

DEVELOPING UNIVERSITY CAPACITY IN SADC TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES IN PURSUING THE SDGs

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN



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MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

This document Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is intended to be Deliverable 1.3 for the ‘Developing University Capacity in SADC towards participatory approaches in pursuing the SDGs (EngageSDG) Project. An ERASMUS-EDU-2023-CBHE implemented under the provisions and regulations of the Grant Agreement signed between the SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES ASSOCIATION (SARUA) as ‘Beneficiary’ and the ‘Agency’ the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) as financing, control, and audit institution.

The M&E plan will guide the Project Management Committee (PMC) through the phases of the project and be able to assess the progress, achievements, and obstacles. It details all internal and external quality control measures and provide detailed indicators and templates for the progress reports, which will feed into three internal monitoring reports.

INTRODUCTION

The EngageSDG project intends to promote the engaged university model by focusing on the use of participatory approaches to produce knowledge, and their potential to create innovative relationships between SADC universities and the communities within which they are embedded, in addressing societal challenges. The project defines a participatory approach (PA) to knowledge co-production as ‘solving a problem or designing an innovation in a way that involves people who are directly concerned by the result of his or her work.’

The consortium behind the EngageSDG project is composed of 6 SADC and 5 EU universities, as well as the associations SARUA and OBREAL. The SADC universities are located in Mauritius (University of Mauritius, University of Technology Mauritius), South Africa (University of the Western Cape; North-West University) and Zambia (University of Zambia; University of Lusaka). The EU partners are: University of Barcelona; University College Cork; Free University of Brussels; and University of Bologna.

The broad background for this project is the growing emphasis on societal engagement as a core responsibility of contemporary HE systems (Boyer 1996). Although universities in many countries traditionally have been involved in community engagement, this area of activity often has played a subservient role. Many interventions in the community were linked to areas in which it was traditionally part of the institution’s educational role to implement policies and strategies to promote public services (e.g. community health, public policy, social services), and the interventions provided the practical opportunity for students in these selected fields of study to gain experience in their future areas of professional practice. In effect, community engagement was not driven by a ‘whole-institution’ approach, but was seen as a discrete, compartmentalized activity with little effect on the institution’s definition of its academic mission.

However, the prominence and urgency of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has questioned the adequacy of the dominant paradigm of HE engagement. As a result, there is a growing trend to view societal engagement as part of HE’s core responsibility. The increasing interest in the model of the “engaged university” reflects this commitment. For example, Brink (2018) argues that engagement is an integral aspect of the “soul” of the university and defines engagement as “the deployment of our research and teaching for (a) responding to societal challenges, and (b) learning from them” (Brink 2018: 287).

In recent years, this responsibility has been integrated into the core of developmental plans and policies on the African continent and its regions. Within HE, this commitment is also reflected at the institutional and inter-institutional level, often linked to an emphasis on the need for HE institutions to partner with other societal sectors in responding to societal challenges.

Similarly, there is a growing emphasis within the SADC on the responsibility that higher education institutions carry for societal engagement. The call is for higher education institutions to integrate engagement into their core academic activities, and to enter into meaningful relationships with their local communities for the production of knowledge.

Alongside this increasing commitment to societal engagement, is the realisation that meaningful engagement requires partnership between various sectors, including HE, communities, business and industry and the public sector. Against this broad background, this project is concerned with the question of how HE institutions may engage with their “communities” to develop knowledge that makes a meaningful impact on societal challenges.

To this end, the project intends to introduce an Integrated Participatory Framework (IPF) as a decision-making framework that will support HE institutions in Mauritius, Zambia and South Africa, and the wider SADC HE, in the selection of PAs that are situationally relevant. This is because there is a need to clarify which approaches are most suited to the purpose and nature of specific interventions, as well as to develop capacity in their practical implementation. In this sense, the project will focus on those SDGs that are most relevant to the regional development goals of the SADC, as well as the strategies and contexts of each university.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF ENGAGESDG

Generally, the EnaggeSDG project aims to build capacity in SADC universities to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in their local environments through the use of participatory approaches.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

SO1. Developing a Report on the State of Play

- Dissemination: Use targeted communication channels to disseminate the report widely among stakeholders in the SADC region and beyond. This includes academic publications, project websites, social media, and newsletters.
- Awareness campaigns: Launch awareness campaigns highlighting the report's findings and their implications for achieving the SDGs through higher education, using infographics, webinars, and press releases.
- Stakeholder engagement: Engage with policymakers, educational leaders, and the broader academic community through roundtable discussions, conferences, and forums to discuss the report's findings and implications.

