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INsPIRE

*“INnovative governance Practices for Higher Education Institutions in
Iraq”*

Kick-off meeting

Siena, 19-21 February 2019

Minutes



Opening ceremony

The INsPIRE kick-off meeting has been preceded by an opening ceremony, to which the representatives of several Italian and Iraqi institutions have participated (see [Annex 1](#)). Professor Riccardo Mussari, project coordinator, opens the ceremony stressing the relevance of the starting project as a mutual learning opportunity for all partners involved.

The Rector of the University of Siena, Professor Francesco Frati, offers his welcoming to the project partners and all the invited institutions. He provides a presentation of the University of Siena internationalization positioning, and of the programs focused on diplomacy and cultural mediation in which this University is engaged.

The word is given to Mr. Ahmad A.H. Bamarni, Iraqi Ambassador in Italy, who recalls the traditional relationships between Iraq and the country hosting the kick-off meeting, thanking the partners for having invited him. He describes the current situation of Iraq, underlying that even though the dramatic post-wars conditions affect the higher education system, the Iraqi one holds a considerable capacity as compared to other Middle Eastern countries.

Professor Francisco Matte Bon and Dr. Marcello Scalisi, respectively President and Director of UNIMED, take the word. The former gives a presentation of UNIMED, stressing the community of Universities it has been able to engage and connect in the recent years. The latter presents all partners involved in INsPIRE and describes the relevance of such a project, in which the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHER) itself has felt the need to involve foreign partners for the reformation of the higher education systems. Dr. Scalisi underlines the importance of investing in people and their education rather than in infrastructures – as evidenced by other projects carried out by UNIMED – appreciating the University of Siena sensitivity in this respect.

Finally, Mr. Al Rubaiey, representative of the Iraqi MOHER, intervenes by stressing not only the enthusiastic engagement of its institution in INsPIRE, but also how crucial this project is felt for the future of the Iraqi higher education system.

Local governmental and military authorities attend the ceremony and take part to the official lunch held in the afterwards.

Participation

All expected participants attend the meeting and signatures are collected every day. The list of participants is reported in [Annex 2](#). The scheduled agenda has not been changed during the meeting, except for the presentation of WP1, which has been postponed to the 20th February morning session in order to give more space to the participants' presentation on 19th February.

Project opening

Professor Mussari opens the working sessions of the meeting, providing an overall presentation of the project. In particular, he:

- describes the current Iraqi higher education context and its consequential needs;
- restates the name of participant institutions, their acronyms and partner numbers;



- details the project objectives;
- explains the methodology that will be used for the project activities;
- illustrates the working packages in which activities will be grouped, specifying the difference between “core” and “cross” activities, the latter represented by those pertaining to WP6, WP7, and WP8;
- presents and discusses the expected impact of the project;
- briefly shows the Logical Framework, emphasizing its underlying rationale.

Partners’ introduction

All participants are given space for introducing themselves and their expectations from the project. Consensus emerges in this respect. All Iraqi partners emphasize the tricky context in which their higher education institutions (HEIs) conduct their activities at the moment. Not only the damage of the infrastructures caused by decades of wars, but also the environmental issues affecting some parts of the country (e.g., the water salinity problem in the Basrah region) undermine Iraqi HEIs potential. Nevertheless, a wide variety of programs and PhD courses is offered by Iraqi HEIs, with a huge number of students enrolled in them, and with quality research outputs produced by researchers affiliated to those institutions.

This considered, what Iraqi participants expect from INsPIRE is to introduce innovative governance and management practices to rebuild their higher education system in a way to successfully cope with the challenging context. They all share the idea of the higher education system as a driver for the economic, social and cultural recovery of their country. In this respect, investing resources – both financial and human – in the higher education system is thought vital, and INsPIRE is felt to address these needs. Not least, Iraqi participants consider this project as an opportunity to increase the international relationships and positioning of their institutions, both with the EU and the EU HEIs. As for European partners, their expectations mainly relate to the mutual sharing of expertise in the matter of HEIs governance and internationalization.

Presentation of Working Packages

All WP leaders and co-leaders have provided a relatively brief presentation of each WP during the second day of the meeting (see [Annex 3](#) for WPs description). All presentations have concerned the:

- planned methodological approaches;
- partners involved;
- tasks to develop;
- working groups;
- timetables;
- expected results.

