



PRACTICAL EXPRIENCE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT IN THE PARTNER COUNTRY

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THE PROJECT

“Modernisation of higher education in the area of food quality and safety in Tajikistan”.



THE OBJECTIVE

To support modernization of higher education in the area of food quality and safety in Tajikistan.

THE MAIN OUTCOME

Master level study programme
“Food quality and safety”.

PARTNERS

6 universities (3 from Tajikistan, 3 from EU Member States) and 1 public authority:

- ✦ Latvia University of Agriculture (LV)
- ✦ Tajik Agrarian University named after Sh.Shotemur (TJ)
- ✦ Avicenna Tajik State Medical University (TJ)
- ✦ Technological University of Tajikistan (TJ)
- ✦ Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra (SK)
- ✦ Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LT)
- ✦ Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan (TJ)

Management practices

No1 Building the consortium and elaboration of the project

No2 Management and coordination of the consortium and the project

No 3 Cultural differences (including management culture)

No1 BUILDING THE CONSORTIUM AND ELABORATION OF THE PROJECT - EXPERIENCES

1) The programme's ***partner search data base is a good tool to find relevant partners.***

Potential partners, who are active and announce themselves in the partners' data base, have greater chance to be invited to join consortium.

2) ***Insufficient knowing and understanding local environment*** (procedures, rules) in Partner country ***and real status quo at partners' institutions*** (capacity, experience) is leading towards shortcomings in elaboration of the activities time schedule and planning of the budget.

More resources (working time and funding) than planned are necessary when the project is in implementation phase.

No1 BUILDING THE CONSORTIUM AND ELABORATION OF THE PROJECT - EXAMPLES

➤ ***Partners have overestimated their ability to communicate in English; we assumed this statement and did not ascertain.***

Limited ability of directly involved staff to communicate in English has raised issue on necessity to ensure interpretation during joint events and necessity to translate materials (it is affecting budget, is requiring additional time for provision of events).

➤ ***We did not realised that visas acquisition process will be more complicated and expensive than planned.***

No-one of involved EU partners has embassy in Tajikistan. Acquisition of visas is requiring unscheduled travels to neighbouring countries where relevant embassy is located (it is affecting budget, time necessary for acquisition of visas).

➤ ***It was not known that staff members of partner institutions having top executives positions (rectors, vice-rectors, representatives of ministries) are more restricted to travel to EU countries.***

Coordination of their travels with several superior authorities is time assuming and sometimes they are not allowed to go for a meeting (it is affecting quality of activities).

No1 BUILDING THE CONSORTIUM AND ELABORATION OF THE PROJECT - LESSONS LEARNT AND TO BE SHARED (1)

- ✦ ***Start elaboration*** of the project ***in very due time***, as lack of time is one of the greatest hazards for success of a project.
- ✦ ***Assess capacities*** of your partners and ***be realistic*** with regard to their experience and competence level.
- ✦ ***Get to know and verify procedures to be applied*** with regard to any of activities (invitations, visas, procedures and timeline for submission of the study programme for licensing, etc.).
- ✦ If possible ***visit your partners*** and have a project planning meeting (on-line meetings are option, if visit is not possible).

No1 BUILDING THE CONSORTIUM AND ELABORATION OF THE PROJECT - LESSONS LEARNT AND TO BE SHARED (2)

- ✦ ***Explain partners content and main conditions before submission of the project***, as sometimes they are not fully aware on the proposal.
- ✦ ***Ask partners all questions you have*** in mind, even those which seem to be silly at the first glance, as answers will provide you valuable information.
- ✦ ***Ask partners what they have experienced*** in other projects and what has to be taken into consideration.

No2 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE CONSORTIUM AND THE PROJECT - EXPERIENCES

1) ***Flexibility, openness and reliance of partners*** from Partner countries are ***good basis for applying joint*** management and coordination ***procedures***.

2) Even all partners have experience in the project management, ***the understanding and capacity of the project management is differing considerably***.

