WP1 baseline study, which helped identifying the needs and priorities of Laos, Myanmar and Sri Lanka Higher Education institutions in developing an Asian way to internationalization. According to these needs, the activities were then structured allowing project partners to get involved in the various phases of project writing and management, with the organization of training and practical exercises. Participants carried out the activities with a high spirit of cooperation, in spite of the difficulties caused by the particular international situation and the restrictions posed by the pandemic in international travel. Nevertheless, the training was successfully carried out remotely with tailor-made activities and appropriate materials, promoting for Asian partner Universities the gaining of expertise in writing and managing projects. After the training organized within the project framework, Asian partners also organized cascade trainings for their faculties and staff involved in international activities, followed by national cascade meetings, promoting a spill over effect and the diffusion of knowledge.

This report produced under the Work Package 3 offers a guide on the main steps of project writing and project management, with the aim to encourage and promote internationalization for the Higher Education Systems in the different countries.

In the first part, project partners present the strategic priorities in their countries, offering an overview of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Laos, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, reporting the main challenges with the aim to identify how such challenges can be addressed through internationalization. Having identified the strategic priorities, the partners indicate the most important donors working in their respective country, gathering all the accessible information on possible opportunities that may be available for project implementation.

The second part of the report provide a roadmap concerning the main steps of project writing and project management. The guide offers an overview on the most important features that must be taken into account when deciding whether or not to get involved in a project, followed by useful tips on how to draft a project proposal and how to eventually manage the different activities once the project has been funded.

CHAPTER 1: Strategic Priorities for the Development of Higher Education

Laos

1.1 Introduction to HE in Lao PDR

The Laos higher education system consists of five public universities. Four are under the Ministry of Education and Science: National University of Laos, Souphanouvong University, Savannakhet University and Champassak University. The University of Health Science is under the Ministry of Health. In addition, there are another 39 public institutions and colleges offering post-secondary education under line ministries, 10 Teacher Training Colleges and 45 private colleges. In general, these institutions deliver formal two-year or longer post-secondary qualifications. Three private institutions have been allowed to award bachelor's degrees: Rattana Institute of Business Administration, Saengsavanh Business Institute and Sutsaka Institute of Technology. The first one delivers joint programmes with Thai institutions whereas the second one is linked to Vietnamese universities. Finally, it is worth mentioning there is only an international university, Soochow University, a branch campus of the University in Southern China.

1.2 Issues of Higher Education in Lao PDR

Even though higher education institutions in Lao PDR have made some progress, many issues need to be tackled. Universities in Lao PDR are facing insufficient quality teaching and learning due to the limited skills of teachers, a low proportion of professorial and doctorate-qualified personnel, poorly equipped laboratories, less active quality assurance, and heavily classroom-based teaching-learning. Another problem is the limited opportunities for sending students on exchange abroad and receiving international students. Most of the universities do not have international programmes. English proficiency among university staff, lecturers, researchers and students is low. Credit transfer with foreign universities is impossible, as Lao higher education system does not have a clear scheme for transferring credits. This lack of clear methodologies and procedures for credit transfer make it difficult for the universities to mobilize their students. In addition, the university governance is ineffective with insufficient accountability systems. It is heavily centralized; and there are no Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in use at HEIs. These make communication between working units and departments slow and cause imbalanced workload among areas.

1.3 Three strategic areas of intervention

The following three strategic areas of intervention will positively impact on several issues described above. They have been detected since they can be developed also through international collaborations and internationally funded projects.

1.3.1 Offer more international programs

Currently, there are two international bachelor programmes, offered at NUOL and Savannakhet University. Similarly, there are a few international programs run at private HEIs. While there are a few other international programs offered at masters' and doctoral level, they are still insufficient. A higher number of international programs would be beneficial in many aspects of HEIs because this would make the respective higher education institutions (HEIs) more recognizable in terms of quality and standards. There are possible sub-strategies to increase the number of international programmes. They may include:

- ◆ Encouraging academic faculty to develop international programmes
- ◆ Allowing institutions to run joint international programs with others whether they are domestic or foreign HEIs
- ◆ Make course credits transferable to other national and international HEIs

- ◆ Offer exchange schemes/opportunities to students and/or lecturers and set up projects with HEIs abroad by seeking budget support from international organizations
- ◆ Seek joint research between students and students, academics and academics or students and academics with foreign HEIs
- ◆ Increase English-speaking environment.

1.3.2 Quality assurance (QA)

QA is very significant to the development of HEIs because as the name implies, it ensures that all practices have to be systematically effective and efficient. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, when most teaching-learning at HEIs in Lao PDR are conducted online, QA is even more essential because online teaching-learning is seen to have big gaps. NUOL has been a member of ASEAN University Network since 1997. NUOL began implementing quality assurance (QA) in 2001. Since then, NUOL has participated in AUN quality assurance activities, and one of them is that it has appointed Chief Quality Officer (CQO) to AUN. NUOL has participated in AUN-QA held discussions and trainings related to QA. This is helpful to HEIs in Lao PDR because the Lao CQO offer QA training to many HEIs in the country. There are sub-strategies that HEIs in Lao PDR can employ to make their QA systems operate sustainably. They can be (1) to make QA implementation an institutional priority, (2) to allocate budget for QA operation, and (3) to monitor and regularly discuss the QA implementation in the institutional Executive Boards and academic Faculty Boards monthly meetings.

1.3.3 E-governance

E-governance has come to existence in early 2000s when the internet became available worldwide. When E-governance is applied most information, communication, regulations, and laws are integrated and processed through the Internet. Although there are some risks, E-governance can offer large opportunities for HEIs' development. While some of the main risks can be lost or damaged information, data hacked, internet interruption, and large initial investment in IT facilities, several key advantages of E-governance include more efficiencies in terms of time, cost, transparency, environmental friendliness, innovation, and competitiveness. E-governance does not have to be a full-scale governance. It can be partial or as much as appropriate. There are sub-strategies to embrace E-governance. They might be to:

- ◆ Redefine the role of the institutional IT Centre to design the institutional website and to facilitate E-governance
- ◆ Define the activities that have to be operated online
- ◆ Allocate budget for IT infrastructure, development, and maintenance
- ◆ Encourage as many online activities and services as possible and as security allows
- ◆ Discuss E-governance implementation regularly in the institutional and academic faculty boards' meeting.

International programs

A. *How to tackle the issues for higher education:*

Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) should give more autonomy to HEIs to cooperate with foreign institutions; HEIs should have strategic guidelines for the internationalization of degree programs; HEIs should have strategic plan on strengthening the competency in designing international programmes in all fields. HEIs should upgrade the qualifications of staff to PhD level in order to promote international programs. More bilateral and multilateral agreements of cooperation between HEIs should be developed nationally and internationally.

B. The opportunities for HEIs in Lao PDR:

HEIs in the region provide structured programmes that can be revised for use in Lao PDR. Currently, four universities in Lao PDR, including Souphanouvong University, National University of Laos, Savannakhet University, and Champasack University, are creating International Student Exchange Programmes in order to promote students exchange between HEIs internationally. These International Student Exchange Programmes are guided by the Second Strengthening Higher Education Project (SSHEP 2) of the MoES.

This is a good opportunity for HEIs in Lao PDR to implementing International Programmes as well as International Student Exchange Programs. Levels of mobility and internationalization have to be important indicators of quality of education of the institution. International relations and cooperation may be in the areas of research and education at the administrative level. It would be beneficial and crucial to have connections with other universities internationally. This would help to open opportunities for both lecturers and students for their professional development.

Expanding networks with other organizations and institutions would be a good opportunity to get funding to develop the curriculum and lecturers to be more innovative and professional. Student mobility and lifelong learning will help students to learn and develop themselves in more innovative ways. The curriculum of HEIs should provide some essential employability skills to help students be prepared for employment. The curriculum should stay up to date to match the needs of the labour market as well as society. HEIs should partner with other organizations to cooperate with them and adapt the curriculum to match with their needs. Therefore, students will have more chances to get jobs after they graduate.

Quality Assurance Systems***A. How to tackle the issues for higher education:***

HEIs should have a strategic plan for their QA committee. To achieve this strategic plan, HEIs should make QA as a high priority. In addition, HEIs should work collaboratively with other international institutions to get experience from them about QA. QA Committee should include QA technical staffs who are in charge of QA system development. HEIs must pay attention to the risks involved when shaping the QA system. It is only possible to create a functioning system through continuous contact with personnel and students.

B. The opportunities for HEIs in Lao PDR:

The Education System in Laos, especially HEIs, will need to develop a good quality assurance system to:

- ◆ Improve accountability and transparency
- ◆ Address weaknesses and opportunities of the working system, administration and management of the University
- ◆ Deliver ever-improving value to students and stakeholders
- ◆ Contribute to education quality and organizational stability and capabilities and organizational - personal learning
- ◆ Respond to international projects.

In order to make sure that the QA system works continually and effectively for HEIs in Lao PDR it is important to have QA system sections which are independent to carry out the QA tasks for HEIs, reporting to the Academic Governance. Thus, they can benchmark their QA systems with Asian and European universities to see if theirs are good enough.

E-governance

A. How to tackle the issues for Higher Education:

It is true that access to information using relevant Information Communication Technology (ICT) is very important in HEIs so as to allow full participation in HEIs development. Many of the HEIs lack the skills to access and understand the opportunities delivered by ICT management for E-governance. Therefore, HEIs should design E-governance; develop policies - regulations, institutional infrastructure and technological facilities. Implementers need to establish and sketch a clear roadmap with directions to support this infrastructure, to accommodate E-governance on the website, which can access online services anytime, anywhere, in the world.

B. The opportunities for HEIs in Lao PDR:

The HEIs will have an E-governance system that allow universities to have more autonomy while ensuring accountability to all relevant authorities – transforming service delivery, which provides cheaper outputs but at lower cost in less time with considerably more innovations. E-governance certainly supports HEIs connect within experts, researchers, lecturers and students – supporting learning and administration management which gives opportunities internal and external partners to access online service anytime, anywhere when needed. To rise capacity in ICT and E-governance LAO HEIs should seek collaboration with international universities and international organizations.

Myanmar

1.4 Introduction

Myanmar has more than 170 higher education institutions (HEIs) including colleges, degree colleges and universities. The HEIs in Myanmar are trying to keep pace with the education reform and the national priorities in order to achieve a world-class Higher Education system. Regarding development of Higher Education, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) includes three main strategies: Strategy 1: Strengthen Higher Education governance and management capacity; Strategy 2: Improve the quality and relevance of Higher Education; Strategy 3: Expand equitable access to Higher Education.

However, significant challenges remain. Myanmar clearly needs a higher education system that can produce students capable of critical thinking and innovation, as well as an investment in infrastructure – internet, libraries, teaching and laboratory facilities – and the kind of applied research that will benefit students and industry alike. Some recommendations for short- to mid-term goals for Myanmar higher education cooperation include:

- ◆ Expanding person-to-person networks through faculty and staff exchanges
- ◆ Helping inform the vision of Myanmar higher education through cooperation in curriculum development and basic research methods, as well as exposure to modern teaching methodologies and organizational/administrative issues
- ◆ Assisting in infrastructure development, especially related to libraries and science facilities
- ◆ Enhancing English language capacity of academic staff to teach effectively in English
- ◆ Better coordination of resources and current efforts, to avoid redundancy, maximize leveraging from individual initiatives and provide the greatest possible benefit from those limited resources.

In Myanmar, one of the priority areas of education sector reform is to develop a world-class Higher Education system. To realize this goal, the internationalization of higher education system is of utmost importance. For internationalization of higher education, the following tasks are regarded as the important agenda:

- ◆ To provide scholarships, stipends and awards both locally and internationally
- ◆ To work together with regional organisations, such as the ASEAN University Network (AUN) and SEAMEO (South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation)

- ◆ To collaborate with international and local organizations including the UN, INGOs and NGOs
- ◆ To upgrade education standards to international levels.

In this regard, the following projects are proposed in order to develop the internationalization of the HEIs in Myanmar.

1.5 Project of Training for Trainers on Outcome Based Education & Student-Centred Learning

In the context of socio-cultural, economic, and demographic changes, it is imperative for every organization to promote their competitiveness by improving human resources. It is necessary for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to produce highly qualified graduates in accordance with the requirements of the labour market. Students are seeking new skills, competencies and capabilities required for their employability. Accordingly, teachers need to change their roles as disseminators of knowledge to facilitators of knowledge. Outcome-Based Education (OBE) is currently favoured internationally to promote educational renewal by combining specialized knowledge with dynamic and cross-sectional capabilities, through revolutionizing curriculums. OBE is an education system built on specific outcomes and a student-centric model that combines theories and real-world scenarios. It focuses on the knowledge, skills and attributes that students acquire at the end of their studies rather than what, or how, something is taught.

The quality of teaching matters the most in higher education. To change the role of teachers as facilitators of knowledge, training on Outcome- Based Education and Student-centred Learning are important for improvement of pedagogy and teaching and learning approaches. Therefore, training in Outcome-Based Education and Student-centred Learning becomes a strategic priority for the development of higher education.

Training Objectives:

The main objectives of the training are to:

- ◆ Enlighten participants on curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment practices
- ◆ Help participants to develop programme objectives, programme outcomes and course outcomes and to link with the assessment requirements
- ◆ Enlighten participants on the significance of the various assessment methods and techniques that can be utilized at the course and programme levels
- ◆ Implement active teaching and learning techniques to engage students in learning
- ◆ Guide participants to design learning environments that support the development of learning teams.