The “one size does not fit all” and “participatory” approaches emerge as a shared methodology through which all WPs activities are planned to be performed.

After the WPs presentation, some time is devoted to questions from participants and open discussions on the main themes presented so far. Main issues seem to be clear and shared by all participants.

WP1 Focus group – Update of needs analysis

Apart from the “cross” WPs, WP1 is the only one already started at the moment in which the kick-off meeting is held. Aiming at realizing an updated needs analysis, this WP activities will be conducted during the first year of the project, and will consist in:

- carrying a preliminary desk research and the collection of relevant data (January 2019 – November 2019);
- identifying stakeholders (February 2019 – April 2019);
- identifying existing governance frameworks and best practices (March 2019 – July 2019);
- designing and preparing of a diagnostic tool (March 2019 – August 2019);
- conducting a self-evaluation for a final assessment study (August 2019 – November 2019).

In the execution of these activities, Ms. Marchionne and Dr. Di Donato (UNIMED), together with Mr. Osamah Abdulateef, Ms. Al-Shaikhli Sudad, and Mr. Omar Al-Bairaqqdar (University of Baghdad) arrange three focus groups to discuss the main issues related to “Improving Governance in the Higher Education System in Iraq”, which are:

- decision-making
- ability to obtain resources
- quality improvement
- evaluation

The objectives of the focus groups work are:

- to collect the expectations of the participants;
- to collect the opinions of the participants;
- to evaluate the experiences, needs and priorities of the participants;
- to understand how participants perceive reality;
- to understand how participants behave and react.

20/02/2019 – FOCUS groups

UNISI
(moderator)

UNIBO
(rapporteur)

MHESR

- *Mosul University*
(rapporteur)
- *Basrah Oil & Gas University*
- *Al Karkh University of Sciences*

UNIMED

(moderator)

Istanbul Aydin University

(rapporteur)

MHESR

- *Baghdad University*
(rapporteur)
- *Sumer University*
- *Furat Al Awsat Technical University*

UNIMED

(moderator)

EVORA

(rapporteur)

MHESR

- *Basrah University*
(rapporteur)
- *Green Al-Qasim University*
- *Southern Technical University*
- *Wasit University*

Focus groups are composed by a minimum of 6 up to 12 participants, with the presence of a moderator represented by a European partner who addresses semi-structured interviews. Details on topics and questions are reported in [Annex 4](#). The focus groups last one hour, while a further half an hour is devoted to the presentation of results from a rapporteur chosen in each group.

Results from focus groups highlight a constrained decisional autonomy allowed to Iraqi HEIs, thing that goes hand in hand with a burdened discretion over the ability to obtain and spend resources for their activities. Therefore, even though participants may be willing to build their own strategies and the related action plans, they do not feel to be in the conditions to do so at the moment. For this reason, their first concern is a change in the regulatory framework. The MOHER is considered as a crucial actor to support such change process.

One of the main results of the focus groups was the need to enhance autonomy of universities in terms of financial management and also academic autonomy. With this regard, the universities are in needed to be trained on how to manage their human resources. Capacity building and management of human resources are two other two main points that have been discussed among universities. Furthermore, decision making and quality measures needed to be taken into accounts for the next steps of the needs analysis research of the WP1.

Performance does not emerge as a shared concept among participants, even though its multiple configurations relate to the technical preparation of students and the employability scores. Overall, participants reveal to be scared from the idea of being compared on the basis of a standardized concept/indicator of performance. As for the evaluation area, participants report that quality evaluation are not used for making decisions, at least not in terms of financial rewards, whereas they are used to indirectly affect careers.



The Iraqi MOHER representatives add their opinion to the final discussion. In their view, the main issue to be addressed is not the role of the Ministry, but rather the lack of managerial competencies in HEIs. As such, they state that all changes are deemed to be introduced through a learning process and disregarding any kind of top-down implementation.