SO2. Developing a Conceptual Framework and Digital Ecosystem

- Promotional content: Create and distribute promotional content that highlights the benefits and features of the digital ecosystem and conceptual framework, including tutorials, feature articles, and demo videos.
- Training and webinars: Host training sessions and webinars for academic staff and administrators on utilizing the digital ecosystem for decision-making, capacity development, and collaboration.
- Feedback channels: Establish channels for feedback on the digital ecosystem, encouraging users to contribute ideas for improvement and share their success stories.

SO3. Capacity development in higher education institutions

- Capacity building programmes and pilots: Promote capacity-building programmes through direct communication with universities and via academic networks and associations, emphasizing the benefits of adopting PAs for local engagement.
- Success stories: Share success stories and case studies from pilot projects in South Africa, Mauritius, and Zambia to illustrate the impact of these initiatives and encourage adoption by other institutions.
- Resource sharing: Develop and share resources, such as guides, best practices, and toolkits, to support the capacity development of higher education institutions in the SADC region.

SO4. Creating a sustainable community of practice

- Community building: Use social media, online forums, and dedicated platforms to facilitate the creation of a community of practice, encouraging regular interaction, knowledge exchange, and collaboration among regional higher education institutions.

- **Events and networking:** Organise virtual and in-person events, such as workshops, conferences, and meetups, to strengthen the community of practice and foster networking and collaboration.
- **Continuous learning:** Offer ongoing learning opportunities, including online courses, webinars, and collaborative research projects, to keep the community engaged and support continuous improvement.
- **Communication with Project Partners and Beneficiaries**
- **Regular updates:** Provide regular updates to project partners and beneficiaries through newsletters, email communications, and project meetings to keep all parties informed and engaged.
- **Tailored communication:** Develop tailored communication strategies for different groups of beneficiaries (e.g., academic staff, students, community members) to ensure relevance and maximize impact.
- **Visibility and branding:** Ensure consistent branding and visibility for the EngageSDG project across all communications, enhancing recognition and credibility.

The project will take place in 4 phases, with some phases running in parallel. Each phase corresponds to the four specific objectives of the project.

Phase 1 Analysis: The situation analysis provides the basis for the project and consists of two components of the first project phase. The first part, commencing in the first month of the project, involves a review of international research on the use of PAs, as well as a general study of available information on the use of PAs amongst higher education institutions in the SADC.

Phase 2 Design: Development of the Integrated Participatory Framework: The second phase of the project (in the third and fourth quarter of Year One) involves the development of an Integrated Participatory Framework (IPF).

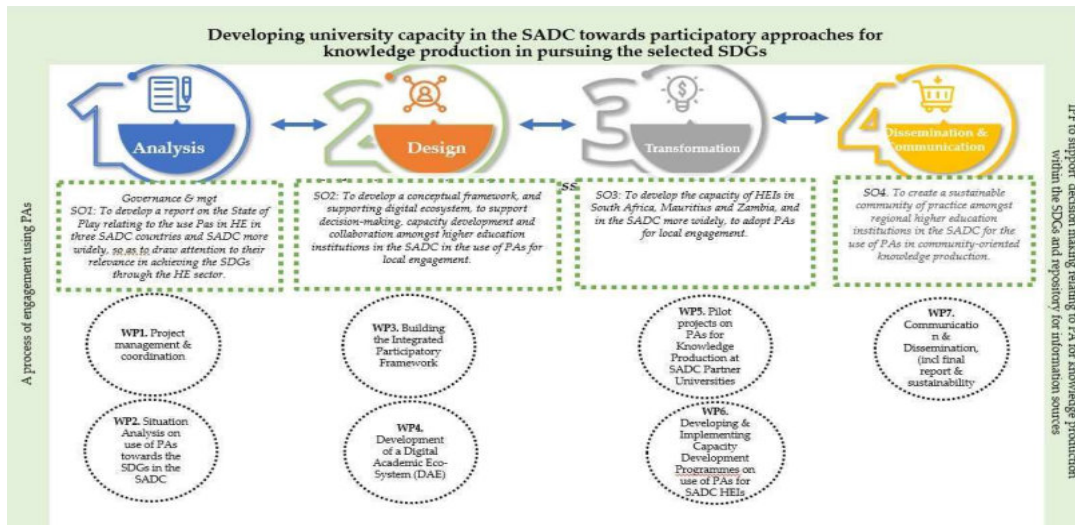
Phase 3 Transformation: Capacity Development Pilot Projects on PAs.

Phase 4 and all phases: Implementation.