Expected Outcomes:

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- ◆ Understand the importance of OBE and develop an overall OBE plan for a programme
- ◆ Design effective programme objectives, programme outcomes and course outcomes
- ◆ Be able to select appropriate assessment methods and techniques
- ◆ Be able to transform to students-centred learning methods and to create an effective learning environment in the classroom
- ◆ Create learning environments that enable to develop the learning teams.

1.6 Projects to Implement Joint Research

The inter-institutional joint research projects are of imperative importance for the development of higher education institutions in developing countries and Myanmar is no exception. Higher Education Institutions in Myanmar are encouraging academic and research collaboration among various institutions and creating team network approaches that are more effective in sharing knowledge, resources and innovations. By doing academic collaboration and joint research projects, the quality and performance of higher education

institutions will be enhanced. It is a very valuable tool that not only accelerates progress but also enhances the quality of partners who are in the specific field of collaboration. Moreover, joint research projects are beneficial to the faculty in learning new research tools, and to the students in increasing the breadth of their knowledge and learning different approaches to solve a problem.

Thus, across the disciplines, research collaboration and interdisciplinary work is growing. Collaboration on research means a shared responsibility for integrity in research integrity. There are different kinds of research collaboration: intradisciplinary, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary.

Collaboration research projects sometimes can be a frequent source of problems due to many reasons such as sharing of credit and responsibility after joining more than two people for a common purpose, not getting initiated and discontent with a slow collaborator, and often spoiled because of misunderstandings among the participants. The biggest challenge for universities and higher education institutions for doing research collaboration is the limited funding for research from the government. The integrated joint research projects in which multidisciplinary subjects from Higher Education Institutions can participate will be implemented by the following objectives:

- ◆ To improve the higher research quality of Higher Education Institutions
- ◆ To create the opportunities for researchers and academicians for exchanging ideas across disciplines
- ◆ To strengthen the effective collaboration and coordination between multidisciplinary subjects
- ◆ To establish academic environment conducive to cooperation and to respect different cultures of different institutions.

1.7 Projects to implement student mobility

Among the Asian universities, internationalisation has also caught on and HEIs are fervently broadening their education systems to incorporate internationalisation within the teaching, learning and research agenda. Nonetheless, integrating a global dimension into the university structure is not an easy task. One of the fundamentals of the internationalization of higher education is student mobility. Asia is becoming more and more important in international student mobility. The growing focus on this region is because of its role as the largest origin region for international students in the world and its growing popularity as a host region for international students. While China and Japan are traditional destinations for international students in Asia, Malaysia, South Korea and Thailand are emerging as hot spots for international students.

Traditionally, HEIs in Myanmar focused on internationalisation through student mobility programmes such as bringing international students in and sending home students abroad. According to the UNESCO statistics, the total inbound internationally mobile students to Myanmar were 459 and the total outbound internationally mobile tertiary students studying abroad were 10,698 in 2018. These activities are linked with the benefits of gaining intercultural competencies and global citizenship skills. Although most HEIs in Myanmar aim to expose graduates to intercultural competencies and global mind-set, a majority of students will not have the opportunities for overseas exchange or study abroad. The major barrier for students desiring to study abroad is the cost, especially those who may lack resources for the additional cost associated with study abroad. Another concern is a difficulty in transferring credits earned from the institutions abroad to their home universities, which can result in delaying students' progress toward graduation. Other issues include information, assistance, ICT, language skills, culture and environment, confidence and health.

Objectives of the project:

- ◆ To strengthen international credibility
- ◆ To boost international rankings through increased inbound students
- ◆ To acquire a more diverse student body
- ◆ To gain opportunities to improve International Relations Office (IRO) capability and operations, and
- ◆ To widen opportunities to increase academic cooperation and partnership with other higher education institutions.

Sri Lanka

1.8 Introduction

Internationalisation has a prime importance to raise the quality of higher education to the next level in Sri Lanka. The knowledge translation and acquisition, the mobilisation of talent in support of global research and the enchantment of the curriculum with international content are considered to be the main benefits of internationalisation in higher education. Internationalisation in HEIs in Sri Lanka is still not at a satisfactory stage with respect to the universities in Europe, Australia and even Asian countries. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a strategic focus to uplift the level of internationalisation in higher education.

The National Development Strategy of the Government as stipulated in the Public Investment Programme 2017-2020 and sustainable Development Goals have been taken into developing the policies of higher education. Out of the eighteen objectives laid down by the National Higher Education Commission (NHEC), three are focused on capacity building of students to enable them to be innovative and creative in facing challenges in a rapidly changing and integrating world, to provide opportunities for students to learn from the latest global advances through innovative university curriculum and to respond to, and benefit from, economic globalisation, industrial and technological advancement, and the consequent restructuring of labour markets.

1.9 Six thematic areas

There are six thematic areas: Professional training in career guidance, need for internationalising postgraduate education, Strategies for implementation, Excellence in global standards, Quality assurance and accreditation, and Postgraduate studies and research developed by the NHEC in 2019 on the internalisation in higher education for the next 10 years.

1.9.1 Professional Training in Career Guidance

Career guidance has been given priority with the aim for providing professional training for the career guidance staff in the universities.

Policy 22 - Professional training should be provided to staff in the Centre for Career Guidance and Career Counselling to effectively carry out their role. In the process, in addition to introducing postgraduate study programmes in the Sri Lankan University system to provide professional education and training to career guidance staff, it is expected to provide opportunities for overseas professional training in collaboration with foreign universities.

1.9.2 Need for Internationalising Postgraduate Education

Incoming student mobility for undergraduate and graduate students are not that attractive at present and only 236 undergraduates (0.06%) and 694 graduate students (1.7%) are reported for the year 2020. Therefore, it is expected to encourage mobility through appropriate policy measures and incentives to foreign Postgraduate students to study at Sri Lankan institutions will help introduce the international character to the programmes of local universities while facilitating interaction between local and foreign students.

1.9.3 Strategies for Implementation

The University Grant Commission in its policy on Postgraduate education and research lays down principles and guidelines for foreign collaboration as well as internationalisation of post-graduate student participation in local universities and HEIs. Individual universities and HEIs initiate scholarship and financial support schemes for foreign students while internationalising their post-graduate courses and research programmes.

1.9.4 Excellence in Global Standards

Institutions engaged in post-graduate education, training and research need to be constantly pursuing goals of excellence and global and regional standards. At present Sri Lanka does not have mechanisms for pursuing such standards of excellence in the post-graduate field. Policy 41 has been introduced to develop centres of excellence of national or international importance within universities and they must be recognized, encouraged and supported. Strategies for Implementation are conduct of sustained impact-oriented research in a nationally/ internationally important area over a specific period of time and development of expertise and experts on the subject.

1.9.5 Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Under the current system, external quality assurance of state universities is done by the UGC. Due to expansion in number of students, introduction of multidisciplinary courses and entry of private sector into higher education there is a need to establish an independent authority outside the UGC to give directions, monitor quality assurance and accreditation process of all new and existing universities/institutes/programmes of both state and non-state higher education. Global ranking is the baseline for Quality Assurance and Accreditation and the policy Issue 43 focuses on this strategy. Currently international observers are involved in the institutional review and this could be further upgraded with international support.

1.9.6 Postgraduate Studies and Research

Relative paucity of funding for research, the absence of regular forums for research with international collaboration and participation, and unsustainability of research journals and scholarly publications are both causes and consequences of the prevalence of a weak research culture in the Sri Lankan universities. International collaboration for research is still limited to a few medical and science faculties. The recent practice of holding annual international research conferences in the state universities has not yet led to much international participation and collaboration in any substantial sense. They promote mostly presentation of Abstracts, rather than high-quality research, leading to a new culture of conferences dominated by writers of Abstracts, with the intention of securing points for promotion in academic jobs.

The policy recommendations proposed are under the following themes:

- ◆ Need of a national policy
- ◆ A common legal framework
- ◆ Quality and standards
- ◆ Promoting full-time PG training and research
- ◆ Need for internationalising Postgraduate education
- ◆ Inter-institutional collaboration
- ◆ Achieving excellence in global standards
- ◆ Quality of staff.

The state (UGC) monitors the external quality assurance process based on the recommended Quality Assurance framework. Further, internationalisation and international cooperation can be an effective tool for higher education quality improvement.

CHAPTER 2: Main Donors active in the Asian Region and analysis of their work

Laos

Higher Education Institutions in Laos made relevant progresses in in terms of enhancement of internationalization and quality of academic offer. Despite all the efforts different issues still need to be tackled and to do it, the cooperation and support form different donors represent a great opportunity. This section includes an analysis of the work of some donors which can be relevant in supporting the implementation of projects aimed at tackling the issues highlighted in the first chapter.

2.1 List of Donors for the Project of International Programmes

Donor	Field of Action	Opportunities	Importance for HEIs development
Erasmus+: KA2 (EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport) https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/	Capacity-building projects in the field of higher education to support the modernisation, accessibility, and internationalisation of higher education in partner countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Building in Higher Education action (CBHE) projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southeast Asian Social Innovation Network (SEASIN) Designing and Managing International Relations, Educational Project & Mobility Schemes in Asia Countries (ToolKit) OPEN-ing Laos Higher Education System to internationalization strategies International Credit Mobility (ICM) (Mobility schemes implemented between NUOL and Université du Luxembourg, Savannakhet University and Pisa University, NUOL and Université Jean Moulin Lyon III. Entrepreneurship Knowledge Centres to Foster Innovative Entrepreneurship Practices in Education and Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the quality of higher education and its alignment with labour market needs Improving the level of skills in HEIs through new education programmes Strengthening the capacity of management, governance, and innovation, as well as internationalization Building the capacity of national authorities to modernize their own higher education systems Fostering regional integration and cooperation across different regions of the world

<p>EU SHARE (European Union Support to Higher Education in The ASEAN Region) https://www.share-asean.eu/</p>	<p>Enhancing policy dialogue harmonization of ASEAN Higher Education supporting the further development of ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) and developing a common credit transfer system and scholarship programme for intra-ASEAN student mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Policy dialogue on enhancement of strategic issues in harmonization of ASEAN higher education ◆ ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) Task Force and the ASEAN-Australia/New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) project ◆ Quality Assurance project for strengthening quality culture and ensuring and enhancing quality within national Higher Education systems and at institutional levels ◆ Credit Transfer Systems (CTS) programme facilitating comparability and compatibility of study programmes for harmonious student mobility ◆ Scholarship programme for intra-ASEAN and ASEAN-EU mobility with the application of credit transfer systems (ACTS and AECTS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Experiencing fully funded, one-semester exchange for undergraduate students from selected universities across the ASEAN region ◆ Enhancing mobility for university students around ASEAN through quality assurance and ASEAN-wide credit transfer system ◆ Improving connectivity of HEIs across ASEAN and strengthening the EU-ASEAN university partnerships ◆ Enhancing internationalization process, student mobility, and the development of digital credential recognition in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Apply to be an AUN member is important because they can get access to a pool of expertise, resources, cooperation, and assistances in different forms
<p>ASEAN University Network (AUN) https://www.aunsec.org/</p>	<p>ASEAN University Network (AUN) engages in policy dialogue harmonization of ASEAN Higher Education. Now AUN focuses on development of the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF) and ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF) and further develop a Common Credit Transfer System and scholarship program for intra-ASEAN student mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conduct QA evaluation ◆ QA Capacity-building training 		

2.2 List of Donors for the Quality Assurance Capacity Building

Donor	Main Field of intervention	Work carried out in the region	Opportunities offered for HEIs Development
DIES (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies) https://www.daad.de/en/information-services-for-higher-education-institutions/further-information-on-daad-programmes/higher-education-management-dies/	Training programmes, dialogue events, projects and partnerships - that foster professionalization of institutional management processes, alignment of education to international quality standards and strengthening of research capacities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ DIES Quality Assurance Project in Southeast Asian (ASEAN-QA) ◆ DIES International Deans' Course for Southeast Asia ◆ Training on Internal Quality Assurance (TrainIQ) in Southeast Asia ◆ Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Asia -CALOHEA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Strengthening the capacity for internal and external quality assurance through dialogue and trainings ◆ Assuring and enhancing the quality of study programmes and facilitating the recognition of credits and degrees based on shared quality assurance principles and standards ◆ Assisting higher education institutions in adjusting their courses of study to meet international standards of quality, expanding their research capacity and making their organizational structures more competitive
ASEAN Quality Assurance Association (AQAA) http://association.asean-qa.org/	The ASEAN-QAA is an association composed of individuals involved in the development of quality assurance in Southeast Asia higher education institutions and their academic institutions. To be a regional network sharing expertise and resources for enhancing quality in ASEAN HEIs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Capacity-building trainings 	HEIs in Lao PDR have opportunities to apply to be members of AQAA. Then, member HEIs can get benefits, such as participating in QA conferences, trainings, getting technical/expertise assistances, sharing resources, and obtaining network.

2.3 List of Donors for E-Governance

Donor	Main Fields of Interventions	The Work Carried Out in The Region	The Opportunities Offered for HEIs Development
SEAMEO https://www.seameo.org/w5	South-east Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) is a regional intergovernmental organization among governments of Southeast Asian countries to promote regional cooperation in education from early childhood to higher education, science and culture in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy dialogue Funding projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universities may propose the Prime Minister of Education about cooperation projects that would support e-governance to be discuss in SEMEO HEIs in Lao PDR have opportunities to apply for assistances in terms of project funding, expertise, and cooperation with ASEAN HEIs that would enhance e-governance implementation at HEIs in Lao PDR
Erasmus+: KA2 (EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport) https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/	Capacity-building projects in the field of higher education to support the modernisation, accessibility, and internationalisation of higher education in partner countries.	Advancing Strategic Management, Leadership and Fundraising in Higher Education in Asia (ASTRA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall goal of the ASTRA is to enhance the financial sustainability and to secure additional funding for promoting the research activities in the areas of ICT and Social Sciences in the four participating Universities from Laos and Thailand.

