



Innovative Governance Practices in  
the Higher Education Institutions in Iraq

## WP3 REPORT

### January 2023



**Authors**

Nazim Celal Irem, Istanbul Aydin University

**European Partners**

- [Bologna University](#), Italy
- [Evora University](#), Portugal
- [Aydin Istanbul University](#), Turkey
- [UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union](#), Italy

**Iraq Partners**

- [University of Mosul](#)
- [University of Baghdad](#)
- [University of Basrah](#)
- [Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University](#)
- [Sumer University](#)
- [Al-Qasim Green University](#)
- [University of Basrah Oil and Gas](#)
- [Al Karkh University for Science](#)
- [Southern Technical University](#)
- [Wasit University](#)
- [Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq](#)

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## Expected Outcomes of the WP3

The outcomes of WP3 are a) the formulation of action plans for each partner university and the piloting of their implementation in each Iraqi higher education institution (T3.2). The Iraqi Partners are participating in the piloting of the action plan, which means that implementing changes are expected to report on the activities implemented; b) reporting on the piloting, as part of D3.3, and development results along with an effective assessment report. c) A general guidebook for higher education institutions' strategic planning and administration. Together with Sumer University, European Partners will produce the Handbook. The IAU will direct the defining of the report's contents, the collecting of contributions, and the report's compilation. Later, it was determined that the European partners would compile the report, with the IAU contributing a chapter on strategic planning and quality assurance. Sumer University is anticipated to collaborate with European Partners in the development of the Handbook.

## Partners' Responsibilities and Roles in WP3

The role of Istanbul Aydın University in WP3 is to lead the development of the work package in collaboration with the co-leader, Sumer University. In addition, the work package requires the drafting of action plans customized for each Iraqi university, implementation of changes and best practices, guiding their piloting in each of Iraq's higher education institutions, and a subsequent impact assessment. The University of Sumer is tasked with assisting the IAU in its engagement with Iraqi colleagues and coordinating the activities of Iraqi Partners.

All other Iraqi Partners are tasked with designing their own institution-specific action plans to enhance their management approaches and governance structures. Idealistically, the Iraqi university personnel participating and trained in the WP2 activity would also participate actively in the design of action plans alongside university leaders and academic and administrative staff. WP3 requires persons who have the capacity to apply the plan, such as trained employees and university officials. In this regard, all Iraqi partners have designated an INSPIRE project coordinator tasked with managing the internal procedures associated with the creation, execution, and monitoring of action plans.

The European Partners will give direction and assistance to the personnel trained in WP2 for the definition of the action and will ultimately provide examples of implementable actions. Therefore, the European partners will be involved in the preparation of Good Governance Guidelines and a book for strategic planning and governance, which will supplement the skills learned throughout the training by providing partners with direction for Action Plans. The Manual shall be translated into Arabic.

## Distribution of responsibilities and tasks

The IAU is especially tasked with assisting in the preparation of a unique action plan for each Iraqi higher education institution (T3.1). It included two templates for this purpose: a template for an executive strategic plan and a template for an action plan. In a number of workshops, either with the entire team or with individual institutions, it is made clear that, in order to maintain the coherence and relevance of the Project, the ultimate objective of strategic action planning in WP3 is to provide a solution to the problem(s) identified in the need analysis. The strategic action planning process is unrelated to the three- to five-year corporate strategy documents of the HEIs. It is better if the action plans and executive strategy plans could align with the terms, aims, objectives, and strategies outlined in the HEI's corporate policy papers, yet this is optional. Nonetheless, strategic action plans must be prepared within the scope of the INSPIRE Project in order to

provide answers to the concerns identified in WP1 and stated in the UNIMED need analysis handbook. IAU was tasked with assisting Iraqi partners with the formulation of their action plans.

The Iraqi partners are needed to authorize strategic planning-trained personnel who will work with each university to establish an Action Plan. The anticipated starting point for the Action Plan will be the institution's self-evaluation. And it is the obligation of the Iraqi partners, particularly the relevant personnel, to convene meetings within their institutions to discuss the specific objectives to be addressed and the desired reforms to be implemented. Each Iraqi institution of higher education would appoint a person or team to oversee the Action Plans. English must be made available for The Plan. We can anticipate translation in the instance that the strategy is produced in Arabic. To facilitate the process of sharing and advice on behalf of the European Partners, however, each Iraqi university should make an English version (eventually a condensed form) of the document available. The University of Sumer would compile the ten action plans and facilitate their distribution among EU partners.

## Objectives of Task Force 3

WP3's objective is to support the drafting, implementation, and monitoring of action plans, which are prepared in reference to the problems identified at each Iraqi university and reported by UNIMED in its Needs Analysis Report in WP1 and the adaptation of international managerial techniques to the local context in an appropriate manner; to ensure a successful implementation of governance changes in Iraqi HEIs, and to conduct periodic impact assessments and refinement of decisions.

## How did it work?

By February 2022, all Iraqi partners are required to examine the UNIMED's Need Analysis Report that was created at the beginning of the Project as an outcome of the WP1. The study is highlighted because a considerable amount of time has passed since its initial release, and there were delays in the Project owing to the circumstances in Iraq and the COVID outbreak. Moreover, several of the staff of Iraqi HEI who have engaged in such WP1 activities have been replaced. What is required is to revisit the core project document to identify and redefine the difficulties, if necessary. The strategic planning procedure has begun. The first attempt of the IAU team was to start a discussion with the Iraqi partners about the difficulties they had discovered in the need analysis; Iraqi partners were invited to reflect on the need analysis for creating an action plan to solve the problems identified there. What type of steps needed to be taken? When? Who? What help was needed? In all virtual meetings with Iraqi partners, the same themes have been emphasized by the IAU team in various circumstances, such as defining the problems and determining the steps to be taken to overcome them. We have also prepared two templates, namely a strategic plan (and an action plan templates, that supply solutions to all the problems which might be faced during the strategic planning process. These two templates were expected to

It has been found that the majority of Iraqi partners have yet to use the UNIMED report on need analysis as a point of reference. As soon as we noticed that the paper did not receive the necessary attention, we resent it to all partners. Despite this, certain action plans were only partially consistent with the criteria of the need analysis.

