





Final External Evaluation Report

by

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Feb. 2023



































1. Introduction

INsPIRE is an Erasmus Plus structural project for Capacity Building in Higher Education KA2 which carries the official code of 598790-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP 15/01/2019. The project funded by European Union, EACEA. INSPIRE was designed and submitted for funding depending on the undeniable need for supporting the higher education system in Iraq. INsPIRE aims to modernize the governance system and internationalization of the Iraqi partner universities, along with the different academic values, through multiple training activities. Also, to establish ten Consultative Centers that serve this purpose in each partner university Like all the Iraqi institutions, the higher education system in Iraq went through hard crises since 1980, this is due to the Iran/Iraq war, severe international embargo, liberation of Iraq war and its aftermath, sectarianism civil war and ISIS invasion. Thus, implementing the project in the backdrop of such environment is not easy at all. Iraqi Higher Education System is inherited from the British System during the forties and fifties of the last century when Iraq went through different stages of colonization by Britain. Since its beginnings the Iraqi System of Higher Education has not been through substantial changes to its management system, and there has hardly been any training on different management levels especially the lower echelons of university governance. Therefore, INsPIRE proposal was submitted. The derogatory effects that the Iraqi universities suffered due to previous protracted situations of instability and isolation, make this project of capacity building in governance so much more

valuable for each one of those academic institutions, as shown in the need analysis in the project

application. Despite of the super majeure difficulties that INsPIRE went through, the partner

universities achieved most of the tasks and goals of the project.

2. INsPIRE Overview

The proposal on INsPIRE got the approval and support from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Baghdad to take this opportunity to benefit from the European universities' experiences as added value to upgrade the Iraqi higher education system of





governance. In addition, the Ministry is planning to adopt the European Bologna Process in within different Iraqi universities. INsPIRE was designed and written with the follow up of the ministry. The ministry was very suppurative during the proposal writing period, they lead the efforts in building the Iraqi consortium and they became a partner to lead the implementation phase for the Iraqi universities. They helped in diagnosing the general needs of Iraqi universities as well as they chose 10 Iraqi universities to be partners in the project. They are geographically distributed within northern, middle, and southern parts of Iraq. On the other hand, each Iraqi university chose its coordinator with a potential team to work in the implementation phase of the project. University of Siena along with UNIMED successfully coordinated the efforts of proposal writing and they chose the European partners as well.

INsPIRE proposal successfully submitted on time and accepted in August 2018. All the Iraqi universities show positive attitude and commitments to implement the different activities of the project in their universities through signing the partnership agreements and following up with the different clauses of the agreement. Moreover, four European academic institutes from Italy, Portugal and Turkey are partnering in this project as well as UNIMED -Mediterranean Universities Union. The project has multiple work packages and tasks, all of which are great support to improve the governance system at the Iraqi partner academic institutions.

The official start of INsPIRE was in January 15, 2019 when the kick off meeting of the project took place efficiently and successfully at the University of Siena, Italy, with the participation of the ten Iraqi Universities along with the Ministry. They got thorough information about the project during the in-person presentations about the type of the work packages and their roles, commitments as well as the financial aspects of the project.

3. INsPIRE's Goals and Objectives:

INsPIRE project has its goals and objectives that fit the needs of the Iraqi Higher Education System, and hence were highlighted in the project proposal. All of them are for the sake of modernization and enhancing the governance model with the Iraqi Higher Educating System. The goals of the project are:

- 1. Enhance good governance, management, and accountability practices
- 2. Establish a clear governance framework.
- 3. Strengthen the capacity of HEIs to develop their own specific strategies.





- 4. Strengthen the international relations management within the HEIs.
- 5. Improve the participation in strategic planning and development activities of non-university actors.

In summary, the project aims to build the capacities and competencies of the academic staff and administrators as well from the Iraqi partner universities, by training the leaders, decision makers and high skilled professionals on the modern governance, management, and accountability system. It is also to upgrade the Iraqi higher education system by European added value to their system of governance

4. **Inspire In Brief:**

- Duration: 3 years and 1 year extension.
- The official starting date of the project isJan.15, 2019
- The official ending date of the project is Jan. 14, 2022
- The official ending date after extension is Jan.14, 2023
- The project was put on hold for the period from September 2019 until June 2020, for almost ten months.
- Maximum grant approved: 993.365,00 EUR Consortium structure from Partner Country: Ministry of Higher Education, 10 Higher Education Institutes from Iraq
- Project coordinating institution: University of Siena.
- Project tasks held online along the year 2021, in the light of travel restrictions due to the COVID19 Pandemic.
- All onsite visit activities, both in the EU and Iraq were moved to 2022.
- Work Packages:
 - 1. Update of the need analysis.
 - 2. Training and capacity building activities for internal staff in quality assurance and strategic planning.
 - 3. Implementation of changes and best practices through action plans.
 - 4. Modernization of Iraqi HEIs International Relations Strategies.
 - 5. Launching of consultative centers in each of the partner Higher Education. Institutions to coordinate between the University, state and not-state actors.





- 6. Project Quality and Evaluation.
- 7. Dissemination and Exploitation.
- 8. Management.
- The consortium is formed by program Countries, 4 Higher Education Institutes and a Network of Universities. They are:
- 1. Università Degli Studi Di Siena (Italy). Coordinator of the project.
- 2. Unimed Unione Delle Universita Del Mediterraneo (Italy)
- 3. Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna (Italy)
- 4. Universidade De Evora (Portugal)
- 5. Istanbul Aydin Universitesi Vakfi (Turkey)
- 6. University of Baghdad (Iraq)
- 7. University of Basrah (Iraq)
- 8. Wasit University (Iraq)
- 9. Ministry of Higher Education And Scientific Research (Iraq)
- 10. University of Sumer (Iraq)
- 11. Al Qasim Green University (Iraq)
- 12. Basrah University for Oil And Gas (Iraq)
- 13. Al-Karkh University of Science (Iraq)
- 14. Southern Technical University (Iraq)
- 15. University of Mosul (Iraq)
- 16. Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University (Iraq)

5. External Evaluation Tools and Designed Procedures

The aim of the external evaluation of capacity building project is to carefully monitor all aspects of implementation processes of the project, to ensure that the project performed adequately and accurately to meets its objectives and to highlight the evidence of successful outputs. The external evaluation always takes the original plan of the approved project proposal as a reference, which was agreed on by all the partners and approved by the commission.

The external evaluation processes of capacity building project also ensure the high quality of outputs of the different activities planned within the different work packages. The evaluation includes the process of dissemination within institutions and their plans for sustainability. It is





obvious the evaluation is also to support the project coordinator, partner universities and participants to reach the ultimate goals of the project through the implementation of its activities. This external evaluation final report is covered activities of the project from the official start on Jan 15, 2019, to Jan 14, 2023.

