A Mid-term Evaluation report

Conducting
External Evaluation of the project
"Improving Governance Practices at Palestinian Higher Education Institutions"
Project Nr. 573684-EPP-1-2016-1-PS-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Project

UniGov is an international cooperation project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme of the European Union during the period 15 October 2016 – 14 October 2019. The project seeks to support the modernization, accessibility, and internationalization of HEIs in Palestine, through addressing five cross-cutting aspects of university governance.

The UniGov project is soliciting proposals for the provision of consultancy services from qualified and accredited consultants to develop an external evaluation.

This project proposal was primarily prepared based on the outcomes of "Universities through the Looking Glass: Benchmarking University Governance to Enable Higher Education Modernization in MENA" , a study developed by the World Bank in 2010. The study had addressed the major issues concerning the five elements of university governance in 41 universities in Tunisia, Palestine, Morocco and Egypt. Moreover, several regional universities, including ANNU and other Palestinian universities, have participated in the Institutional Evaluation Program (IEP) conducted by the European University Association (EUA). The IEP offers improvement-oriented institutional evaluation programs for higher education institutions.

The World Bank Study and the IEP have noted weak governance, accountability, and management structures across HEIs in Palestine. Consequently, a project summary was prepared by ANNU, and later was shared with national and EU partners. A consortium was established for the project and the different WPs and interventions was discussed. Activities of project were assigned to consortium partners according to their institutional and personal expertise. Meetings were arranged on phone and Skype calls in order to ensure the full involvement and commitment of all partners in this project.

1.2. Rational for the setting-up of the consortium

The UniGov project aims at improving the governance practices of higher education institutions in Palestine. In partnership between 5 European and 5 Palestinian HEIs, the consortium is welling to carry out the activities of this project.

The Palestinian Universities in this project are (ANNU, BZU, IUG, AAUJ, PPU). These universities represent the majority of HEI community including staff and students, they are classified as largest universities in Palestine with a total estimated number of 60,000 students and more than 2,300 academic staff. In addition to this, Governance

was decided by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education as one of the National Priorities that need to be addressed through EU funded projects.

Palestinian universities in this project represent different geographical areas and different cultural environments in Palestine, this will support the project by involving more HEIs and stakeholders at each area. For example, IUG is located in Gaza and will involve other HEIs and other stakeholders in Gaza, IUG will also provide all the logistical support needed in that area. In addition to this, ANNU, BZU, AAUJ and PPU are all located in the West Bank where decision and policy makers are existing, thus, involving those stakeholders will support the success of the project and will secure the intended impact of the project.

At the Program countries, partners of this consortium are all reputable universities, well-known for their experience in good governance. For example, the values of good governance in Irish universities were initially established in the Universities Act, 1997 and subsequently detailed in the 2001 framework. Accordingly, all universities in Ireland including UCC adopted the HEA/IUA "Governance of Irish Universities", its principles and its reporting requirements.

The UNISI, UL, UCC, and UE cover most needed expertise, and have been all assigned to work packages related to the development and capacity building. They represent different higher education systems, and different university sizes and ages. This variety will expose the Palestinian Universities to different governance models, so they will be able to adopt the cutting-edge and innovative models and practices.

The UNIMED has a track record in EU project participation and management and, particularly, in the development of scientific and educational cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Accordingly, The UNIMED will support the management and the dissemination activities of this project and will support the collaboration and networking between partners as well as with external stakeholders.

In general, all EU Universities have intensive and proven experience on executing EU projects. They have the required expertise, necessary competencies and skill, resources, and knowledge on the topic. In the same vein, all Palestinian Universities have the willingness to improve their governance and accountability practices. They are committed to the modernization of their HEIs, and motivated due to local, regional, and global challenges in the economy and the labor market.

1.3. European added value

In general, the European HEIs have a well-established experience of good governance practices. This experience proved its success through the excellent reputed positions and ranks achieved by the EU universities at a regional and global levels. In addition, the EU partner institutions selected in this project are very well-known universities in

the field of university governance. Values such as transparency, autonomy, participation, and accountability are the basis of their institutional culture.

Universities in Palestine seek experienced EU partners mainly for two reasons: (1) EU partners can act as a benchmarking tool to measure the status of Palestinian HEIs, and (2) EU partners will utilize their experience and competencies to develop HEIs in Palestine. Establishing partnerships with universities in the EU is an important step to share their experience and to manage and lead the development stages of the project. Obstacles, such as managing change, can be easily handled by the EU partners due to their previous experience. Moreover, the implementation of training modules will occur concurrently with the study visits to EU partner institutions. This will eventually allow the participants sense and see cases of successful governance best-practices, and therefore will foster participants to change once they come back to their home institutions.

Establishing EU partnership will support the dissemination dimensions of the project. The EU partners will share the project outcomes and outputs and will create/facilitate new networking opportunities with other European HEIs.

1.4. Aims and objectives of the project

The Overall objectives of the project are to:

- ✓ Support the modernization, accessibility and internationalization of the higher education field in the eligible Partner Countries.
- ✓ Support eligible Partner Countries to address the challenges facing their higher education institutions and systems, including those of quality, relevance, and equity of access, planning, delivery, management, and governance.

The Specific objectives of the project are to:

- ✓ Create an enabling environment to adopt decent governance practices
- ✓ Establish a clear governance framework, including well-defined mission and vision.
- ✓ Establish an effective management framework and structure
- ✓ Stimulate autonomy and accountability.
- ✓ Strengthen links with different stakeholders (i.e. improve transparency and participation) in strategic planning and development activities.

1.5. Project activities and Methodology

The project consists of six WPs and each WP contains a systematic build-up of activities. The WPs and activities are established based on a systematic review of institutions' needs in partner countries and an intensive consultation with partners in programme countries. In general terms, of the six WPs, three of them deal with the preparation, capacity building and development of governance practices in partner countries, whereas the remaining three deal with the cross-cutting aspects such as management of the project, dissemination and exploitation of results, and quality assurance.

More specifically:
- WP1: Preparation,
- WP2: Capacity Building and Training,
- WP3: Diagnosis, development, and implementation of remediation plans,
- WP4: Project Quality and Evaluation,
- WP5: Dissemination and exploitation of the project, and
- WP6: Management and Coordination.

All the different WPs, activities and their content, expected outputs, results and impact, are a result of an intensive collaboration with and contribution of the project partners. Each WP has a WP Leader, who is responsible for the implementation of the WP, and delivering of the WP outputs/results in cooperation with the other participating partners in the WP. The progress of each WP is the responsibility of the WP Leader and in collaboration with the internal quality evaluator.

The project Kick-off will be in Italy, organized and hosted by the UNIMED, with the participation of all consortium representatives. The first WP (i.e. WP1- Preparation & Desk Research) will be led by UNIVERSITA' DI SIENA (UNISI). The WP seeks to conduct desk research and review of current effective governance best practices, to learn from other experiences. Consequently, the WP will define the stakeholders of the project scope (Governance stakeholders) and will establish a diagnostic tool that will be used later in WP3. In addition, the WP will prepare a preliminary training needs assessment which will highlight the topics and aspects that should be addressed during the next work pack (WP2).

Based on the findings of WP1, WP2 which will be led by University College Cork (UCC), seeks to build the capabilities of partner countries in the field of university governance. Thus, training modules will be prepared and training will be executed initially through a training web portal. The online training will provide explanation on general governance terminologies, literature, and examples of good governance practices. After executing the online training modules, participants be will divided into groups. Each group will visit a partner university located in Europe. Study visits seek to follow-up and show the practice of good governance at program countries institutions, the assembly of visiting groups will be arranged in order to have 4 visiting

groups, each consisting of 5 participants representing the 5 Palestinian universities. When finishing the study visits, the experts of EU partners will visit Palestine to conduct field capacity building for 16 project participants from each university in Palestine.

Upon the completion and delivery of the capacity building and training WP, the participants and project team will be ready to start the third WP (WP3- Diagnosis, development, and implementation of remediation plans). In this WP, Universities in program countries will supervise the Palestinian partner universities, to conduct a self-evaluation process utilizing the diagnostic tool which was developed and trained during previous two WPs. Once the self-diagnostic study is conducted, the results will be submitted to experts of the program countries partners, and the experts will develop a remediation action plan for each university according the results of evaluation. These action plans will be given enough time for implementation, taking in consideration the expected the resistance to change. In order to ensure achieving the intended outcomes, assessment will be conducted periodically, and refining decisions will be taken when necessary.

The first cross-cutting aspect of each project is WP4 (Project Quality and Evaluation). The WP will be led by Birzeit University (BZU) and an External Quality Auditor (formative evaluator) will be hired. The aim of this WP is to ensure that different activities (and their associated the deliverables and outputs) are implemented within the assigned budget and timeframe, while assuring that the overall goal and specific objectives are achieved. A dedicated quality team will be nominated to assure that the project activities are performed adequately and precisely. The team will be responsible for drawing up (and the dissemination of) a detailed quality and evaluation plan for project partners. The plan includes the procedures to monitor the project activities, key performance indicators (KPIs) and criteria, associated risks, and the procedures to evaluate the deliverables and their quality in meeting the requirements of the targeted groups. A quality and evaluation report will be issued periodically to indicate the status of the project, make recommendations and corrective actions. In addition, the External Quality Consultant will submit two mid-term reports and a final evaluation/comprehensive report.

The second cross-cutting aspect is the Project Dissemination and Exploitation (WP6). The WP will be led by UNIMED. The dissemination of the project and it will start from early stages of the project (preparation and inception phase of the project). Vision and mission will be prepared, and web presence will be used to distribute related information and to aware partners and direct/indirect beneficiaries of our objectives. A detailed dissemination plan will be prepared, addressing the multiplication aspects of the project results and objectives. The plan will also include lessons learned, steps, and recommendations for addressing governance issues in HEIs, to be utilized and adopted by other HEIs across the South Mediterranean. In addition, a final dissemination conference will be held in Palestine, gathering several stakeholders and decision makers at other HEIs as well as the Ministry of Education and Higher

Education, to encourage them to take significant steps on this important issue, and to utilize the experience of the project partner institutions of this project.

The final cross-cutting aspect is the Project Management (WP6). The WP will be led by An-Najah National University (ANNU) and is concerned with issues related to the operational and financial aspect of the project. Several meetings will be held to discuss the project management (progress, products, financial and operational activities). In between the meetings, virtual meetings will be utilized to discuss new trends and issues, and to follow up on the project activities (operational, financial, and expected outcomes)

2. ACTION PLAN

2.1. My understanding for the evaluation

UniGov is an international cooperation project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme of the European Union during the period 15 October 2016 – 14 October 2019. The project seeks to support the modernization, accessibility, and internationalization of HEIs in Palestine, through addressing five cross-cutting aspects of university governance.

Following a careful review of the term of references, and taking into consideration my experience in conducting project assessment and evaluation, I confirm my understanding of UniGov needs.

- ➢ The aim of the external evaluation is to ensure that implementation of the project is performed adequately and accurately. It identifies procedures, criteria and resources for monitoring the project. It also deals with the evaluation of the progress of the project, risk and issue management and with the evaluation of the results in comparison with the needs of the target group(s) and sector(s).

- ➢ This evaluation is **a Formative evaluation;** also known as process or implementation evaluation is performed to examine various aspects of an ongoing program in order to make changes/improvements as the program is being implemented. This type of evaluation attempts to document exactly what is transpiring in a program.

- ➢ Formative evaluation activities include the collection and analysis of data over the lifecycle of the project and timely feedback of evaluation findings to project

actors to inform ongoing decision-making and action (i.e. it is a form of operational intelligence). It requires an effective data collection strategy, often incorporating routinized monitoring data alongside more tailored evaluation activities. Feedback is primarily designed to fine-tune the implementation of project although it may also contribute to policy-making at the margins through piecemeal adaptation.

