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WALADU

Development and Structuring of BA Courses in Archaeology and Ancient History

External Evaluation

WP2 – Training and Transfer of Know-How

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Disclaimer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Evaluation Purpose and Scope

Funded by the European Union through Erasmus+ (Capacity Building Key Action 2), WALADU is a three-year project (2017-2019) coordinated by the University of Bologna. The project is a partnership between the Universities of Ludwig Maximilian in Munich and Koç in Istanbul, in addition to the Universities of Baghdad, Kufa and Qadisiyah in Iraq.

WALADU's general aim is to **contribute to the improvement of education in archaeological and historical subjects in Iraq** and to **increase the opportunities for students in the labor market in Iraq** to bring the formal education of these subjects in line with current EU trends and standards. Specific objectives focus on promoting:

1. The modernization of BA courses in archaeology and ancient history in Iraqi universities;
2. The reinforced capacity to design teaching units, and the cultivation of innovative knowledge by local teachers and staff;
3. International collaborations between the EU and Iraqi higher education institutions to support academic exchanges at all institutional levels, by framing the collaborations within an internationally regulated and recognized network.

This formative evaluation study seeks to provide relevant information concerning the WALADU project experience in relation to the WP2 and key progress made. The study aims to determine the extent to which capacity building, and processes related to it, has been effective in generating the desired results.

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to provide evidence of the effectiveness, immediate effects, sustainability and efficiency of the project that can be used for both learning and accountability

The final evaluation, carried out from July to September 2018, consisted of three phases:

Desk review - This phase's aim was to plan and establish the framework for the evaluation process, including the identification of objectives, indicators and an initial gathering of information.

Consultation process – This phase aimed to gather feedback of key informants, such as the coordinating team (University of Bologna), the European partner universities and the trainees.

Consolidation - The results of the desk review and the consultation process were compiled and analyzed in this phase. Information was examined and crosschecked in light of the evaluation matrix defined during the desk phase. As a result of this process, the final report was drafted and finalized after incorporating the inputs of the coordinating team.

II. Findings

Through the implementation of Work Package 2, the project directly contributed to improving the quality of the performance of senior, junior and administrative staff employed by the universities of Baghdad, Kufa and Qadisiyah and strengthening major aspects such as local ownership, management and sustainability.

The project in general, and WP2 specifically, were effectively built around contextually-relevant needs and has been generating important achievements that have the potential to be impactful in the long-term at multiple levels of the universities and within Iraq's society.

The project, and specifically the WP2, adequately takes into consideration the complexities linked to the Iraqi context and the gaps related to outdated infrastructure and tools within the Iraqi universities. The project and WP2 also acknowledge university staff's lack of opportunities to relate to more complex and participatory teaching modalities, and is therefore **relevant** to the needs of the target group it addresses.

The evaluation results have found that the WP2 has been **effective** in creating the conditions for junior and senior scholars and administrative staff to improve their knowledge and capacities, and for them to play an active role in contributing to the advancement of higher education in Iraq.

This evaluation aimed to analyze the extent to which capacity building results were impactful at different levels, though the evaluation could only assess **immediate results** due to the limited scope of this study. The project's WP2 has increased the capacity of the target groups in terms of knowledge, skills and confidence, and has facilitated the transfer of newly acquired know-how to Iraqi students. Further analysis during the final evaluation is needed to comprehend the overall impact potential on an individual basis, as well as changes to a broader and systematic extent within the universities and society.

The project has put in place transparent and **efficient** working modalities and can rely on a robust M&E methodology that ensures a smooth implementation.

Although in its early implementation stages, the project is building momentum towards ensuring its long-term **sustainability** through WaLink, a network of experts, that will serve as a resource to strengthen exchanges and cooperation between Europe and the Middle East in the Humanities field.