Myanmar

The HEIs in Myanmar are trying to keep pace with the education reform and the national priorities in order to achieve a world-class Higher Education system. However, significant challenges remain. Despite the increases in the financial resources allocated to Higher Education in Myanmar in recent years, these are still insufficient. Under such condition, the international donors play a significant role to enhance the internationalization of HEIs in Myanmar. This section presents the possible donor organizations, which are relevant to each type of project.

2.4 List of Donors for the Project of TOT on Outcome Based Education & Student-Centred Learning

Donor	Main Fields of Interventions	The Work carried out in the Region	The Opportunities offered for HEIs Development
Erasmus+: KA2 (EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport) https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/	Capacity-building projects in the field of higher education to support the modernisation, accessibility, and internationalisation of higher education in partner countries.	Capacity Building in Higher Education action (CBHE) projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Credit Mobility (ICM) Connecting Higher education Institutions for a New Leadership on National Education (CHINLONE) Southeast Asian Social Innovation Network (SEASIN) Designing and Managing International Relations, Educational Project & Mobility Schemes in Asia Countries (ToolKit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the quality of higher education and its alignment with labour market needs Improving the level of skills in HEIs through new education programmes Strengthening the capacity of management, governance, and innovation, as well as internationalization, Building the capacity of national authorities to modernize their own higher education systems Fostering regional integration and cooperation across different regions of the world
DIES (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies) https://www.daad.de/en/information-services-for-higher-education-	Training programmes, dialogue events, projects and partnerships that foster professionalization of institutional management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIES Quality Assurance Project in Southeast Asian (ASEAN-QA) DIES International Deans' Course for Southeast Asia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening the capacity for internal and external quality assurance through dialogue and trainings Assuring and enhancing the quality of study programmes and facilitating the

<p>institutions/further-information-on-daad-programmes/higher-education-management-dies/</p>	<p>processes, alignment of education to international quality standards and strengthening of research capacities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training on Internal Quality Assurance (TrainQA) in Southeast Asia 	<p>recognition of credits and degrees based on shared quality assurance principles and standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assisting higher education institutions in adjusting their courses of study to meet international standards of quality, expanding their research capacity and making their organizational structures more competitive
<p>EU SHARE (European Union Support to Higher Education in The ASEAN Region) https://www.share-asean.eu/</p>	<p>Enhancing policy dialogue harmonization of ASEAN Higher Education supporting the further development of ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQR) and developing a common credit transfer system and scholarship programme for intra-ASEAN student mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Policy dialogue on enhancement of strategic issues in harmonization of ASEAN higher education ◆ ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQR) Task Force and the ASEAN-Australia/New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) project ◆ Quality Assurance project for strengthening quality culture and ensuring and enhancing quality within national Higher Education systems and at institutional levels ◆ Credit Transfer Systems (CTS) programme facilitating comparability and compatibility of study programmes for harmonious student mobility ◆ Scholarship programme for intra-ASEAN and ASEAN-EU mobility with the application of credit transfer systems (ACTS and AECTS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Experiencing fully funded, one-semester exchange for undergraduate students from selected universities across the ASEAN region ◆ Enhancing mobility for university students around ASEAN through quality assurance and ASEAN-wide credit transfer system ◆ Improving connectivity of HEIs across ASEAN and strengthening the EU-ASEAN university partnerships ◆ Enhancing internationalization process, student mobility, and the development of digital credential recognition in the region

2.5 List of Donors for the Joint Research Project

Donor	Main Fields of interventions	The Work carried out in the Region	The Opportunities offered for HEIs Development
The Japan Foundation Asia Centre's grant and fellowship programme Grant Program for Enhancing People-to-People Exchange https://grant-fellowship-db.ifac.jp/en/	Collaborative projects in the fields of arts and culture, sports, civil society, and intellectual exchange.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Measuring Social Enterprise Research Exchange and Learning in Asia (MSE-REAL) ◆ Transformative Learning Towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable ASEAN Community ◆ Developing Sustainable and Resilient Communities in The Midst of Climate Change ◆ Project for the Restoration and the Human Resources in Angkor Wat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Promoting exchange/collaborative projects implemented by ASEAN countries and Japan participants ◆ Strengthening partnership among HEIs in Japan and ASEAN
The Sumitomo Foundation Grant for Japan Related Research Projects http://www.sumitomo.or.jp/e/	Research projects in the fields of the social sciences or humanities related to Japan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Return to Surf: Re-understanding The Sea among Local Surfers in Post-Tsunami Settings ◆ Challenges in Establishing a Successful Social Interactions and Developing a Lasting Interpersonal Relationships with Japanese by Malaysia Exchange Students ◆ Mapping Publication Co-Authorship between Japanese and Philippine Institutions: Implications for Bilateral Engagement in Research and Higher Education ◆ Aid Effectiveness of Japan ODA in Burma / Myanmar: Case Study of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Project (GGP) in Education Sector in Chin State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Encouraging research project in the field of the social sciences or humanities related to Japan ◆ Improving research quality of HEIs ◆ Enhancing mutual understanding between Asian countries and Japan

JFS (Southeast Asia-Europe Joint Funding Scheme for Research and Innovation) https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/worldwide/asean/7th-call-southeast-asia-europe-joint-funding-scheme-jfs-launched	Thematic areas: Health, Environment and Climate Change, Bioeconomy, Science, Technology and Innovation including Nanotechnologies and Smart Cities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and optimizing the design quality of mangrove restoration towards a sustainable coastal ecosystem management in Thailand and Mekong delta of Vietnam Freshwater biotas of the insular biodiversity hotspots of Southeast Asia: diversity, biological states and uses Strengthening rice breeding programs in Laos and Thailand and developing climate-resilient rice varieties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging Southeast Asian and European researchers and innovators to collaborate on topics of mutual interest Developing bi-regional multilateral research and innovation projects
---	---	---	---

2.6 List of Donors for Student Mobility

Donor	Main Fields of interventions	The work carried out in the Region	The Opportunities offered for HEIs Development
TICA (Thailand International Cooperation Agency) https://tica-thaigov.mfa.go.th/en	Administering human resource development projects and grant scholarships/training courses/study trips to developing countries.	Human resource development scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing the mobility of university staffs and students
JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) https://www.jica.go.jp	Dispatching experts and overseas volunteers to developing countries, and in return welcoming government officials and specialists as training participants and overseas students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project for human resource development scholarship Phase II The Project for Capacity Development of Yezin Agricultural University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing people-to-people connections through human resource development.

SEAMEO SEARCA (Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture) https://www.searca.org/faculty-student-mobility-grant	Offering Mobility Grant for faculty and student to conduct their research work or take courses for credit in selected Southeast Asian universities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering PhD and Master degree scholarship at foreign universities, Conducting International, regional, and national training, seminars, and other learning events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing the mobility of university staffs and students Developing human resource in HEIs
Sakura Science Exchange Program https://ssp.jst.go.jp/	Inviting young talented people from Asian countries and regions to Japan in a collaboration of industry-academia- government to introduce and offer experience in Japanese science and technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Myanmar young people visited Japan on this program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing mobility for university staffs and students around ASIA.

Sri Lanka

There are 77 higher education institutes (HEIs) in Sri Lanka including public universities, campuses, institutes and private recognized institutes. All these HEIs are continuously working on curriculum and other educational reforms targeting enhanced graduate employability targeting national and global changers while paying more attention on quality assurance and global ranking. Support of international donors is invaluable in achieving these goals under the selected five themes listed in the previous chapter. Three of them have been taken into consideration in the following analysis:

2.7 Excellence in Global standards

Donor	Field of Action	Opportunities	Importance for HEIs Development
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/ty pes_of_assistance/grant_aid/index.html	Engineering and Sciences	Technology transfer and capacity building	Research capacity development

European Union (Erasmus+ and Erasmus Mundus) https://ec.europa.eu/info/education/set-projects-education-and-training/erasmus-funding-programme_en	All fields	Knowledge transfer	Human resource development
China Aid (Chinese Academy of Sciences) https://www.cas.cn/	Science and Engineering	Research capacity development	Improve research capacity
United States (National Institute of Health) https://www.americashealthrankings.org/	Medicine	Health related research improvement	Development of Health-related research
German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) https://www2.daad.de/deutschland/studienangebot/international-programmes/en/	All fields	Knowledge transfer	Human resource and research development
Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) https://terravivagrants.org/grant-makers/cross-cutting/korea-international-cooperation-agency/	All fields	Technology and knowledge transfer	Human resource and research development
Fulbright Commission (USA) http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com	Humanities and Social Sciences	Knowledge transfer	Human resource and research development
German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/353.html	Education and Vocational Training	Technology and knowledge transfer	Human resource development
British Council https://www.britishcouncil.lk/study-uk	Strengthening Capacity for Youth and Civic Leadership Education in Universities (UNICYCLE) Women in Leadership / Fellowships	Knowledge transfer Capacity building	Human resource development

2.8 Professional Training in Career Guidance

Donor	Field of Action	Opportunities	Importance for HEIs Development
Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) https://terravivagrants.org/grant-makers/cross-cutting/korea-international-cooperation-agency/	All fields	Technology and knowledge transfer	Human resource and research development
Fulbright Commission (USA) http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com	Humanities and Social Sciences	Knowledge transfer	Human resource and research development
European Union (Erasmus+ and Erasmus Mundus) https://ec.europa.eu/info/education/set-projects-education-and-training/erasmus-funding-programme_en	All fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge transfer Workshop on Challenge Driven Learning 24th February 2022 EUSL- Energy Project SECRA - Erasmus+ Project Symposium INNOTAL Project Integrating Talent Development into Innovation Ecosystems in Higher Education SSAPI Project Strategic Support for Accreditation of Programmes and Internationalization at South Asian Higher Education Institutes TOOLKIT Project "Designing and Managing International Relations, Educational Projects and Mobility Schemes in Asian Universities" 	Human resource development
Sri Lankan American Knowledge Exchange (SLAKE) https://www.cufsaa.com/slake/	Sociology, Economics, Science, Engineering	Provide scientific and evidence-based solutions and innovations	Human resource and research development

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/types_of_assistance/grant_aid/index.html	Engineering and Sciences	Technology transfer and capacity building Japan' s Modernization Studies seminar programme	Human resource and research development
United States (National Institute of Health)	Medicine	Development of Health-related research	Health related research improvement
German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/353.html	All fields	Education and Vocational Training	Technology and knowledge transfer Human resource development

2.9 Postgraduate Studies and Research

Donor	Field of Action	Opportunities	Importance for HEIs Development
Toyota Technological Institute (TTI) https://www.toyota-ti.ac.jp/english/	Engineering, Science	Summer Seminar	Strengthen the relationships with partner universities Knowledge Sharing
IIT Roorkee, India https://www.iitr.ac.in/	Engineering, Science	Summer internships	Developing human resource in HEIs Enhancing the mobility of university staffs and students
Imperial College London https://www.imperial.ac.uk/	Engineering, Science, Agriculture	Imperial Climate and Energy Early Academic Fellowship	Developing human resource in HEIs

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) https://www2.daad.de/deutschland/studienangebote/international-programmes/en/	All fields	Knowledge transfer. An information session regarding the scholarship opportunities in Germany for Masters and PhDs including DAAD Scholarship. Two separate sessions will be conducted for Masters and PhDs on 30th and 31st March.	Human resource and research development
Asia-Pacific Network (APN) https://www.apn-gcr.org/	All Fields	Join Research	Human resource and research development
Queensland University of Technology (QUT) https://www.qut.edu.au/	All Fields	Join-PhD programmes	Human resource and research development
RMIT University, Australia	All Fields	Join-PhD programmes	Human resource and research development
Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) https://english.cas.cn/	All Fields	Join Research	Human resource and research development

CHAPTER 3: Roadmap for project proposal writing

3.1 The decision-making process

The roadmap for project writing starts with the selection of a good call for proposal and a great project idea. But before starting with the project proposal writing, it is crucial to carefully analyse whether or not the institution should do the project in the first place.

There are several things that must be addressed when deciding to embark in a project proposal. First and foremost, the project's **strategic fit** with our institution. Will the project contribute to our institutions' strategic plan to evaluate it, we could check if the project's aims are compatible with existing national development goals or sustainable development goals of our country, as analysed in the previous chapters. Generally, the project goal should aim to improve at least one of the following aspects:

- ◆ Teaching and learning: curriculum development, teaching quality, teaching methodology, and technology in teaching including online teaching, assessment techniques, etc.
- ◆ Research: pure, applied, development of research skills, research writing, publication, guiding techniques of research students, and presentation.
- ◆ Administration: leadership and management, financial management, student administration, student services, guiding student societies, library, IT, communications, internationalization etc.
- ◆ Community engagement: working with businesses, government, NGOs, community surrounding the university; community development activities (e.g. rural development) extra-mural courses etc.
- ◆ Graduate employability: Career skills development (soft skills and employability skills), career guidance mentor training, entrepreneurship etc.
- ◆ Some other specific area in current demand or a combination of several of the areas listed above.

