



Meeting of Erasmus+ CBHE projects managed by Lebanese institutions: Challenges and Lessons learnt

Monday July 26, 2021

Concept Note

In 2008, with the launch of the 4th edition of the EU-funded Tempus programme, the EU Commission took a new decision of allowing partner country institutions to be grant holders of capacity building projects. This marked an important shift in the EU policy towards more equity in the partnerships and cooperation at equal foot in these international programmes.

The step aimed at further enhancing the capacities of the partner country institutions in the management of international projects with all its administrative and financial responsibilities. It also aimed at strengthening the institutional ownership of the results produced by these projects. With the Erasmus+ programme launched in 2014 and its new phase 2021-2027, this shift towards project leadership by partner country institutions has been confirmed and further increased.

Between 2015 and 2020 (first phase of Erasmus+), Lebanon has been offered 27 CBHE projects out of which 8 projects were led by Lebanese institutions. Only 2 of these 8 were regional projects.

These 8 projects which are called on for a cluster meeting on 26 July 2021, are:

E-TALEB: Professional Standards Framework for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Lebanese Universities, 2015 – USEK

TLQAA+: Programme Evaluation for Transparency and Recognition of Skills and Qualifications, 2016 – University of Balamand

StEER-LEB: Student Empowerment, Engagement and Representation in Lebanese Universities, 2017 – USEK

MORALE: Capacity building for curricula modernization of Syrian and Lebanese HEIs and lifelong learning provision: towards sustainable NGOs management and operation with special focus on refugees, 2018 – BAU

LEBPASS: The Lebanese Diploma Supplement, 2018 – USEK

CONNECTE: Collaborative Network for Career-building, Training and E-learning, 2019 – USJ

SWaTH: Sustainable Wastewater Treatment for Hospitals, 2020 – University of Balamand

GLOB-SM: Development of new master program in GLOBAL Supply chain Management for Southern Mediterranean, 2020 – AUB

The aim of this cluster meeting is to study the impact of this type of grant holding on the institutional capacities and ownership of the concerned partner country institution, to exchange practices and to draw lessons for future beneficiaries. Closed projects can inform running and newly selected projects about their experiences and about the challenges faced during implementation.

This has a special relevance and draws particular interest at the context of Lebanon which has been marked since 2019 with many difficulties and obstacles at the level of the MEHE and later at the level of general political crisis, the financial hindrances, the banking system collapse all aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic and amplified by the Beirut blast of 4 August 2020.

Grantholders, Lebanese and EU partners, other stakeholders like MEHE, EUD, potential applicants, the team HERE will be invited to this cluster meeting.

The following issues will be raised either through a pre-event survey to be filled out by the projects or through the different sessions of the meeting.

The cluster will also provide a good opportunity for the NEO to present part of the impact study carried out in 2020 and which addressed the CBHE projects selected between 2015 and 2017. The presentation will focus on the projects gathered in this cluster meeting.

Agenda

10:00 – 10:05 Opening by Aref Alsoufi, NEO Lebanon and Orla Colclough, EUD to Lebanon.

10:05 – 10:15 Update on the new programme by Clivio Casali (EACEA)

10:15 – 10:30 National Impact Study and short discussion

10:30 – 11:15 Panel 1: Practices related to management issues and partnerships

Guiding questions for discussions

- 1) Is there any special model that characterised the management of your CBHE projects?
- 2) How much your institution's rules and services were supportive or obstructive to you when managing your CBHE projects? Contribution to the success of coordinating a CBHE project? Resources mobilised? Institutional ownership?
- 3) How are the relations with each of Lebanese partners, regional partners and EU partners managed? and how is an active involvement of all these partners ensured?

11:15 – 11:25 Short break

11:25 – 12:10 Panel 2: Issues related to impact and effect of managing projects by Lebanese institutions

Guiding questions for discussions

- 1) What impact does coordinating a CBHE project have on the institution's visibility, attractiveness and international exposure?
- 2) What impact does coordinating a CBHE project have on the institution's different departments and offices (Faculties, IROs, financial department, IT, Registrar, etc.)
- 3) How does the coordination of a CBHE project contribute to individuals' capacity building and readiness to undertake new international projects?

12:10 – 12:55 Panel 3: Closed projects VS Ongoing projects VS New projects

|E-TALEB, TLQAA+| VS |StEER-LEB, LEBPASS, MORALE, CONECTE| VS |SWaTH, GLOB-SM|

Guiding questions for discussions

- 1) What challenges were faced during the implementation of the project? And specifically, what problems were popped up at closing phase? Examples of adverse situations, unexpected shortcomings, ineligibilities identified by EACEA, etc..
- 2) What advices or lessons learned can be conveyed by closed projects to ongoing projects; and by closed and ongoing projects to very new projects.

12:55 – 13:00 Closing

The pre-event survey

You can choose more than one answer.

In case you are concerned in more than one CBHE project and answers differ from one project to another, then please fill in a survey for each project.

1) Which of the following CBHE projects are you coordinating?

- E-TALEB
- TLQAA+
- StEER-LEB
- MORALE
- LEBPASS

- CONECTE
- SWaTH
- GLOB-SM

2) What does it mean to you the coordination of an Erasmus+ CBHE project?

- Seeking prestige and enhancing attractiveness of your institution
- Gaining power and authority
- Building capacity in the field of management
- Building capacity in the field of finance
- Better implementing the project results
- Establishing cooperation opportunities with other institutions
- Other:

3) Coordinating a CBHE project was your

- personal choice
- institution's choice
- Lebanese partner's choice
- international partner's choice
- Other:

4) In the coordination of your project, which of these partners were more difficult to deal with:

- National partners
- Partners from the region
- Programme country partners

5) How do you describe the relationship with Lebanese and Programme country partners?

- Dealing with Lebanese partners is easier than dealing with Programme country partners.
- Dealing with Programme country partners is easier than dealing with Lebanese partners.
- It depends on the rules of each partner institution no matter whether it is a Lebanese or a Programme country institution.

6) Please mention 3 main characteristics of your project management system

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7) Please mention 3 main characteristics of your project financial management system

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8) Please mention 3 most important added values that the management of a CBHE project has brought to your institution (evidence-based and concrete examples are appreciated)

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9) What are the inconveniences of being a Grantholder rather than a partner in a CBHE project?

- Being overloaded with work
- Non rewarded responsibilities
- Risk of penalties
- Other:

10) At a new call for CBHE proposals, I would:

- Never apply again as a grantholder
- Advise others to be very careful and well prepared before applying as a grantholder
- Prefer to submit a proposal as a partner rather than as a grantholder
- Certainly submit again as a grantholder
- Be more experienced and better positioned to apply again as a grantholder
- Not apply again before the current situation in Lebanon gets better
- Other:

11) Based on your experience, is there any message you would like to convey to the programme at the launch of its new 2021-2027 phase?

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