WP8 – Administrative and financial management

The last session of the kick-off meeting is devoted to financial management issues. Ms. Elena Cellai, INSPIRE project manager, carefully explains all procedures and details concerning the followings:

- general project overview;
- co-financing concept;
- administrative strategy;
- budget: headings, ceilings, eligible costs and possible changes;
- exchange rate;
- payment cycle;
- external audit certification;
- administrative agenda;
- reference documents to be consulted regularly.

Moreover, Ms. Cellai explains the procedures to follow for the purchase of the equipment needed for the project activities, introducing that a first deadline for this kind of decision is scheduled for the following week. By February 27th, all Iraqi HEIs have to fill in a customized work plan where to justify the activities and scopes of modernization the purchase of equipment serves for, and the specific equipment that is needed. She will send to the partners the template of the need analysis, received by the European Agency for Culture, Education and Audiovisuals (EACEA).

Partners decide that, after the EACEA's authorization to the purchase of the equipment, the University of Baghdad on behalf of all Iraqi HEIs will launch a tendering process. Upon receipt of the tendering process documents and the provider's invoice, USiena will transfer the funds for the purchase to the University of Baghdad. These decisions will be also reported in the Partnership Agreements.

Ms. Cellai specifies that also for the purchase of subcontracting services, specific procedures have to be followed: best value for money, with the reception of at least three offers, in the case of services less than 25.000 Euro; public tendering procedures, for services above 25.000 Euro. Upon receipt of the provider's invoice, USiena will transfer the funds for the purchase to the each partner. This point will be also reported in the Partnership Agreements.

Ms. Cellai underlines, as clearly indicated by the EACEA, that financial flows from USiena to the partners will only happen through institutional bank accounts: no individual bank accounts are permitted. Costs of bank commissions on international transfers will be borne by the beneficiaries, unless a different solutions is found in the next months when Partnership Agreements will be discussed and signed by USiena and the project partners.

Upon request of the Iraqi partners, Ms. Cellai will send individual budgets organized per WP numbers.

Finally, she sets the next steps to make, which are:



- the appointment of a Responsible Person for Administrative and Financial Management in each HEI (by March 15th)
- the signature of Partnership Agreements (by May 2019)
- the preparation of a first Internal Report (covering 15/01/2019 – 31/12/2019 expenditure) by 15 January 2020

The financial management issues related to travels and stays, instead, are deeply illustrated by Ms. Silvia Marchionne from UNIMED, insofar as UNIMED is in charge for the logistical management of the project. In connection to this, at the end of the meeting, Ms. Marchione and Dr. Marco Di Donato (UNIMED) collect all travel documents.

The partners agree that the budget for travel costs and costs of stay will be managed by UNIMED. This decision will be reported in the Partnership Agreements.

At the end of both presentations, participants raise questions and answers are given to solve any doubt on this topic.

Closing and next steps

Professor Mussari closes the meeting by thanking everybody for the active participation in every session. He summarizes the main issues dealt with in the meeting days, and finally presents the planned schedule of the INSPIRE meetings.

Meetings	When	Where
<i>Kick-off meeting</i>	February 2019	Siena
<i>First mid-term meeting</i>	November 2019	Baghdad
<i>Second mid-term meeting</i>	May 2020	Evora
<i>Third mid-term meeting</i>	March 2021	Istanbul
<i>Final meeting and conference</i>	December 2021	Rome

As suggested by Professor Lopes Resende Da Silva (Universidade de Evora), the possibility to merge meetings and field visits when they are enough close to each other will be considered.

The first field visit under the WP1 visits (Basrah) is scheduled in September (tentatively date 8-12 September), a second field visit of WP1 (Baghdad) will be in the first week of November. Next to the field visit, all partners will meet in the same week of November for the first mid-term meeting, scheduled on 6-7 November 2019 in Baghdad.





ANNEX 1: KICK-OFF MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, 19 February 2019

09:30 a.m. – 04:15 p.m.