Once the strategic fit has been evaluated, we should focus on the project's expected **benefits** for our institution and our partners. There can be three main types of benefits: academic, including higher quality teaching and learning, and improved research outputs; financial, which could increase the income for our institution through more grants and scholarships, and finally reputational, for example: the university's ranking, and the opportunity to take part in international conferences or publications.

Then a careful analysis must consider the expected **costs** that will be required for the duration of the project. These must be quantified in estimated person days, in order to understand what kind of financial commitment will be required by our institution that will not be covered by the project budget. Besides the actual material costs, it is important to consider the opportunity costs: by choosing to participate in a project, our institution personnel will possibly have to withdraw attentions from other projects or businesses.

Other important points that should be considered regard the project's **governance, possible risks** and **evaluation**. Concerning the governance, successful projects require full commitment by the senior management of the university and clear responsibility schemes and tasks distribution. Therefore, there must be a clear allocation of responsibility among the partners, with the clearly defined management roles in order to avoid disputes and conflicts during the project's timeline. Through the establishment of a balanced allocation of tasks, the risks of disagreements will be reduced. Nevertheless, this is just one of several risks that there may be in choosing to participate in a project, that can be financial, ethical, of intellectual property or reputational. Eventually, the question worth taking is: are those risks acceptable?

3.2 The funding organization

When we have a great project proposal, of course we must submit a successful application. However, what does "successful application" mean? It means that we have a good project idea that is complying with all formal requirements. However, this is not enough; we shall also convince the donor to choose to fund it. That is to say, we shall write down our project idea in a convincing and clear way.

It is important to adapt the logic of our project idea to the different requirements of the donors with particular attention to their requests for specific forms and documents. The funding can come from a wide variety of sources: the European Union, International organizations, bilateral cooperation agencies, private foundations and many more. It is important to get familiar with the external context to have higher chances to find the most suitable call for funding for our needs. We should find out which are the main actors and funding institutions at the regional level, how these institutions work and what areas do they fund. Make contact with the local offices of funding institutions in your country (where these exist), invite them to your university to meet senior management and discuss your development strategy, sign up for newsletters and attend any briefings that they run.

3.2.1 Different types of calls for application

Once we have found the funding organizations, it is important to understand the types of calls and financial opportunities that may be suitable for our institution. There can be three types of calls and financial opportunities:

1. Call for individual scholarships and fellowships
2. Call for proposals
3. Call for tenders

The call for individual scholarships can cover different mobility experiences, such as student exchange, student enrolment at different levels, internships and more. In this case, the application form must be usually filled by single individuals. Some schemes may require a previous agreement with the home university and are a typical form of opportunity among bilateral cooperation agencies. During the application, it is important to stress the positive impact and the results of the mobility or action. An important role for the IRO is to gather information about these programmes, disseminate the details to faculty and students as appropriate, and most importantly provide advice and guidance (especially for students) who are making applications.

The call for proposals or grants usually include a detailed project idea developed by the applicant within the framework proposed, with specific attention to the policy background and objectives of the programme. The grant is awarded according to the highest quality proposal. Sometimes it is possible that the programme may award a percentage of reimbursement of actual eligible costs incurred by beneficiaries, by co-financing the project. The beneficiaries have later the ownership of the results.

Finally, the opportunity can be a call for tender or procurement. In this case, the procedures aim at addressing a specific need of the contracting authority, which may need supplies, services or works. The award criteria for this type of call are usually not only the quality of the proposal but also the economic bid: the contractor will choose the proposal with the most convenient price-quality ratio. By participating in a call for tender it is important to take into consideration the market price of the service and the margin of profit for our institution, since the results will be owned by the contracting authority. Different international organizations resort to this method to obtain the supplying of good and services, and every year numerous contracts are awarded through public procurement procedures, ranging from supply of office furniture, provision of translation services to maintenance of buildings. In general, besides the specific award criteria of each type of funding, the donor will award the grants on the basis of the proposal submitted following the competitive calls published. It is therefore useful that the proposals describe planned activities, information on who will be carrying these activities out and how much they will cost. When participating to the call for proposals we also have to carefully consider what is the relevance of our planned project idea: the proposals must be relevant to the existing policy background and suitable with the objectives of the call. Nevertheless, the applicant is free to propose and deliver its own idea which finds more appropriate for the achievement of the overall call for application's objectives.

Applicants must submit the proposal before the strictly enforced deadline. Afterwards, the donor checks the eligibility of the proposals; the eligible proposals are evaluated according to the awarding criteria defined by the call, in order to identify those proposals whose quality is sufficiently high for possible funding. The basis

for this evaluation is normally a peer review carried out by independent experts. It is also possible that the donor may decide to negotiate with the applicants whose proposals have successfully passed the evaluation stage. To reduce unnecessary workload and simplify proposals, some calls for proposals may specify a two-stage submission procedure, in which those proposals that pass the evaluation criteria for the first stage will be requested to submit a complete proposal in the second stage.

There can be calls that change every year (different topics) but also calls that always have the same priorities. For the latter, there is often the possibility to have information on the call before its publication (draft documents with the topics). Always read the call very carefully and do not assume it is just the same as one you have seen earlier.

3.3 Consortium setting

The partnerships will vary according to the call for proposals, but generally speaking, we will need local partners from the same country or region as much as international partners, which can come from the country of the donor institution or from other countries, according to the operation schemes. Moreover, the Consortium shall also include other universities as much as other types of institutions, such as NGOs local authorities, foundations, companies etc. By promoting heterogeneity in the Consortium, the project would possibly have wider positive consequences for different actors.

Finding successful partnerships is crucial to insure the project's effective development. To identify local partners that may be an asset in the project proposal, we could consider several criteria, such as the relevant experience in the field of the project or in project management, previous positive collaborations, or expertise in specific fields of action. Local partnerships can be researched through local contacts, formal contacts through the Ministry or previous positive experience. On the other hand, international partnerships must be selected following different criteria: the interest and the previous experience in the region, specific knowhow, common research interest and the overall perceived added value. International partners can be researched through networking, common research interests, university agreements or previous projects. One role for the IRO is to maintain good contacts with local universities and other relevant organisations (especially those you have worked with on previous projects) so that when the call comes you can easily identify good consortium members. Putting together a consortium from scratch after the call comes out can be difficult.

3.4 Concept note

The project draft proposal or the concept note is an outline of the project's main characteristics. Essentially, the concept note is a brief outline of the project you have in your mind. But what exactly is this document? What should it contain? Who is it meant for?

In general, it can either be a simple overview of the project idea or a highly structured document with in-depth information about the proposal. It should include the proposal basic characteristics, such as the proposed title, the duration, target countries, prospective partners, short needs analysis, tentative budget, main activities to perform and expected outcome.

To assess the correct format that we want to submit as our concept note, we should analyse the specific requirements of the specific donor. Normally, the note is supposed to be shared with two main actors: our prospective partners and the funding organization. In fact, the draft forms are the basis for the consortium setting. Once we have the project idea structured, we need to start looking for prospective partners that we will share this document with outlining the draft of our project proposal. Our prospective partners will then evaluate the concept note and will decide accordingly whether or not they want to be a part of the project, with a comprehensive knowledge of the most important information.

The concept note is often the initial step required to tap the donor agency for funding¹. Sometimes donors request concept notes as the first step in funding applications². This allows them to screen applications so that only the best ones are invited to submit a full proposal. Usually, the donors provide their own concept note template that participants can use. If the donor does not provide a specific format, it should ideally not be more than 2-3 pages and contain a basic set of information, among which the introduction, the background, proposed objectives and expected results, innovation and a budget overview.

Let's check an example of a concept note structure:

1. **Title.** In the header section we should include the title and all the primary information, such as the date of submission and who is submitting the proposal.
2. **Introduction or background.** In this section we can state the problem we want to address and explain what the root causes of this problem are. We should explain what the available opportunity and how we can intervene by addressing the problems.
3. **Goal, objectives and expected results.** The goal is usually the long-term impact while objectives are more specific and practical. We can list out the results we expect that the project will achieve during the period.
4. **Innovation.** We can explain the new value this project will create. The donor must clearly understand the uniqueness of our idea and what positive effects our proposal will bring in the future.
5. **Budget.** Although a detailed analysis is not required, we should include in the draft a rough hypothesis of how much money we are seeking from the donor to execute the project.

3.5 Project proposal writing

Writing a successful project proposal is a process involving several steps. To have a higher probability for the proposal to be accepted, the proposition must be coherent and constructive. This includes foreseeing the context in which the project will be developed and to which funding program it is addressed to. Once the idea is clearly defined, the core part of the project proposal is to define the plan. The planning phase must be a clear and concise visual presentation of all the key components of the plan, and it must also include the basis for monitoring the development of such project. Therefore, a functional project plan must answer to the following four questions:

- ◆ How will the project work?
- ◆ What is it going to achieve and how?
- ◆ What factors relate to its success and how they are connected?
- ◆ How the progress will be measured?

It must specify which is the **wider overall objective**: this objective is the medium or long-term aim that the project contributes to. This does not mean that only the project proposed will achieve such objective, but it explains why the project is important to reach such long-term benefits. This wider objective must also show how the project fits into the strategies or policies of the donor.

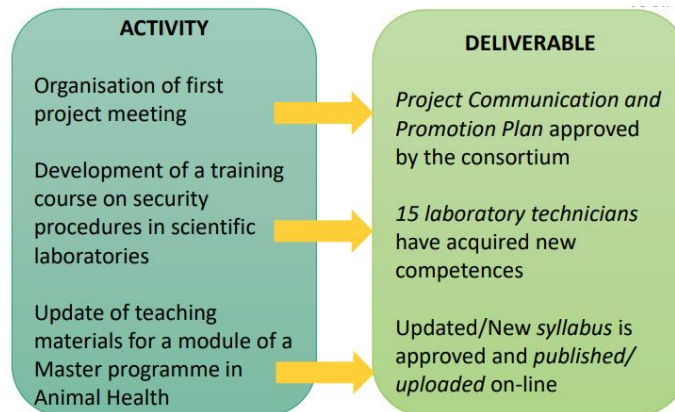
Once the overall objective is stated, the proposal must also include which are the **specific objectives** that the project is expected to achieve by its end. These objectives are the reason why the project has to be implemented and therefore it is important that they are realistically achievable. The project's specific objective must be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Realistic and Time-bound.

Concerning the measurability of the objectives, the proposal has to include the expected **deliverables** according to which the development of the project can be assessed and calculated. The deliverables of a project are the results that will be obtained during the project and that will lead to the specific objectives. They are divided in outputs (tangible) and outcomes (intangible). Each deliverable is supposed to be linked

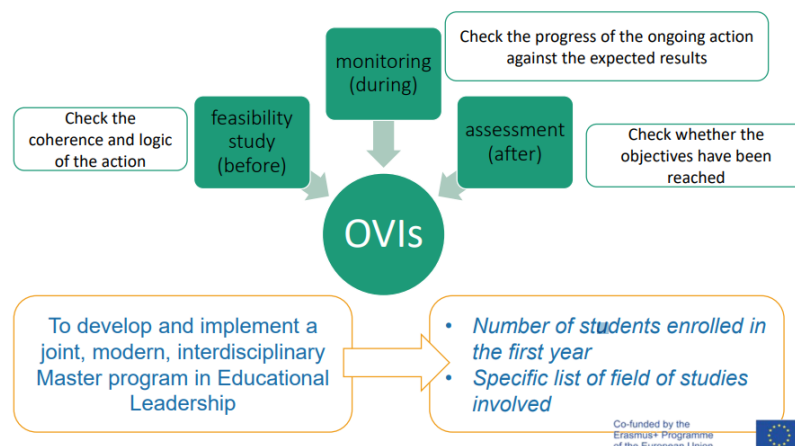
¹ <https://www2.fundsforngos.org/tag/funding/>

² <https://tools4dev.org/resources/concept-note-template/>

to a specific project phase and must be realistic and specific in relation to the duration of the project. Deliverables are different from the **activities**: the first is what the consortium plans to achieve through the latter. Therefore, an activity is the task which consequently leads to the achievement of a deliverable, for example an activity can be the organization of a project meeting and the consequent deliverable could be the project communication and promotion plan approved by the consortium in that occasion. Examples of outputs are publications, articles, and reports, while outcomes are the development of skills, knowledge, or improvement in policies.