III. Conclusions & Recommendations

Investing in local capacities in higher education Institutions is a mean to promote change towards a modernization of education policies and to provide students with an education that is more aligned to the needs of the labour market and society. The partnership between

European and Iraqi universities for the WALADU project focuses on the grass-root level. It works with professors (juniors and seniors) and administrative staff building their skills, knowledge and expertise, through a bottom-up approach, to reach a long-term change in higher education institutions for archaeological and historical subjects, including quality assurance systems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Acknowledging the results so far achieved, the following is a consolidated set of specific recommendations and suggestions based on the areas of potential improvement identified throughout the evaluation exercise:

- The evaluation generally recommends assisting junior and administrative staff in measuring the effectiveness, and possibly the impact, of the new syllabi and trainings for peer administrative staff. It would be advisable to work on a set of tools that would help evaluate the cascade effects of the WALADU trainings and eventually initiate a more permanent accountability mechanism to be used in Iraqi universities.
- The language barrier was identified as one of the major areas of improvement for both trainees and organizers. The inclusion of Arabic-speaking facilitators in future trainings would therefore be highly suggested.
- To reinforce the preparation phase, the establishment and the administration (depending on the availability in situ) of basic and advanced scientific English courses for scholars to digest before attending the trainings abroad is highly recommended.
- A two-step selection should be envisaged to strengthen the selection criteria process and to further assess the language skills of the candidates. The current process could be complemented by in-person interviews—including via Skype—to meet the candidate and further assess his/her speaking and technical English skills.
- Consider lengthening senior scholars' trainings to ensure they are able to maximize their exposure to European universities teaching methodology and the universities' research environments.
- To further maximize the benefits of the exchange between universities -and provided the security situation allows for it- consider sending European scholars on short term missions to Iraq during the initial needs' assessment and candidate selection phases.

To ensure long-term policy results are achieved in the complex and bureaucratic Iraqi higher education context, advocacy and policy actions should be more explicitly geared towards promoting dialogue with ministries and authorities to advocate at the national level for innovative teaching methodologies that are in line with international standards.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

I. The Project

WALADU is a three-year project (2017-2019) funded by the European Union in the context of the Erasmus+ (Capacity Building Key Action 2). Coordinated by the University of Bologna, the WALADU project is a partnership between the Universities of Ludwig Maximilian in Munich and Koç in Istanbul, in addition to the Universities of Baghdad, Kufa and Qadisiyah in Iraq.

WALADU's general aim is to **contribute to the improvement of education in archaeological and historical subjects in Iraq** and to **increase the opportunities for students in the labor market in Iraq** to bring the formal education of these subjects in line with current EU trends and standards. Specific objectives focus on promoting:

4. The modernization of BA courses in archaeology and ancient history in Iraqi universities;
5. The reinforced capacity to design teaching units, and the cultivation of innovative knowledge by local teachers and staff;
6. International collaborations between the EU and Iraqi higher education institutions to support academic exchanges at all institutional levels, by framing the collaborations within an internationally regulated and recognized network.

The WALADU project involves a broad spectrum of activities that are encompassed in eight work packages (WP). Working on developing the academic profile of teaching staff (both senior and junior professors), in addition to the administrative technical competence on quality assurance, is a prominent component of the project. This specific component is enclosed in the Work Package 2 (WP2), which is the focus area of this evaluation study.

Twelve senior and twelve junior teachers and researchers from each Iraqi University partnering in the project were selected to be trained in Europe. The junior teachers were divided into groups of four to attend the training programme organized by each of the European Universities. The five administrative staff selected were trained in Bologna.

II. Evaluation Purpose and Scope

This formative external evaluation study seeks to provide relevant information concerning the WALADU project experience in relation to the WP2 and key progress made. The study aims to determine the extent to which capacity building, and processes related to it, has been effective in generating the desired results.

In detail, the primary purpose of this evaluation is to provide evidence of the effectiveness, immediate effects, sustainability and efficiency of the project that can be used for both learning and accountability.

Report Structure

The report starts by illustrating the methodology and approach employed. The report then presents key contextual information and briefly highlights the project's and the WP2's objectives.

The report later presents the **findings** of the evaluation by analyzing various aspects of the WP2, such as the **operational strategy/approach** and **implementation**. Every aspect of the WP2 is linked to relevant evaluation criteria ranging from relevance to effectiveness, and from immediate results and sustainability to efficiency.

Finally, **conclusions** and a set of **recommendations/observations** are provided. The annexes section provides an overview of the tools used during the data collection, such as the evaluation grid and the interview guide. An overview of the report's content is provided in the **executive summary**.