Parallel phases: Digital Academic Ecosystem: Throughout the duration of the project, the partner institutions will manage and coordinate the project within the framework of a digital academic eco-system (DAE). The major components of the system are:

1. **Online collaboration space:** SARUA will take the lead in the configuration of a collaborative project workspace. It is envisaged that MS Teams will be configured for this purpose, as it offers a cost-effective solution for collaborative work. The project will use this collaborative workspace to support its activities, including the regular virtual project meetings, project management, the monitoring and review of progress, and the storage of project reports for internal use.
2. **An online learning and teaching solution:** OBREAL Global currently is developing an e-learning platform (OBREAL Global Training Platform), and it has committed to making this solution available to the project. OBREAL will customise the development of its e-learning system to support the objectives of the project and the training component.
3. **An Academic Repository:** The project will develop an academic repository to host resources on higher education engagement and PAs. For this purpose, SARUA will coordinate a project task team with the role of coordinating the design and development of the academic repository. The academic repository will become a key contribution by the project to ensure the sustainability of the project, by hosting and updating electronic resources on engagement and PAs.

The overall structure of the different phases



LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF THE INTERVENTION LOGIC	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS AND PREREQUISITES
Goal (general objective) <i>Identify the broader objective to which this project contributes</i>	The general objective of the project is to enhance the capability of higher education institutions in the SADC to build their capacity to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in their local environments through the use of participatory approaches for knowledge production	Completed final project report on the use of participatory approaches for knowledge co-production at SADC partner universities	University autonomy to take decisions about approaches for social innovation and participatory knowledge development Stable institutional leadership Minimum connectivity is guaranteed for HEIs, including generators for areas/regions with less stable power sources – Sufficient bandwidth and accessible data/wifi for young researchers and university staff Securing the contribution of local communities to contribute to the project Political stability and consistent commitment of SADC ministers to higher education
Purpose (specific Objectives) <i>List the specific objectives that projects shall</i>	Specific Objective 1: To develop a report on the State of Play relating to the use of PAs in higher education in three SADC countries and in the SADC more widely, so	Completed situation analysis on participatory approaches in each partner institution and within the SADC. Completed framework	Partner universities have a commitment to engage in participatory research as part of their vision and mission.

achieve	as to draw attention to their relevance in	document on the development and use of an Integrated	
	achieving the SDGs through the higher education sector. Specific Objective 2: To develop a conceptual framework, and supporting digital ecosystem, to support decision-making, capacity development and collaboration amongst higher education institutions in the SADC in the use of PAs for local engagement. Specific Objective 3: To develop the capacity of higher education institutions in South Africa, Mauritius and Zambia, and in the SADC more widely, to adopt PAs for local engagement. Specific Objective 4: To create a sustainable community of practice amongst regional higher education institutions in the SADC for the use of PAs in community-oriented knowledge production.	Participatory Framework (IPF) in pursuing the SDGs. Completed partner reports on their pilot projects for the use of the IPF to support participatory approaches for local engagement. Updated Integrated Participatory Framework document. Completed report on participant feedback on the capacity-building programme for the incorporation of participatory approaches into institutional policies and strategies for SDG engagement. Developed and implemented solutions for a digital academic eco-system to support SADC HEIs in the use of participatory approaches, demonstrated to project participants and through a SARUA webinar. Developed and implemented project stakeholder engagement, dissemination and sustainability strategies.	University leadership commitment to the project/willingness to engage the full academic community in strategy revision and ability to set realistic/context specific goals. Partner universities have staff and offices which can be mobilised for the project, with the necessary expertise. Openness of staff to engage in professional development and time flexibility that would allow them to engage in the project training activities beyond their normal workload. A strong linkage exists with the SADC secretariat, through SARUA, as well as to national authorities associated to the project
Outputs (deliverables) <i>List the deliverables (grouped in work packages) that the project is committed to produce. These must be stated as results.</i>	The work plan is revised upon the project award, updated as needed and endorsed by all partners	Partnership agreements signed by coordinator and partner at hand. Agenda and recording of Kick off Meeting	All partners nominate contact points for executive committee and engage consistently in monitoring and decision making