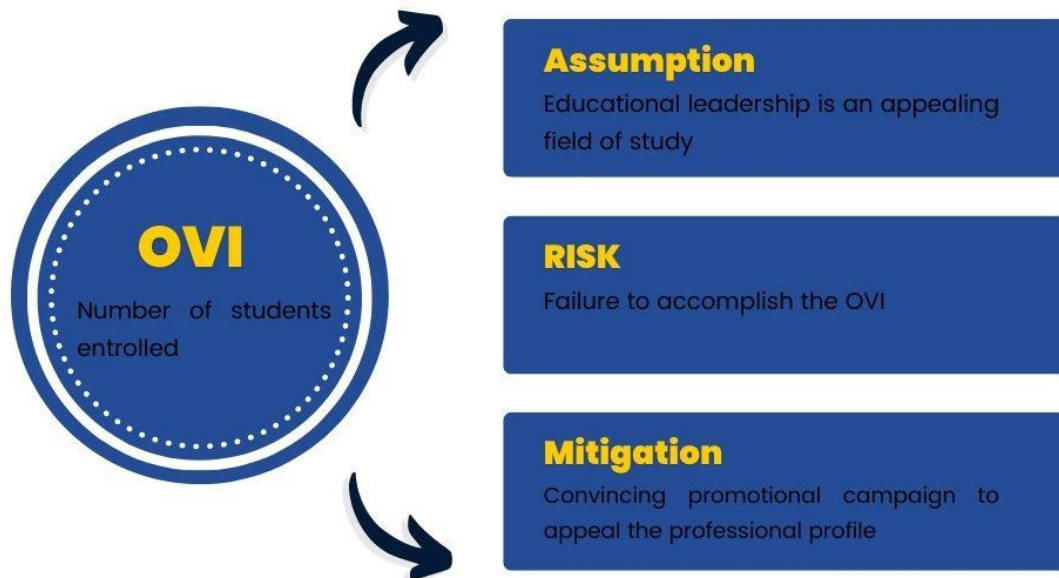
To monitor how the project is going, there must be **indicators** that help us in establishing whether or not the actions we have taken are giving the expected results. The Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) describe the project objectives in measurable terms. They need to be specific, and they may refer to quality, quantity, timeline, and targets. Through the establishment of OVIs it is possible to empirically keep track of the project development and achievements during three different stages of the activities carried out. Before the activity starts it is possible to measure the OVIs through a **feasibility study**: this is done before the action is taken and it aims at checking the coherence and logic of the action. During the activity there is the **monitoring**, which checks how the action is progressing and if it responds to the expected results. Finally, after the activity is concluded, the **assessment** evaluates if the result has effectively been reached. For example, if the specific objective is the development and the implementation of a joint, modern, interdisciplinary Master program in educational leadership, useful OVIs are the number of students enrolled in the first year and the specific list of fields of studies involved. To establish OVIs it is necessary to identify the correct and useful indicators, which may be information, facts and figures internal or external to the project. Internal indicators can be narrative or financial reports, documents, questionnaire responses and surveys, while external indicators can be publications, papers, manuals, feedbacks from stakeholders and more. When elaborating the indicators, it is important to identify the sources for their measurement.



3.6 Assumptions and risks

To assure a successful achievement of the project goals, it is also important to recognize the existing external factors, which might influence the fulfilment of the project's aim. Although these external factors can possibly be beyond our control, they might have direct consequences at all levels and on the project feasibility overtime. For this reason, it is necessary to identify such factors in advance so to include them in the logic of our proposal, with the aim of foreseeing mitigating actions that can be taken in order to reduce the negative impact that such external factors could have on the implementation of the project. The goal of this exercise is not only to mitigate the negative consequences of the factors, but also to organize a prompt response in case those risks happen, and thus protecting the success of our project from the aversions.

We can again take as a concrete example as showed below the case of the implementation of a joint interdisciplinary Master program in Educational Leadership.



3.7 Logical Frameworks

Some donors require the presentation of a logical framework (often abbreviated to log frame) which puts the objectives, objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs), the means of verifying these indicators and risks and assumptions into four columns. The log frame was first developed by the World Bank. The World Bank group has published a very helpful Log Frame Handbook which explains how it works ³. This is an example of a log frame structure. Some of the language used in the column and row headings varies from donor to donor, but the principles are the same.

Project Description		Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	What is the overall broader impact to which the action will contribute?	What are the key indicators related to the overall goal?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What are the external factors necessary to sustain objectives in the long term?
Purpose	What is the immediate development outcome at the end of the project?	Which indicators clearly show that the objective of the action has been achieved?	What are the sources of information that exist or can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?	Which factors and conditions are necessary to achieve that objective? (external conditions)
Outputs	What are the specifically deliverable results envisaged to achieve the specific objectives?	What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the action achieves the expected results?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What external conditions must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule?
Activities	What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?	Means:	What are the sources of information about action progress?	What pre-conditions are required before the action starts?
		What are the means required to implement these activities, e. g. personnel, equipment, supplies, etc.	Costs	
			What are the action costs?	

³ <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/783001468134383368/pdf/31240b0LFhandbook.pdf>

3.8 Work packages

The work packages define specifically the work plan by setting the steps to complete a certain phase of it. Essentially, a work package is a related group of activities within a project. These activities are grouped together to create what can be seen as “smaller projects” inside the project, and the combination of the different work packages constitute the whole project activities.

The work packages focus on different stages of the project’s progress. We can outline five main types of work packages:

1. Preparation
2. Development (implementation, the substance of the work planned to include production, testing etc.)
3. Management
4. Quality Assurance and monitoring (quality plan)
5. Dissemination and Exploitation of results (promotion, visibility, awareness-raising)

These five types of work packages can be further divided in two general categories, which are technical and transversal WPs. On one hand, the Technical WPs include the phases of preparation and development, and concern the setting of the project’s theme, discipline, or the geographical dimension. The activities and results then differ according to the specific project.

For CBHE projects (Capacity building in Higher Education), examples for technical WPs can be the curriculum development, the modernization of governance and management of HEIs or the strengthening of relations between HEIs and the wider economic and social environment.

For APPEAR projects (Appearance Printing – European Advanced Research School), technical WPs may aim to establish a preparatory funding to assess each other’s respective institutional and social environments and jointly design a project proposal for academic partnership in future calls.

<p>Examples from CBHE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum development • modernisation of governance, management and functioning of HEIs • strengthening of relations between HEIs and the wider economic and social environment • modernisation of policies, governance and management of higher education systems 	<p>Examples from APPEAR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparatory Funding to assess each other’s respective institutional and social environments and jointly design a project proposal for Academic Partnership in future Calls • Academic Partnerships strengthening the capacities of the institutions in higher education, research and management in the target countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum development • Strengthening research capacities • Teaching/education skills development • Enhancing Quality Assurance • Etc.
--	---

On the other hand, the Transversal WPs include management, quality plan, dissemination and exploitation. These WPs outline phases during the whole project and their objectives are to support the technical WPs.

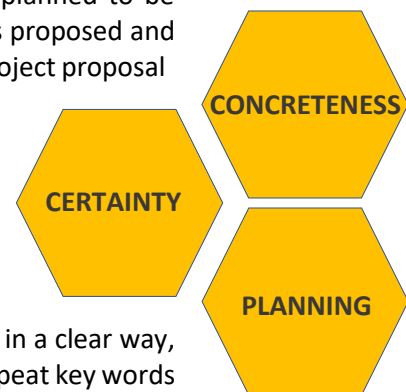
Tools helping for the establishment of these transversal work packages comprehend the establishment of meeting deadlines and work plans, the compliance to program rules (administration, finances, framework), the appropriate use of the grant, the effectiveness of activities and results (deliverables, outputs, outcomes) and the visibility promotion.

The main characteristics that must be included in the Work packages are:

- ◆ **Start and end date:** that can be consecutive or independent
- ◆ **Partners' involvement:** it is not necessary that each partner must be included in the program of every WP. The partners who participate in the WP should generally contribute and benefit from the activities performed and the results achieved
- ◆ **Assumptions and risks:** the WP should include any factors (situations, events, conditions or decisions) that may impact on the activity or its objectives, are necessary for the project's success and are not directly under the control of the partnerships
- ◆ **Mitigation strategy** for the potential risks
- ◆ **Description of the activity and tasks to be implemented:** including the aims and objectives of the work package and how the involved partners will organize their work
- ◆ **Milestones and overall approaches**
- ◆ **Performance indicators**
- ◆ **Relationship with the other WPS**
- ◆ **Deliverables:** the type, the target groups and the due date
- ◆ **Inputs:** human resources, travels, equipment, services and supply

3.9 WP Evaluation

Finally, when planning the project proposal, we should also take into consideration the WPs will be subject to an external evaluation. The Evaluator does not have to be necessarily an expert on the disciplinary field of the project, the geographical region or on the university world. His/her job will be to highlight our mastery in the sector and allow non-peers to understand, by analysing the project according to three (3) different criteria: **concreteness**, **certainty** and **planning**. The concreteness will be evaluated according to whether or not the deliverables proposed are relevant to the organized activities. The methodology chosen must be appropriate for the objectives that we have proposed and outcomes planned to be achieved and there must be an overall coherence between the activities proposed and their costs. The certainty of the project will be measured by checking if project proposal is clear and with a complete description of the activities; the choices we take must be explained thoughtfully. Finally, the third criteria for the evaluation will be the planning. To verify the project proposal planning quality, the evaluator will focus on the logical sequence of the activities and a realistic timeline.



To guarantee a successful project evaluation, it is important that we help the comprehension of the evaluator, by presenting our project proposal in a clear way, for example by using resources such as bullet points. It is also useful to repeat key words and concepts; whenever possible we should take advantage of the flexibility allowed by the templates, to explain all the different characteristics of the project proposal:

- ◆ Aims and objectives of the work package
- ◆ How the partners involved will organize their work
- ◆ Milestones and overall approaches
- ◆ Performance indicators
- ◆ Relationship/linkages with other work packages and with the overall coordination of the project

In conclusion, writing a project proposal is indeed a process composed of several important steps. Once we have found a call for proposals matching with our institution's strategic focus and actors that may be fit to be our partners, the project proposal writing must demonstrate to the funding organization all our motivation in reaching meaningful objectives through the project idea. From building a strong consortium setting to establishing coherent objectives, every decision taken during this process will help us secure a successful realization of the project. Therefore, it is crucial that we ensure to every piece of the puzzle the right attention.

3.10 The role of the IRO

Proposal writing is usually a collaborative activity between academic staff and IRO staff, also calling on expertise from the Finance Office. The IRO should develop the skills, knowledge and experience among its staff to support proposal writing. For example, this might include:

- ◆ **Skills:** Writing in English; understanding proposal structures from different donors; editing skills (taking texts from several different people and putting them into one proposal, checking word counts etc.); engaging consortium members
- ◆ **Knowledge:** how different parts of the proposal work (defining objectives, SMART indicators, log frames etc.); preferences of different donors; where to find information necessary for the proposal both internally and externally
- ◆ **Experience:** having worked on other similar projects both in your own university or elsewhere; experience working or studying abroad, particularly in countries where donor agencies are found; meeting tight deadlines.

The Head of the IRO should be looking for training opportunities for their staff in all of these areas.

CHAPTER 4: Project Management Cycle

4.1 Project management

After writing a successful project application, it is time to deal with the effective execution of the project. In general, project management concerns the organization and management of the resources that are necessary for the development of the project. There are many definitions available on the concept of project management, indeed all of them agree on the fact that the success or failure of a project is based on the correct usage of the available resources and on the people involved. The consortium setting is a crucial part of the management; besides the successful idea and the goals, the teamwork is what really defines the project's successful evolution.

4.2 Project Management Cycle



We can define five different phases of the project management cycle. These phases, combined together, make part of what is called project management, and they are supposed to be organized according to the specific features of the project. This means that the phases are not required to follow a strict order, as they can be carried out in a connected/intertwined way, according to the specific features and the characteristics of the project.

1. **Initiation.** This is the beginning of the project, in which the basic idea is explored and elaborated. The initiation sets the foundation of what will be the direction of the project: it is particularly important to consider the partnership management, creating synergy and integrity among the partners.
During this phase the Consortium usually organizes what is called the Kick-Off Meeting of the project, in which the partners meet for the first time after the designing phase and take the fundamental decisions concerning the project implementation and management, which are then specified in the Partnership Agreement. The decisions taken during this fundamental meeting affect all the other phases of the project management cycle.
2. **Planning.** In this phase the Consortium will analyse and discuss the WPs and the related activities previously agreed in the project proposal. During the planning, the main objectives are to organize in detail the activities, the time management and to prevent the possible risks from the beginning. To minimize as much as possible the probability of failures, it is important to identify the risks, assess them and create action plans to reduce them. Through the planning we define the scope, the roles and the responsibilities. To reduce the risks and allocate the correct amount of responsibility among partners, in this phase it is important to discuss specifically the project structure in its main four aspects, on which the Consortium previously agreed during the Kick-off meeting:

- ◆ Division of work (work packages and tasks)
- ◆ Division of work during the project for months (Work plan/Timetable)
- ◆ Division of responsibilities between partners
- ◆ Division of products (List of deliverables)

Although these aspects were already introduced at the very beginning of the project, it is during the planning that the Consortium agrees on the project's details, shaping how the activities will be concretely carried out overtime.

3. Execution. Concerns the definition of a well-organized project strategy, governance, delivery structure. Many times, conflicts may arise simply from misunderstandings: we need a structured governance to avoid such conflicts. It is also important to note that conflicts can also serve as a constructive mechanism of change: the coordinator is not alone in dealing with the challenges. In general, the consortium as a whole in this phase agrees on the project's execution, sharing responsibilities. In this phase the procedure for the purchase of the equipment foreseen in the project proposal is shared and discussed together, along with the possibilities to subcontract some of the activities (according to the allocated budget) that cannot be carried out internally by the Consortium, making it necessary to involve external professionals to develop them.
4. Performance Monitoring. This phase of the management covers the tracking of the efforts and the costs of the project management thus far. It is important to always monitor the evolution of the plan to ensure the adherence of it with the established objectives. To monitor and perform the project's development, the Consortium usually defines what is called a Quality Plan, through which it is possible to establish criteria, tools and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the project in terms of both processes and outputs. The Quality Plan criteria, aims, procedures and tools for the project evaluation are usually firstly anticipated during the Kick-off meeting and later developed and approved by the partners during the project development. Through the Quality Plan, the Consortium is able to constantly monitor the evolution of the project and evaluate whether or not corrections of the plan shall be made in order to achieve the best results in the short and long term.
5. Closing. This is the final phase of the project management process. It indicates the stage after the final delivery and all the paperwork that must be submitted once the project is officially terminated. The final task of this phase is to review the entire project and complete a detailed financial and technical report that covers every aspect. The technical reports and the financial documents are often mandatory documents for the final assessment and carried out by the donor or by the funding agency and in case of external auditing carried out by the funding agency after the end of the project if this is an assessing procedure foreseen by the programme.