The objective of the external evaluator in this project is to critically examine and monitor all the aspects of the project activities and achievements during the lifetime of the project.

This evaluation has its tools, designed procedures, criteria, and resources to the critically examine the different activities of INsPIRE. The final assessment of INsPIRE concentrated on the overall quality of outcomes and products for the Iraqi partner universities. The evaluation is based on different tools and criteria for data collection like:

- Partnership performance (which include quality of the management and WP leaderships, effective communications, meeting deadlines, participation efficacy and useful outcomes, etc.
- Progress in contractual success through the achievement of the objectives and respect of
 the work packages by detailed implementation of the different tasks to meet the expected
 goals and outcomes.
- Quality and relevance of the project outcomes in reaching the set objectives.

Through the lifetime of the INsPIRE the data for the evaluation were obtained from different relevant resources, they are:

- Thorough information for the evaluation was obtained through five structured, comprehensive questionnaires during different period of evaluation, these questionnaires were designed to provide statistical information about the different implementation activities from the partners as beneficiaries. The questions in the survey tackled all aspects of implementation like, the managements of the project, quality of the content of different trainings, quality of deliverables, knowledge transfer, feedback on field visits to Europe, website contents, dissemination, sustainability, and the level of satisfaction of the project by the participants.
- Multiple structured telephone interviews were conducted with the key representatives of INsPIRE project from the Iraqi partner universities. The interviews were dedicated for





their feedbacks on the implementation phase of the project, which includes the status quo of the project in their university, different challenges that face the implementation of the project, knowledge transfer, future as well as opinions of the participant regarding improving the implementation phase. Twelve interviews were conducted during the second half of the project lifetime.

- Eight Zoom meetings with each work package leader at the last month of the project period. These meeting is devoted to measure their contentment during leading the work package that they are responsible for as well as the to discuss the processes of implementing each task.
- Five constructed surveys during different the period of the project. Four surveys are considered relevant for analysis and evaluation, while the fifth on at the last month of the project was considered irrelevant because the number of Iraqi partners who participated is only 3 out of 10 partners.
- The evaluation also considered a detailed review of the deliverables, and all the materials of INsPIRE.
- Measurements of the level of participations as well as commitments of the participants toward INSPIRE.
- Analysis and critique to the project website during the project lifetime. Including written report.
- Direct communications with the Principal Coordinator of the project, Prof. Riccardo
 Mussari, Siena University and with Ms. Martina Zipoli from UNIMED were obtained
 almost on daily bases, as well as virtual meetings and email communications with contact
 persons from other project partner institutions in Iraq to collect and summarize the
 important information for reporting and evaluation findings.
- Online participation in virtual training and discussed the role and the plan of the external evaluator with the participant.
- The interim evaluation report (submitted 15, March 2022) used as a reference for writing the final report.





To carry out the External Evaluation, the External Evaluator was given a full access to all relevant external and internal documents as well as the project's website. The given access was for example: the project proposal, the Logical Framework Matrix, available documentation included reports & deliverables, internal quality control and monitoring reports for work packages, internal intermediate reports, and feedbacks.

Qualitative and quantitative analyses of the collected data from the used tools, along with the results from the above used tools gave integrated result for evaluations, as the criteria measured by different tools are interrelated and hence inevitably overlap. So, all these measurements together gave an integrated picture of the results, outcomes, and the impact of the project.

6. Evaluation of the Implementation Phase of INsPIRE

6.1. Formal Attribute of the project:

The Logo: The INsPIRE's logo has been created and accepted by all the partners. The logo is represented in all the documents related to the project along with the Erasmus Plus log and the partner universities logos.

The website https://projectinspire.eu has been formulated and continuously updated, it transparently contains all the project activities, along with project individual actions and outcomes. The meetings minutes, Agendas and all the deliverables were uploaded on time in the website. Comprehensive critique was written by the external evaluator regarding the website and distributed among the partners to enhance the quality of the website. All the mentioned points in the report were taken into consideration by the consortium to enhance the website and make it user friendly.

6.2. The Implementation of INsPIRE Work Packages:

There are eight work packages that covers all the main activities and planned tasks for the INsPIRE to achieve its goals and ultimate outcomes. According to the published project Management Handbook, every partner institute in this project has its role in implementing the work packages and its tasks. The Management Handbook defined the role and commitments of





the universities of implementing the work package. The European partner universities as well as the Iraqi partners were participated actively in reaching the goal for the benefit of the Iraqi universities to modernize their governance system and its values.

To control the quality of the work package implementation the project coordinators in the partner universities must fill a results report in a template form to show the status of achievements of the work packages.

6.2.1. Work Package 1 Update of the Need Analysis:

The Leader: UNIMED

INsPIRE needs analysis was divided into different tasks, the table below show the description of each task and the status que of the achievement.

Task And Results	Evaluation	Progress
T1.1		
Preliminary		
Desk Research	All the relevant data were collected to be used for different	Commisted
Result:	work packages	Completed
Collection of the		
required Data		
	Comprehensive map identified the internal and external	
	stakeholder for each university point of view was formulated	
T1.2	as a useful report. The report considered that each university	
Identification of	is in different area and has different relations where the	
Stakeholders	stakeholders are different. The report shows the impact of	C1-4-1
Result:	each stakeholder can have on the project. The universities can	Completed
Key Stakeholder	make intervention plan of the involvement of the stakeholders	
maps	to support the project. The stakeholders were divided into	
	national and international actors and national and	
	international authorities.	





	The stakeholder map was published on the website and shows	
	a very good satisfaction of the participants from all the	
	partner universities in the management survey.	
	https://projectinspire.eu/wp-	
	content/uploads/2021/06/Stakeholders-Mapping.pdf	
	Comprehensive measures were taken to use for self-	
	evaluation they are 10 bilateral meetings with the Iraqi	
	partner universities and real time support for their need, also	
T1.3	around 80 answers were collected as a response to the	
Identification of	questionnaire on self-assessment.	
the Existing	https://projectinspire.eu/senza-categoria/diagnostic- tool-for-	
Governance	institutional-self-evaluation-on-governance/	
framework	The second diagnostic tool is the explanatory document	C1-+1
Result:	which is an informational report was published as a	Completed
Diagnostic Tools	diagnostic tool or guidance to self-assess governance and its	
for Institutional	dimension in academic institute. Like autonomy,	
Self Evaluation	accountability, management techniques and participation.	
on Governance	The third measure is the self-assessment rich questioner was	
	considered as a diagnostic tool for feedback from the	
	participants. The external evaluator survey shows a very good	
	satisfaction with the survey as a tool for self-assessment.	