D1.1 Approved project work-plan.	A consensual financial management approach is established to execute the grant.	Agenda and minutes of first meeting of the Project Management Committee.	The project has an experienced financial management team to support partners who are newer to the E+ programme
D1.2 Detailed monitoring & evaluation framework.		Project Operational Plan	
D1.3 Documented and approved operating procedures for the Project Management Committee.	A clear, feasible system for monitoring of the project deliverables is established	Approved ToRs of Project Management Committee and Financial Management Committee.	Each SADC partner has the necessary leadership support to conduct the benchmarking and develop a process-plan.
D1.4 Approved internal and external Quality Assessment Reports.	Approved and coherent PMC operating procedures		SADC partner leadership is efficient and equitable in choosing staff to participate in training, whose profile align to the goals of the project.
D2.1 Approved situation analysis report on the use of participatory approaches in the SADC		Approved Financial Management Guidelines	
	An approach to internal and external evaluation of the project is established, with clear procedures and terms of reference	Approved Monitoring and Evaluation Plan	Possible data privacy issues are mapped and resolved.
D3.1 Completed Institutional Participatory Framework (IPF) on the development and use of participatory approaches in pursuing the SDGs.	Peer-reviewed benchmarking report on the use of PAs in the SADC	Approved interim and final internal monitoring reports	
		External evaluators report	
D 4.1 Developed digital academic repository on PAs in pursuing the SDGs is developed.		Benchmarking report	The partnership entails adequate expertise to support training on the use of participatory approaches
D5.1 Integrated report on local PAs is developed, based on experiences and insights of SADC partner universities in implementing their pilot projects.	An IPF guideline is developed based on the input from partners, assessment of state of play for participatory approaches, and consultation with important associated partners		
		IPF Guidelines agreed and published	Partners have sufficient outreach in their networks so as to engage other experts where needed in their pilot projects and also to promote the uptake of the results of their pilot projects more widely.
D 6.1 Final capacity development programme on the use of participatory approaches.	Digital learning and collaboration materials and resources made		
D 7.1 Workshop on the PAs is presented to SADC senior officials			

D 7.2 Final Project Conference D 7.3 Completed final project report.	available in SARUA digital repository and on SARUA digital platforms Completed reports on IPF integration by project partners. Capacity Development Programme is presented.	Digital materials and resources developed and implemented – validation through project webinar. Institutional roadmaps for the integration of the IFP into their policies and strategies for engagement, based on the pilot project. Training event presented – Video recording.	
Activities: <i>List the key activities to be carried out (grouped in work packages) and in what sequence, in order to produce the expected results.</i> T1.1 Project Kick-Off Meeting		Documented workplan approved by FMC	Partnership entails expertise in EU project management and ability to transfer knowledge in grant management

T1.2 Developing detailed Work Plan for the project	Inclusive participation from partnership in decision making/monitoring	Approved Monitoring & Evaluation Framework	The project management platform is user friendly and easily accessible to all partners
T1.3 Developing detailed Monitoring & Evaluation Plan for the project			
T1.4 Preparation and approval of Financial Management Guidelines	Project progress and risks are constantly monitored and mitigated Sound financial management/grant usage	Approved financial management guidelines Bi-lateral meetings documented with partners to address specific financial management concerns	International meetings are planned far in advance to ensure the time needed to secure visas, travel insurance, vaccination, etc.
T1.5 Initial project Meeting			
T 1.6 Establish and Implement Project Governance and Management Structures	Team building within consortium to achieve goals Effective governance and management structures.	Well planned and documented physical meetings which incorporate team building exercises and group work – Minutes, videos and evaluation reports of meetings	Partner universities are able to mobilise different staff members for self-assessment and have leadership commitment to strategy revision.
T1.7 Annual Project Planning and Review Meetings			
T1.8 Internal and External Quality Assessment of the Project	Project planning meetings held as per project workplan. External evaluation has clear terms and scope of assessment.	Meeting Reports/ attendance lists and videos	Internet is stable to allow for participants of training and pilot projects to engage in the online activities and to be able to conduct the pilot phase.
T2.1 Preliminary situation analysis of PAs in SADC	Internal and external monitoring reports produced as scheduled	Access to the project management platform/frequency of updates and communication in the platform	EU partners provide adequate expertise to develop robust training and support and online resources.
T 2.2 Identification of key stakeholders to be included in project communication and dissemination activities	A framework is provided for a benchmarking study with expected procedures and points of assessment	Project risk register is updated as appropriate and references in management meeting/project planning (meeting minutes/traffic in project management platform)	Partnership has sufficient African and international outreach capacity and ability to create synergies with other projects and initiatives.
T 2.3 Project workshop on the findings of the preliminary situation analysis.			