4.2.1 Project Organization Structure

To avoid possible misunderstandings over the allocation of responsibilities and the project's governance, the management comprehends also clarifying the accountability of each partner.

The Consortium usually adapts the project organization structure to the specific situation. In fact, there is not a mandatory structure that must be followed: the only important thing is to clearly define who is responsible for what, in order to avoid problems and clarifying how the decisions are taken within the consortium. By doing so, each partner will know who is in charge for the activities and the risk of mis-governance is reduced.

An example of organization structure can be the following. The organization can be set on three different levels: first with the **steering level**, which includes the steering committee, usually formed by one representative of each partner team, and the advisory board, which deals with specific issues. This does not mean that it must be formed by a representative of each partner, it can also be formed, for example, by three quarters of the project's representatives. The second level can be the so-called **project management level**,

entrusted with all the coordination of the project. Finally, the **operational level**, constituted by the leader of each working package.

It is important that the project organization structure is defined so to have a clear image of who is responsible for what at every step of the project. Moreover, it sets clearly that the coordinator is not the only one responsible for the project: the coordinator's role is to organize the work, but the results will depend on all the people working on the project together. What is important to highlight is that the structure for the project organization can be widened and changed according to the project's specific characteristics and needs: for example, if the consortium deems it as necessary, it is possible to set a general assembly with the leaders of each work package. In conclusion, the only thing that actually matters is that the organization is suited for the project and for the Consortium working on it, creating an efficient and functioning environment for the project development.

4.2.2 Contractual procedures

Besides the technicalities on how the project is carried out, project management also means taking care of the most formal and bureaucratic parts, which are essentials for ensuring a transparent and correct fulfilling of the plan. Each project usually includes the signing of following four different types of agreement:

- 1 **Grant Agreement.** It is the first contract that must be signed. It specifies the terms, conditions, and important details of the agreement. Usually there are also annexes that concern the budget, the financial handbook, the mandates, the proposal. It is signed by the donor and the coordinator.
- 2 **Partnership Agreement.** The coordinator signs it with each partner, it is signed by the whole project consortium. It contains the roles and duties of each partner. It also includes the rules on the budget and the financial handbook. All the information needed can be found in the partnership agreement. This document refers to the terms and conditions specified in the previously signed Grant Agreement, binding the project partners to the same specific terms, including the further provisions that the Consortium decides in the occasion of the Kick-Off Meeting.
- 3 **Mandates/Letter of intent or interest/Memorandum of Understanding.** These agreements are sometimes signed and included in the project proposal. They are documents confirming that the university or institution is committed to participate in this project.
- 4 **Confidentiality Agreement.** These contracts signed by the parties bind the project partners in maintaining the project information confidential. Usually, confidentiality agreements are signed in the field of research projects, in order to protect the information from disclosure to others.

4.2.3 Financial management

One of the most important parts of the project management is undoubtedly how to deal with the funds. The donor will grant the financial support for the project implementation, but the consortium has the obligation to use those funds for reaching the project goals. The financial management of the project funds is specified in the Grant Agreement. There are three main ways in which it is possible to organize the project funds distribution.

Firstly, the financial management can be **centralized**. This is especially recommended when the consortium is particularly big and there is a large number of partners, so the coordinator administers the budget without the need to transfer a sum to each partner. The coordinator will therefore have the complete control of the financial management; this of course will also impose to the coordinator a great burden, and in terms of administrative work there will be the need for a figure specialized in dealing with the financial administration.

Secondly, the financial management can be **decentralized**. In this case, the funds will be distributed among the partners according to the budget proposal. The timing and the percentage of the transfer is usually defined in the Partnership agreement. This type of financial management of course requires a high level of trust among the partners, which must deal with the budget expenses transparently and provide all the needed documentation to the coordinator.

Finally, the financial management can be a **mix between both centralized and decentralized management**. In this case, the consortium may decide to keep centralized a part of the budget allocated to specific expenses, such as the travel costs, while decentralizing others, for example the equipment and staff costs. By choosing this arrangement the coordinator controls a part of the funding while the partners can manage autonomously other expenses.

4.2.4 Equipment and Subcontracting

During the project management the Consortium will implement the decisions concerning the purchase of the equipment. The decisions concerning the equipment – which items and services are necessary for the project's objectives, what percentage of the budget must be allocated to the purchase – are generally set at the very beginning of the project, specifically in the project proposal document. Afterwards, usually during the Kick-Off Meeting, the project partners will review the decisions on which they previously agreed on and start the purchase of such items and services. This purchase is part of the project management since the Consortium will decide how to handle the purchases according to the budget distribution. As mentioned before, the budget can be distributed in different ways according to the Consortium decision, which will influence how the equipment purchase will be carried out. The only imperative thing about the decisions concerning the equipment is that the items and services bought must be consistent with the project's objectives; that's why the equipment is purchased at the beginning of the project's activities – usually in the first year – since it is decisive for the carrying out of specific activities within the project's framework.

In this phase, the project partners will also determine whether or not to resort to subcontracting. Generally speaking, the project partners decide to resort to subcontracting for specific activities that cannot be carried out from the Consortium members and thus require an external supplier. Specific activities requiring subcontracting can be for example the translation of documents or the creation of promotional materials, such as videos, brochures or websites.

4.2.5 Dissemination and Exploitation

In order to ensure that the project will have lasting results in the long run, the management also implies discussing and defining what is called the project's dissemination and exploitation. In this phase the Consortium sets up instruments that will be then used for the exploitation of the projects' results. There can be different instruments that can be used for ensuring a successful dissemination and exploitation of the project that can vary from national workshops, cascade trainings to the implementation of websites and promotional materials. During the project development, the partners usually draft the Dissemination and Exploitation plan, a document containing what will be the dissemination strategy stating the methodology, goals and actions to ensure the sustainability of the project in the future. The Dissemination and Exploitation of the project is a crucial part of the management, since the main scope on which the Consortium should focus is not supposed to be limited at reaching the objectives drafted in the plan, but also creating the base for future development in a broader sense. For the project to be defined as successful, ideally its results will be sustainable in the long run, making its positive outcomes beneficial for a wider audience beyond the actors involved in the project activities. For this reason, the Consortium should focus on implementing exploitation activities that do not need to end as the projects ends but can be maintained in the long run.



Fig. 1: Project Management: a brief recap

4.3 Main challenges

The challenges to be faced during the project management can arise from a variety of sources. To create the conditions that will assure a prompt response in case challenges arise, in the project management it is important to dedicate time to the assumption of possible problems that we may face during the project development. In general, why do projects usually fail?

- ◆ Lack of coordination of resources and activities
- ◆ Lack of communication among partners
- ◆ Poor estimation of duration
- ◆ Lack of control over progress
- ◆ Lack of quality assurance control

It is possible to outline three main categories from which challenges may occur: the partners, the budget and external unpredictable events.

4.3.1 Challenges rising from the partners

The project success or failure is based on the people involved in the project. For example, it could happen that we have to deal with defaulting or sleeping partners, late delivery, slow progress, or turnover of key personnel. What do we mean with defaulting partners? It can happen that a partner from the consortium fails in taking care of the outcome or the deliverable of a work package. This can be due to different reasons: lack of expertise, poor coordination... Moreover, it is also possible that we have to deal with sleeping partners. In this case, the partner is present, but is not doing his or her job, taking part on the project just as an observer. Our job as coordinators in these cases should aim at encouraging the partners in dealing with their tasks, for example by organizing bilateral meetings, to understand whether the partner is correctly understanding the content of the project and to ensure that they have a correct acknowledgment of the task they have been assigned to and are supposed to complete. And if it is necessary, a code of conduct can be created and signed among partners. This can be considered as official rules for partners to take their full efforts in contributing to the project based on their roles and responsibilities.

Challenges arising from the consortium setting may also be linked to a partner's renewal of key personnel. In this case, it can also be possible that we will have to face late delivery and slow progress. When this happens, our job as coordinator is for example make sure that the new personnel is completely aware of all the progresses of the project reached so far and of the activities to be performed until the end of the project.

Concrete example:

There was a delay in completing tasks assigned by the project coordinator; the working team members were reluctant to do the tasks assigned. Why did this happen? All the working team members were office directors and heads of departments; therefore, they were too busy with their work; there was an overall lack of communication among team members.

Possible solution:

- ◆ The coordinator can organize bilateral meetings with the involved team members and explain and assign the specific tasks to each partner
- ◆ The creation of a chatting group for regular communications and project updates can help in ensuring that the partners are aware of the steps to be accomplished and always involved

Lesson learned:

- ◆ Regular meetings and communication among team members is crucial
- ◆ Trust among team members is important and must be built as the project develops

- ◆ There should not be too many team members, especially the key persons who work on development WPs, as it will make it not easy to carry out the activities consistently
- ◆ The team leader of each partner should recruit team members who have the right backgrounds for the project development activities/tasks

4.3.2 Challenges rising from the financial management and budget

A big part of the project management is organizing the financial aspects. As previously mentioned, to avoid possible problems and misunderstandings concerning the funding allocation, at the very beginning of the project the consortium sets the terms for the funds management in the grant agreement. Nevertheless, it is possible that issues related to the budget may become a risk for the project development.

Concrete examples:

The different legislation of the donor country and the country in which the project is carried out may impose limits on how the funds can be allocated, or simply impose delays on the project developments. Difficulties in providing the relevant documents required by the donors for financial reporting.

Possible Solution:

- ◆ it is important to have a full commitment of the governance of the partners comprising the Consortium so that they can intervene and negotiate with the relevant authorities. Sometimes it may be necessary to amend partnership agreements in order to comply with local legislation. In any case, it is important to make aware the officers of the funding agency about these difficulties in order to reach a shared solution.
- ◆ In some case, declarations by the legal representative of the institution can substitute the required documents if these are not part of the universities accounting systems.

4.4 Challenges rising from external unpredictable events

It may happen that the consortium has to face an unpredictable event having negative consequences for the development of the project as it was originally planned. The recent covid-19 pandemic was an outstanding example of how an unpredictable and surprising event can represent an important challenge for international projects. The pausing of international travel and the staff shortages worldwide were just two of the most prominent effects that the pandemic had which became soon a problem for projects. But besides a pandemic, many other challenges may arise from other unpredictable events, such as electric shortages, the impossibility to access internet or a natural catastrophe.

Concrete example:

International travel is paused since countries blocked the borders as a measure to prevent the spread of the virus. The staff involved in important tasks for the project had to prioritize other issues related to the pandemic, causing a shortage in the personnel resources working on the project.

Solution:

- ◆ The meetings that were supposed to be in presence were virtualized and the working packages were adapted in the most proficient way, so to guarantee the project's development, although the difficulties
- ◆ The consortium held several meetings through Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other platforms, accessible to every partner. The meetings were recorded and sent to each partner so to keep every team member aware of the latest developments
- ◆ Partners were supported in the accomplishment of their tasks with every mean possible via remote mode.

Lesson learned:

- ◆ Every project can be subject to risks that cannot be predicted during the project planning phase: partners must actively face those challenges with flexibility and acceptance, trying to find the most proficient solution despite the circumstances
- ◆ With great communication among the team and the correct use of the resources available, every challenge can be faced.

As there can be different paths to reach a destination provided that the Consortium try to reach and accomplish the main goals of the project, activities, tasks should be adapted to the external circumstances and different predicaments. The quality is assured by the teamwork and continual monitoring of the project progress and processes.

GOLDEN RULES FOR PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

As we analysed in the previous chapters, the roadmap for project proposal and the project management is a process involving many steps: here are some golden rules which may be useful to keep in mind.

1. Consider the project's strategic fit with your institution

Before embarking in writing the project proposal, we must be sure that the project is going to be in line with our institutions' core values and needs. To assess the project's strategic fit, we can check if there is a compatibility among the project idea and our institution's strategy, by asking ourselves how and in which way the project will contribute to the development of our institution. Ideally, the project's aims are in line with national development goals and will have sustainable positive outcomes in the long run.

2. Focus on the funding organization

Once we define a great project idea, we will probably need to find financial support in order to implement the project. Therefore, we need to search for a funding organization which may be willing to support our project and to whom we can present our proposal. The project's proposal must be written according to the requirements established by the funding organization. When writing the proposal, we should adapt it to the donor's logic in order to present a convincing plan. It is important to highlight in which way our plan is innovative, which outcomes will it reach, how these outcomes will be beneficial for our institution and how they will be sustainable over time.

3. Establish a strong Consortium

The project success or failure will be determined by the people working on it. When assembling the team, we should always keep in mind that the partners will determine the project's effective development. In general, it will be useful to find partners with previous experience in the field of the project or with specific expertise in fields related to the project. An ideal consortium setting could include different typologies of partners, such as NGOs, other organizations and universities, both at the national and international level.

4. Pay attention to the concept note

The concept note is a brief outline of the project you have in mind. It should contain an overview of the project, including the main characteristics such as the background, the proposed objectives, and a budget overview. This document is supposed to be shared with both the prospective partners and sometimes the funding organization if it is required in the application form. In the first case, it should convince the prospective partners to get involved with the project, while in the second case it should convince the donors to finance it. Therefore, the concept note should be clear, complete and convincing, as it determines the start of our project.

5. Define the plan: the project proposal

The project proposal represents the core of our project development. Therefore, it must describe in detail how and in which way this project will be a good strategic fit for our institution, which objective it will help to reach and how it will be accomplished. The project proposal should define the overall objective as much as the specific objectives, describing the activities with estimated costs and time, that will be carried out and the deliverables through which it will be possible to monitor the project's development.