2.2. Evaluation objectives: The task aims the following objectives:

a. To assess the degree to which project objectives were achieved.
b. To understand the project, and to measure the level of efficiency, effectiveness, impact, appropriateness, consistency, and coverage of the emergency assistance delivered.
c. Support the modernization, accessibility and internationalization of the higher education field in the eligible Partner Countries.
d. Support eligible Partner Countries to address the challenges facing their higher education institutions and systems, including those of quality, relevance, and equity of access, planning, delivery, management, and governance.
e. It also deals with the evaluation of the progress of the project, risk and issue management and with the evaluation of the results in comparison with the needs of the target group(s) and sector(s).
f. To identify lessons learned from the first round.
g. To evaluate the agencies and other actors who have intervened, and to make recommendation to them.

2.3. Proposed Methodology

The process of conducting a formative evaluation will depend heavily on reading all available literature and the comprehensive understanding of the project, its mandate, goals, and activities. This will only be fulfilled after reviewing the project's documents needed, and after a set of meeting is done with the project's manager.

It should be stressed here that the availability of all information needed by the consultant regarding the project is a vital condition for setting all the assumptions that will be the base for building the project's evaluation needed.

Thus, a participatory role is expected from the project management and other stakeholders involved. This will assist in developing the individual goals to the best

within the approved evaluation and broad objectives, as well as among the current political, financial, management and logistical circumstances in the project.

The evaluation will review the deliverables to insure the realization of the intended impact of the project. It will also evaluate the quality of management for the project and the partnership performance. The external evaluation will also assess the effectiveness and the impact of the dissemination activities. Other evaluation areas could also be added based on the consortium decisions.

2.4. The Evaluation Process

The evaluation process will mainly go through fourth phases, which will be explained in details as follows:

A. First phase: Evaluation plan: {Project orientation, Intensive disk review, Development of evaluation indicators and questions, and evaluation tools).
B. Second phase: Evaluation of the project progress (Mid-term Evaluation report)
C. Third phase: Evaluation of the capacity building of Palestinian Partners universities (Training Evaluation)
D. Fourth phase: Overall Evaluation of the project (Final Evaluation report)

First phase: Evaluation plan: several steps will be used in the evaluation plan:

Step 1, Project orientation: During this step I will:

a. An orientation interview with the project manager & the internal Quality Committee representatives is to be held, to get further details and clarifications about the task and determine the general guidelines of the evaluation.
b. Identify Stakeholders: after the meetings of the internal Quality Committee staff, I will be able to prepare the list of the individuals and organizations, identify their degree of involvement in the project, determine the participants and conduct interviews with them, and determining their interest of the evaluation of this project.
c. Identify the project establishment, implementation, processing, logistics, and any other related matters.
d. Gathering and collecting all relevant documents and papers about the project.
e. Design an Evaluation Plan: A complete evaluation plan is a management tool that you can use to monitor project activities, demonstrate progress,

make decisions about changes, and prepare reports. This plan will include: project goals, project objectives, project stakeholders, project outcomes, and project map.

Step2, Intensive disk review: reviewing and studying all documents and papers, knowing the stakeholders and related parties and identifying areas and locations. During this stage, I will scan the literature reviews and related studies, using tools and sources of information as: internet, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, NGOs, and other Organizations.

Step 3, Development of evaluation indicators and questions: will be done in respect with the six assessment criteria items, Relevance, Consistency, Coverage, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Impact.

   a. The indicators will show the gap in the achievement whether qualitative or quantitative.
   b. Questions design: determining the questions will basically depend on the objectives and will measure the indicators.
   c. The questions and indicators will be set in consistency with the six determined assessment criteria.

Step 4, Evaluation tools: Will help me gather the information using:

   a. Documentation: papers, documents, vouchers and any other papers since starting the project until finishing it will be studied reviewed, and tracked.
   b. Observation: Through visits to all beneficiaries in the project.
   c. On site visits to the stakeholders.
   d. Interviews: will be conducted with primary and secondary stakeholders.
   e. Survey: questionnaires will be distributed to all beneficiaries.
   f. Focus groups: will be conducted with most involved related parties so they can say their notes and opinions.
   g. Evaluation matrix: to determine the characteristics of the gathered information.

Step 5, Preparation for Field work: After doing the disk research, preparing the Stakeholder list, and evaluation tools, I will be more familiar with the

project, and I will start preparing for the field work by arranging with the internal Quality Committee and the other responsible parties.

Step 6, Submission of the evaluation action plan.

Second phase: Evaluation of the project progress

This is the implementation phase where I will collect the data:

Step 1, the external evaluator will start the first survey and send the questionnaires built in the previous phase to measure the overall progress of the project.

Step 2, Data entry and data analysis: the collected data will be judged -focus group and interviews- and entered on statistical software -questionnaires- so it can be analyzed and discussed.

Step 3, **A Mid-term Evaluation report:** The mid-term evaluation report shows the results of project process and assesses the quality of work both within the project and the consortium. The final report will be prepared covering the project design, development, activities, outcomes, goals achieved and impact.

A draft final report will be submitted in English language following the structure below:

1. Executive summary
2. Background: will contain at least:
   ✓ Assessment objectives & goals
   ✓ Project activities
   ✓ Methodology
   ✓ Work Constraints
   ✓ Description of work performed
   ✓ Documentation structure

3. Intervention description:
4. Evaluation results, based on the selected criteria.
5. Conclusions and recommendations

Third phase: Evaluation of the capacity building of Palestinian Partners universities: The main objective of this stage is to assure that all these tasks regarding capacity building are done with high quality manor:

1. Preparation of customized training modules: all training material will be prepared and organized on the training platform.
2. Implementation of online training for universities in partner countries
3. Organization and implementation of study visits to program countries: during which face-to-face training will be conducted and followed by study visits to partner EU institutions.
4. Organizing and conducting field capacity building at partner countries: during this activity, experts and researchers of the project (form EU partners) will visit the partner Palestinian universities in order to assess and participate in the gap analysis/self-assessment study.

Step 1, a questionnaire, structured interview, or focus groups will be used to evaluate
- Implementation of online training for universities in partner countries
- Organization and implementation of study visits to program countries
- Conducting study visits to partner EU institutions.

Step 2, the external evaluator will start the first survey and send the questionnaires built in the previous phase to measure the overall progress of the project.

Step 3, Data entry and data analysis: the collected data will be judged -focus group and interviews- and entered on statistical software -questionnaires- so it can be analyzed and discussed.

Step 4, **A capacity building Evaluation report:** The capacity building evaluation report shows the impact of all types of training and assesses the quality of work.

Fourth phase: Overall Evaluation of the project:

This is the implementation of the overall final summative evaluation after the end of the project:

Step 1, the external evaluator will start building the questionnaire

Step 2, the external evaluator will start the first survey and send the questionnaires built specially for the summative evaluation to measure the overall progress of the project.

Step 3, Data entry and data analysis: the collected data will be judged -focus group and interviews- and entered on statistical software -questionnaires- so it can be analyzed and discussed.

Step 4, **a final Evaluation report:** The final evaluation report shows the final results of project activities and the impact they have on the target groups. The document represents a summative evaluation of the project and it contains a detailed picture of the whole project activities and includes recommendations.
The final report will be prepared covering the project design, development, activities, outcomes, goals achieved and impact.

A draft final report will be submitted in English language following the structure below:

6. Executive summary
7. Background: will contain at least:
   - ✓ Assessment objectives & goals
   - ✓ Project activities
   - ✓ Methodology
   - ✓ Work Constraints
   - ✓ Description of work performed
   - ✓ Documentation structure

8. Intervention description:
9. Evaluation results, based on the selected criteria.
10. Conclusions and recommendations

3. FINDINGS: Questionnaire data

This part of the report presents the results of the general survey carried out on all the administrative staff responsible for implementing the project from the various Palestinian and European universities to assess the progress of the project.
Second phase: Evaluation of the project progress
Responses to each item of the questionnaire will be summarized and commented on.

A. ROLE

What is your role in the project?
(28,.0%) of the respondents described themselves as a researcher, a further four describing themselves as coordinator and other four as a project leader. (see below chart).

Role in the Project
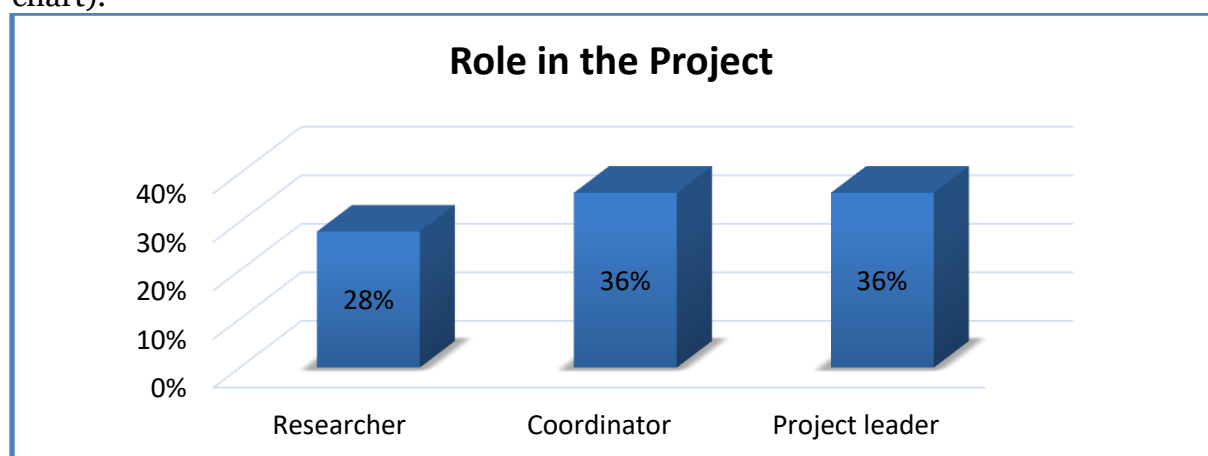
How clearly were your tasks clarified by project managers?
The majority of respondents (91.0%) stated their tasks had been either mostly or completely clarified by the project managers. % 9 of the respondents stated that their tasks were somewhat clarified. (see below chart).

How clearly were your tasks clarified by the project manager?

How satisfied are you with your role in the project?
All respondents (100.0%) were either completely (27.0%) or mostly satisfied (73.0%) with their role in the project.

How satisfied are you with your role in the project?

Completely satisfied
27%

Mostly satisfied
73%

- Completely satisfied
- Mostly satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- A little satisfied
- Not at all satisfied
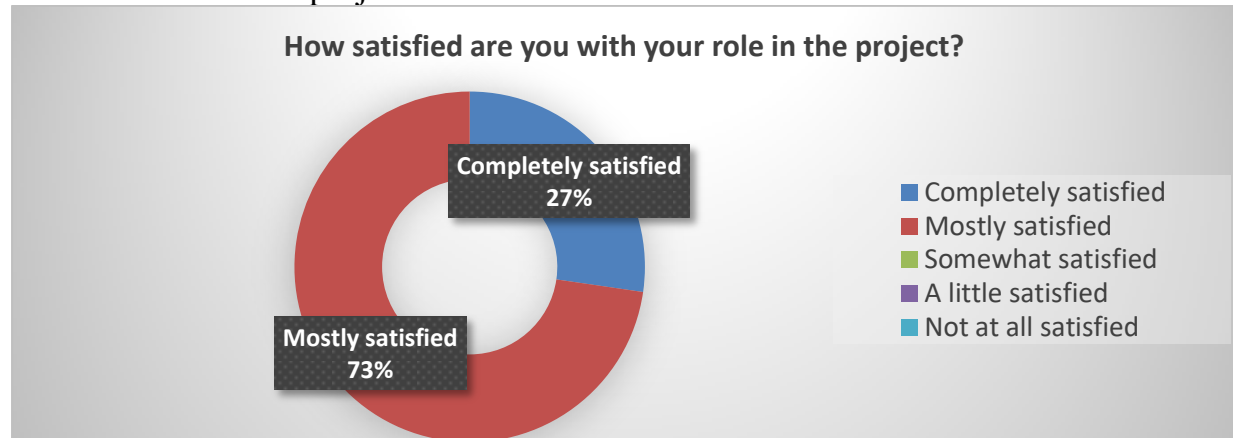
B. LEADERSHIP

Ratings of the effectiveness of leadership in the following areas
Generally speaking, project leadership was rated very highly by respondents over a range of aspects of leadership (see pie charts below).