By February 2022, a timeline with some explanatory notes about the planning process has been created by IAU and delivered to project partners.

## Chronology

- On May 25, 2021, the IAU team attended the WP2 discussion and planning gathering. When it came to the WP2 field visit, we were delighted to welcome INSPIRE partners to Istanbul Aydin University.
- The IAU team held an online meeting with the new representative of MOHESR
- September 28, 2021 - we met with the INSPIRE team to discuss the WP3 online activities.
- On October 25, 2021, we had a meeting to plan WP3 activities. During the conference, the responsibilities of IAU and Sumer University, as well as the objectives, division of responsibility, and distribution of duties under WP3 were defined.
- November 6, 2021 - Riccardo Mussari requested that the INSPIRE General Partners Meeting be held at Istanbul Aydin University, which was accepted by our side, as we had previously suggested. However, it was not possible owing to the epidemic.
- November 15, 2021 - Quality Assurance Workshop held by us. Prof. Funda Sivrikaya Serifoglu
- On January 25 and 26, 2022, General Partners Meeting was held online with IAU assisting in its organization.
- Considering our discussions with Iraqi partners during the partners' meeting, we concluded that maintaining close touch with all institutions involved in the Project would be advantageous. Therefore, we wrote an email requesting contact information for Iraqi personnel involved in WP3 efforts. In addition, we have given action plan, and strategic planning report templates for completion and return by March 4, 2022. Due to the lack of response, we were forced to extend the submission deadline to March 9. Again, there were only a handful of submissions, not from everyone. Therefore, we set another deadline as March 23.
- We told the INSPIRE coordination team that we had not received submissions from four Iraqi partners and requested assistance in contacting them.
- May 5, 2022 – May 9, we invited all Iraqi partners to discuss WP3 and their Action Plans. To recall the invitation, we emailed them again and respectfully requested to confirm their presence at the meeting on May 9. Prior to the meeting, we requested a draft of their Institutional Evaluation Report, Action Plan, and Strategic Planning Report, if not the final versions. Prof. Celal Nazim discussed the relevance of these documents and provided brief instruction on how to fill them out during the meeting.
- We received a couple of revised papers from Iraqi entities following the conference. On May 26, we participated in a zoom meeting with Al-Karkh University to analyze its reports in depth. In the end, we decided to have one-on-one meetings with each Iraqi institution to discuss their Action Plans and Strategic Planning processes. On May 26, we sent them an email requesting a recommended date for the session based on their schedules. Al-Karkh University was the only institution to respond with a proposed date and a request to evaluate their paperwork. We were unable to contact other partners. Therefore, we sought the INSPIRE Coordination team for assistance.
- May 27, 2022 - Since the University of Sumer is the co-leader of WP3, we expected them to assist us and interact with us, at least in regards to contacting Iraqi partners. We respectfully requested that they contact others in order to provide essential documentation. Unfortunately, the University of Sumer did not respond to our inquiry.
- On October, we sent emails requesting information about the possibility of holding the field visit at IAU. We discovered that it would not be feasible to go to Istanbul for various security difficulties for Iraqi partners. As a result, we offered to host an online event in lieu of a site visit.
- On October 27, the coordination team was informed of the obstacles encountered, attempts to engage Iraqi partners, and WP3 progress to date via an online meeting.
- On November 14, we went on a call for a second one-on-one session. We asked that the partners choose a date between the 21st and 25th of November, bring their papers, discuss them individually and make edits and reviews. Three institutions had appointments for the session; however, the bulk

was still absent. Therefore, on November 29, we reconvened and revised the meeting time, despite the fact that certain partners were still absent. In December, we emailed everyone many times to confirm that they had received their session appointment. We have managed to conduct separate zoom sessions with three of the ten partners: Al-Furat Alawsat University, Wasit University, and Al-Wasim Green University. Although we agreed to have a zoom session with Southern Technical University, no one came up on time, and we waited almost 20 minutes for someone to join or respond to our emails.

- In addition, we had missing papers too. While we asked and many times reiterated the necessity of an Action Plan and Strategic Planning Report for WP3, only Al-Furat Alawsat Uni, Basrah Oil and Gas Uni and Al-Qasim Green Uni supplied both documents. The majority submitted either simply Action Plan (excel file) or Strategic Planning Report (word file).
- IAU team has drafted a section entitled “Strategic Planning as a Tool for Quality Assurance: Best Practices” for the Good Governance Handbook.
- IAU team to organize a planned online event as the final project activity on January 9, 2023.

## Outcomes of the WP3

- 1) 8/10 Strategic Plans
- 2) 5/10 Strategic Action
- 3) 10 Feedback Reports
- 4) Chapter entitled “Strategic Planning as a Tool for Quality Assurance: Best Practices” was written by the IAU Team as a contribution to Good Governance Handbook

University	Strategic Plan Format ( <i>Word</i> )	Action Plan Format ( <i>Excel</i> )
Southern Technical University		
University of Mosul		
Baghdad University		
AL-Karkh University		
Wasit University	updated	
AL-Qasim Green University	updated	
Basrah University for Oil and Gas		
University of Sumer	updated	
AL-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University		
Basrah University		