T2.4 Preparing input reports on the contribution of various participatory approaches in pursuing the SDGs T 2.5 Project workshop on the input reports T 2.6 Draft situation analysis on the use of PAs amongst SADC HE institutions T 2.7 Final situation analysis T3.1 Partner Work Meeting on creating an Integrated Participatory Framework T3.2 First draft of Integrated Participatory Framework T3.3 Study visit by SADC partners to EU partners T 3.4 Peer review of the draft Integrated Participatory Framework T 3.5 Prototype Integrated Participatory Framework T3.6 Finalising the Integrated Participatory Framework T 4.1 Specifications for the design of a digital academic ecosystem to support collaborative work on HE engagement amongst SADC HE institutions	Finalised situation analysis on the use of participatory approaches for local engagement. Wide consultation on the draft guidelines for an IPF IPF reviewed and updated Finalised and approved IPF	Documentation of risk mitigation (project management platform/email) Terms of reference and final external evaluation report Approved project monitoring reports Inputs from all partner on benchmarking study – reports Developed and peer-reviewed Integrated Participatory Framework Implemented PA projects by all SADC partner universities. All partners submit institutional road maps/ leadership endorsement for PA integration. Integrated report on partner case studies of PA integration	Political stability, that would allow for all partners to engage in the project without interruption
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T 4.2 Establishment of a digital collaborative project workspace T 4.3 Development of an online learning and teaching system (LMS) T 4.4 Subject repository on PAs in pursuing the SDGs is developed T 4.5 Review and Improvement of the Digital Academic Eco-System T 5.1 Criteria for project proposals in the subsequent stage of the project are developed T 5.2 SADC partner universities submit proposals for pilot projects T 5.3 EU partner universities evaluate project proposals T 5.4. Approval of proposals for pilot projects T 5.5 SADC partner universities implement projects T 5.6 SADC partner universities submit reports on the implementation of the projects at the end of Year 2 T 5.7 Integrated report on local PAs is developed, based on the experiences of the SADC partner universities	Digital academic eco-system to support HE capacity development and collaboration developed. Online learning and teaching system developed. Digital academic repository developed. Active participation of all partners in respective institutional projects for IFP development	Revised Integrated Participatory Framework submitted to and approved by PMC Feedback report form SADC HEIs on capacity development event. Feedback report from SADC officials on capacity development event. Documentation related to SARUA Special interest group for development of PAs (reports, videos from meetings)	
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T 6.1 Task Team conducts needs analysis for development of capacity development programme T 6.2 Task Team conceptualises and develops capacity development programme. T 6.3 Selection of participants for the capacity development programme T 6.4 Presentation of the Capacity Development Programme T 6.5 Survey of participants to the learning/training event T 6.6 Development of case studies on the use of PAs T 6.7 Revision of Capacity Development Programme T 7.1 Development of project stakeholder engagement system T 7.2 Implemented project communication strategy T 7.3 First project dissemination event to share the findings of the situation analysis (Virtual) T 7.4 Second project dissemination event to share the Integrated Participatory Framework with key stakeholders	Integrated report on local PAs developed Capacity development programme on the use of participatory approaches is developed. Staff from a selected group of SADC higher education institutions are trained in the use of PAs	Close-out report on project website / Website hits and downloads Participation, physical and virtual in final conference	
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T 7.5 Third project dissemination event is held to present the work on the pilot projects and the prototype IPF. (Hybrid)	Learning material is developed for use in the capacity development programme.		
T 7.6 Establishment of SARUA community of practice for HE Engagement	A mechanism for the assessment of participant responses to the capacity-building event is designed and administered.		
T 7.7 Workshop is presented for SADC senior officials and non-academic stakeholders	Key project stakeholders identified.		
T 7.8 Project Close-out			
Conference T7.9	Project stakeholder engagement strategy implemented.		
Project Close-out			
Report	Project dissemination events held to inform key project stakeholders on project progress.		
	SARUA community of practice on HE engagement established.		
	Workshop conducted for SADC officials		
	Final project report submitted and placed on SARUA website.		

INDICATORS

The M&E Framework will make use of SMART quality indicators to assess whether the project reaches its results and objectives. It will lead to an on-going evaluation and control process related to project organisation, management and coordination, efficacy (comparing and measuring obtained results), and conformity (accomplishment level of the responsibilities assumed by each partner).

Indicators will be both qualitative and quantitative, and will include:

- Assessment of pilot projects and studies by project participants - to address the following questions:
 - i) To what extent were the planned activities of each work package implemented as planned?
 - ii) Were all outputs produced as planned? (Questionnaires, focus groups).

- Were project oversight and stakeholder management systems put in place as planned? Indicators will include:
 - i) Timely delivery of progress reports from partners (project manager records);
 - ii) Records of PMC meetings (agendas, minutes);
 - iii) Audit samples of financial approvals;
 - iv) Frequency of PMC communications and time efficiency in conflict resolution.
- Inclusivity of staff from partners and associated partners in project activities and monitoring processes (Feedback from focus groups and interviews).
- Feedback/evaluation collected from partner meetings (questionnaires).
- Regularity, relevance and impact of project dissemination via various communication channels: project website and social media (website hits; activity on selected social media).
- Feedback on the project outputs such as the stakeholder analysis and the IPF from identified stakeholder groups such as SARUA communities of practice (questionnaires, focus groups).