https://projectinspire.eu/wp-	
content/uploads/2021/05/Self-assessment-questionnaire-	
PDF.pdf	
A fourth measure was a very thoughtful information were	
published regarding news about self-assessment of	
institutional governance which keep the institutional	
involved updated with the latest diagnostic tools.	





	https://projectinspire.eu/news-and-events/news/iraqi- universities-performing-a-self-assessment-on- institutional-governance/	
T1.4 Design and preparation of Diagnostic tool Result: Virtual Focus Group with Iraqi Universities	Three Virtual focus groups on governance and autonomy were formulated by 13 active participants from the Iraqi partner universities along with representation from European universities. These focus groups met between Jan.19, 2019 and January 2021. They negotiated and suggested plans for decision making, process, accountability, strategic planning, quality assurance, students' involvement and international collaboration. https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Virtual-Focus-Groups_Main-outcomes.pdf	Completed
T1.5 Self-Evaluation for Final Assessment Study Result: Final Report with Updated Need Analysis	A complete comprehensive final report about the updated need analysis were formulated by staff of UNIMED with the contribution of staff from the Ministry of Higher Education and Baghdad university. The report published on the website. The purpose of this report is to understand the need of the partner universities to enhance the good governance and to orient the content of the raining toward the actual need of the partners. https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/INsPIRE-D1.4-Report-on-the-Iraqi-HE-system.pdf	Completed

Deliverables:

- Key Stakeholder Maps.
- Diagnostic Tool for institutional self-evaluation on governance.
- Final report with the updated needs analysis.
- INsPIRE Virtual Focus Groups PPT.





• INsPIRE Virtual Focus Groups outcomes.

Evaluation:

The work Package1 has achieved its goals and fulfilled its tasks and deliverables. The reports published is a good example for what the Iraqi universities in general need. The published report can serve as a guide document for future development for INsPIRE non-partner Iraqi universities as well as the partners. The updated need analysis report is a rich report has all the needed issues that the partners can take into their consideration to enhance the good governance within their universities. The outcomes of this work packages used as a guide for the implementation the other task of INsPIRE.

6.2.2. Work Package 2 Training and Capacity Building Activities for Internal Staff in Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning:

The Leader: University of Evora

Task And Results	Evaluation	Progress
	The Capacity Building action of INsPIRE included a virtual training on Moodle, with synchronous and asynchronous sessions for a total of 45 hours of training, performed between December 15h and January 21st. The online training was hosted in the online training platform of UNIMED available here: https://learn.uni-med.net/	Completed
and Didactic Material Result:	Six training seminars were conducted by the different EU partners, most of them represent the European vision and practices on the topics. These seminars are contributing to the good governance, and it is considered an eye opening to the participants on the modern's models of	Completed





governance and it parameters. The topics were on autonomy, governance models, quality in higher education, accountability, and internationalization.

https://projectinspire.eu/results/trainingwebinars/

Four training workshops on the different topics of Governance were also given virtually to the Iraqi universities staff. They tacked the quality assurance, accountability and management, universities social responsibility and governance and leadership. By having these condense training the participants showed have the adequate knowledge to implement the new trend of governance in their universities and convey the knowledge to their peer as well. https://projectinspire.eu/senza-categoria/training- workshops/

The Seminars Titles:

Financial webinar

University Autonomy

Quality in Higher Education

Accountability and Financial Accountability

Trends of Internationalization

University Models

The Workshops Titles:

Quality Assurance

Accountability and Management Orientation

for result.





	University Social Responsibility and Third	
	Mission	
	Governance and Leadership	
	The European consortium invited the	
	participants to the Field Visit to European	
	universities during June. The preparation	
T2.3	started with the nomination of the	
	participants.	Commisted
Selection of training	The Iraqi universities along with the	Completed
participants Result:	coordinator selected relevant participants to	
	take part in the field visit to Bologna	
Profile of participants	University, University of Siena, University	
	of Evora.	
T2.4		
Implementation of	All the planned online training was	
online training	All the planned online training was implemented for the Iraqi partner	
Result:	universities	Completed
Online training sessions		
	Two comprehensive Field visit to the	
T2.5	University of Sienna and University of	
Preparation and	Evora were successfully conducted. While	
-	the field visit to University of Aydin was	
organization of training study visits at EU		Completed
Universities (Siena,	https://projectinspire.eu/results/study-visits-at-	Completed
Evora and Aydin	european-universities-2/	
Istanbul Universities)	https://projectinspire.eu/news-and-	
istanour Oniversities)	events/field-visit-at-the-university-of-siena-	
	and-evora-34-iraqi-colleagues-on-the-move/	





	https://projectinspire.eu/news-and- events/virtual-study-visit-to-istanbul-aydin- university/	
T2.6 Organizing and conducting capacity building activities in Iraq Result: Multiple training sessions	Conducting by giving online training on the subject not in person, as an adaptation for COVID 19 requirements.	Completed
ToT at local level Result: Three universities were conducting the ToT	University and Wasit University https://projectinspire.eu/results/local-trainings-in-	Partially completed

Deliverables:

- Training seminars and their materials.
- Training workshop and their materials.
- Guidance for ToT.

Evaluation:

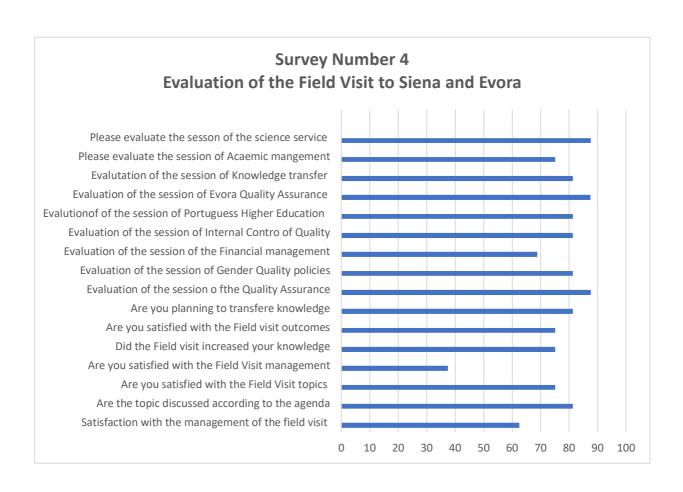
The main part of this work package has been achieved through conducting multiple online training sessions as a seminars and workshops by the EU partners. The total number of beneficiaries from the training are 148 to be changed staff members from the different Iraqi universities. These training





were virtually conducted and in person at the University of Evora and University of Siena. with synchronous and asynchronous sessions for a total of 45 hours of training. The online training was hosted in the online training platform of UNIMED available here: https://learn.uni-med.net/
The trainings were directed to middle management (service directors and other administrative staff, rectorate staff, positions in the general management of the university), administrative staff at Faculty level, leaders of special areas. The seminars were conducted on time and to the expected contents. The title of the seminars and the workshops were directly tackling the subject of the project which is the innovative governance.