Project Leadership

☐ Neither Agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Question	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Was the project steering committee effective?	9,1%	72,7%	18,2%
Was the project manager effective?		54,5%	45,5%
Was the project organization the appropriate one?		63,6%	36,4%
Combining the perspectives, resources and skills of the…	18,2%	45,5%	36,4%
Resolving conflicts among partners		36,4%	63,6%
Creating an environment where different opinions can be said		36,4%	63,6%
Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness and openness	9,1%	90,9%	
Working to develop a common understanding and vocabulary		63,6%	36,4%
Motivating people involved		36,4%	63,6%
Taking responsibility of the project	18,2%	27,3%	54,5%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

For "Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness and openness", "motivating the people involved "working to develop a common understanding and vocabulary", "Fostering respect, trust inclusiveness and openness", "Creating an environment where different opinions can be said "Was the project manager effective? ", "Was the project organization the appropriate one? ", a majority of respondents, ranging from 9.1% to 90.9%, gave response of either "agree" or "strongly agree".

Perhaps the only exceptions to these positive conclusions were for ratings on "Taking responsibility of the project", "Combining the perspectives, resources and skills of the members.", and "Was the project steering committee effective?", where the responses, ranging from 9.1% to 90.9%, gave response of "Neither Agree nor disagree" (see pie charts above).

C. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

<u>Ratings of the effectiveness of staff carrying out the following activities</u>
Most aspects of administration and management of the project were rated highly by respondents. (see pie charts below).
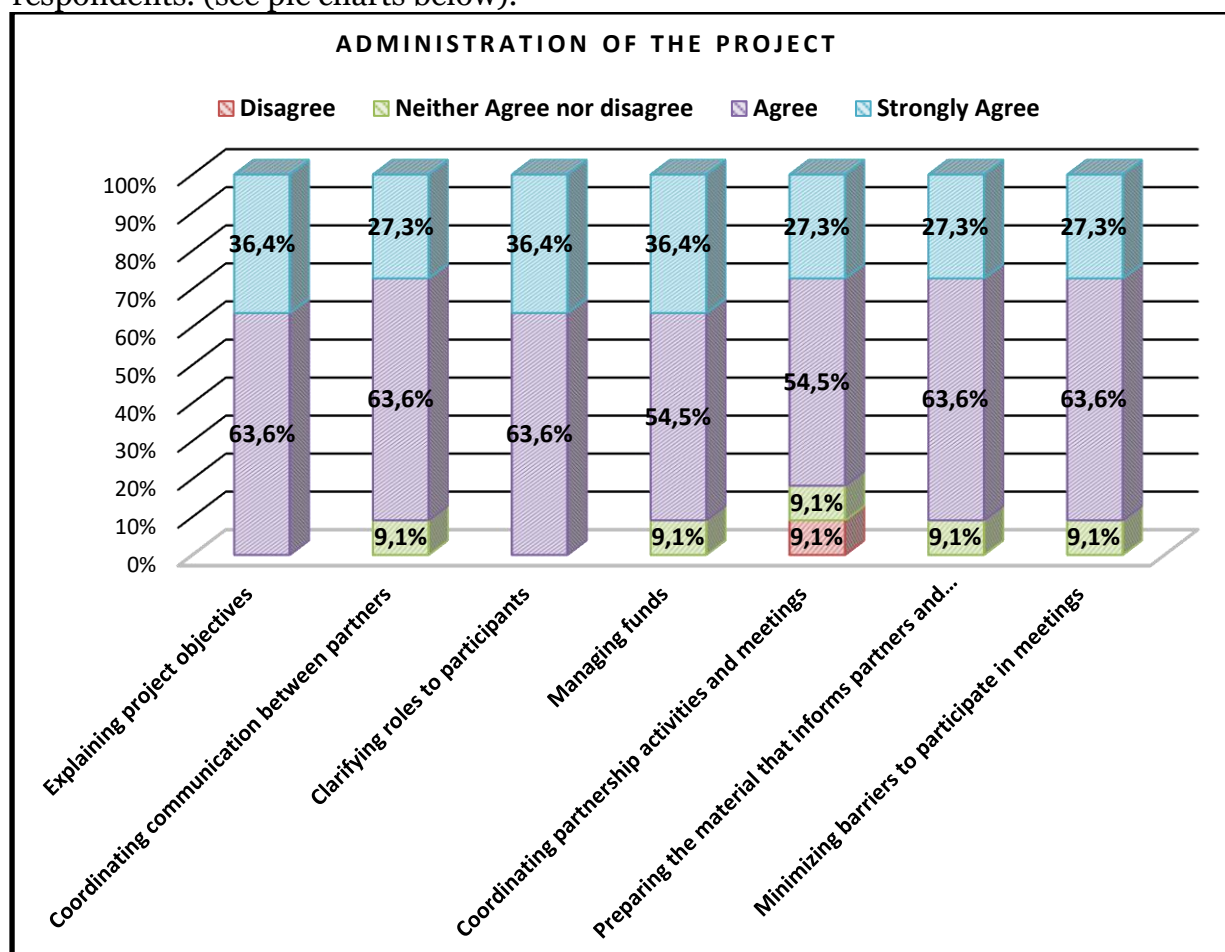
Especially positive were responses for "explaining project objectives", "clarifying roles to participants", "preparing the material that informs partners etc."," coordinating communication between partners", "managing funds"," preparing the material that informs partners and Helps them to take decisions on time.", and "minimizing barriers to participate in meetings", for all of which the responses were either strongly agree or agree.

 The only exception to this was for responses to "Coordinating partnership activities and meetings", where just 9.1% of the responded was disagree on this issue.

D. BENEFITS AND COSTS

Ratings of the advantages of participating in the project.
When respondents were asked about the benefits of participating in this project, a range of views were expressed (see bar charts below).
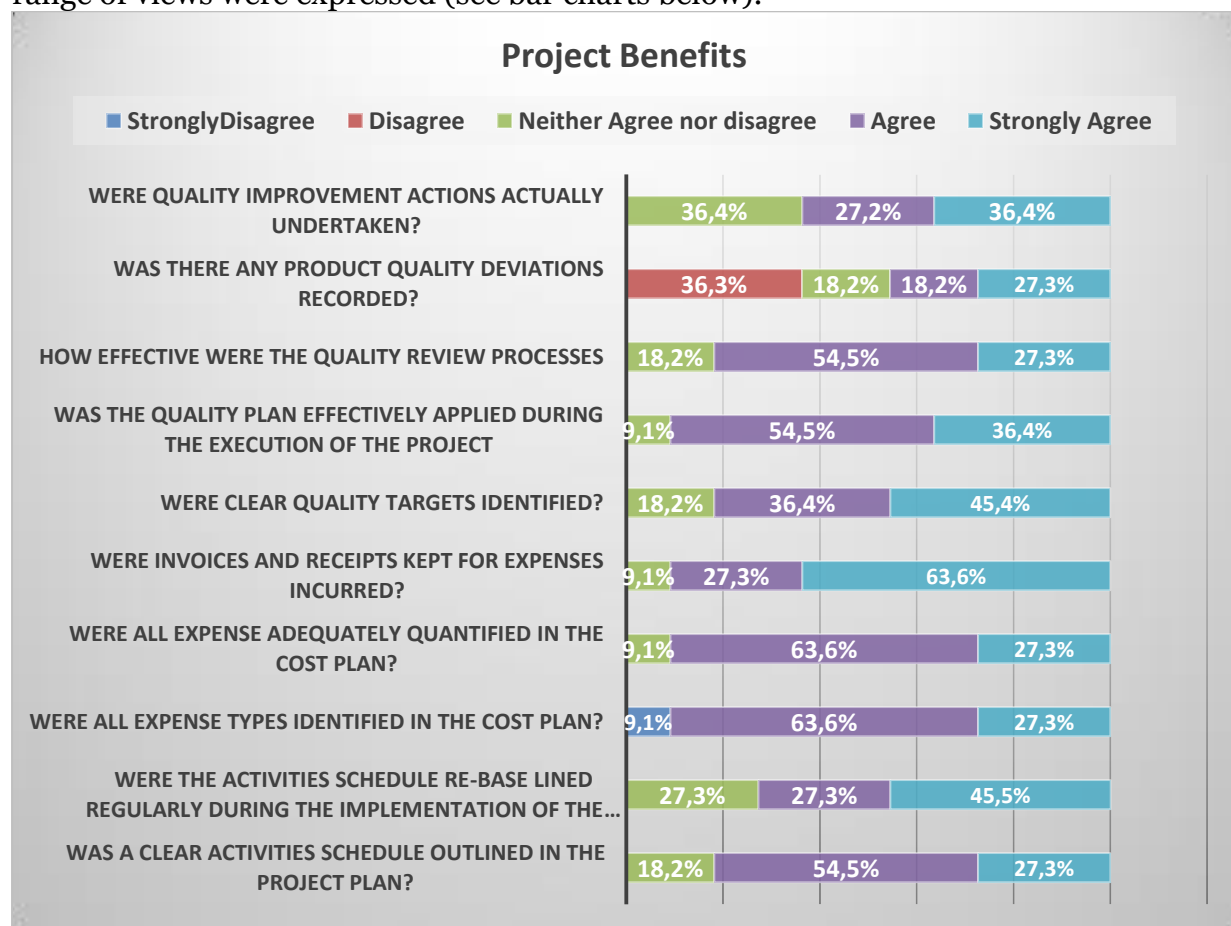
According to the respondents in the above chart, the following are the main benefits of the projects arranged according to their importance to the participants:
   1. All expenses were adequately quantified in the cost plan.

2. The invoices and receipts were kept for expenses incurred.
3. The quality plan was effectively applied during the execution of the project.
4. A clear quality targets was identified.
5. The quality review processes were effective.
6. The quality improvement actions were actually undertaken.
7. A clear activities schedule was outlined in the project plan.
8. All expense types were identified in the cost plan.

When respondents were asked to rate the benefits of participating in this project, in terms of the advantages of so doing, a range of views were expressed (see bar charts below).
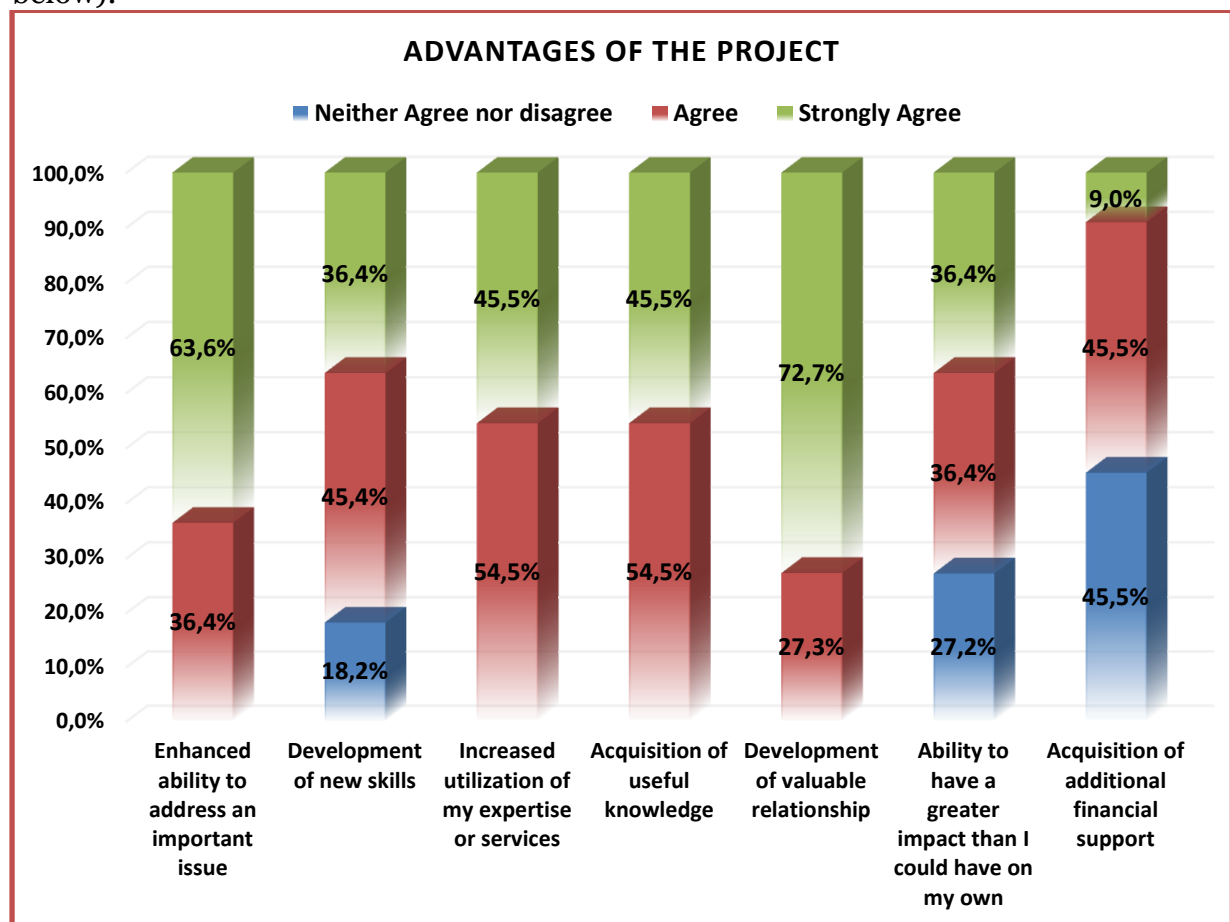
Seen as most important in this regard were an "enhanced ability to address an important area" and the "development of valuable relationships"," increased utilization of my expertise or services", "acquisition of useful knowledge". Somewhat less important, but still positively rated on the whole, were the "development of new skills", and the "ability to have a greater impact than I could on my own". The only possible benefit that did not on the whole obtain positive ratings was the "acquisition of additional financial support.