III. Methodology

The final evaluation, carried out from July to September 2018, consisted of three phases:

Desk review - This phase's aim was to plan and establish the framework for the evaluation process, including the identification of objectives, indicators and an initial gathering of information. Relevant documentation in relation to the project in general and the WP2 specifically were gathered and reviewed, including the project proposal, minutes of meetings, and reports from the universities and from the trainees. A list of key staff members, partners and representatives of direct target groups was completed. The timeline and conditions for delivery and presentation of the final report were agreed upon and the evaluation matrix was defined (please see Annex I). The overall methodology of the evaluation, summarized in the matrix, relies on a selected number of criteria such as: relevance of the work package to the needs of the target groups and to the context, coherence of the work package against the overall project design and logical framework, effectiveness of the activities (trainings), immediate results & sustainability, and efficiency and mainstreaming of relevant crosscutting issues (gender balance, good governance) during the overall implementation.

Consultation process – This phase aimed to gather feedback of key informants, such as the coordinating team (University of Bologna), the European partner universities and the trainees. Twelve individuals took part in the consultation process. The full list of the key informants interviewed is available in Annex II. The consultation process employed a qualitative data gathering methodology through semi-structured interviews on an individual basis or small group settings over Skype calls (please see Annex III for the interview guide).

Consolidation - The results of the desk review and the consultation process were compiled and analyzed in this phase. Information was examined and crosschecked in light of the

evaluation matrix defined during the desk phase. As a result of this process, the final report was drafted and finalized after incorporating the inputs of the coordinating team.

The methodology used throughout the evaluation exercise primarily focused on analyzing the process to achieve the expected outcomes and to determine the immediate effects of this work package. Particular attention was given to the level of participation of all partners in the design and implementation of the capacity building activities and changes generated at different levels.

SECTION TWO: FINDINGS

I. Relevance and Coherence

Higher education is one of the sectors that sustained significant damages in Iraq over the last fifteen years, particularly to infrastructure and the educational system. The gap between the educational opportunities offered by universities in Iraq and the requirements for sustainable economic development has widened over time. Instability and the lack of security have undermined normal academic activities in Iraqi universities and have triggered an unexpected brain drain that has further undermined the educational opportunities of Iraqi students. At the institutional level, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) needs technical support and capacity building to effectively ensure access to quality higher education system.

Despite international endeavors to reconstruct the Iraqi education system, there is a need to increase efforts in order to strengthen the rehabilitation of the institutional and human capacity of Iraqi universities. According to international specialized agencies, urgent needs include the enhancement of the capacity of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in policy, planning and management of the higher education system; additionally, Iraqi teachers and researchers require support to re-establish contact with the academic world community¹. The destruction of cultural heritage throughout the country has placed further emphasis on the necessity to modernise the Iraqi higher education system to provide qualified personnel to preserve Iraq's threatened cultural heritage.

The WALADU project has sought to address these needs through following the *Europe to Iraq* trajectory, which aims to promote the development of an *in-country* higher education system. The WALADU project recalls positive examples set by other international programmes in Iraq, such as rehabilitation interventions implemented by UNESCO within the framework of the International Fund for Higher Education. UNESCO also implemented a project aimed to support Higher Education Institutes' initiatives and ensure both their

¹ UNESCO Office for Iraq <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/iraq-office/education/higher-education/>

continuous improvement and coordination, respectively by the development of quality assurance procedures and a joint planning and monitoring with MoHESR.

Within the scope of addressing constraints related to cultural heritage and education in Iraq (in general) and revitalizing the archeology and ancient history sectors (specifically), the WALADU project was designed by taking the inputs provided by the Iraqi Universities of Baghdad, Qadisiyah and Kufa as a point of departure. Sustained by the Iraq State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) and the Association of Arab Universities, the WALADU project brought together European and Iraqi Universities to develop a concerted strategy and action plan.

The WALADU project envisages a mixed methodology that combines researches and practical activities, including training, validation and dissemination among others. The review of the project documentation, background information, and feedback from key informants showed that the project design is **relevant** to the target groups' needs and consistent with international and national policies.

Specifically, the work package under evaluation (WP2) was designed to improve the technical capacity of the identified target groups (senior, junior and admin staff from the partner Iraqi Universities) encompassing a combination of face-to-face training activities and the use of IT technologies. This initial design was further fine-tuned and tailored according to the participants' needs during implementation. The further refinements of the teaching methodology and the training structure were also based on the findings related to WP1's "Need Analysis and Report" and practical constraints related to actual capacities available among the Iraqi universities' staff.