The survey below shows the evaluation of the participants of the study visit to University of Siena and University of Evora.







6.2.3. Work Package 3 Implementation of changes and best practices through action plans: The Leader: Istanbul Aydin University

This work package is dealing with the implementation of change to the Iraqi universities following the institutional action plans. According to the website and the communication with the coordinator the below result was obtained.

Task	Evaluation	Progress
& Results		
T3.1	After three training session by	Completed
Development of a Specific	Aydin University on how to	
Action Plan for HEI Iraq	write strategic plan, with two	
Result:	examples sent the Iraqi	
	universities sent drafts of plan	
	https://projectinspire.eu/senza-	
	categoria/institutional-action-	
	plans-by-each-partner-	
	university/	
T3.2	The piloting phase was not	Not achieved.
Piloting the Implementation	conducted. The drafting of the	
of the Action Plan for each	plan took longer than planned,	
HEI Iraq	due to the well-known	
Result:	challenges in the project	
	implementation and the lack	
	of experience of Iraqi	
	universities in working on	
	such plans. A revision was	
	needed which took extra time	
	and therefore no piloting was	
	put in place. Moreover, the	
	limited autonomy of Iraqi	
	universities also limited the	





	possibility and the capacity of making improvements on the short term.	
T3.3 Drawing up General	The handbook has been formulated and published.	Completed
Guideline Handbook Result:		
Published Handbook		
	T. 1 1 A 1	
T3.4 Assessing and refining the	Istanbul Aydin university made an assessment – a form	Partially Completed
Governance Framework at each University	of revision and evaluation – to all plans, to perform a piloting	
Result:	phase and adjustment to the university governance and	
Assessment of the plan	management model. But not	
	implemented during the lifetime of the project	

Deliverables:

All the material for Work Package 3 is available on the following links:

https://projectinspire.eu/senza-categoria/institutional-action-plans/

https://projectinspire.eu/senza-categoria/assessment-of-the-institutional-action-plans/

Evaluation:

Conclusions: Some of the tasks belonging to this work package have not been totally achieved. WP3 Leader Istanbul Aydin University is coordinating working groups at each Iraqi HEIs as a Strategic Plan Task Force, in charge of filling the Action Plan. The coordinator has developed a





template for Partners to use, upon the reflection on their own strategic goals. It is obvious that this work package needs the involvement of the high-level authorities of the partner Iraqi universities. The universities drafted action plan. They started to continue with the European universities to discuss the weak points of the plan for better outcomes. They made bilateral meetings with the leader of the work package. The result is each university sent another better draft.

6.2.4. Work Package 4 Modernization of Iraqi HEIs International Relations Strategies: The Leader: University of Bologna

This work package launched at the University of Bologna during May 2022 as planned for. The meetings days at the University of Bologna was very successful to give the participants from Iraqi side the chance to have training in person in a very important subject.

Task	Evaluation	Progress
& Results		
T4.1 Tailor modeling of this WP according to WP1 outcomes	The result of work package 1 is taken into consideration as the needs for the Iraqi universities for internationalization.	Completed
T4.2 Selection of training participants	The Iraqi universities along with the Eu coordinators select the relevant participants to participate in the training during the field visit to the University of Bologna.	Completed
T4.3 Organization of the trainings at University of Bologna	The training in the University of Bologna organized and conducted according to the plan. https://www.uni-med.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/INsPIRE-Agenda-Training-week-and-PM-in-Bologna.pdf	Completed





T4.4 Definition of a modern university international relation strategic plan in each Iraqi partner	The task has been completed. As it happened for WP3, all plans were sent by the 10 universities, revised by University of Bologna, and sent back again with the necessary improvements. Then the participants worked along with University of Bologna to develop the draft into its final version. This is the process of learning. All the result are on the project website.	Completed
T4.5 Organization of a national workshop at national level	This comprehensive workshop is planned for November 2022 in Baghdad, but not achieved due to the decision from the Ministry of Higher Education not to host it, according to communication with the coordinator.	Not completed

Deliverables

- Report s of the Training
- All the strategic plans for each university.
- Experience of EU partners university of Evora
- Experience of EU partners university of Siena
- How to conduct a SWOT analysis
- Group work SWOT analysis
- From SWOT to plan University of Bologna
- •
- Example of Action Plan for Internationalization Lund University
- Exercise of strategic planning, general instructions
- Internationalization of Education University of Bologna
- Internationalization at DISI University of Bologna





- Impact of international projects and fundraising on university strategic plans, University of Bologna.
- Organization of services for international relations, University of Bologna.
- List of objectives usually associated to internationalization.
- Group work strategic plan for internationalization, template.
- Group work Internationalization plan.
- Expectation and internationalization in Iraq, Mosul University.

Evaluation:

The work package 4 is dedicated to a comprehensive training focusing on the goal of modernization of the higher education system. The training conducted in person at the University of Bologna. The training took place On May 16th to 20th. Twenty fours staff members from 10 Iraqi universities together with the representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq were hosted by the University of Bologna, Italy, for an intensive Training Week "Design internationalization plans for universities" to jointly work on strategic planning for internationalization activities.

The trainees get in charge of identifying policies and priorities for internationalizations in their universities. The main aim of the training is from the training week is to encourage universities to exploit their own strengths their capacity in term of internationalization and to put strategic planning for their international cooperation.

The feedback from the participants through the external evaluator survey were positive regarding the quality of the training the importance of the subjects. The participants showed their willingness to transfer knowledge to their colleagues in their home universities.

The number of deliverables and provided resources for this important subject are very good and diversified and important information.