As for disadvantages of participating in the project, almost more than half (54.5%) of respondents thought that "insufficient influence in partnership activities" was not an important disadvantage, although another third (36.5%) believed that it was important. Moreover, (36.4%) of respondents thought that "diversion of time and resources away from other priorities or obligations" was not an important disadvantage, although another third (45.4%) believed that it was important. Lastly, a majority (strongly agree 54.5.2%) and (18.2% agree) thought that "conflict between my job and the partnership's work" was not an important disadvantage of participating in the project.
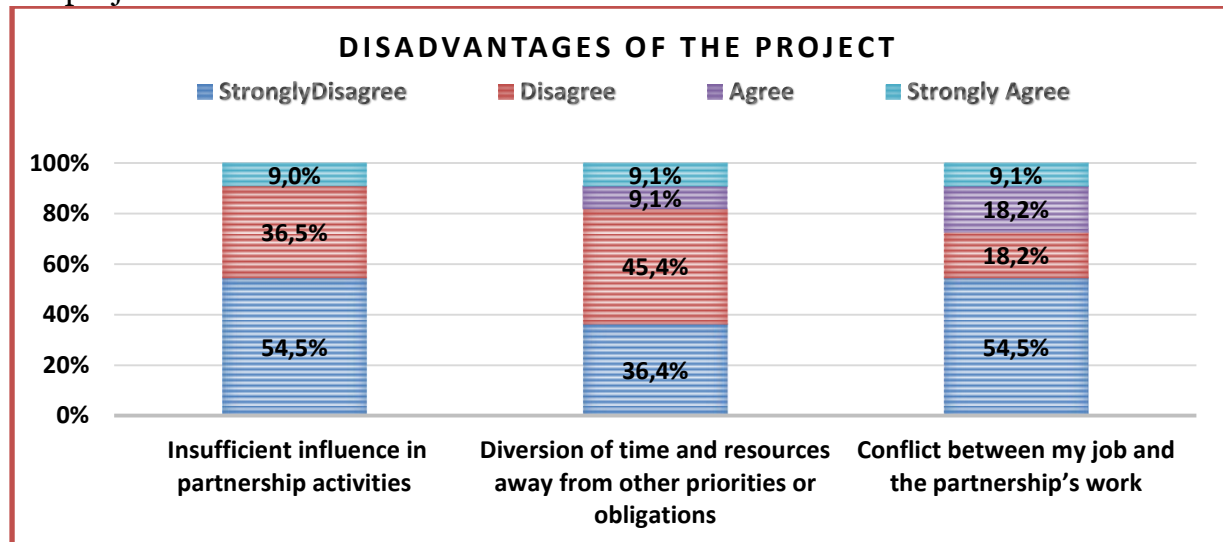
How do the advantages compare to the disadvantages of participating in this project?

When asked for their overall rating of the advantages and disadvantages of participating in the project, the majority of respondents (55.0%) stated that the were many more advantages than disadvantages, while another 45.0% said simply that there were more advantages than disadvantages. No respondent thought that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages (see chart below).
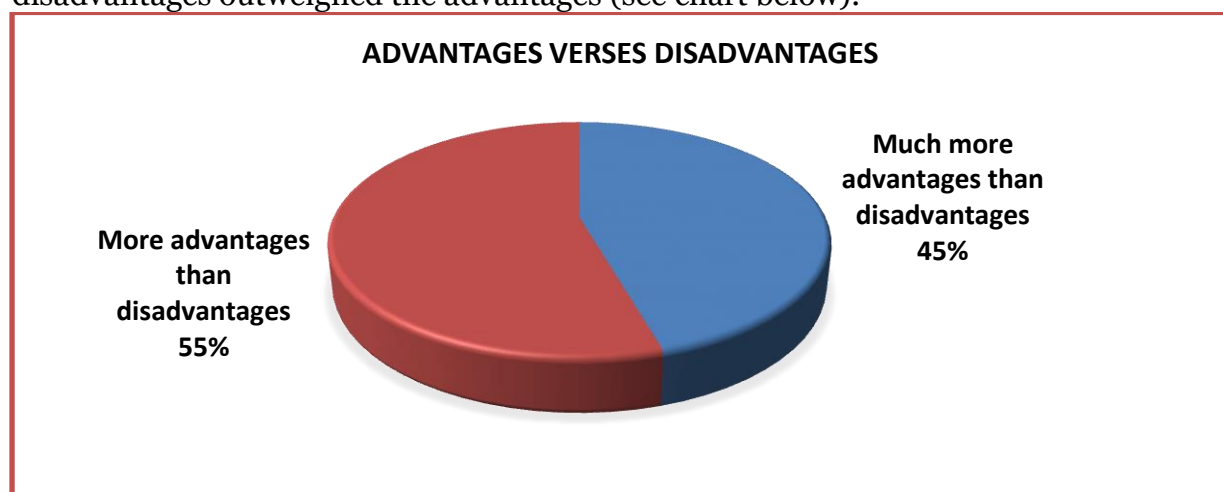
E. PROJECT COMMUNICATION

<u>Ratings of the effectiveness of communication of the project</u>
Most aspects of communication of the project were rated highly by respondents. (see chart below)

Project Communication

■ Disagree   ■ Neither Agree nor disagree   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

Question	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
Are milestones being used to manage and communicate progress?			54,5%	45,5%
Is the schedule being followed by the project team?	9,1%	9,1%	63,6%	18,2%
Is a suitably detailed, up-to-date schedule in place?			63,6%	36,4%
How useful was the content and format of the project status report?			54,5%	45,5%
Was the project progress regularly communicated?		9,1%	63,6%	27,3%
Was the communication with stakeholders adequate and effective?		18,2%	54,5%	27,3%
The project team members meetings conducted regularly and effectively		18,2%	36,4%	45,4%
The communication plan clearly identify the target audience, messages and methods to be used		9,1%	36,4%	54,5%

The responses of all the participants in the project came as either agreeing or strongly agreeing to the following matters regarding the communication efficiency and effectiveness in the project:
1. Are milestones being used to manage and communicate progress?
2. Is a suitably detailed, up-to-date schedule in place?
3. How useful was the content and format of the project status report?

Moreover, around (82.0%) of the responses were either strongly agree or disagree, and the remaining (18%0) were neither agree nor disagree regarding the following aspects of communications of the project:
1. The communication plan clearly identifies the target audience, messages and methods to be used.
2. The project progress was regularly communicated.
3. The project team members meetings conducted regularly and effectively.
4. The communication with stakeholders was adequate and effective.

The only exception to this was for responses to "is the schedule being followed by the project team?", where just 9.1% of the responded was disagree on this issue.

F. PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT

Ratings of the managing of risk of the project

As for the risk management of the project, several questions were asked regarding the ability of the project and the project manager to face risks and manage them in the best way. (see chart below).

Project Risk Management

Legend: ■ StronglyDisagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Was the project affected by unforeseen risks?	9,1%	45,4%	18,2%	18,2%	9,1%
How well the risk managed?			18,2%	36,4%	45,4%
Was a clear mitigation plan outlined for each risk identified?			36,4%	36,4%	27,2%
Were the team members effectively involved in the risk identification and risk control process?		9,1%	27,3%	45,4%	18,2%
Were all important project risks identified early in the project?			27,3%	45,4%	27,3%
Have costs, schedule, scope, or quality changes been effectively managed?			18,2%	45,4%	36,4%
Were all approved changes implemented according to the appropriate procedures?			18,2%	45,4%	36,4%
Were the change management processes properly used to manage changes to cost, schedule, scope, or quality?		9,1%	18,2%	45,4%	27,3%

Participants' responses to the following issues related to risk management ranged between (70-80%), agree or strongly agree. The rest (20-30%) were neither agree nor disagree;
1. How well the risk managed;
2. Have costs, schedule, scope, or quality changes been effectively managed;

3. Were all approved changes implemented according to the appropriate procedures;
4. Were all important project risks identified early in the project?
5. Was a clear mitigation plan outlined for each risk identified?

The results also revealed that there was disapproval and rejection regarding the following questions, according the following table:

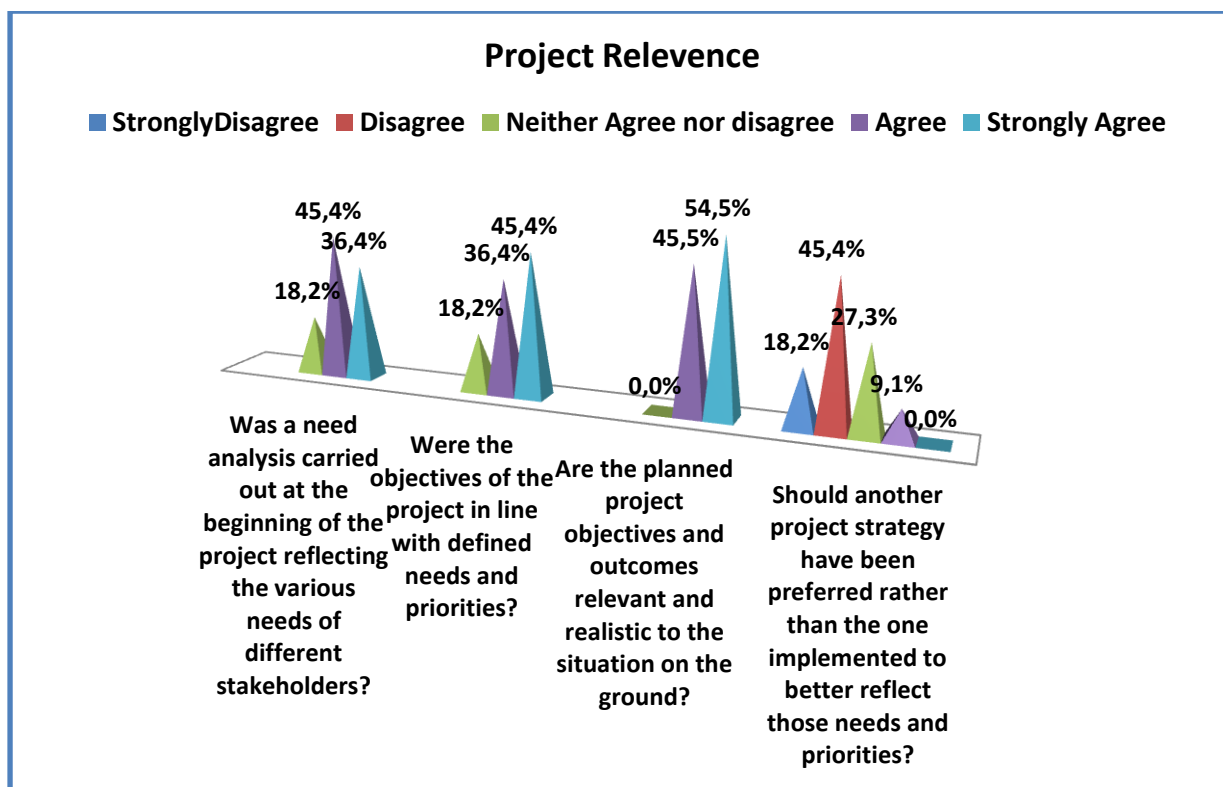|	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Were the change management processes properly used to manage changes to cost, schedule, scope, or quality?		**9.1%**	18.2%	45.4%	27.3%
Were the team members effectively involved in the risk identification and risk control process?		**9.1%**	27.3%	45.4%	18.2%
Was the project affected by unforeseen risks?	**9.1%**	**45.4%**	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%

E. PROJECT RELEVANCE

Ratings of the relevance of the project

As for project relevancy, survey participants were asked about four issues examining the relevancy of the project. Most aspects of relevancy of the project were rated highly by respondents. (see chart below).