<i>09:30 – 10:30</i>	<i>Registration and welcome coffee</i>
10:30 – 12:30	<p>Opening ceremony</p> <p>Francesco FRATI, Rector of the University of Siena</p> <p>Ahmad A.H. BAMARNI, Iraqi Ambassador in Italy</p> <p>Luca VERZICHELLI, Rectorate's Delegate for the Internationalization, University of Siena</p> <p>Prof. Francisco MATTE BON, President of UNIMED – Mediterranean Universities Union</p> <p>Hussain AL-RUBAIEY, Minister's Office/International Relations, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq</p> <p>Marcello SCALISI, Director of UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union</p>
<i>12:30 – 02:00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
02:00 – 02:15	<p>Project opening and welcome</p> <p>Prof. Riccardo MUSSARI, Project Coordinator, University of Siena</p>
02:15 – 03:00	<p>Partners' introduction, their expectations from the project</p> <p>About 5 minutes per partner</p>
03:00 – 03:30	<p>Project presentation and logical framework</p> <p>Prof. Riccardo MUSSARI, Project Coordinator, University of Siena</p> <p><i>Starting of the sessions for each working package coordinator on: methodological approaches, partners, tasks to develop, working groups, timetables, expected results (about 30 minutes per working package, following questions and discussion)</i></p>
03:30 – 04:15	<p>WP1 Preparation – Update of need analysis</p> <p>UNIMED – Mediterranean Universities Union and University of Baghdad</p>
<i>08:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Dinner at Il Bandierino</i>



Wednesday, 20 February 2019

08:45 a.m. – 04:30 p.m.

08:45 – 09:00	<i>Registration of participants</i>
9:00 – 09:45	WP2 Development – Training and capacity building activities for internal staff in quality assurance and strategic planning Universidade de Évora and University of Basrah
09:45 – 10:30	WP3 Development – Implementation of changes and best practices through action plans Istanbul Aydin University and Sumer University
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00 – 11:45	WP4 Development – Modernization of Iraqi HEIs International Relations Strategies Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna and University of Mosul
11:45 – 12:30	WP5 Development – Launching of consultative centre in HEIs to coordinate University, state and not-state actor Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University
12:30 – 01:00	WP6 Quality – Project Quality and Evaluation Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University and Universidade de Évora
01:00 – 02:00	<i>Lunch</i>
02:00 – 02:30	WP7 Dissemination and Exploitation University of Baghdad and UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union
02:30 – 03:00	Questions and discussion on the different working packages, first year working plan and scheduling of meetings and events
03:00 – 04:30	WP1 Preparation – Update of need analysis UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union and University of Baghdad Focus groups
08:00 p.m.	<i>Dinner at Il Pomodorino</i>



Thursday, 21 February 2019

09:00 a.m. – 02:00 p.m.

<i>09:00 – 09:30</i>	<i>Registration of participants</i>
09:30 – 11:00	<p>WP8 Management</p> <p>University of Siena with the active collaboration of all partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and management tools - Administrative issues and organization - Budgetary and financial issues: unitary costs and internal procedures - Partners' agreement, discussion and approval
<i>11:00 – 11:30</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:30 – 12:45	<p>Roundtable on administrative, budgetary and financial questions</p> <p>University of Siena with the active collaboration of all partners</p>
12:45 – 01:00	Conclusion and closing of the meeting
<i>01:00 – 02:00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
<i>08:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Dinner at San Desiderio</i>

ANNEX 2: KICK-OFF MEETING LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

FAMILY NAME	NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	POSITION
MUSSARI	RICCARDO	University of Siena	ITALY	Professor
RUGGIERO	PASQUALE	University of Siena	ITALY	Professor
SORRENTINO	DANIELA	University of Siena	ITALY	PhD, Researcher
PALMIERI	VANIA	University of Siena	ITALY	PhD, Researcher
CELLAI	ELENA	University of Siena	ITALY	Project Manager
CASSONE	PAOLA	University of Bologna	ITALY	Head of Eastern Neighbouring Countries, Russia, Asia, Oceania and North America Unit
SARTOR	FILIPPO	University of Bologna	ITALY	Coordinator Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Western Balkans Geographical Unit
ADDOUS	AHMAD	University of Bologna	ITALY	Assistant Professor
LOPES RESENDE DA SILVA	PAULO FERNANDO	Evora University	PORTUGAL	Professor
TORRES DUARTE QUARESMA	PAULO MIGUEL	Evora University	PORTUGAL	Professor
IREM	CELAL NAZIM	Aydin Istanbul University	TURKEY	Professor
SCALISI	MARCELLO	UNIMED	ITALY	Director
MATTE BON	FRANCISCO	UNIMED	ITALY	President
MARCHIONNE	SILVIA	UNIMED	ITALY	Project Manager
DI DONATO	MARCO	UNIMED	ITALY	PhD, Researcher