From a technical point of view, WP2 is relevant to the target groups' needs and in line with the overall design of the project proposal, where the different levels were coherently outlined and interlinked in a sound and robust logical framework. A clear result chain and appropriate set of indicators complete the M&E methodology of the project. However, the indicators are mostly quantitative which is counterbalanced by frequent external evaluations that provide a qualitative perspective.

II. Results Achieved (Effectiveness)

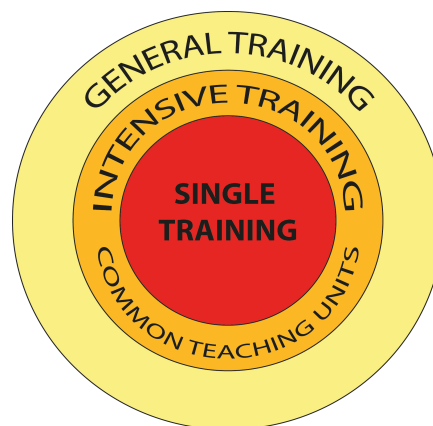
This evaluation finds the WP2 to be **effective**, as all the expected outputs have been achieved according to the project work plan. The WP leaders were: the LMU-Munich for the Senior Teaching Staff and the Junior Researchers Staff training; the University of Bologna for the Administrative Staff training. The table below provides an overview of progress results:

ACTIVITIES WP2	LMU	Koç	UniBo	Dates	Status
Senior Teaching Staff Training (12	✓			27 Nov-7 Dec 2017	Achieved

participants)					
Junior Researcher Staff Training (12 participants)	✓	✓	✓	LMU 22 Oct-21 Dec 2017 Koç 22 Oct-21 Dec 2017 UniBo 12 Feb-12 Apr 2018	Achieved
Administrative Staff training (30 participants as per project proposal; changed to 5)			✓	UniBo 01-08 March 2018	Achieved

General Structure and methodology of the trainings

The common framework adopted by the European Universities for the capacity building component, targeting senior and junior staff from the Iraqi counterparts, was defined and approved during WP1 in the second half of 2017. The Training System Methodology (TSM) was the result of in-depth discussions and the willingness to identify a common approach to the training's structure. It has two components: a general (i) and an intensive (ii) training, which was followed by the three EU partners as a general rule. To each partner was then given the possibility to organize its own detailed schedule according to the resources available during the training period (teachers, facilities etc.). The trainings comprised a mixed methodology including: lectures, research visits, seminars and workshops, BA course structuring, homework and reports.



The training for senior scholars was held at LMU Munich from November 27 to December 7, 2017. It aimed to improve their technical and academic skills, and particularly focused on didactic methods, research and innovation policies. The following topics were discussed:

- Research-oriented teaching methods
- Leadership and people management
- Quality management of degree courses
- New excavation and survey methods
- International collaborations, exchange of academic knowledge
- Geographic information system (GIS)

The training offered intensive workshops and courses from current programs at LMU, and guided tours of the university, institutes and libraries. Museum trips were also available during leisure time.

The training for junior scholars was held respectively in LMU Munich, Koç Istanbul and University of Bologna from October to December 2017 (in LMU and Koç) and from February to April 2018 (at UniBo). The trainings consisted of two weeks of General Training plus 1.5 months of Intensive Training aimed at improving their technical and academic skills. The senior scholar trainings focused on didactic skills, research and innovation policies, as well as specific academic themes on the History and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (which should be taught after the training in the Iraqi Universities amplifying the impact of the capacity building). Four junior scholars were sent to each university and topics varied from English and academic writing courses (general training) to GIS, excavation methods and grant writing (intensive training).

Administrative staff trainings consisted of two weeks of General Training aimed at improving their know-how of quality assurance, ECTS and internship design. It was initially planned in Baghdad but due to security issues it was moved to Bologna and held from the 1st to 8th of March 2018.

Junior and Senior Staff Training: Results and Achievements

The evaluation team received positive feedback from the trainings, particularly regarding newly acquired competencies and its overall organization. The immersive experience at European partner universities was highly appreciated by both junior and senior scholars.