The results showed that all respondents(100%) were either strongly agree (54.5%) or agree (45%) believe that the planned project objectives and outcomes are relevant and realistic to the situation on the ground. Moreover, around (82.0%) of the respondents were either strongly agree (45.5%) or agree (36.4%) believe that the objectives of the project were in line with defined needs and priorities. The results also showed that around (82,0%) of the respondents were either strongly agree (36.4%) or agree (45.4%) believe that a need analysis was carried out at the beginning of the project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders.

The results also revealed that there was disapproval and rejection regarding the following questions, "Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs and priorities?" This means that around (65%) of the respondents said that there is no need for other strategy to be implemented in this project.to implement other strategy to the project.
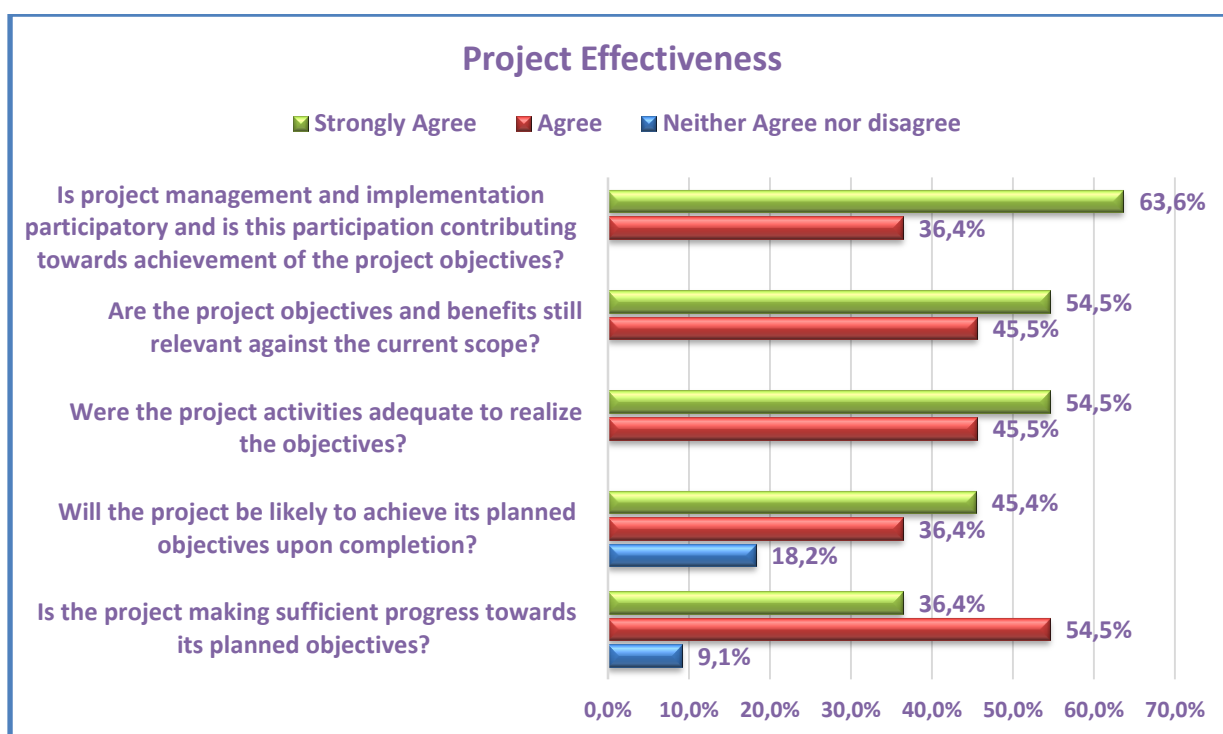
Project Relevence

■ StronglyDisagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

45,4%
36,4%
18,2%

45,4%
36,4%
18,2%

54,5%
45,5%
0,0%

45,4%
27,3%
18,2%
9,1%
0,0%

Was a need analysis carried out at the beginning of the project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders?

Were the objectives of the project in line with defined needs and priorities?

Are the planned project objectives and outcomes relevant and realistic to the situation on the ground?

Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs and priorities?

F. PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

Ratings of the effectiveness of the project

As for project effectiveness, survey participants were asked about four issues examining the effectiveness of the project. Most aspects regarding the effectiveness of the project were rated highly by respondents. (see chart below).

The results showed that all respondents(100%) were either strongly agree (63.6%) or agree (36.4%) believe that project management and implementation participatory contributing towards achievement of the project objectives. Moreover, (100.0%) of the respondents were either strongly agree (54.5%) or agree (45.4%) believe that:
1. the project objectives and benefits are still relevant against the current scope.
2. the project activities were adequate to realize the objectives.

Project Effectiveness

Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neither Agree nor disagree

Is project management and implementation participatory and is this participation contributing towards achievement of the project objectives? — 63,6% / 36,4%

Are the project objectives and benefits still relevant against the current scope? — 54,5% / 45,5%

Were the project activities adequate to realize the objectives? — 54,5% / 45,5%

Will the project be likely to achieve its planned objectives upon completion? — 45,4% / 36,4% / 18,2%

Is the project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives? — 36,4% / 54,5% / 9,1%

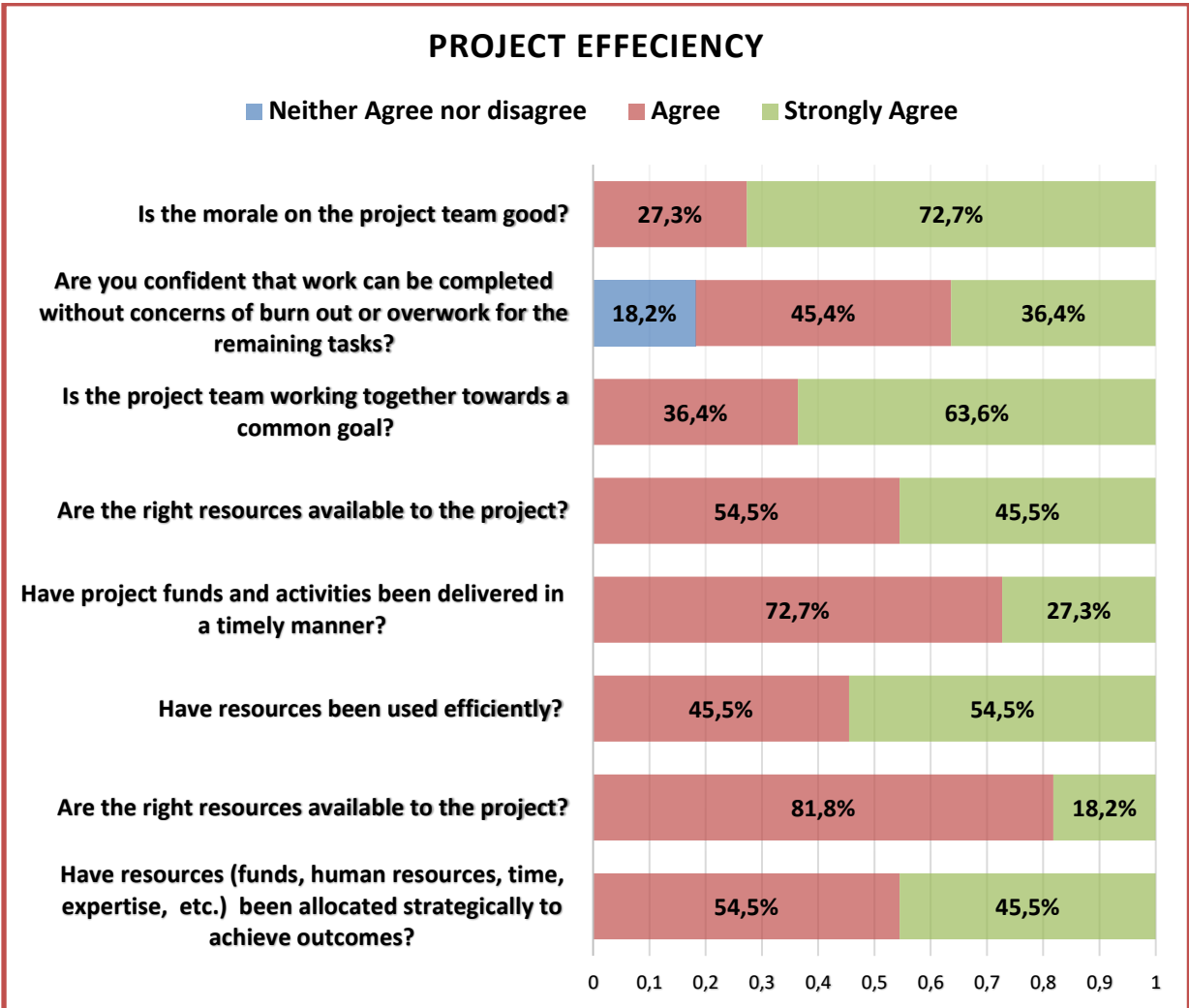0,0% 10,0% 20,0% 30,0% 40,0% 50,0% 60,0% 70,0%

The results also revealed that (9.1%), and (18.2%) of the respondents were neither agree nor disagree regarding the following issues respectively, according the following table:

|	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Will the project be likely to achieve its planned objectives upon completion?	**9.1%**	54.5%	36.4%
Will the project be likely to achieve its planned objectives upon completion?	**18.2%**	36.4%	45.4%

G. PROJECT EFFECIENCY

Ratings of the efficiency of the project

As for project efficiency, survey participants were asked about many issues examining the effectiveness of the project. Most aspects (88.0% of the aspects) regarding the efficiency of the project were rated highly by respondents. (see chart below).