DHANOON	MUFEEED DHANOON YOUNUS ALMULA	University of Mosul	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
HASAN	MAZIN SAMI HASAN	University of Mosul	IRAQ	Head of Quality Assurance Department
AL ASHQAR	SAYF MOHAMED DHIYA YOUNIS	University of Mosul	IRAQ	Head of Scholarship and Cultural Relations Department
ABDULATEEF	OSAMAH FADHL ABDULATEEF	University of Baghdad	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
AL-SHAIKHLI	SUDAD HISHAM HAMEED	University of Baghdad	IRAQ	Director of Scientific Affairs
AL-BAIRAQDAR	OMAR F. HUSSAIN	University of Baghdad	IRAQ	Manager of Quality Assurance Division
ALBU TAHA	SAJID SAAD HASAN	University of Basrah	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affair
HADDAD	NAZAR SAMIR ABDALWAHAB	University of Basrah	IRAQ	Vice Dean for Scientific Affair/ College of Medicine / L.E.A.R OF UNIVERSITY
AL HAKEEM	ABDULLAH MOHAMMED JAWAD MOHSIN	University of Basrah	IRAQ	College of Medicine
AL-JOBAYR	AHMED GHANIM WADDAY	Al-Furat Alawsat Technical University	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
AL-MULLA	EMAD A. JAFFAR	Al-Furat Alawsat Technical University	IRAQ	Dean of Babylon Technical Institute



ALSHAMANI	ALI NAJAH KADHIM	Al-Furat Alawsat Technical University	IRAQ	Manager of Quality Assurance Division
JABER	ABDULRIDHA HASAN SAUD	Sumer University	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
SHARRAD	ALI OBIED SHARRAD	Sumer University	IRAQ	Dean of Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology
ALDAKHEELI	MUATAMED ABED HAJER	Sumer University	IRAQ	Vice Dean of Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology
AL JANABI	HADI YASIR ABBOOD	Al-Qasim Green University	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
TIMIMI	ALI HASSAN ABBAS	Al-Qasim Green University	IRAQ	Professor
SADAHAL KHERSAN	EMAD HASSAN RIDHA	University of Basrah Oil and Gas	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
AL ZUBAIDI	WAEEL HASAN FARHAN	University of Basrah Oil and Gas	IRAQ	Computer Centre Manager
AL BADRAN	FIRAS ABDULRASOOL HASHEM	University of Basrah Oil and Gas	IRAQ	Dean of College of Oil and Gas Engineering
AL-RAMI	RAAID NAWFEE HASSAN	Al-Karkh University of Science	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affair
ALKAMAL	SOHAIB KAMAL MAHMOOD	Al-Karkh University of Science	IRAQ	Lecturer
ALSHEIK	MUSTAFA A. ULHUSEIN ABDULAMER	Al-Karkh University of Science	IRAQ	Manager of Biology Department/Colleg e of Science



ABDULAHAD	ALAA FAREED ABUDULAHAD	Southern Technical University	IRAQ	Vice Chancellor for Scientific Affair
AL-SHAMKHANI	MAHER TALIB ABDUL ZAHRA	Southern Technical University	IRAQ	Director of Continuing Education & Career Center
MORAD	AKEEL MOHAMMED ALI MORAD	Southern Technical University	IRAQ	Lecturer
AL RUBAIEY	HUSSAIN	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	IRAQ	Minister's Office
ALZUABIDI	MOHAMMED KHALEEL HUSSEIN	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	IRAQ	Directorate of Scholarships and Cultural Relations
AL-MIJBILEE	HUDA ABDULLAH HAMAD	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	IRAQ	Translator/Minister' s Office
ALI	ALI JUMAAH ALI	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	IRAQ	Minister's Office
FARHAN	SABEEH LAFTA FARHAN	University of Wasit	IRAQ	
AL-ZUWAYNY	HUSAM MAJEED HAMEED	University of Wasit	IRAQ	
ALSAIDI	MUNTADHER ALI ABDULRIDHA	University of Wasit	IRAQ	