Differences are causing risks and unfavourable impact on well timed implementation of activities, is requiring more working time as planned initially, are affecting costs of management and activities.

No2 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE CONSORTIUM AND THE PROJECT - EXAMPLES

- Reliance and flexibility of partners let us ***introduce joint management approach*** for all involved Tajikistan's universities.
- Person appointed for a position of a ***coordinator*** at the partner level ***had formal, but not real power to take decisions*** on the project, and ***was not familiar with the theme***.
- ***Different bearing in considering deadlines*** scheduled for execution of activities and tasks ***is affecting work*** of other staff and partners and is causing postponing of some activities.
- ***Partners located in the same country very rarely are coordinating execution of joint tasks***, even if you planned so in the proposal and discussed in management meetings.
- ***Insufficient experience*** of partners ***to procure goods and services are requiring extra supervision***.

No2 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE CONSORTIUM AND THE PROJECT – LESSONS LEARNT AND TO BE SHARED (1)

- ✦ ***Do not take as self-evident***, that each partner and each involved management staff member ***is knowing and is understanding conditions*** of the agreement and partnership agreement. Discuss them.
- ✦ ***Create and introduce easy and understandable procedures.*** Do it as soon as possible.
- ✦ ***Visit each partner, talk to each partner*** about its management practices and experiences, ***discuss the project management approaches*** with a coordinator and with decision making person/-s (rector, vice rector, etc.).

No2 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF THE CONSORTIUM AND THE PROJECT – LESSONS LEARNT AND TO BE SHARED (2)

- ✦ ***Plan enough meetings and enough time for explanation of management and coordination procedures*** and to agree on mechanisms and procedures.
- ✦ Management and coordination is ***more effective if messages including tasks are personalised*** - direct communication to a single partner/person, therefore sufficient amount of time should be planned for this task.
- ✦ ***Ask partners – how you are going to do this?*** Find out their experience and let to use in the most valuable way.

No3 CULTURAL DIFFERENCES (INCLUDING MANAGEMENT TRADITIONS) - EXPERIENCES

- 1) ***People*** in Middle Asia countries ***are very hospitable*** and will do their best to make you feel comfortable and to fulfil your needs and wishes.
- 2) ***Cultural differences can raise issues not considered as those to be discussed while the project planning.***
- 3) ***Finding compromises is requiring patience, energy and diplomacy.***

No3 CULTURAL DIFFERENCES (INCLUDING MANAGEMENT TRADITIONS) - EXAMPLES

- ✦ Religious and social traditions have required ***careful thinking about timing of events and menu.***
- ✦ ***Entertainment traditions*** are differing and it would be useful to discuss them at the beginning of the project.
- ✦ ***Gender equality issue.***
- ✦ ***Non-written principle of hierarchy*** (position, rights) at institutional level and between institutions is ***slowing down process or sometimes even is stopping it for a while.***

No3 CULTURAL DIFFERENCES (INCLUDING MANAGEMENT TRADITIONS) - LESSONS LEARNT AND TO BE SHARED

- ✦ ***Assess traditions and take into consideration*** while planning any activities.
- ✦ ***Plan sufficient work time for individual communication to partners***, as it would happen that managerial staff of a partner do not take part in events and does not follow directly, what happens in the project.
- ✦ ***Define*** already in the proposal what are ***requirements and conditions for staff eligible to take part in the project events***.
- ✦ ***If possible, discuss entertainment traditions already*** at the beginning of the project. Explain them to all involved staff.



BENEFITS ?

The project is not only the process having objectives, and results to be achieved. It is also:

- Step forward to better higher education in Tajikistan and it means - in the world;
- Possibility to establish long-lasting partnership and to initiate new joint projects;
- Opportunity to work in international environment;
- Chance to get to know the world a little bit better;
- Gaining new friends;
- Learning life, which is so diverse and interesting.

THANK YOU FOR THE ATTENTION!

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