PROJECT EFFECIENCY

Legend: ■ Neither Agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

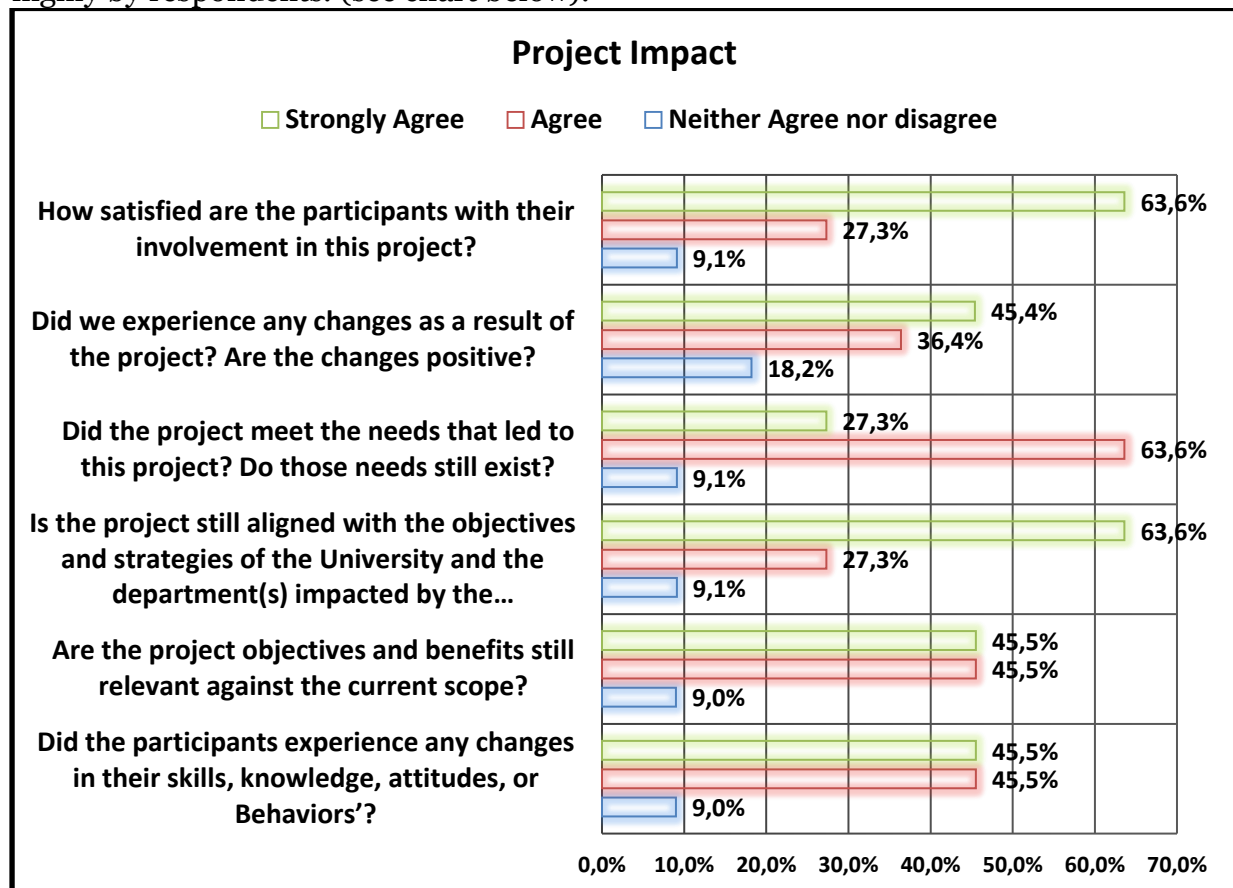| Question	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Is the morale on the project team good?		27,3%	72,7%
Are you confident that work can be completed without concerns of burn out or overwork for the remaining tasks?	18,2%	45,4%	36,4%
Is the project team working together towards a common goal?		36,4%	63,6%
Are the right resources available to the project?		54,5%	45,5%
Have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?		72,7%	27,3%
Have resources been used efficiently?		45,5%	54,5%
Are the right resources available to the project?		81,8%	18,2%
Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?		54,5%	45,5%

On average, the overall rate regarding all the aspects of efficiency of the project were either (45.5.7%) strongly agree or (45.5%) agree and only (2.3%) neither agree nor disagree.

Project Effeciency

Strongly Agree	45,5%
Agree	52,3%
Neither Agree nor disagree	2,3%

26
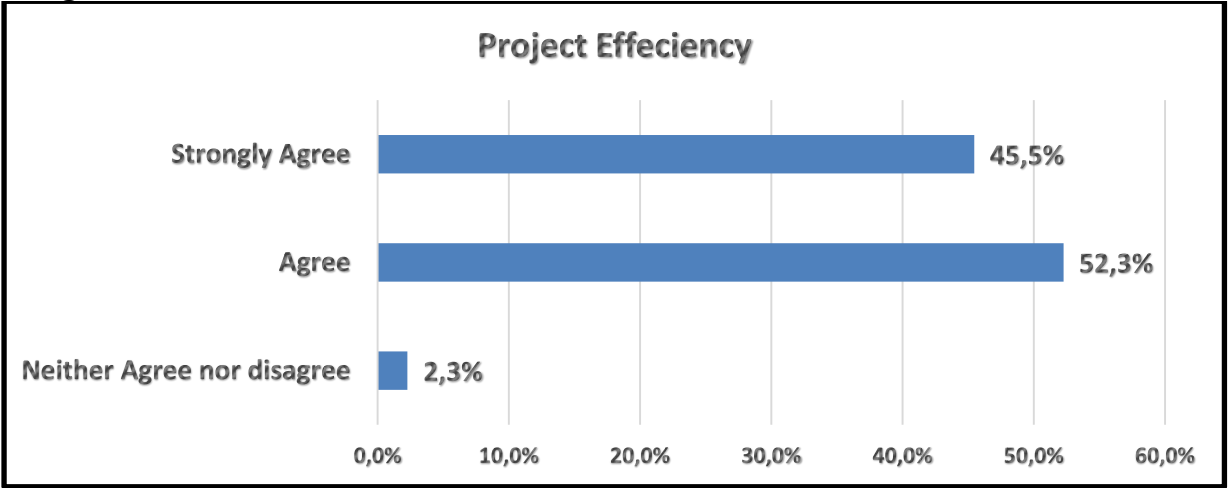
H. PROJECT IMPACT

Ratings of the impact of the project

As for project impact, survey participants were asked about many issues examining the impact of the project. Most aspects regarding the impact of the project were rated highly by respondents. (see chart below).
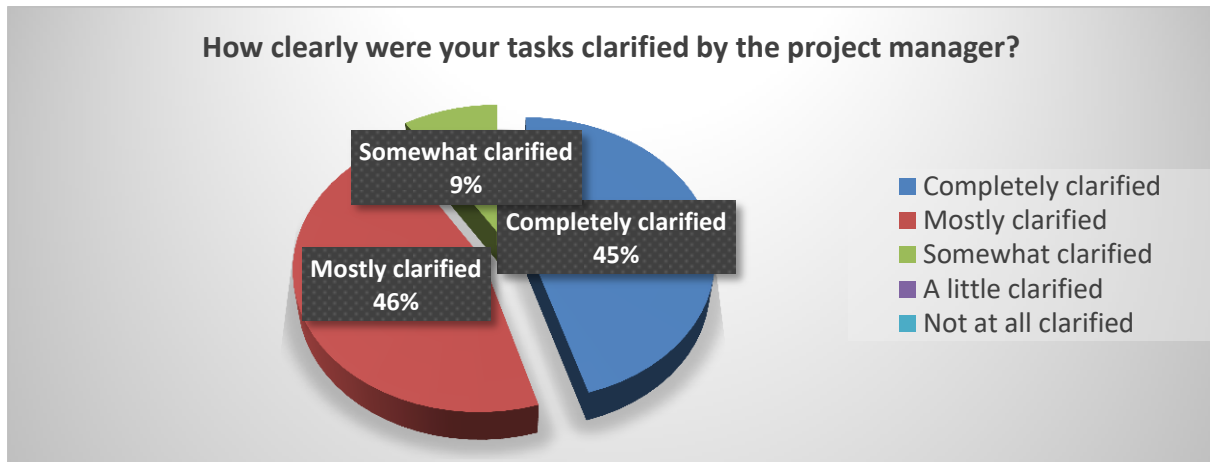

Project Impact

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neither Agree nor disagree

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor disagree
How satisfied are the participants with their involvement in this project?	63,6%	27,3%	9,1%
Did we experience any changes as a result of the project? Are the changes positive?	45,4%	36,4%	18,2%
Did the project meet the needs that led to this project? Do those needs still exist?	27,3%	63,6%	9,1%
Is the project still aligned with the objectives and strategies of the University and the department(s) impacted by the…	63,6%	27,3%	9,1%
Are the project objectives and benefits still relevant against the current scope?	45,5%	45,5%	9,0%
Did the participants experience any changes in their skills, knowledge, attitudes, or Behaviors'?	45,5%	45,5%	9,0%

The results showed that all respondents(100%) were either strongly agree or agree With the following project impact:
1. the participants are satisfied with their involvement in this project.
2. the project is still aligned with the objectives and strategies of the University and the department(s) impacted by the deliverable(s).
3. the participants experienced any changes in their skills, knowledge, attitudes, or Behaviours'.
4. the project objectives and benefits are still relevant against the current scope.
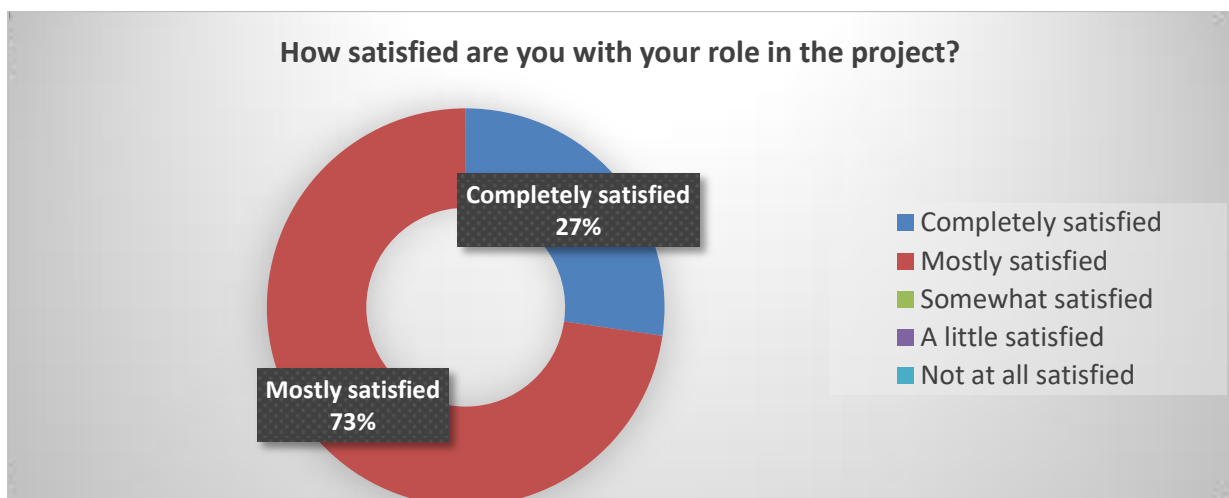5. the project met the needs that led to this project. Did those needs still exist.

4. THE MAIN RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE EVALUATION

On the basis of the questionnaire data reviewed here, the following seem the most salient conclusions:

➢ Project partners had a clear understanding of their role in the project.

How clearly were your tasks clarified by the project manager?

- Somewhat clarified 9%
- Completely clarified 45%
- Mostly clarified 46%

Legend:
- ■ Completely clarified
- ■ Mostly clarified
- ■ Somewhat clarified
- ■ A little clarified
- ■ Not at all clarified

➢ Most group members felt highly involved in the project and were satisfied with their role in it.

How satisfied are you with your role in the project?