The plan was to travel to Iraq to host workshops regarding work package 4 and 5, but due to different logistical reason the European partner couldn't travel to Iraq to implement the two workshops, involving ideally other universities in the country, stakeholders and private companies



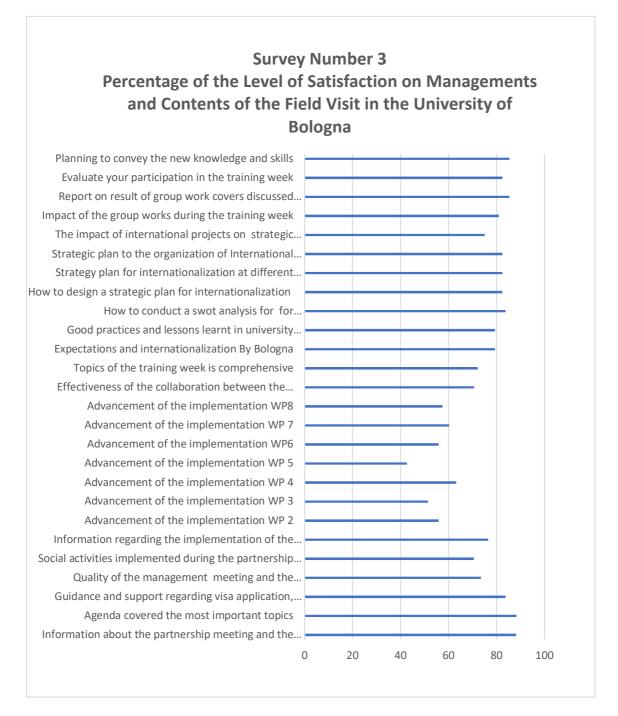


as planned. While discussing the planned tasks with the Partners, a decision came from the Ministry of Higher Education (in charge for hosting) not to host the events according to email from the ministry.

The below diagram shows a result of some management aspects and responses of the participants in the training of internationalization in the University of Bologna. The survey tackled all aspects of the training as well the status que of the work packages at the time. The diagram shows positive response (between 70% to 84%). This high percentage shows high level of satisfaction of the training. It is a successful visit for all the partners.







6.2.5. Work Package 5 Launching of consultative center in HEIs to coordinate University, state and not- state actor:

The Leader: Ministry Higher Education





Task	Evaluation	Progress
&Results		
T5.1	The definition of the strategy to	Completed
Definition of the strategy for the	create the consultative Center in	
creation of a consultative Centre in	each Iraqi partner university has	
each university	been conducted and a plan for	
Result:	the strategy was published.	
The strategy was defined	The strategy is doable, but it	
	needs multiple decisions form	
	the Iraqi leader in higher	
	education to add to the	
	universities structure this unit.	
	https://projectinspire.eu/wp-	
	content/uploads/2022/10/WP5-	
	Consultative-centre-strategy-	
	definition.pdf	
T5.2 Organization of a National	It is not completed due to all the	Not Completed
Consultative workshop to define	hindrance for travel to Iraq, and	
the creation of consultative center	the decision on behalf of the	
_	Ministry of Higher Education	
Result:	not to host the workshop.	
planned for November 2022 in		
Baghdad		
T5.3	Ten consultative centers were	Completed
Creation and launching of the	officially initiated with the Iraqi	
consultative center in each HEI in	universities. But the equipment	
Iraq	is not received due to many	
Result:	administrative issues. The Iraqi	
10 consultative centers were	universities mentioned that they	
officially initiated		





can equipped the units from their	
university's resources.	

Deliverables:

Strategy for the Consultative Centers

Evaluation:

The initiation of the Consultative Center in each university to serve as an active unit to sustain the change to innovative governance and beyond. These centers are to serve the modernization of governance process, and to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes after the project's lifetime. The higher education system in Iraq does not have such centers within its approved structure. The system is very centralized, so the initiation of such center is not easy, it needs approval from multiple levels. That is the reason why, to facilitate the implementation and opening of such centers were delayed they were renamed them as units. There are official letters from all the Iraqi partners universities regarding initiation units within their structure to serve as consultative centers in each university.

Details are available here: https://projectinspire.eu/results/local-and-international-consultation-units/

However, as a general comment, units have been opened and staff assigned to the units. All in all about 40 ppl were involved between internal staff and external stakeholders, which sounds like a very good result. On the other side, the follow-up on the work of these units is uncertain. Will they be operational? this is uncertain at this stage unfortunately.

6.2.6. Work Package 6 Project Quality and Evaluation:

The Leader: Al-Furat Al-Awsat University

Task	Evaluation	Progress
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& Results		
T6.1	The requirement of the committee was set for internal and external	
Definition of		
Quality	https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/INsPIRE_D6.2-	
Committee	Quality-Plan.pdf	Completed
Result:		Completed
Definition of	https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Plan-of-	
requirements	External-Evaluation.pdf	
T6.2 Definition of Quality Plan	Comprehensive plan for evaluation internally and externally are suggested. https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/INSPIRE-	Completed
Result:	Midterm-External-Evaluation-Report.pdf	Completed
Plan for	Wildlerm-External-Evaluation-Report.pur	
evaluation		
T6.3 Internal Quality Plan	The internal quality plan defines the quality cycle and establish commitments between the partners and a measurable matrix for the work packages to ensure the quality together with monitoring the performance. A report has been produced to explain and show the different activities that need an action within a feasible deadline. The report used the terminologies of value chain model presented by Michael Porter to follow. https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/INsPIRE_D6.2-Quality-Plan.pdf	Completed
T6.4 External Quality Plan Result: Plan of external evaluation	Submitted Midterm external Report and final internal and external reports	Completed





Deliverable:

https://projectinspire.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/INsPIRE_D6.2-Quality-Plan.pdf

Conclusion: This work package has been progressing within the time frame. Comprehensive quality plan report has been submitted as a guideline and control of the quality of the different activities. It seems the Iraqi partner universities are very much engaged in the planning phase which give the indication that they have high motivation.

6.2.7. Work Package 7 Dissemination and Exploitation:

The Leader: University of Baghdad

Task & Results	Evaluation	Progress	
	The plan draws up the strategies of the project		
	to reach out to the target groups and beyond.		
	The plan was published as report that covers all		
	the segment of the project. The report included		
T7.1	the priority of communications and exploitation.		
Design Dissemination and	The report also tackled the sustainability of the	Commission	
Exploitation Plan	project after its lifetime.		
Result:	The report was prepared by University of	Completed	
Comprehensive dissemination plan	Baghdad with the consultation of UNIMED and		
was done	the European partners.		
	https://projectinspire.eu/wp-		
	content/uploads/2021/06/INsPIRE_D7.1-		
	Dissemination-Exploitation-Plan.pdf		
Т7.2	A multilingual comprehensive website		
Creation and Management of Project	dedicated for INsPIRE project has been	Completed	
Website	formulated and published, the website covered		





Result:	all the activities up to date. The deliverable has	
Website initiated	been published along with all the information	
	and the activities.	
	https://projectinspire.eu	
	The dissemination of the deliverable within the	
	consortium and beyond tackled three lines:	
	Media Kit Promotional Material, which contain	
T7.3	many useful branding materials like postcard	
Preparation of Dissemination	and posters and webinar flyers in Arabic	
Materials	language Photo gallery, unfortunately it has few	Completed
Result:	photos representing the activities. The third line	Completed
Multiple types of materials were	is the Publications which has great access to the	
distributed	partner websites and their news along with the	
	access to social media like Facebook and	
	Twitter.	
	https://projectinspire.eu/media/	
	The WP Leader and co-leader encouraged	
T7.4	several times Iraqi partners to perform a	
Deployment of Dissemination and	dissemination event at their institution, also	Not
Sustainability Campaign	engaging other universities in the country	achieved.
Result:	outside of the consortium. However, these	
	dissemination events were not implemented.	
	This was done virtually with the presence of all	
T7.5	the EU partners, and they gave presentation on	
Project Final Conference	the works were done for the project on the	
Result:	different Work Packages. Only person from the	
	ministry attended to represent the partners.	
	initially attended to represent the partitors.	