ANNEX 3: WORKING PACKAGES DESCRIPTION

WP 1	Update of Need Analysis
<i>Leader(s)</i>	UNIMED (co-leader UOB)
<i>WP description</i>	The aim of this WP is to realize an updated needs analysis able to identify gaps and priorities in governance practices that have to be addressed. Accordingly, the WP1 core activities consist in a) conducting a comprehensive desk research on the relevant literature on the topic; b) identifying hypothetical key stakeholders to involve in innovative governance practices; c) proposing and applying a diagnostic tool for Iraqi partners' self-evaluation.
<i>Deliverables</i>	The expected deliverables are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key stakeholders map (due by May 2019); • diagnostic tool (due by August 2019); • two field visits in Iraq universities (due by November 2019); • final report of the update needs analysis (due by November 2019)
<i>Expected results</i>	The key stakeholders map will provide a comprehensive identification of the hypothetical stakeholders that could be involved in a good governance arrangement. The diagnostic tool will be based on a literature and governance frameworks review. The tool will enable each project partner to realise a self- assessment to outline governance gaps and priorities to address in the following WP. During the field visit, the self-evaluation carried out by HEIs will be analysed and revised by programme partners expert. This will lead to the outline of a specific strategy to implement. The strategy will be improved and supported though the training step (WP2) and, much more, through action plans (WP3).
<i>Duration</i>	January 2019 – November 2019

WP 2	<i>Training and capacity building activities for internal staff in quality assurance and strategic planning</i>
<i>Leader(s)</i>	UEvora (co-leader BASMEDCOL)
<i>WP description</i>	This WP aims at designing and developing the content and the methodology of a training program to provide to Iraqi Universities on the themes of quality assurance and strategic planning. Accordingly, the core activities of WP2 concern the a) realization of a capacity building on the topic of strategic planning through an online training platform; b) organization of three 3-days training study visits at European Universities; c) organization of two field capacity building (at the local level) from EU universities experts, and d) the organization of 10 local training of trainers.
<i>Deliverables</i>	<p>The expected deliverables are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the deployment of an online training platform, able to guarantee the efficacy of the training, as well as their good involvement before the study visits to EU partner institutions (due by May 2020); • a comprehensive report on training study visits, composed by smaller reports built on the basis of the evaluation provided by each participant about specific terms, the team participation plans for the future activities (due by October 2020); • a report synthetizing the 2 training sessions held in Iraq and the possible developments triggered by such experience at the local level (due by November 2020); • a final report on the local training of trainers in Iraq (due by December 2020)
<i>Expected results</i>	<p>The online platform will be deployed to guarantee the efficacy of the training, as well as a proper involvement before the study visits to EU partner institutions.</p> <p>Every participant will be asked to provide his evaluation on specific terms, as well as a report about its team participation and its plans for the future activities. All these reports will be put together in one comprehensive and final report. It is expected that it will clarify the areas of improvement for each institution on the basis of their experience at EU Universities.</p>

	A final report will summarize the program, the selection of participants, and the list of participants during the two training field missions. The aim of the report is to synthesize the experiences at local level, and the possible developments triggered by them.
<i>Duration</i>	December 2019 – December 2020

WP 3	<i>Implementation of changes and best practices through action plans</i>
<i>Leader(s)</i>	IAU (co-leader UOS)
<i>WP description</i>	On the basis of the results of WP1, this WP aims at a) developing a specific action plan for each Iraqi HEI, in tight collaboration between EU Universities' experts and the staff trained in WP2; b) drawing up a general guideline handbook for strategic planning and governance for HEIs; c) assessing and refining the governance framework at each university.
<i>Deliverables</i>	The expected deliverables are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action plan per each partner university (due by March 2021); • Good Governance Guidelines Handbook (due by June 2021); • results and impact assessment report (due by December 2021)
<i>Expected results</i>	Based on the results of the needs analysis, the action plan will describe the specific strategical planning for each HEIs, by using the “no one size fits all” approach. The action plan will act as a reference for assessing the impact of all the activities from the preparation stage until the implementation actions. Aiming at guaranteeing the sustainability of innovative governance practices, the EU experts will work in collaboration with Iraqi partners on the elaboration of a “Good Governance Guidelines Handbook”. All the activities and outcomes achieved in this WP will be summed up in a report that will include an impact assessment on the work done at the level of each institution.
<i>Duration</i>	October 2020 – December 2021