The junior scholars expressed their satisfaction with the trainings' overall organization and methodology. Despite the initial difficulties with language barriers and adjusting to new teaching and research methods (specifically academic writing and technical terminology), all the interviewees highlighted the importance of this experience towards improving their technical capacities and teaching techniques.

The topical division of the selected candidates into small groups was, according to this evaluation and key informants, a rewarding choice. All of the junior scholars were offered the possibility to further research their main field of interest and partake in supplemental activities (such as shadowing a museum curator) to maximize the impact of the training. Particular appreciation emerged for the teaching methodologies employed in the European universities, specifically participatory seminars, as opposed to those used in Iraq where frontal lectures with no real engagement from the students are the norm.

The length of the trainings and the final assignments were positively rated, though some scholars did have difficulties writing academic papers congruent with EU standards. It is important to highlight that the selected final assignments, the syllabus, are currently being used in the Iraqi universities for the academic year 2018-2019. This is an important achievement that should be further analyzed by the external final evaluation to grasp its potential positive implications and impact.

The senior scholars also expressed overall satisfaction with the trainings and the ability to use universities' facilities, such as libraries and labs. However, the length of this general training was, according to some, not enough to adequately discuss and further research

important topics, particularly to learn about methodologies and tools that are currently not in use nor available in Iraq. Additional feedback included the desire for a balanced combination between academic lectures and practical skills, e.g. the use of drones in archeology, excavations and other similar practical activities, and the desire to improve language skills ahead of the trainings.

The language barrier emerged as the biggest challenge from both trainees and organizers. A good knowledge of the English language was one of the main selection criteria for candidates, however the selection happened through the analysis of written requests which inaccurately portrayed applicants' speaking abilities. To mitigate, the consortium partners included academic writing in English within the training schedule. This adjustment proved to be very useful, though in some cases it was barely enough. Suggestions to avoid the same challenges in the future encourage a two-step selection process that would include in-person or teleconference interviews to gauge candidates' language skills. Additional suggestions revolved around the idea of enabling prospective participants to enroll in pre-training courses in advanced and technical English, even on line considering that this type of courses are currently not available in Iraq.

On the other hand, the senior scholars exhibited more advanced English-language skills, including in other languages, which in most cases improved communication and the trainings' smooth implementation. However, it would be beneficial to consider having Arabic-speaking facilitators at future trainings in Europe.

Finally, gender balance was another criterion that the consortium partners tried to apply as much as possible during the selection and when possible, the selected candidate pool was comprised of 50% men and 50% women. The same criterion was applied to the composition of groups sent to the European Universities.

Administrative Staff Training: Results and Achievements

The administrative staff training was initially conceived as a residential training to be delivered in Baghdad for 30 candidates. However, due to security concerns and the decision to maximize the potential impact of this training by employing a "training of trainers" (ToT) approach for selected candidates, the number of beneficiaries was reduced to five and the training was implemented in Bologna. Stricter selection criteria identified qualified candidates with current roles and positions in the Iraqi Universities that would allow the five chosen staff members to transfer the learned know-how to other staff and to play an important role in the follow-up activities, such as the creation of archeological labs (WaLab) and libraries (WaLib).

The training was held from March 1st to 8th 2018 and was divided in two phases: 1) quality assurance tools, international teaching mobility, internship design and 2) ECTS system. According to project reports and key informants, the course was useful and effective. The possibility to experience first hand how administrative systems in European Universities work was one of the aspects participants appreciated the most. Topics and the entire

programme were rated as excellent and proactive discussions on how to improve the work of the Iraqi universities towards higher standards were considered very useful. During those discussions, important structural gaps and relative initial solutions for the Iraqi universities were identified by the trainees. Through the definition of follow-up activities, led by the University of Bologna, the long-term engagement to foster and support the new BA's teaching activities was assured. The creation of WaLab and WaLib in every Iraqi partner university was the first step to improve outdated infrastructure and technical tools. By the time of this evaluation, the creation of the labs and libraries was nearly concluded; key informants reiterated the importance of having specialized books in English and the necessary tools, including drones, to further advance archaeological research in Iraq.

An additional important achievement of this training was the five-year framework agreement signed by the consortium partners to establish, among other academic endeavours, an international resource network called WaLink. The network will aim to become a platform and resource for students in the field of Humanities and to strengthen exchanges between Europe and the Middle East in the same field. The administrative staff will be involved in the creation and maintenance of this network.