Deliverables:

- Dissemination Plan
- INsPIRE Postcard
- INsPIRE Postered
- INsPIRE logo
- Webinars Flayers in Arabic for the work packages

Evaluation:

INsPIRE project made good dissemination and exploitation to define the goals and objectives as well as the activities for the universities and the communities. During the lifetime of the project there is a common message on the necessity to develop skills and competences linked to the governance of Iraqi Universities. There is a visibility to the main activities carried out in this framework, through a thorough information of INsPIRE website, the website with all the deliverables. The universities also active in social media to disseminate the different activities. All these will contribute in one way or another to the sustainability of the project.

The leaders of the work package 7 for the Dissemination formulated excellent Dissemination plan that enriched the inputs and communication of the other WPs of the INsPIRE project. The website was continuously updated during the project lifetime.

The leaders of WP7 along with the participants also produced the logo, INsPIRE Postcard, INsPIRE Posters and multiple Flayers.

However, the plan for Deployment of Dissemination and Sustainability Campaign was not achieved for a logistic reason.

6.2.8. Work Package 8 Management:

The Leader: University of Siena

Task & Results	Evaluation	Progress
Project Management Handbook	A comprehensive handbook or guide to the management procedure of INsPIRE during its lifetime and beyond has been produced and published on the website. It is very useful guideline to follow for all the partners. It has all the information	Completed





	about the project and the strategies of managing the implementation phase.	
	https://projectinspire.eu/wp- content/uploads/2021/10/D8.1-	
	INsPIRE-Project- Management-Handbook.pdf	
T8.2		
Work Package		
Result report	Executive report for each partner leader at the end of their wp	Almost done
Result:		
T8.3 Report of Plenary Meetings Result:	All the meeting are achieved either in person or virtually and the reports are available. https://projectinspire.eu/senza-categoria/plenary-meetings/	Completed
T8.4 Virtual Meetings	Many of the virtual meetings have been accomplished the agenda and the minutes was shared in the website. https://projectinspire.eu/senza-categoria/virtual- meetings/	Completed

Deliverables:

- Agenda of the meetings (in person or virtually)
- Report of the meetings
- Reports of work packages

Evaluation:

The different management tasks have been achieved perfectly and published for the activities. Even though this project has gone through many hurdles, yet the management spent more the





required time to manage this project. It is well seen by the number of deliverables, trainings, workshops, guidance, communications toward achieving the ultimate goals of the project. One of the big challenges is the management of providing the equipment to the beneficiaries as well as the staff cost, this is due to super majeure reason as the universities do not have the authority to open institutional bank count to receive their allocation.

6.3 Partnership meetings:

According to the feedback from all the partners during the interview and the survey, all of the planned activities were implemented according to schedule that was agreed upon between the partners after the suspended period of the project. All the activities were designed according to the proposal and after agreement with all the partners on the date of the meetings. The participants received the agenda of the meetings in advance. The meetings discussion points adhered to the distributed agenda. All the partners participated in almost all the meetings and most of them there were active and engaged in the discussions.

Different kinds of management arrangements skills were taken from the start of the project till March 2022. The skills were used to implement the activates categorized into: Partnership meetings, Training, workshops, Webinars, and Bilateral communications publications managing the website and social media activities. All the administrative data regarding these activities like agenda, minutes, contents materials, attendees list and outcomes are available on the website or with the coordinator.

The summary of the partnership meeting including one plenary meeting is in the below table.

Date of meeting	Name of meeting	Type of meeting	No. of Participants	Partner Universities
19-21	Kick off meeting	In persons at the	48	All
Feb. 2019		University of Siena		
22Sept.	Partnership	Virtual	41	All
2020	meeting			
17Dec.	Partnership	Virtual	42	All
2020	meeting			





15 June	Partnership	Virtual	37	All
2021	meeting			
25-26	Partnership	Virtual	32	A11
Jan2022	meeting			universities
				except
				Summer
				and
				Southern al
				Karkh
16 May	Partnership	In presence at the	34	A11
2022	meeting	University of		
		Bologna		
15	Partnership	In presence at the	40	All
November	Meeting	University of Siena		
2022				
11 Jan	Final Meeting	Virtual	14	All
	rmai Meeting	viituai	14	
2023				European
				Partners and
				one person
				from the
				Iraqi
				universities

There was a plan for a Final meeting in Baghdad as in the proposal. The Ministry did state they are not willing to organize such an event, nor the other workshops planned at their premises (WP4, WP5). A negotiation between the University of Siena and the MOHESR without a positive result. Therefore, it was hosted online.





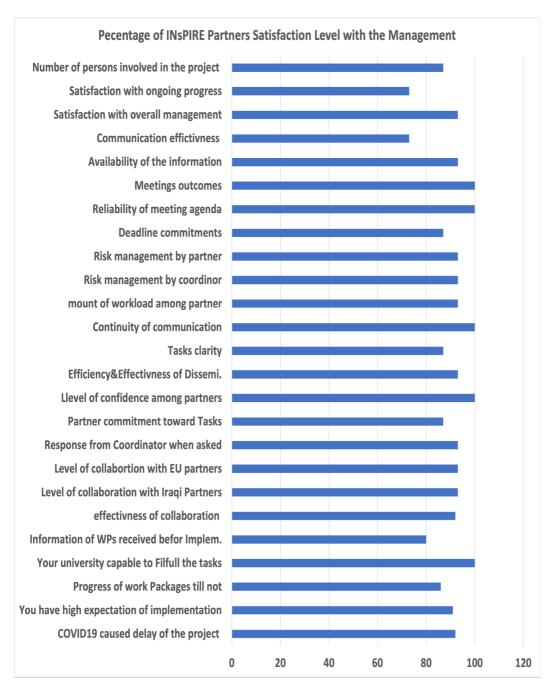
6.4 Analysis of the Management Survey:

The parameters of the management that were taken into consideration through the evaluation of the project are: the efficacy of the implemented, guidance of the European partner universities, the level of communications, the engagement of the partner universities, the concentration on the goals, priority actions, continuity and following up. These parameters were included on the evaluation of all the work package tasks and activities. All these points were taken in as survey questions that were answered by all the partners. The participants were from all the partner universities. The quantitative results are illustrated in the following diagram as a percentage of satisfaction of the different items of management:

Survey Number 1







The analysis of the management aspects from the partners of INsPIRE according to the below result of the survey reflects high management engagements of the partners specially from the Iraqi universities. There are two points where the satisfaction is within 70%, which is the lowest evaluation, they are the satisfaction of the overall progress of the project and the effectiveness of communications. It is obvious the delay of the implementation of the project and the period that





the project was put on hold affected the degree of satisfaction of the participants, also the online communication almost through all the period of the INsPIRE reflected on the satisfaction of the effectiveness of communications. Almost all the participants form the Iraqi universities never met with the European partners or with other Iraqi partners from 2019 to 2023 or never met at all. Nevertheless, in general the result shows the individual participants who represents their universities are satisfied and motivated but the system among the university level and the ministerial level is not helping the participants to achieve the optimum results of the project with the defined time.

The multiple telephone interviews with the coordinator from each university, as well as multiple zoom meetings with all the work packages leaders shows almost the same outcomes of the survey. In general, the partner universities have great feedback regarding the level of management despite all the challenges.

However, there are some notes received from different Iraqi partners through the survey, zoom meetings and the interviews shows the followings points:

- 1- They want to receive the materials of training in advance to have the adequate time to get squinted with topics.
- 2- They are looking forward to consolidating their experience in internationalization of universities through students and staff mobility, as well as in fund raising.
- 3- Most of the partners are concerned that the online trainings are less effective than in person trainings.

6.5 Training Sessions:

Multiple training sessions were conducted through the first period of the project. Studying the contents of each training, showed that the training topics are in line with goals of the project. The contents of the training constituted the core of the capacity building of the trainees toward modern governance and university management. The total of Virtual training on University Management was 40 hours from December 20, 2021, to January 21, 2022. The total number of participants was 148 academic staff form the Iraqi partner universities.

The topics of the training and the dates are shown in the table below:





Topic of Training	Date	Leaders
Financial webinar	30, Sept. 2020	UNIMED & University
rmanciai weomai	30, Sept. 2020	of Siena
University Autonomy	15, July 2021	University of Siena and
		& University of Evora
Governance Model	28, July 2021	Advisor on Higher
		Education Policy in
		Ireland &
		Head of Cabinet in the
		Portuguese State
		Secretary of Science
Quality in Higher Education	9, Sept. 2021	Advisor to the President
		of Board of Trustees of
		Istanbul Aydin
		University
Accountability and	16, Sept.2021	University of Siena
Financial Accountability		
	23, Sept. 2021	University of Bologna
Trend of Internationalization		
		University of Coimbra
	30, Sept. 2921	Purtogal & University of
University Models	_	Evora

6.6 The workshops:

Multiple virtual workshops were given to the academic participants from different Iraqi universities by European partners universities, all of them tackled the most important topics of modern university management and governance. The sequence of the topics of the workshops





delivered are logical. The number of participants is constant to ensure the participation of all the partner universities.

Number	Title	Date	Leaders	Participants
Workshop 1	Quality Assurance by Istanbul Aydin University	15/11/2021	Istanbul 40 Aydin University	40
Workshop 2	Accountability and Management orientation for results	18/11/2021	University of Siena	40
Workshop 3	University Social Responsibility and Third Mission	23/11/2021	University of Bologna	40
Workshop 4	Governance and Leadership	25/11/2021	University of Evora	40

The number of the applications of the workshops from partner universities is satisfactory. This is according to the feedback from the survey and interviews.

6.7 Quality analysis of the outcomes:

The quality aim of INsPIRE project, is summarize the findings and conclusions taken from the quality assessment tools as well as monitoring and evaluation of INsPIRE to ensure a high-quality level of work results and very satisfactory achievements toward the expected impact.





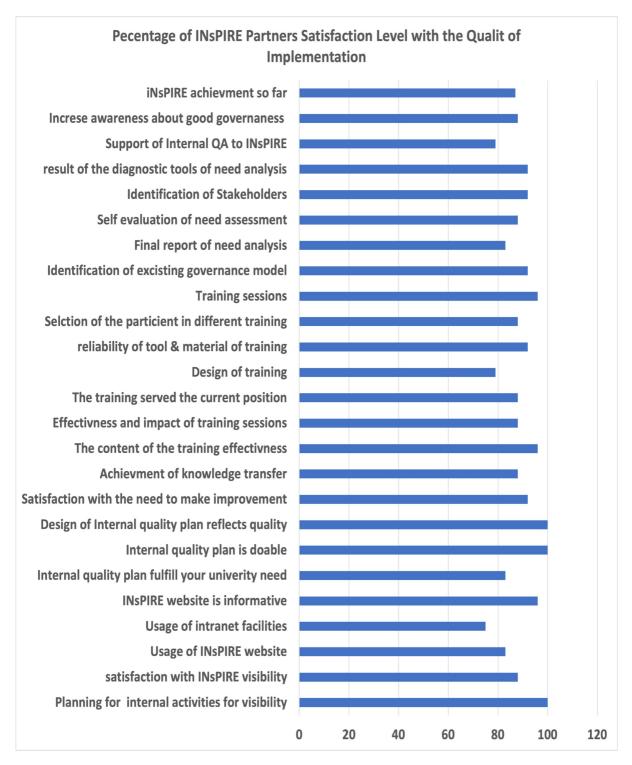
To measure the quality of the outcomes of INsPIRE the External Evaluator considered different quantitative and qualitative tools they are: 1- Quantitative measure of comprehensive quality survey tool to evaluate the performance of the different activities with its outcome and interactions. Also, 2- Complete qualitative and integrated quality picture of the effect and impact of the training sessions, workshops, and deliverable through reviewing all the activities and the published materials. Together with Evaluation of the outcomes of structured multiple interviews conducted with the partner universities regarding the quality of the project on their universities and the ministry.

• The quantitative analysis evaluation of the project:
quality is produced through detailed quality survey of the performance and outcomes of the
different activities of the project during the first implementation period. Multiple questions were
structured targeting the quality of the project through the multiple outcomes of the work
packages. The questions were structured on the outcomes and the future expectations of the
outcomes. The result of this tool is as the below diagram which reflect the percentage of
satisfaction of the participant on different quality measures:

Survey Number 2







The above diagram shows high quality and expectation of the contents and outcomes of the project so far. The general result fluctuating between 75-100 %. Considering all the challenges





INsPIRE went through, the result of the quality of the project performance is very good in its different aspects.