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

Performance monitoring plan is extremely useful for proper implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities and consists of two separate plans monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring plan considers the range of activities, outputs and results and the Evaluation Plan incorporates the results against the objectives.

The content of the progress monitoring includes include:

- Status of project scope/implementation arrangements compared with those in the plan
- An assessment of the likelihood that the immediate development objectives (project purpose) will be met in part or in full, and whether remedial measures are required based on the current project scope and implementation arrangements;
- An assessment of changes to the key assumptions and risks that affect attainment of the development objectives;
- An assessment of the progress of each project component
- An assessment of progress in implementing the overall project to date in comparison with the original implementation schedule target (use of the timeline) versus a chart showing actual implementation schedule.
- Other project developments, that might adversely affect the project's viability or accomplishment of immediate objectives.

The performance monitoring plan will utilise both internal and external evaluations providing general evaluation tools for both internal and external assessments of specific and cross cutting work packages, which guarantees high-quality results and activities. The Monitoring plan will involve day-to-day monitoring of the project's implementation, ensuring that activities are well-organised and completed on schedule, and continuous communication between partners to make informed decisions.

An external evaluator will review the project's overall progress and development.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The M&E plan and its monitoring will be ensured by OBREAL and SARUA. Both partners own the required expertise and experience including in the frame of Erasmus+ collaborative projects.

Each partner is responsible for the quality of its work in the work packages, the reporting, and publication.

The heads of the respective work packages are responsible for the appropriate implementation of the activities and timely reporting. Changes in the timetable, which may cause delays for other work packages, have to be notified and approved by the Project Coordinator. The Project Coordinator is also responsible for reporting to the European Commission.

The primary modes of evaluation will be:

1. Meetings of the Project Exco and PMC to ensure oversight and quality of the project activities in line with the overall objective.
2. The Work Package leaders (WPLs) will be required to submit regular project progress to the PMC, according to specified reporting templates. These templates will be explained in detail at the first formal partner meeting, and partners will have the opportunity to have further clarificatory meetings should they need further support in the completion of reports. The templates will be used to generate regular information to effectively monitor the project implementation, in terms of the achievement of the agreed deliverables. They also will serve to assess the timely execution of the budget, as well as the adherence to all financial management requirements.
3. Peer review of project outputs: Internal (project partners including beneficiaries and associates) and external (by stakeholders as identified in the development of the stakeholder engagement strategy).
4. Periodic follow-up by OBREAL Global, as the coordinator of the M&E framework, with each partner, on at least a six-monthly basis, to discuss any matters that may impact on their engagement with the project, any concerns that partners may have; and their satisfaction levels with the project management, guidance on project monitoring and reporting, the quality and effectiveness of collaboration and communication; and their contribution to the achievement of project objectives. This follow-up may make use of a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures (interviews, focus groups, surveys)

The Quality Committee will communicate virtually and will meet prior to the Kick-Off Meeting and be invited to PMT meetings where monitoring results will be discussed.

METHODOLOGY AND PLANNING

METHODOLOGY

The tools that will be used to evaluate quality for EngageSDG will be the following ones:

- Online Questionnaires with quantitative variables. They will be Likert Scale questionnaires where different items will be evaluated from 1 to 4. These values are used to avoid bias derived from intermediate values and thus avoid the trend to the medium. Results obtained through this means, allow comparing numerical values between the different partners of the project. Specific questions in order to identify the different important items of the project and in which partners/experts can freely express their opinion. These answers are really useful to get feedback (either key points or potential solutions) from the partners.

- Semi-structured interviews with each of the partners. These interviews will be recorded and will be carried out whenever OBREAL deems it necessary, and at least once every 12 months.

These tools are the same for the Internal Quality Management and for the External Evaluation.

PLANNING

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
Task 1.8 Internal project evaluation and monitoring												
Task 1.8 Conducting external evaluation												
Task 1.8 Prepare project reporting												

DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS

All the documentation and records are stored and archived in accordance with the documented and approved operating procedures for the Project Management Committee (D1.3).