III. Immediate effects & Sustainability

Measuring WP2's impact goes beyond the scope of this evaluation, however there are some "immediate effects" that emerged during the consultation phase. The immediate effects can constitute the basis from which the final external evaluation could be based, which would analyze the long-term effects of the WALADU project.

To determine the early impact of any project intervention, final evaluations should analyze changes at three different levels: individual, community and institutional/policy levels. In this specific case, any effects of the intervention are too young to analyze for policy changes, primarily because discussions with the relevant Iraqi Ministries and Authorities are in the initial stages and still on going. Similarly, the long terms effects at the community-level are not evident yet. This evaluation will therefore consider the immediate effects at the individual level, and will strongly acknowledge that all of the above-mentioned levels are an integral part of the WALADU project and therefore would prove useful to analyze at the final evaluation stage.

The findings of the evaluation show that the project has been particularly effective on the individual level. Trainees felt the project had increased their knowledge, technical expertise, and—for junior scholars in particular—also their self-confidence. New syllabi have been developed and junior scholars are already transferring their acquired know-how to their students. European counterparts are following-up with the scholars through emails and skype calls to give advice and to help them shape courses and/or practicums (e.g a survey on archeological sites to be implemented in February 2019).

To help junior scholars measure the tangible and direct results of their actions, it would be useful to provide the scholars with tools (such as evaluation questionnaires) to administer to students at the end of this academic year. This will help get feedback on the junior scholars' performance and the cascade effects of the trainings implemented by WALADU, but also to establish transparent accountability mechanisms within Iraqi universities. The same suggestion is valid for the administrative staff that will be training their peers according to the ToT methodology.

Benefits at the individual level were also highlighted for senior scholars. Some senior scholars are working to improve teaching methodologies in their university, a long-term change that could eventually reach the top of the bureaucratic Iraqi system through intentional, cohesive, incisive and coordinated action supported by the European partners.

In terms of sustainability, the impact of the WP at the individual level is particularly important. Building the capacity of teaching staff ensures long term sustainability, since the scholars' wealth of knowledge will last beyond the completion of this project. By signing the five-year cooperation agreement, the WaLink network will ensure regular exchanges on a variety of topics and ad hoc collaboration on further interventions, including possible new grants. Furthermore, talks with relevant authorities, including Ministries, on the establishment of internships to offer the students the possibility to get practical experience and be more competitive in the job market, are successfully progressing.

Finally, the overall methodology adopted by the WALADU project, which is participatory in nature, aims to increase local ownership by reinforcing the sustainability of the project's activities. The general positive environment built around this initiative, the variety of relationships established, and the number of partnerships developed are all elements that are expected to last well into the medium and long-term.

IV. Management (Efficiency)

The evaluation of the project documentation and the feedback received at the consultation level showed that the management of this project relies on a good levels of interaction between partners throughout all different stages of the project, from conception to implementation. The working relationship appears to be based on mutual respect and common goals, which led to a participatory implementation strategy involving partners and representatives in all strategic and important decision-making levels. This also involved the assignment of implementation responsibilities of the different WPs to each European partner (LMU Munich, UNIBO and Koç). Furthermore, a number of strategies and working modalities are in place to guarantee a coordinated and transparent project implementation (WP5), from regular meetings (Consortium Assembly meetings) to publishing every relevant document to the WALADU website. To add to this, according to the most of the interviewed, internal communication processes are strong which contribute to the smooth implementation of the project.

As already highlighted in the relevance paragraph of this report, the project envisages a robust M&E methodology that, through a combination of internal and external evaluations, encourages the identification of corrective or mitigation measures on a timely basis, and favours good governance.

SECTION THREE: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Investing in local capacities of higher education institutions is a means to promote change towards the modernization of education policies and to provide students with an education that is more aligned with the needs of the labour market and society. The partnership between European and Iraqi universities for the WALADU project focuses on the grass-root level. It works with professors (juniors and seniors) and administrative staff building their skills, knowledge and expertise, through a bottom-up approach, to reach a long-term change in higher education institutions for archaeological and historical subjects, including quality assurance systems.

Having this general objective of the project in mind, this evaluation study provided an overview and analysis of the relevance, effectiveness, immediate results and sustainability of one of its work packages, WP2.