• The qualitative measures of the evaluation were considered through the review of the contents of the trainings, workshops, seminars, deliverable and their accordance with the expected outcomes in the proposal. The other qualitative tool of evaluation is comprehensive interview with the leaders of quality work package. All the activities that took place during the period of INsPIRE so far coincide with the goals and expected outcomes.

The total numbers of the participants from different Iraqi universities that have taken one or more training is 148. They represent all the partners from Iraq. It is expected that those trained people will serve as consultant to university leaders and decision makers.

7. External Evaluator General findings

The success of the project dedicated for capacity building is mainly measured by its goals' achievement. After in depth analysis of the project performance and outcomes it can be concluded that INsPIRE achieved many tasks that lead to capacity building in the partner universities and has affected a change in the mind set of individual participants. The INsPIRE vision is to be involved decision making for multidimensional aspects by the leadership to make a positive change into internal governance of the higher education system of the beneficiary Iraqi universities. The evaluation parameters that are considered for the evaluation are: the effectiveness, the efficiency, sustainability, and the European added value of the actions that took place.

7.1 Effectiveness:

Effectiveness investigates what extent were the objectives achieved. All the activities (training, workshops, meetings, data collections, discussions, publications) were considered quantitatively and qualitatively in the effectiveness analysis which adopted the following indicators:

• The achievement of the topics of the training like: University Autonomy, Governance Models, Accountability, Trend in \ University Models, are comprehensive factors toward effective outcomes of the project topics. The continuity of the different training topics and workshops made the project more effective.





- Bringing strategy and culture of quality according to the European standards, this is achieved by the offered training sessions on the Quality and workshop on quality assurance in higher education.
- Bringing Culture of modern internationalization of higher education through training sessions on Trend on Internationalization at University of Bologna. This topic is one of the cores of the modern university governance.
- The trained 148 staff members from the different Iraqi universities considered as preparation of professional workforce within the higher education system in different Iraqi universities along with the Ministry of Higher Education, the trained staff will serve and advocate for the cause of the project.
- To enhance the network between European partner universities and Iraqi institutions as well as between the partner Iraqi universities for future collaboration and knowledge exchange.

7.2 Efficiency:

Efficiency refers to the use of resources toward the achievement of those project goals. Our observation so far, is that the plan of financial allocations and the experience of the European partner are used in efficient way to serve the project cause. However, some of the financial allocation couldn't reach the destination to the Iraqi university for buy the equipment.

The full capacity of the European human resources is used for knowledge collecting data, analyze data and knowledge transfer for the aim of the project. Also, the financial aspect is used so far for European staff cost and training. The budget was used as well for the kick-off in person meeting in Siena University in 2019, training at University of Bologna and Field visits to the University of Siena and University of Evora as well as the implementation of the project. No more financial allocation was used for the Iraqi partner university due to challenges with money transfer.

Having the Iraqi academics devoted their efforts and time to the project without having had any staff cost received from the project so far has a negative impact to their motivation which is in turn reflects on the project outcomes. A part of that the expenditures were efficient to a certain extent.





7.3 Sustainability:

Sustainability is referred to the continuation of benefits of the project after its lifetime. So, the main question here is: To what extent will the outcomes and the activities of the project be expected to continue after the project ends?

The partner Iraqi universities have put in place not very clear strategy to sustain the outcomes of the project. The project has trained and built capacity of academic staff from Iraqi university, the participants show their readiness to integrate good practices into their universities, they will use their new knowledge to advocate for the change as well. This is evidenced by the quality survey and the management survey which shows great impact of the project on the attendees. This project is invested on the human resource development through increasing capacity and promoting professionalism at international level for the universities involved in this project. This investment will sustain in each university through its trained staff, and it will be the catalyst for initiating a culture of good governance in the Higher Education System in Iraq. The networking that the project provides between European expert and Iraqi staff could be seeds for more collaborations. It is important to strengthen institutional relations between the Iraqi universities and the European universities, to open new synergies among them for more collaboration to sustain the relations. However, there is no solid plan for sustainability.

7.4 European Added Value:

- The project provides opportunity for the Iraqi universities to be trained and share experiences and knowledge with the European partner universities. The experts from Europe gave comprehensive training sessions and workshops to academic staff to convey their experiences in European higher education to the Iraqi system
- Enhancement of the skills of staff in Iraqi universities in accordance with European standards in higher education.
- Strengthening the academic networking and internationalization between the European universities and the Iraqi universities.
- Developing academic staff acquainted with the European style of university governance and European academic values and opportunities.





8. INsPIRE's Challenges

INsPIRE project started at a very difficult time in Iraq history. Like all the Iraqi institutions, the higher education system in Iraq went through hard wars, civil war, embargo, ISIS crises since 1980. We can summarize these challenges as the followings:

- The project started just after the Iraqi government and forces from the international community liberate Iraqi territories form ISIS. ISIS controlled more than 1/4 of the Iraqi territories for more than two years. The liberation war was tough and affected the different levels of Iraqi governmental and non-governmental sectors and the Iraqi communities. Some partner universities like University of Mosul were controlled by ISIS which destroyed its infrastructure, some other partner universities are located adjacent to the ISIS controlled areas. The INsPIRE project started just after the liberation of most of the Iraqi lands from ISIS control. Technically, all parts of Iraq were involved in the war against ISIS just before INsPIRE started. The middle and southern parts Iraq was under sever terrorism attacks and political unrest before and during the implementation of INsPIRE. This complex environment is extremely difficult for the coordinator and the partner universities from Iraq and Europe to achieve the ultimate goals of the project within the planned time span.
- During the period of implementation of the project, the COVID 19 hit the world which
 affected INsPIRE project just like any other projects worldwide. Most of the activities like
 meetings, trainings and discussions were turned over to online. The online meeting is great
 solution to keep life going but it won't give the ultimate outcomes compared to in person
 interaction.
- The third challenge INsPIRE was facing is the partner universitas and they have limited experiences with Erasmus Plus projects.
- The partner universities of INsPIRE would like to implement the project smoothly with great outcomes, but it is difficult to have their own bank account to facilitate the money transfer from the European coordinator.
- The delay of the signing of the partnership agreement affected the implementation for almost 10 months. As the project was put on hold for the period from Sept. 2019 until June 2020 when the partnership agreements were signed by all the partners.





• Taking into consideration the above obstacles that face INsPIRE implementation, the project progress is on the way of achieving its final goals as indicated by the success in the implementation with good outcomes of most of the work packages in the current schedule.