WP 4	<i>Modernization of Iraqi HEIs International Relations Strategies</i>
<i>Leader(s)</i>	UNIBO (co-leader UOM)
<i>WP description</i>	This WP aims to support the Iraqi Universities in developing or updating their international relation strategies in a way that it can reflect better modern HE Asian challenges, needs and strategies.
<i>Deliverables</i>	<p>The expected deliverables are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WP design on the basis of baseline study (WP1) (due by mid-October 2020); • training of the trainers on International Relations Strategies at the University of Bologna (due by mid-March 2021); • updating of the university international relation strategic plan (due by mid-September 2021); • national workshop at the Ministry of Higher Education (due by mid-November 2021)
<i>Expected results</i>	<p>On the basis of the first workshop feedback (WP1) and of the questionnaires results, WP leaders design this WP with a special focus on the internationalisation strategies.</p> <p>Workshop training, moreover, are expected to play an important role in terms of dissemination, given importance and diffusion among partner university and national university (cascade approach).</p> <p>The training activity supports Iraqi partners to develop a strategy of internationalization, paying a great attention to the country specificities.</p> <p>With the support of the staff training in EU, each Iraqi partner University will define the outline of the strategic plan, making use of the best practices in strategic planning acquired during the training at University of Bologna.</p> <p>A national workshop at the Ministry of Higher Education is organised to present WP outcomes and to involve additional University in the process of updating/writing new international relation strategies.</p>
<i>Duration</i>	April 2020 – November 2021

WP 5	<i>Launching of consultative centre in HEIs to coordinate University, state and not-state actor</i>
<i>Leader(s)</i>	MOHESR (co-leader ATU)
<i>WP description</i>	The aim of this WP is to accompany the Iraqi Universities in the process of definition of the strategy for the creation of a consultative body in each university for a better coordination of university and non-university actors. Accordingly, core activities of this WP consist in a) defining the strategy for the creation of the consultative centre; b) organizing a national consultative workshop to define the creation of consultative centre; c) launching the consultative centre in each HEI in Iraq.
<i>Deliverables</i>	The expected deliverables are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • definition of the consultative centre strategy in each HEI (due by mid-July 2021); • report on the national consultative workshop (due by mid-October 2021); • creation of the consultative centre in each HEI (due by mid-January 2022)
<i>Expected results</i>	The definition of the consultative centre strategy in each university for a better coordination of state, university and non-university actors. To define the creation of this centre, a national consultative workshop will be organised at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Baghdad. The establishment of a consultative body centre in each Iraqi HEI.
<i>Duration</i>	March 2021 – December 2021

WP 6	Project Quality and Evaluation
<i>Leader(s)</i>	ATU (co-leader UEvora)
<i>WP description</i>	The aim of this WP to ensure that monitoring of the project is performed adequately and accurately. As such, WP6 core activities consist in a) defining the Quality Committee and the Quality Plan; b) performing an internal evaluation of the quality of each WP deliverable; c) performing an external evaluation.
<i>Deliverables</i>	The expected deliverables are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Plan (due by February 2019); • mid-term evaluation report (internal & external) (due by each June and December of the project years); • final external evaluation report (due by January 2022)
<i>Expected results</i>	The preparation of a comprehensive document concerning the realization of all tools and instruments needed for the effective monitoring and evaluation of all project activities and outcomes. A formative evaluation of the project (mid-term report) containing a detailed picture of the whole project activities and including recommendations and corrective action. A summative evaluation (final report) showing the results of the monitoring on the project process and progresses and assessing the quality of work both within the project and the consortium.
<i>Duration</i>	January 2019 – December 2021