- Completely satisfied 27%
- Mostly satisfied 73%

Legend:
- ■ Completely satisfied
- ■ Mostly satisfied
- ■ Somewhat satisfied
- ■ A little satisfied
- ■ Not at all satisfied

➢ The project leadership was rated very highly by participants of the project on the whole, particularly with regard to fostering respect, trust and inclusiveness, motivating the people involved, working to develop a common understanding and vocabulary, and Creating an environment where different opinions can be said.
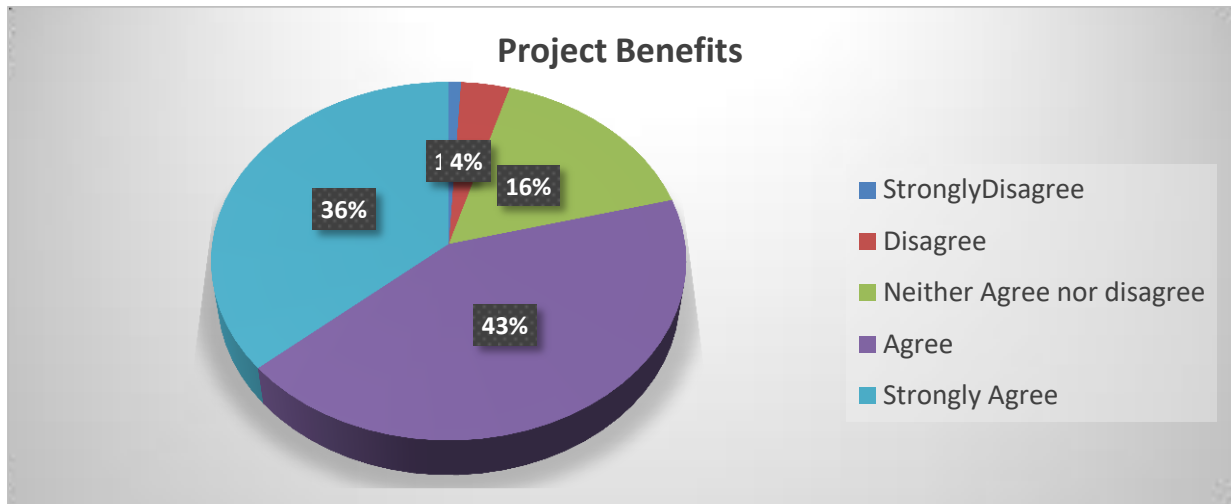
PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Neither Agree nor disagree; 4,6%

Strongly Agree; 50,9%

Agree; 44,6%
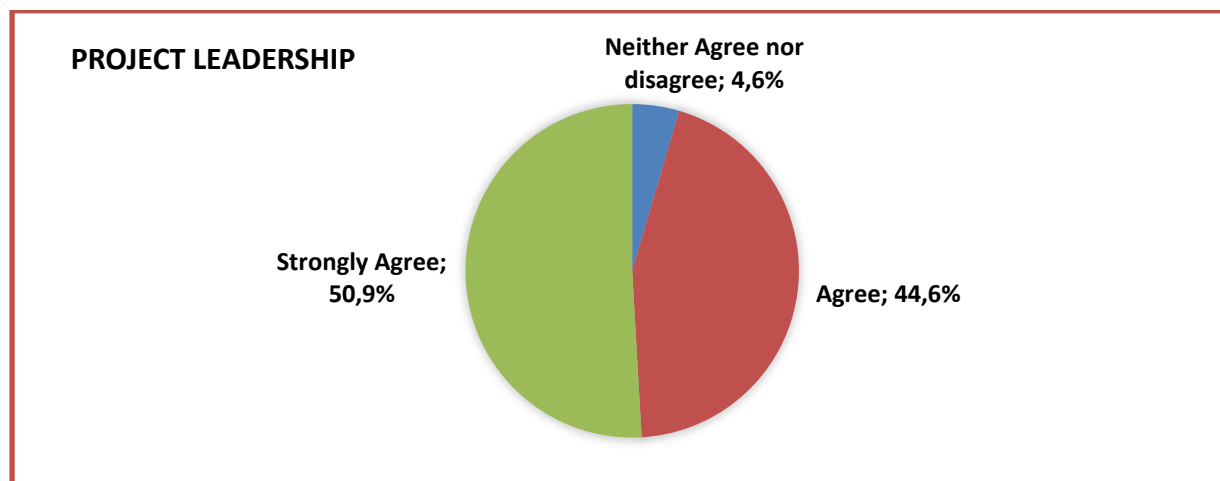
> On the whole, the effectiveness of project staff in carrying out the administration and management of the project was highly rated by group members.

Administration of the Project

1% 8%

31%

61%

- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
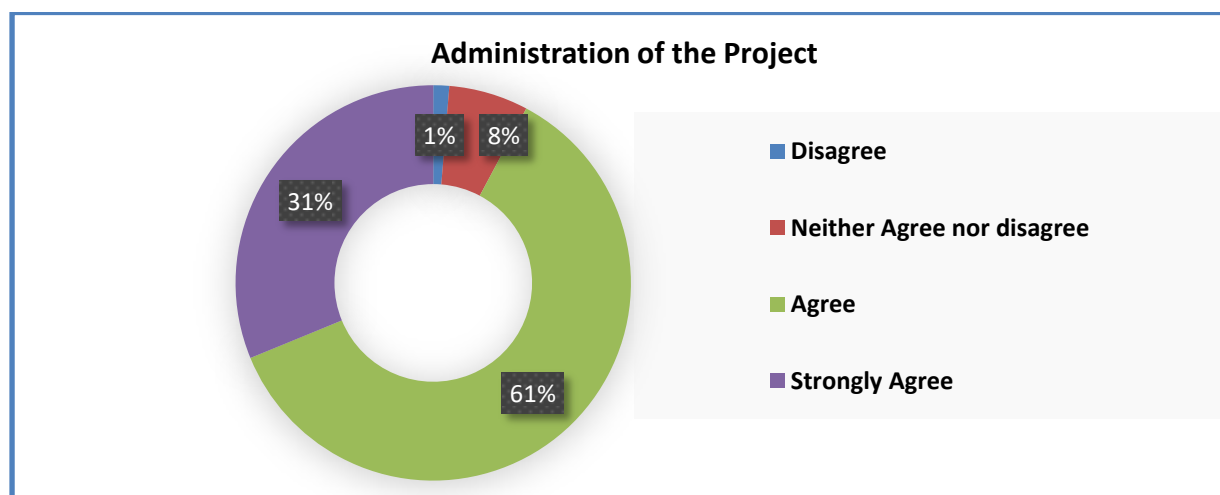
> The main benefits identified by partners from taking part in the project were:
1. All expenses were adequately quantified in the cost plan.
2. The invoices and receipts were kept for expenses incurred.
3. The quality plan was effectively applied during the execution of the project.
4. A clear quality targets was identified.
5. The quality review processes were effective.
6. The quality improvement actions were actually undertaken.
7. A clear activities schedule was outlined in the project plan.
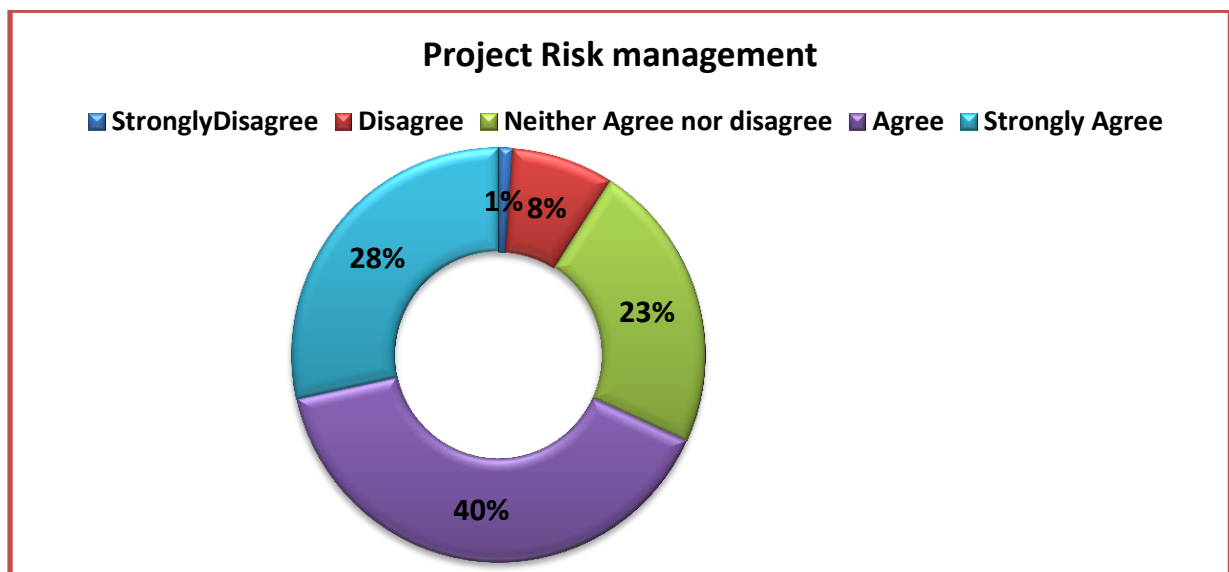8. All expense types were identified in the cost plan.

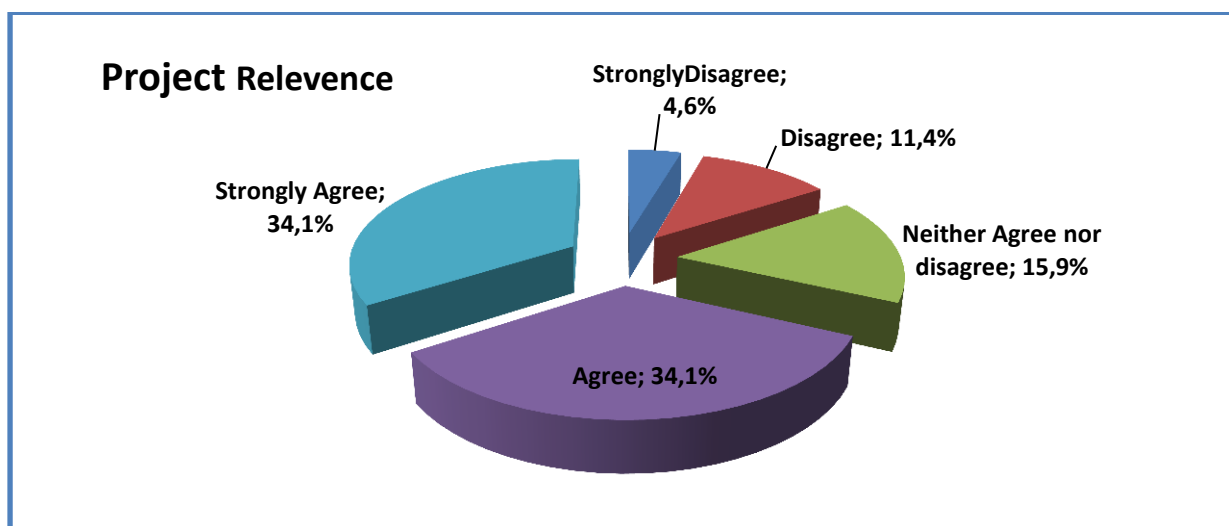All believed that advantages of participating outweighed disadvantages

Project Benefits

(Pie chart legend)
- StronglyDisagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Chart values: 1%, 4%, 16%, 43%, 36%

➢ Frequency of communications tended to be rated as high with other project partners and with project manager. The majority of group members rated the quality of communications positively but a minority rated them as poor.

➢ A majority thought that communication in the project had been effective and felt comfortable in expressing their point of view which they believed had been listened to.

Project Communication

Neither Agree nor disagree; 8,0%

Strongly Agree; 37,5%

Agree; 53,4%
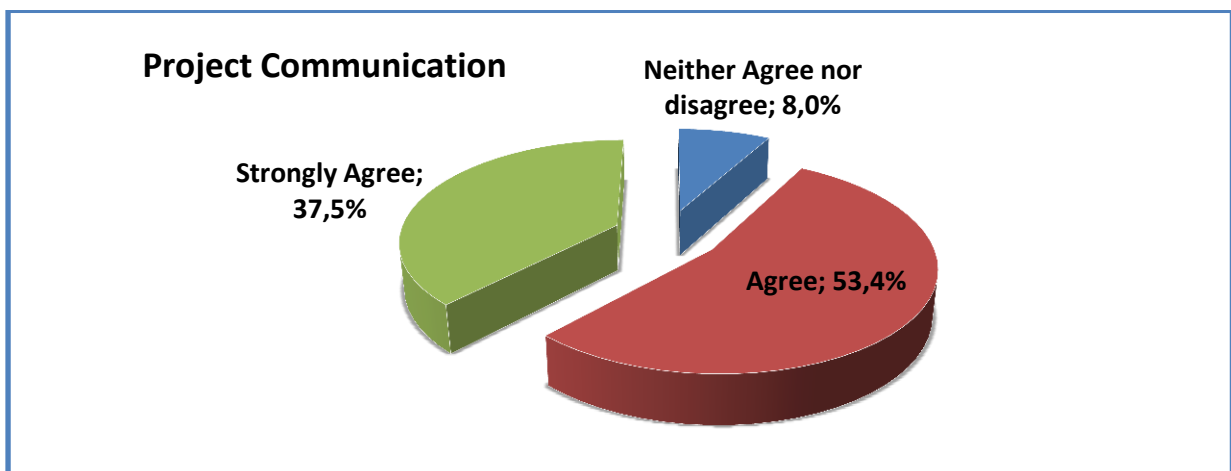
➢ There was general agreement among the group, that the project had been well managing the risk; costs, schedule, scope, or quality changes has been effectively managed; all approve changes well implemented according to the appropriate procedures; all important project risks were identified early in the project; a clear mitigation plan was outlined for each risk identified, and the project was not affected by unforeseen risks.