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGEMENT

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS ANALYSIS

The Monitoring plan will include indicators for assessing the project milestones and achievements (deliverables and other outputs) and a clear methodology for the various quality assurance measures to be undertaken. It will address how these various forms of feedback will be assessed, used, analysed and disseminated across the partnership.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION OF PARTNERSHIP SATISFACTION

The aim of this analysis is to validate and evaluate (minimum 2 times during the running period of the project) important parameters of the adopted work plan and to investigate means for maximising the potential of the strengths and opportunities while minimising the impact of the weaknesses and threats.

To identify project's strengths and weaknesses we first identify a list of relevant items as regards managerial and technical aspects of the project.

Each item is to be rated according to a 5-point scale for the calculation of the average rate:

- 1 Very Unsatisfactory

- 2 Unsatisfactory
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Satisfactory
- 5 Very satisfactory

In order to get their feedback, a mandatory suggestion/comment box will be enabled where the partners can include their comments/suggestions on the matter, especially when the evaluation is under 3.

Based on the partner input, the mean value of the rating for each item is calculated. Thus, each item may be categorised as:

Strength - if its mean value is greater than or equal to 3.00;

Weakness - if its mean value is less than 2.00;

All other items, with average values that fall between 2.00 and 3.00 are characterised as Neutral items.

These are the main items for evaluation. However, in each evaluation partners can add other items that they consider relevant for the project and these items could be added in future evaluation of this plan.

Report is a live document and can be modified according to the circumstances and the development of the project.

Table 5. Relevant items of the project.

1.	Collaboration between participating partners <i>(the partners contribute and meet deadlines for the optimal development of the project)</i>
2.	Communication between participating partners <i>(accessible and available partners for effective communication)</i>
3.	Consortium meetings (Regular and effective meetings to address the work plan)
4.	Fluency on the communication between partners (to address the work plan)
5.	Scientific/technical capacity of partners for the specific project
6.	Existence of clear objectives and measurable results
7.	Existence of clear work plan to achieve project's objectives
8.	Existence of clear methods to measure project's success
9.	Sufficiency of risk management methods
10.	Dissemination of content according to plan.
11.	Appropriate financial management.

RISKS EVALUATION

The aim of risk management is to identify potential risks at an early stage. In this sense, some risks have been identified. Partners will evaluate these risks from 1 to 4, being 1 the minimum risk and 4 the highest risk and have to make a comment if the value given is 3 or 4. This could be done efficiently using the OPPM (One Page Project Management).

Each partner evaluates all the risks and also, they can add any other risk that they consider important for the project or for any other WP. The risks added by the partners will be included for the evaluation in the following reviews.

According to the results obtained, an average of each risk and each WP will be calculated, also an average of the project will be calculated taking into account the WP average. Those risks with the highest average will be monitored with special attention and some measures to mitigate the risk can be taken.

For this evaluation, there are two kinds of risks identified:

A “Common risks: which are the same in all the WP”.

B “Specific risks: which are specific to each WP”.

A. The Common risks which are going to be evaluated in all WP are the following ones:

Sleeping partner: One or several partners, for diverse internal reasons, does not assume the responsibilities it has committed to in the project work plan

Physical events disrupted: A physical event needs to be postponed or rescheduled due to force majeure – This could be linked to the global pandemic, political instability.

Time plans are too ambitious, or deadlines are not met

PMC meetings may not always have all partners present and may inhibit inclusive decision making

Mismatches of results vs. initial objectives are identified

Inadequate digital platforms and solutions amongst partners to support participation in project activities

Lack of agreement between partners

B. “Specific risks: which are specific to each WP”.

MONITORING PROJECT PROCESSES AND IMPACT EVALUATION OF QUALITY

Each deliverable reports on a specific task grouping, or activity.

Deliverables are prepared throughout the time of execution of the activity that they are reporting.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The WPL is the ultimate responsibility for the deliverable and delegates the production of parts of the deliverable to relevant partners. Typically, the partners carrying out a specific part of the work will also be reporting on that.

The WP leader may also delegate the whole editing responsibility of the deliverable and its milestones to a partner in case that partner leads all the tasks reported in that deliverable and its milestones.

The other partners participating in the drafting of the deliverable are responsible for delivering their contribution in time and with the required quality level.

All other partners, including those who did not participate in the writing of a document, are invited to participate in the quality control process by reviewing it and providing feedback to improve it and help achieve the required quality level.

The PMC will assess the quality of each deliverable from the 2 reports and will provide the responsible of the Deliverable with any recommendations for improvements before submission to the EC.