WP 7	Dissemination and Exploitation
<i>Leader(s)</i>	UOB (co-leader UNIMED)
<i>WP description</i>	The aim of this WP is to develop a strategy for the dissemination and exploitation of the project. Accordingly, WP7 core activities consist in a) designing the dissemination and exploitation strategy; b) creating and managing a sustainability campaign of the project website; c) preparing and disseminating project materials; d) deploying a dissemination and Sustainability Campaign; e) organizing a final conference.
<i>Deliverables</i>	<p>The expected deliverables are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploitation and dissemination plan (due by mid-February 2019); • INsPIRE Website (due by February 2019); • exploitation and Sustainability Plan (due by March 2019); • dissemination of materials (due by February 2019 and August 2021) • 10 sustainability conferences (due by June 2021 and January 2022); • Report of the final conference (due by mid-January 2022).
<i>Expected results</i>	<p>The dissemination and exploitation strategies will be drawn up in a Project Dissemination and Exploitation plan.</p> <p>The INsPIRE multilingual project website will be created (in both English and Arabic), in order to provide a first level of information about the scope and activities of the project and to disclose public deliverables.</p> <p>Dissemination materials will be produced according to the perceived needs of the consortium, mainly to support the activities described in WP1 and WP2.</p> <p>Complying to the “Events” strategy dissemination, each Iraqi Universities is called to organize a sustainability conference, to which other local Universities are invited.</p> <p>The INsPIRE final conference will be organized back-to-back the final plenary meeting. Involving decision-makers, it aims at exploiting the final project results and products and knowledge transfer.</p>
<i>Duration</i>	January 2019 – December 2021

WP 8	Management
<i>Leader(s)</i>	USiena
<i>WP description</i>	This WP aims at ensuring effective and efficient management of all project activities, pursuing the project's objectives according to the time schedule, budget and the quality standards established. It also aims at ensuring a regular cooperation with the EC services and an appropriate level of quality control on project activities and deliverables
<i>Deliverables</i>	The expected deliverables are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management handbook (due by February 2019); • WPs results Report (due by November 2019, November 2020, March 2021, January 2022); • Reports of plenary meetings (due by November 2019, November 2020, March 2021, January 2022); • virtual meetings (due by January 2022)
<i>Expected results</i>	The preparation of a reference manual containing the project management strategy and procedures, integrating the decisions taken at the kick-off meeting. This Handbook will also summarize the management principles and method to be followed in the project and will be used as a reference document by both the project partners and the External Quality Expert. Each partner leader will write an executive report at the end of their WP. Planned activities will be compared with activities accomplished. The production of a report for the KoM, the mid-term meetings, and the final meeting.
<i>Duration</i>	January 2019 – January 2022

ANNEX 4: TOPICS AND QUESTIONS DISCUSSED BY FOCUS GROUPS

TOPICS		QUESTIONS
Decision making	-How does you make strategic decisions in your university?	- What role can the MOHESR play in the case of university autonomy?
	-What should be the respective roles of universities and of the MOHESR in strategic decision-making?	- How do you see the role of MOHESR in supporting the decision-making power of the university?
Ability to obtain resources	<p>- What resources do you currently have to achieve your strategic goals?</p> <p>-How do current resources allow you to achieve your strategic goals?</p> <p>-Do you have action plans to achieve your strategic goals?</p> <p>- Are there performance</p>	<p>- What are the regulatory and practical changes needed to help you to improve the performance of your university?</p> <p>- How can the MOHESR help you to improve the performance of your university?</p> <p>-What does a good performance of your university mean to you?</p>



	indicators that you monitor periodically?	
Quality improvement	<p>- What are the quality criteria of your services?</p> <p>- What are the regulatory and practical changes needed to help you to improve the quality of your services?</p>	<p>- What do you think are the quality criteria for your services according to: the student public, the socio-economic partners, the public authorities?</p>
Evaluation	<p>-What methods are used to evaluate your performance?</p>	<p>- How do you see the involvement of the different components of the university (teachers, administrators, students) in your evaluation?</p> <p>-How do you plan to use the performance evaluation reports from your university?</p>
	<p>- What are the strategic dimensions that most interest your university / about which you think your university can learn more from the experiences of other countries ?</p>	





ANNEX 5: PHOTOS



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It is an honor to Participate today to this
conference between the University of Siena and the Iraqi
Universities concerning the reform of high education and
the reform in that field

Bamarni
Ahmad Bamarni
Ambassador of the republic
of Iraq in Italy
19/2/2019