Project Risk management

StronglyDisagree   Disagree   Neither Agree nor disagree   Agree   Strongly Agree

1% 8%
28%
23%
40%

> The project relevance was rated very highly by participants of the project on the whole, particularly with regard to the relevant of the planned project objectives and outcomes and realistic to the situation on the ground. Moreover, there was a general agreement among the project participants that, the objectives of the project were in line with defined needs and priorities, and that a need analysis was carried out at the beginning of the project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders?

Project Relevence

StronglyDisagree;
4,6%

Disagree; 11,4%

Neither Agree nor
disagree; 15,9%

Strongly Agree;
34,1%

Agree; 34,1%

> As for the project effectiveness, there was a general agreement among most of the partners that, the project activities were adequate to realize the objectives, the project objectives and benefits are still relevant against the current scope,

the project is making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives, and project management and implementation participatory is contributing towards achievement of the project objectives.
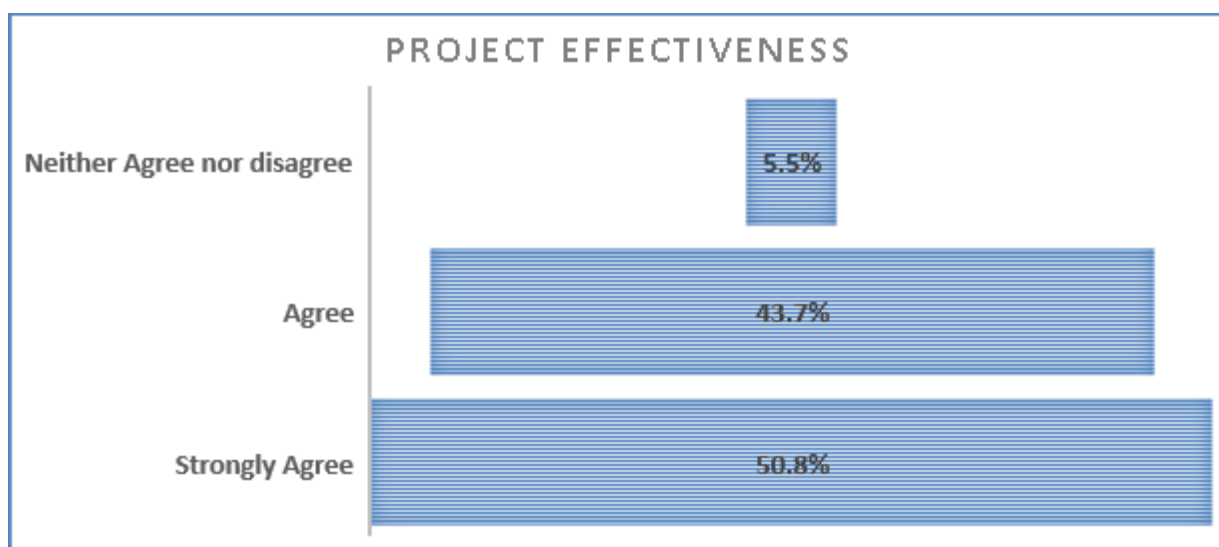
> As for the project efficiency, there was a general agreement among most of the partners that, the morale on the project team is good, the project team is working together towards a common goal, the right resources are available to the project, project funds and activities have been delivered in a timely manner, resources have been used efficiently, and the right resources are available to the project.
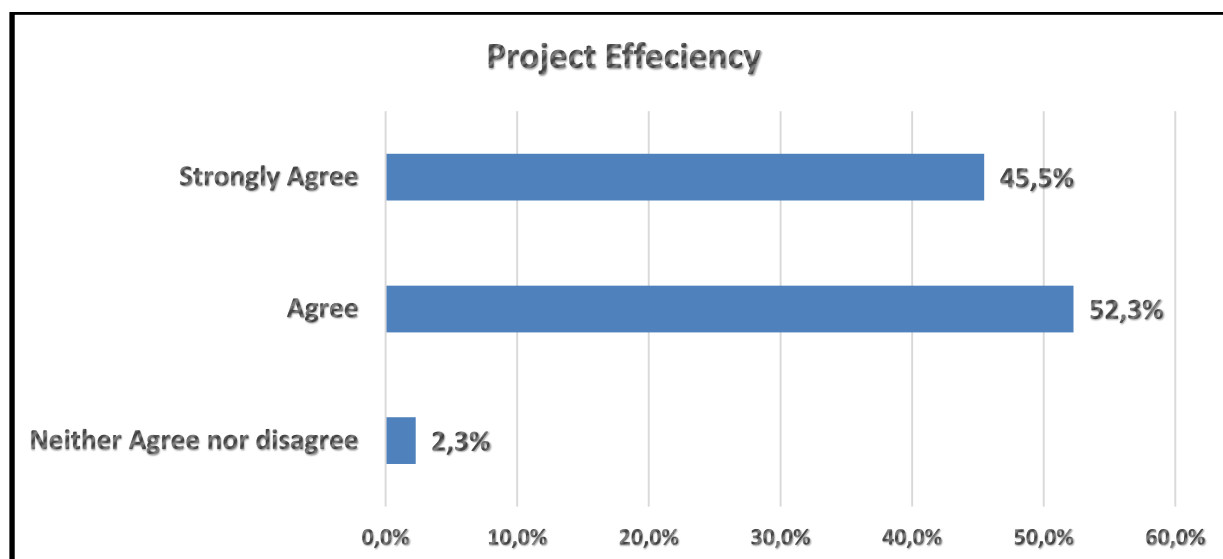
➢ Finally, regarding the impact of the project on the participants, there was a general agreement among most of the partners that:
1. the participants are satisfied with their involvement in this project.
2. the project met the needs that led to this project.
3. the project objectives and benefits are still relevant against the current scope.
4. the participants experienced a change in their skills, knowledge, attitudes, or Behaviors.
5. the project is still aligned with the objectives and strategies of the University and the department(s) impacted by the deliverable(s).

Project Impact

10,6%; 11%

48,5%; 48%

40,9%; 41%

■ Neither Agree nor disagree
■ Agree
■ Strongly Agree
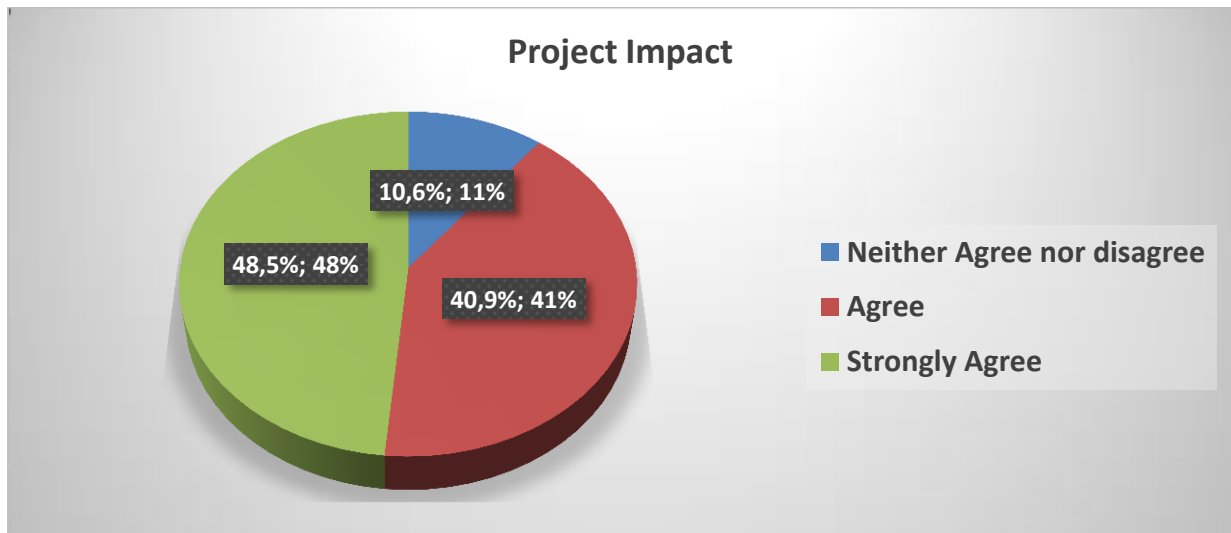
5. THE MAIN LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I believe the project components have been well-established and the progress towards realizing the objectives is very good. The following are the main lesson learned from participating in the project:

➢ The participants have gained experience and acquired new skills in various aspects on project management, leadership, and of course university governance.

➢ Moreover, the participants have acquired new knowledge about the importance of exploiting and applying university governance at our university as well as in cooperation with other participating HEIs and world-wide.

➢ also, the participants believe that the current status can be significantly improved with the introduction of the new paradigms, principles and practices that are utilized in the university governance project.

➢ As a key part of the governance of higher education institutions, documenting lessons learned helps a project team discover both strengths and weaknesses.

➢ It provides an opportunity for team members and/or partners to discuss successes during the project, unintended outcomes, and recommendations for others involved in similar future projects.

➢ It also allows the team to discuss things that might have been done differently, the root causes of problems that occurred, and ways to avoid those problems in later project stages.

➢ The participants also learned that governance practices that are currently implemented by European institutes can be transferred, adopted and applied at our university and other local universities in Palestine. Moreover, the adoption of such these practices will provide support in better defining the vision, mission as we as strategic objectives of our university.

➢ By being involved in this project, the participants have learned that governance practices can assist in creating stronger links between the different stakeholders as they can jointly define and develop well-defined and commonly agreed-upon objectives that serve the needs of all stakeholders in a transparent and participatory approach.

➢ Among the different lessons learned throughout the project is to have consistent vision, objectives and mission statements for the university.

- Another lesson is related to explore the strategic procedures that are used in EU partners to apply governance in their universities.

- The mix of knowledge and experiences of the different partners is a key resource.

- The lack of information and detailed requirements at the start of the project caused delays.

- The individual work packages could have less dependency on each other and started more or less in parallel.
- The large number of partners and difficulty of travelling might suggest that a more flexible approach be sued for scheduling, e.g., not all participants need to meet at same time.

- Governance will take its roles perfectly when the dimensions of accountability, autonomy, and participation are clearly identified among the divisions.

- The project partnership has met regularly with training and management meetings, this has contributed to enhance the communication and the trust among the partners towards a common objective to achieve.

- The participants believe that additional senior-level administrative staff member should have been involved at the earliest stages of the project and continued throughout all phases.

- Also, the level of involvement of indirect stakeholders should have been increased with an emphasis on the expected input from each indirect group and its impact on the overall objectives of the project.

- It is important to involve other Palestinians universities in the project. Such involvement can enrich the validity of the applied tool and compare the results with other governmental and nongovernmental institutions.

- Another aspect is involving people from HEIs who have different administrative levels.

- Early study visits would have been very beneficial to inform the details needed and to build relationships early in the project.

- Early and regular face to face meetings between European partners would have built relationships early in the project and would have benefited the project.

- Early and ongoing communication from each of the partner institutions of the detail and level of training required so that the detailed needs of the WP could be focused.

- The outcomes of each phase, in addition to the lessons learned after each face should be thoroughly discussed by all stakeholders.