6. Allocate the correct amount of time for the assumption and risks

To make sure that the project will achieve its objectives, it is important to address in advance the possible external factors, which may have negative consequences for the project implementation. Although many times the risks are beyond the consortium's control, by identifying them in advance it is going to be easier to have a prompt response in case such risks should happen during the project's development.

7. Consider the evaluation

While writing the project proposal, we should also consider that it will be subject to an external evaluation. Therefore, it must be as clear as possible, in order to allow external points of view to understand how the project will develop, which objectives it will reach and all the main features. Specifically, we should always keep in mind that the project will be analysed according to three different criteria: concreteness, certainty, and planning.

8. Always mind the form!

Besides the content of the documents, we should always mind presenting the information in a clear and concise ways. This means using the appropriate management terminology, expressions or phrases as in guidelines. Stress the right points to convince evaluators but avoid being redundant, find a balance. Least but not last, use easily understandable language, not only for specialists of specific branch or scientists but for everyone.

9. Establish a clear organization structure

Every partner must have a clear role during the project development. This will ensure that all the partners have a certain level of responsibility and will be held accountable for the results of the projects' activities they are assigned to carry out. By having an organized structure made of different levels, each partner will know whom they are supposed to ask for their doubts or entrust with certain tasks.

10. Define the financial management of the project

The implementation of the project is guaranteed by the financial support of the donor. The funding organization grants the funds according to the terms specified in the grant agreement, and it is the partners' responsibility to use them within the agreed framework. Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding, financial problems or shortages, it is important to define specifically how the funds will be managed and distributed among the consortium at the very beginning of the project, and to share and agree on the financial regulations to be respected.

11. Always communicate with the project partners

At any step of the process, communication is essential. As mentioned before, the project's results are strictly related to the team members working on the different activities. Many times, the challenges may arise from poor communication among the partners. Regular meetings and any other mean of communication considered useful by the consortium, help to avoid miscommunications and are useful for building trust among the team as the project develops. Currently there are different tools which can be used to help the communication among the consortium such as: platforms for online meetings (Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams), Dropbox folders or Google Drive for an easy document sharing, parts of the project website reserved just to the partners access for communication and materials sharing, WhatsApp groups, social media.

12. Be ready to face challenges

Every project is subject to external factors outside the consortium control. It is probable that the partners will have to adjust to unplanned changes during the development of the project. The Covid-19 pandemic represents a useful example: although it seemed to be impossible that such event could occur, when it happened it imposed major changes in the organization of international projects. Nevertheless, with great teamwork and positive spirit of adjustment, most of the challenges can be faced successfully!

13. Draft and check the Quality Plan

To be aware of the project's development and outcomes during time, it is important to always monitor the activities and the results, so to ensure the expected and the actually reached objectives. The criteria according to which the project's results should be evaluated are defined in the Quality Plan: by drafting a successful Quality Plan it will be easier to monitor the project's activities and assess in which way there can be corrections and shifts so to reach better performances.

14. Dissemination and sustainability

Finally, the project organization and management should not only be focused on the concrete objectives set at the beginning of the project idea, but also on the sustainability of the project's results in the long run. Project partners should set up instruments so to ensure that once the project is over, its results will be sustainable in the long run and its positive outcomes will be beneficial for a wider audience beyond the actors involved in the project activities.

15. Deadlines are absolute.

It is no use writing a brilliant project proposal if it misses the deadline. I would always suggest that the proposal is completed at least 24 hours ahead of the deadline for submission, just in case of last-minute problems, difficulties in uploading, poor connectivity etc.

The more we work in international projects the more we learn from our partners and from real experience, not only about projects' topics and fields of interventions but about project management and collaborative work. Thus, this simple guide is not exhaustive nor are the golden rules we have listed, it is just a contribution from the TOOLKIT Consortium to all professors and departments who are willing to collaborate with international colleagues and other institutions.

ANNEX 1: Example of Kick-off Meeting Agenda



Designing and managing international relations, educational projects and mobility schemes in Asian Universities - TOOLKIT

Kick-off meeting Agenda

Project partners

MM Partners:

University of Yangon
Yezin Agricultural University
Yangon University of Economics

LAO Partners:

National University of Laos
Souphanouvong University

LK Partners

University of Kelaniya University
of Peradeniya:

EU Partners:

University of Bologna – Italy
University of Uppsala – Sweden
Vilnius University – Lithuania

Location

International Relation Division – Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna Via
Filippo Re 4
40126 Bologna
Italy

Agenda

7th April Arrival

___:___ pick up from the airport to the Hotel

8th April

09:00 Meeting at Hotel Lobby

International Relations Office, via Filippo Re 4 Bologna

SESSION I - OPENING OF THE KICK OFF MEETING

09:30 Official opening TOOLKIT kick-off meeting

Welcome by Prof.ssa Alessandra Scagliarini, Pro Rector for International Relations of the University of Bologna

10:00 TOOLKIT Presentation: objectives and expected outcomes

Prof. Antonio Fiori, Rector's Delegate for Asian Countries

10:45 Coffee Break

11:15 General overview of trends for the relations between Europe and Asia

Mr. James Kennedy, Advisor, University of Yangon

12:15 TOOLKIT Work-plan and timeline

Ms. Giovanna Filippini TOOLKIT COORDINATION TEAM

13:00 Lunch

SESSION II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE CASE OF LAOS, MYANMAR AND SRI LANKA

14:00 LAO Partners Presentations:

-National University of Laos

-Souphanouvong University

15:00 LK Partners Presentations:

-University of Kelaniya

-University of Peradeniya

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 MM Partners Presentations:

-University of Yangon

-*Yezin Agricultural University*
-*Yangon University of Economics*

18:00 End of the day

19:30 Meeting at the Hotel Lobby

20:00 Welcome Dinner at *Ristorante India*
Via Nazario Sauro 14/a, Bologna

9th April

08:45 Meeting at hotel lobby

09:15 Recap of the previous day: Challenges and Objective for International Relations in Laos, Myanmar and Sri Lanka; TOOLKIT Work Plan and Time Line;

TOOLKIT COORDINATION TEAM

SESSION III: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: STRATEGIES, EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS AND MOBILITY SCHEMES

9:45 How to design a strategic plan for International Relations. Introduction to WP 2 “Modernization of Asian International Relations Strategies”

National University of Laos and Vilnius University

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Educational projects in the framework of EU programs: How to prepare successful proposals and how to implement project activities. Introduction to WP 3 “Effective project writing and management in Asian Universities”

University of Yangon and University of Bologna

12:45 Lunch

14:00 How to promote, implement and improve mobility schemes. Introduction to WP 4 “Effective mobility flows management in Asian Universities”

Yezin Agricultural University and Uppsala University

15:15 Coffee break

15:45 FOCUS GROUPS on NEEDS analysis

17:30 End of the day

20:00 Dinner at *Ospitalità San Tommaso (hotel)*
Via San Domenico 1, Bologna

10th April

08:45 Meeting at hotel lobby

09:15 Recap of the previous day: Development WPs and assignment for WP1

TOOLKIT COORDINATION TEAM

SESSION IV – PROJECT MANAGEMENT

09:45 TOOLKIT Administrative and Financial Management

- Contractual Management;
- Financial Management

TOOLKIT COORDINATION TEAM

11:15 Coffee Break

11:45 Dissemination and promotion

TOOLKIT COORDINATION TEAM

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Visit to the University Museum 15:30

TOOLKIT Management:

- Quality Board and Quality Plan
- Local Operational Teams;

TOOLKIT COORDINATION TEAM

16:30 Wrapping up

17:00 end of the day

20:00 Dinner at *Ospitalità San Tommaso (hotel)*
Via San Domenico 1, Bologna

ANNEX 2: Example of Logical Framework Matrix

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX – LFM			
Wider Objective: <i>What is the overall broader objective, to which the project will contribute?</i>	Indicators of progress: <i>What are the key indicators related to the wider objective?</i>	How indicators will be measured: <i>What are the sources of information on these indicators?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To contribute to the modernization and internationalization of Higher Education in MM in order to facilitate the country's transition towards a 'knowledge economy'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New policies on HE introduced in MM on project-specific topics such as University governance, management and strategic planning; 2. MM HEIs enter international and regional education rankings; 3. MM HEIs reacquire their role as key actors both in the education of local human capital and in the promotion of the country's ongoing transition towards a democratic regime; 4. Increased number of students enrolling in MM universities, due to a fairer access to higher education and also to an increased capacity of local HEIs to manage their resources; 5. Increased number of international mobility to and from MM, due to the increased capacity of local HEIs to attract and manage mobility flows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MM Education Index; Ministries official reports and regulations; International organisation and external stakeholders reports; Student enrolment statistics by nation and by Universities; Students mobility statistics by nation and by Universities. 	