In analyzing the project design and specifically WP2's, through the previously mentioned criteria, the evaluation found that it was effectively built around contextually-relevant needs and has been generating important achievements that have the potential to be impactful in the long-term at multiple levels of the universities and within Iraq's society. It adequately takes into consideration the complexities linked to the Iraqi context and the gaps related to outdated infrastructure and tools within the Iraqi universities. Furthermore, it also acknowledges university staff's lack of opportunities to relate to more complex and participatory teaching modalities, and is therefore relevant to the needs of the target group it addresses.

The WALADU consortium partners have been particularly attentive to the means employed to reach the project's aim through creating the conditions for junior and senior scholars and administrative staff to improve their knowledge and capacities, focusing on the potential cascade effect of the trainings and the quality of the follow up assistance provided. The evaluation showed important potentials in term of medium and long lasting changes to a broader and systematic extent within the universities and society that, however, this should be further explored at final evaluation stage.

What this study can assert is that there has been an improvement in terms of increased capacity of the target groups. Acquisition of new knowledge, skills and confidence has been effectively facilitated as well as the transfer of newly acquired know-how to Iraqi students.

The project is also building momentum towards ensuring its long-term sustainability through the establishment of processes and agreements that will guarantee further cooperation, through the WaLink network for example, between the consortium partners. A strategy reinforced by actions aimed at a higher level, such as advocacy with Ministries and Authorities, that are envisaged in the project designs and to which this study recognizes a prominent role even if a more detailed analysis exile from the scope of this evaluation

RECOMMENDATIONS

Acknowledging the results so far achieved, the following is a consolidated set of specific recommendations and suggestions based on the areas of potential improvement identified throughout the evaluation exercise. The recommendations mainly focus on strengthening the capacity building approach considering the structural gaps in which the project operates and the practical possibility to provide a more comprehensive training cycle.

- Given the potential positive effects on BA courses, the evaluation generally recommends assisting junior and administrative staff in measuring the effectiveness, and possibly the impact, of the new syllabi and trainings for peer administrative staff. It would be advisable to work on a set of tools that would help evaluate the cascade effects of the WALADU trainings and eventually initiate a more permanent accountability mechanism to be used in Iraqi universities.
- The language barrier was identified as one of the major areas of improvement for both trainees and organizers. The inclusion of Arabic-speaking facilitators in future trainings would therefore be highly suggested.
- To reinforce the preparation phase, the establishment and the administration (depending on the availability in situ) of basic and advanced scientific English courses for scholars to digest before attending the trainings abroad is highly recommended.
- A two-step selection should be envisaged to strengthen the selection criteria process and to further assess the language skills of the candidates. The current process could be complemented by in-person interviews—including via Skype—to meet the candidate and further assess his/her speaking and technical English skills.
- Consider lengthening senior scholars' trainings to ensure they are able to maximize their exposure to European universities teaching methodology and the universities' research environments.

- To further maximize the benefits of the exchange between universities -and provided the security situation allows for it- consider sending European scholars on short term missions to Iraq during the initial needs' assessment and candidate selection phases.

- To ensure long-term policy results are achieved in the complex and bureaucratic Iraqi higher education context, advocacy and policy actions should be more explicitly geared towards promoting dialogue with ministries and authorities to advocate at the national level for innovative teaching methodologies that are in line with international standards.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: EVALUATION GRID

Evaluation Matrix						
Questions	Sub –Questions	Measures or Indicators	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Sources	Data Collection
To what extent are the WP designs consistent with the target group needs?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of participation and interaction of the target groups in the activities 			Feedback from WALADU staff (each university), target groups, project material	Interviews with key informants/ review of relevant material
To what extent have the capacity building efforts/trainings achieved expected outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective were trainings at increasing the knowledge and competencies (the knowledge triangle) of junior, senior and admin Iraqi staff? To what extent did target groups utilize knowledge and skills from capacity building trainings so far? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of skills/knowledge gained by the trainees (including gender analysis) Level of confidence felt by the trainees to utilize the knowledge/skills gained (including gender analysis) Number and type of innovation at the universities from admin staff Number of updates to university 			Project records, including self-appraisal forms (if any)/feedback of target population Project records/ feedback of Uni staff, target groups / official records	Interviews/ review of relevant material Interviews/focus groups/review of relevant material

<p>How sustainable are the outcomes achieved through the WP2/capacity building component?</p> <p>To what extent did the implementation mechanisms and the use of the available resources facilitate the attainment of WP2 objectives?</p> <p>To what extent were cross-cutting issues- such as gender equality, good governance- mainstreamed through the implementation of the project?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> curricula/syllabus Engagement of senior staff with national government representatives 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What factors hinder or support the long-term sustainability of key WP2 outputs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of teaching methodology Follow up mechanism from Unibo External/internal factors facilitating the upgrade of the courses at the uni in Iraq 		Project records/feedback of FH staff and target population	Review of relevant material/ interviews and focus groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How successful were UNIBO and its partners in implementing and managing WP2? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification and use of implementation strategies (check and balances mechanism –SC and consortium assembly) 		Project records/feedback of FH staff and project stakeholders	Review of relevant material/ interviews
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross cutting issues were integrated in the design and implementation of the WP adequately 		Project records/feedback of FH staff and project stakeholders	Review of relevant material/ interviews and focus groups

ANNEX II: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

Name, Title, Organisation/Affiliation	Contact Date and Format
<p>Ms Licia Prosepio, Project Coordination team, University of Bologna</p> <p>Mr Federico Zaina, Project Coordination team, University of Bologna</p> <p>Mr Emmanuel di Tommaso, Project Coordination Team, University of Bologna</p>	<p>Friday 27/07/18</p> <p>Skype interview</p>
<p>Ms Adelheid Otto, WALADU Focal Point, LMU Munich University</p>	<p>Wednesday 08/08/18</p> <p>Skype interview</p>
<p>Ms Anna Kurmangaliev, WALADU Focal Point, LMU Munich University</p>	<p>Thursday 09/08/18</p> <p>Skype Interview</p>
<p>Ms Burçu Sarsilmaz, WALADU Focal Point, Koç University</p>	<p>Friday 10/08/18</p> <p>Skype interview</p>
<p>Ms Riyam Hussein Abed, Kufa University</p> <p>Ms Shaymaa Al-Badri, Qadisiyah University</p>	<p>Friday 17/08/18</p> <p>Skype interview</p>
<p>Mr Alaa Al-lami, Kufa University</p> <p>Dr Mohammed Sayyab, Qadisiyah University</p> <p>Dr Munah Alqaisi, Kufa University</p>	<p>Monday 03/09/18</p> <p>Skype interviews</p>
<p>Mr Laith Majeed Hussein, University of Baghdad</p>	<p>Tuesday 11/09/18</p> <p>Questions sent via email</p>

ANNEX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE

⇒ Introduction

Brief explanation on the scope of the WP2 evaluation

Brief explanation on the methodology to be adopted

Notes on confidentiality

⇒ Relevance

1. To what extent did WP2 respond to the needs of the beneficiaries?
2. Were all key stakeholders adequately involved in assessing the needs of trainees and designing the training modules? How were the target groups selected?

⇒ Effectiveness

1. Which results (qualitative and quantitative) were achieved by the trainings?
2. Do you think the current set-up and division into small groups for junior scholars was more effective? If no, why?
3. What can you tell me about the teaching methodologies? Do you think they were effective?
4. Have trainees improved their knowledge and skills? How do you think they will employ the newly acquired skills in the future?
5. What were the main challenges faced during the implementation of this WP?
6. What were the main achievements? (Stronger partnerships/good teaching methodologies/good and useful skills for trainees)
7. What are the key lessons-learned with regards to this WP?
8. What needs to be improved and what could be done differently in the future?

⇒ Immediate Effects

1. What do you think were the immediate effects of this work package? What factors hindered or facilitated the achievements of the desired outcomes?
2. Did the training produce any unexpected result (positive or negative)?

⇒ Sustainability

1. What steps have been taken to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the project/WP2?
2. How do you envisage the long-term sustainability of this WP?

⇒ Efficiency

1. Were planning and monitoring procedures appropriate to achieve results and ensure accountability?
2. Were the work plan, budget and organizational set-up adequate for implementing the planned activities and achieving the expected results? If not, why?
3. What are the strategies put in place by the UniBo to guarantee an adequate involvement of the partners?

4. Was the support from UniBo staff effective and timely? What do you think could have been done differently?

⇒ **Conclusions**

Q&A