<p>Specific Project Objective/s: <i>What are the specific objectives, which the project shall achieve?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modernization of MM's Universities management systems and capabilities, especially in drafting academic programmatic documents according to innovative and internationally recognized HE principles; 2. Reinforced capacity to design programs, teach and produce innovative knowledge by local teaching staffs; 3. Establishment or restructuring of IROs in MM's partner universities; 4. Strengthening of collaborations between EU and MM's universities for the exchange of academic knowledge at any level, through their articulation in a recognized and internationally regulated scheme. 	<p>Indicators of progress: <i>What are the quantitative and qualitative indicators showing whether and to what extent the project's specific objectives are achieved?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. MM Universities have implemented new policies for their management; • 2. MM Universities have reviewed the structure of their degree courses according to Bologna Process principles; • 3. MM Universities have opened their IROs; • 4. New cooperation agreements between EU and MM's HEIs. 	<p>How indicators will be measured: <i>What are the sources of information that exist and can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities regulations and policies • 2. Universities websites and regulations • 3. Universities organisational charts • 4. MoU's reports. 	<p>Assumptions & risks: <i>What are the factors and conditions not under the direct control of the project, which are necessary to achieve these objectives? What risks have to be considered?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (RISK) Changes in the political attitude of the local government can affect the choices and imperatives of MM's educational governance; • (RISK) If the political and economic situation in MM gets unstable, certain activities may be delayed; • (ASSUMPT) Great interest in the project topics by the Universities involved and by the local MoE.
<p>Outputs (tangible) and Outcomes (intangible): <i>Please provide the list of concrete DELIVERABLES - outputs/outcomes (grouped in Workpackages) leading to the specific objective/s:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP1 • 1.1 Info-collecting on current status of HES in MM; • 1.2 Drafting of MM's 'Educational Map'; 	<p>Indicators of progress: <i>What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the project achieves the envisaged results and effects?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP1 • 4 scientific publications; • 1.2 CHINLONE and MoE's websites (at least 200 visualisation by the end of Y1); • 1.3 Report disseminated (at least 200 downloads by the end of Y1); 	<p>How indicators will be measured: <i>What are the sources of information on these indicators?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP1 • International Scientific Journals; • 1.2-1.3 Project and MoE's websites; • 1.4 Conference agenda, minutes, attendee list; press release and article in local media. • WP2 	<p>Assumptions & risks: <i>What external factors and conditions must be realised to obtain the expected outcomes and results on schedule?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP1 • (ASSUMPT) Difficulty in finding information on current MM HE's reform and MM's HEIs;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3 Needs assessment on project's target groups; 1.4 WP outcomes shared with MM's academic community and ext. stakeholders; WP2 2.1 MM's partners aware of the main principles of the 'Bologna Process'; 2.2 MM's universities missions approved; 2.3 MM partners aware of different University governance models in EU; 2.4 MM universities' Strategic Plans approved; 2.5 Effective networking between EU and MM HEIs; 2.6 MM universities' strategic plans and MOUs templates approved; 2.7 WP outcomes shared with Rectors of MM's central and regional HEIs. WP3 3.1 Faculty members from EU and MM divided in Task Forces; 3.2 Education Platform for humanities and cultural heritage; 3.3 Education Platform for economics of tourism; 3.4 Education Platform for agricultural sciences; 3.5 Cascade training for spill-over effect; 3.6 Revised course curricula. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.4 At least 150 attendees from the academic community, plus 50 from civil society. WP2 2.1 24 MM HE leaders trained; 2.2 5 MM universities have published their new Mission Statements; 2.3 24 MM HE leaders trained; 2.4 5 MM universities have published their Strategic Plans; 2.5 MM partners have discussed cooperation with 30 EU HEIs; 2.6 5 MM partners have published their IR Strategic Plans and MOU; 2.7 At least other 10 MM Universities are acquainted with new management policies. WP3 3.1 24 EU Faculty members and 38 scholars from MM divided into Task Forces; 3.2 18 MM Faculty members trained; 3.3 16 MM Faculty members trained; 3.4 4 MM Faculty members trained; 3.5 Spillover effect on at least 120 MM teaching staff; 3.6 At least 8 degree courses revised. WP4 4.1 Green light of the MoE on IROs; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Conference agenda, minutes, attendee list; press release and article in the local media; 2.2 Partner Universities websites; 2.3 Conference agenda, minutes, attendee list; press release and article in the local media; 2.4 Partner Universities websites; 2.5 Conference agenda, minutes, attendee list; press release and article in the local media; 2.6 Partner Universities websites; 2.7 Conference agenda, MM HEIs and MoE's websites WP3 3.1 Project website and internal documents; 3.2 – 3.3 – 3.4 Mobility Workplan and Mobility Final Reports; 3.5 Workshops' agenda, attendance list; 3.6 Partner Universities' websites. WP4 4.1 Workshops' agenda, attendance list; 4.2 Mobility Workplan and Mobility Final Reports; 4.3 Cascade trainings' agenda, attendance list; 4.4 MM's university websites and internal documents; 	<p>Engagement of MM's civil society and economic stakeholders achieved only through gradual approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (RISK) HEIs mapping taking longer than expected; No time enough for external stakeholders to get involved in the activities WP2 (ASSUMPT) EU partners rely on a wide network with needed experts; MM's leaders have enough time to carry out activities (RISK) Visa process affecting schedule; Changes in the MM's institutional leadership hindering project implementation WP3 (RISK) Visa not issued in time; Delays in MoE approvals for new curricula, preventing their implementation during project lifetime (ASSUMPT) MoE strongly supports new course curricula and facilitates its dissemination among MM universities; MM partners are strongly committed to the modernization and innovation of their course offering WP4
--	--	--	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP4 • 4.1 MoE's endorsement to the implementation of new IROs; • 4.2 MM's partners acquainted with 3 different models of IR management; • 4.3 Cascade training for spillover effect; • 4.4 Feasibility plans to implement IROs; • 4.5 IR offices established. • WP5 • 5.1 Project's website and social networks' profiles; • 5.2 New institutional promotional materials for MM Universities. • 5.3 Improvement of MM University websites; • 5.4 Improvement of degree courses website pages; • 5.5 Organization of University open days; • 5.6 Organization of IRO open days. • WP6 • 6.1 Report on CHINLONE's project methodology to be used for other projects in transition countries; • 6.2. Presentation of the CHINLONE's model to international conferences; • 6.3 Establishment of students networks and alumni associations in MM. • WP7 • 7.1 IFE; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.2 15 MM's administrative staff trained; • 4.3 Each MM's HEIs organizes cascade trainings for 20 attendees (total = 100 attendees); • 4.4 5 IRO establishment documents drafted; • 4.5 5 IR offices in HEIs organizational charts; • WP5 • 5.1 Website and social networks' profiles regularly updated; • 5.2 Promotional materials delivered to at least 50 potential partners (each HEIs); • 5.3 Creation of specific sections on University websites; • 5.4 Creation of new courses webpages; • 5.5-5.6 At least 300 attendees at each University open days. • WP6 • 6.1 Report drafted and uploaded for free download (at least 200 visualisation by the end of project); • 6.2 Articulation of a specific panel on the CHINLONE experience at the EAIE and APAIE; • 6.3 Students' association statute and mission; • WP7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.5 Project's website, internal documents, and administrative organizational chart • WP5 • 5.1 Google statistics; • 5.2 Printed copies of promotional materials and signed MOUs; • 5.3-5.4 University websites; • 5.5-5.6-5.7 Open days agenda and attendance list; • WP6 • 6.1 Project's website; • 6.2. Conferences' websites and programs; • 6.3 Students' association website; • WP7 • 7.1 IFE report • 7.2 EFE report • 7.3 ISE report • 7.4 ESE report • WP8 • 8.1 Seven project meetings reports • 8.2 Steering committee meetings reports • 8.3 Overall project management and financial administration documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (RISK) Delays in MoE approvals slowing down all the activities; Visa not issued in time, MM Administrative Staff not allowed to participate to mobility and cascade training. No administrative staff fluent in English • (ASSUMPT) MoE strongly supports the project and facilitates its dissemination among MM universities; Enhancement of MM HES's international dimension, thus MM universities entering globalized education • WP5 • (ASSUMPT) MoE's Commitment in disseminating results; Students reachable via social networks and other media • (RISK) Delays in completion of website and public events • WP6 • (ASSUMPT) MM academics continue to support the activities; MM MoE continue to support the activities; MM students willing to join a student network • WP7 • (ASSUMPT) QC has constant and fluid communication with management bodies; All partners
---	--	---	---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.2 EFE; • 7.3 ISE; • 7.4 ESE. • WP8 • 8.1 Organization of the Consortium Assembly meetings; • 8.2 Organization of Steering Committee meetings; • 8.3 Overall management of the project and financial administration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.1-7.4 Project monitoring according to Quality plan • WP8 • 8.1-8.3 Project management according to "Management and Communication Plan" 	<p>are committed to comply with the Quality Plan (RISK) Due to lack of time, partners neglect QC activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP8 • (ASSUMPT) Interaction between partners is fluid and efficient • (RISK) Delays in financial reports from MM partners due to lack of expertise in EU project reporting
<p>Activities: <i>What are the key activities to be carried out (grouped in Workpackages) and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP1 • 1.1 Study on recent HE reforms in MM; • 1.2 Complete mapping on MM HEIs; • 1.3 Assessment of the needs of MM academic leaders, academics and administrators; • 1.4 Conference at the MoE reporting WP outcomes. • WP2 • 2.1 High level conference on the EU Higher Education Area after the Bologna Process reforms; • 2.2 Workshop on University Mission and Governance in MM; • 2.3 High level conference on University Governance and Leadership; • 2.4 Workshop on University Governance and Leadership in MM; 	<p>Inputs: <i>What inputs are required to implement these activities, e.g. staff time, equipment, mobilities, publications etc.?</i></p> <p>STAFF COST 407 WORKING DAYS FOR PREPARATION, 3530 WORKING DAYS FOR DEVELOPMENT, 340 WORKING DAYS FOR QUALITY, 695 WORKING DAY FOR EXPLOITATION AND DISSEMINATION, 1135 WORKING DAYS FOR MANAGEMENT TRAVEL COST FOR PREPARATION (MM FIELDWORK), FOR DEVELOPMENT (WP2 CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS, WP3 AND WP4 TRAINING MOBILITY), FOR MANAGEMENT (7 CA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQUIPMENT FOR NEW IROS IN MM PARTNER UNIVERSITY <p>SUBCONTRACTING AS BELOW TABLE</p>	<p>Assumptions, risks and preconditions: <i>What pre-conditions are required before the project starts? What conditions outside the project's direct control have to be present for the implementation of the planned activities?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASSUMPTION AND PRE-CONDITIONS • Some activities should be self-financed; • There must be enough time for the external stakeholders to participate in the project activities; • Communication between the CHINLONE partners and committees must be fluid and efficient • The Ministries of Education should be committed with the project results dissemination • RISKS • Poor English proficiency of Partners academic and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.5 High level conference on EU/MM Cooperation; • 2.6 Workshop on International Strategies to enhance/increase MM-EU collaboration • 2.7 Conference on WP outcomes. • WP3 • 3.1 Creation of 3 Task Force; • 3.2 Mobility for study degree courses structuring in the field of humanities and cultural heritage; • 3.3 Mobility for study degree courses structuring in the field of economics of tourism; • 3.4 Mobility for study degree courses structuring in the field of agricultural sciences; • 3.5 Training in MM Home Universities; • 3.6 Review of the degree courses at Home Universities. • WP4 • 4.1 Workshop on defining the mission and tasks of IROs; • 4.2 Mobility to EU International relations offices; • 4.3 Training MM Home Universities; • 4.4 Planning of the IROs; • 4.5 Implementation of international relations office/units. • WP5 • 5.1 CHINLONE online dissemination; • 5.2 Improvement of MM Universities promotion; 		<p>administrative Staff; Possible problems for visa that can delay project activities</p>
---	--	---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.3 Improvement of MM HEIS infos; • 5.4 Improvement of MM degree courses infos; • 5.5 MM HEIs open to civil society; • 5.6 MM IROs presented. • WP6 • 6.1 CHINLONE project methodology drafted; • 6.2 CHINLONE model presented; • 6.3 Alumni association created • WP7 • 7.1 -7.4 Steps-by-steps and final evaluation by partners and external evaluators; • WP8 • 8.1 – 8.3 Project activities are carried out according to the project Work Plan. 			
--	--	--	--

ANNEX 3: Example of Concept Note

Erasmus + Programme

Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education

Partner Invitation

Tentative Name of the project proposal: **TEAL2.O “Improving Access to Science and Technology Higher Education in Resource-Poor Institutions through an Open Platform for Technology Enabled Active Learning Environment”**

Coordinator: University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Objective of the project: to improve access to high-quality Science and Technology higher education in the Partner Countries through a collaborative and modular teaching & learning platform that allows full customization to suit the needs of resource-poor institutions and individual faculty, and to build institutional capacities for providing high-quality distance learning in the field of science and technology for a wide and diverse group of learners.

Problems addressed by the project:

Producing globally competitive engineers and scientists requires a shift toward active learning through exploitation of new technology tools and online-based open courseware. Such exploitation is already under way. However, modern technologies often fail to support effective skill development due to lack of freedom and capacity to customize existing knowledge sources to suit local requirements, and due to lack of competent HR capability to help assist learners in the local context. If universities – and especially resource-poor universities – are to benefit from modern learning technologies, it is imperative that they have the capacity to develop appropriate teaching & learning environments and systems.

Currently, there is no single learning platform that can:

- offer seamless integration of various technological options (open courseware, software and hardware)
- be fully customizable to meet individual and institutional teaching & learning needs
- cater to on-demand learning and diverse teaching & learning styles.

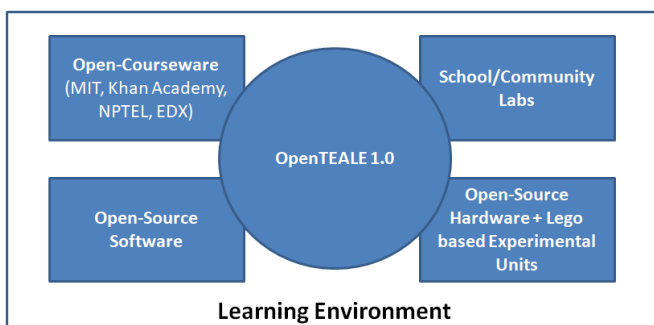
Solutions proposed:

The TEAL2.O project will develop such a platform in Technology Enabled Active Learning (TEAL) environment in the form of an open access online tool hosted in the cloud. It will depend solely on open content and open technology, and will allow modularity and collaboration. The platform will improve access to the best learning materials already available in the public domain (open-courseware, e.g. MIT, EDX, NPTEL), and will offer lesson planning and content creation tools that can be used by individual institutions and faculty according to their needs and requirements. It will also allow the integration and use of existing open-source software and hardware (e.g. Arduino) with DIY style laboratory experiments. Content-wise, the platform will be developed and used in a networked fashion.

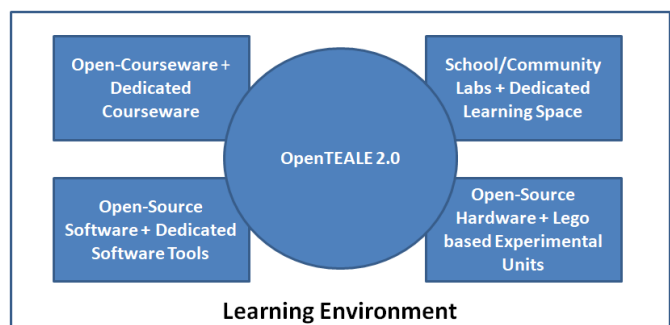
Benefits of the platform: Due to the modularity of the platform, institutions will be able to build their own programs (specifying POs and credit structure), teachers will be able to build their own modules of content (specifying ILOs and credit loads) and students will be able to build their own courses, using, mixing and re-mixing existing content and adding new content. Content will be developed and used in a collaborative manner.

Project activities:

1. Development of TEAL1.O - object-oriented style software platform utilizing existing resources (e.g. open-courseware, software and hardware) and enabling an integrated teaching and learning environment with modules for lesson planning, content creation, theory building, simulation, experimentation and assessment.
2. Development of Standards and Specifications Module: standards interfacing drivers and operating system (TEAL1.O OS) - a set of specifications (data types and methods) to develop any interface (courseware, software, hardware) between the new modules and the backbone facility.
3. Development of TEAL2.O, introducing dedicated courseware, learning space and other software tools:
 - a) Courseware Module: interface driver for Courseware Module
 - b) Assessment and Quality Assurance Module: developing assessment schemes and enabling a quality assurance process based on Intended Learning Outcomes
 - c) Learning/Teaching Support Software Module: an interface driver to connect tools developed by Open-source software, third-party data analysis and visualization plug-ins and report generation tools with backbone facility
 - d) Learning/Teaching Support Hardware Module: developing modular and extensible hardware modules for simulation and experimentation



a. TEAL1.O



b. TEAL2.O

4. Development of sample academic programs, demonstration modules and sample content in the areas of mechanics, dynamic systems, controls and robotics
5. Transnational workshops focused on collaborative planning and development
6. Transnational training of trainers (staff of the participating institutions)
7. Establishment of TEAL2.O Support and Development Center at each partner institution (procurement of equipment is envisaged)
8. Within each partner institution: training of students
9. Sustainability: planning actions to promote the use of the platform by a highly connected global network.
10. Project management and dissemination activities (including organization of 1 major dissemination conference for between 40 and 60 external stakeholders)



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

PROJECT PARTNERS

the TOOLKIT consortium works under the supervision of UNIBO as Project coordinator, and it gathers three Universities from Myanmar, two from Laos and two from Sri Lanka together with three Higher Education Institutions from the EU.

Partners: University of Bologna, University of Yangon, Yangon University of Economics, Yezin Agricultural University, National University of Laos, Souphanouvong University, University of Kelaniya, University of Peradeniya, Uppsala University, Vilnius University.



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the implementing partners of TOOLKIT project and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



<http://site.unibo.it/toolkit/en>