INDICATORS FOR QUALITY CONTROL

The control of the deliverables will obey the following indicators:

- *Timeliness*: the deliverables will be delivered, latest, on the date specified in the proposal;
- *Completeness*: the deliverables should cover all the points described in the proposal;
- *Correctness*: the information contained in the deliverable shall be corrected and verifiable; a reference shall properly back any information coming from outside the activities being reported
- *Readability*: the documents should be concise and focus on the issues specified in the proposal. Any extra material that is deemed relevant to aid the understanding of the document itself shall be included as an annex. As a guideline, the deliverables should aim at being below 60 pages, except in cases of minimum and maximum page limits are provided. Deliverables above ten pages shall contain a detailed executive summary between 5 and 10 pages long.

This is the list of deliverables for the EngageSDG project:

Quarter	Y1Q1			Y1Q4	Y1Q4 Y2Q4 Y3Q4	Y2Q1	Y2Q3
Number	D1.1	D1.2	D1.3	D2.1	D1.4	D3.1	D5.1
Deliverable	Detailed Work Plan	Monitoring & Evaluation Framework	Documented and approved operating procedures for the Project Management Committee	Situation Analysis Report on the use of PAs in the SADC	Internal and External quality assessment – Reports	Completed final Integrated Participatory Framework document on the use of PAs towards the achievement of the SDGs	Integrated report on local PAs is developed, based on experiences and insights of SADC partner universities in implementing their pilot projects
Quarter	Y2Q4		Y3Q3				

Number	D4.2	D4.1	D6.1	D7.1	D7.2	D7.3
Deliverable	Developed and implemented online learning and teaching solution	Developed digital academic repository (on HE engagement and PAs)	Final Capacity Development Programme on the use of PAs	Workshop for SADC officials and non-academic institutions	Final Project Conference	Progress Report

NON-CONFORMANCE AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Non-conformance of a contribution from a partner (or a group of partners): In case of non-conformance of a contribution from a partner this last one is committed to deliver a new corrected version to the WP leader until the contribution reaches the required quality level.

Non-conformance of deliverable: This non-conformance should be detected then corrected before the delivery to the EC. In such a lump-sum based project, a rejection of a deliverable may delay the payments by the EC.

QUALITY OF THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

SCOPE

The Development and implementation of the Capacity Development Programme on the use of PAs for SADC Higher Education Institutions signifies the designing of the capacity development programme; development of programme contents; the review of the programme design and development; pilot presentation of capacity development programme to higher education leadership and staff from higher education institutions in the SADC and programme revision based on participant feedback.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The institutional pilot projects will be monitored through the M&E plan. Each partner is responsible for the quality of the content they are providing, guaranteeing that their final product obeys the following indicators: timeliness, correctness, completeness and understandability.

QUALITY

The WP leaders will monitor in a Quantitative and Qualitative way the following aspects of the project:

- Contents (objectives, duration, etc.)
- Organisation
- Methodology
- Platform
- Training materials/case studies

Follow-up meetings will be held with the different partners involved to detect problems that may arise during the training and mitigate the potential problems in an effective way. The tools used for this evaluation will be agreed upon and will be according to the tools listed in the final section.



CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Taking into account the results obtained in each section of the internal quality assessment, improvement measures will be proposed to alleviate possible deviations from the project and mitigate the risks identified in it. The corrective actions can refer to various categories such as meetings, work packages, measures, evaluations...

Furthermore, as an additional measure and depending on the results obtained, an interview may be carried out via teleconference with the partners that are considered necessary.

These measures will be communicated to the partners and validated by them.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CONTROL

GOAL AND SCOPE OF EXTERNAL EVALUATION

The external evaluation (to the project partnership) offers a distinct look at project execution and impact (T1.8).

The main objective of the external evaluation is to provide an independent, external and comprehensive view of the project halfway through it, and to detect any potential risks and weaknesses which could be prejudicial for its correct development, in a way that all comments and suggestions may be implemented in the second half of the project and those risks and weaknesses may be mitigated.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION

The external evaluation is based on the same tools for analysis as those for the internal evaluation, such as qualitative and quantitative questionnaires, as well as checklists and any other control template that may help him/her to develop this assessment task.

The external reviewers will conduct a review on Y1Q3-Y3Q3, verifying the quality of the deliverables, the achievement of milestones and objectives, and evaluating the results of each WP. The experts will participate in selected project activities, interview partners, and observe meetings. She/he will also examine all project documents, the website, and interview other relevant beneficiaries, in particular different involved staff members and other partners.

The external evaluator will attend at least one project annual meeting, where he/she will be able to participate, contribute and question the other partners about those aspects that might be considered relevant.

Once the project external evaluator is appointed, he/she is gradually introduced to the project so that he/she is aware of the current situation of the project, knows the partners, and becomes familiar with the assessment tools so he /she may attend a project meeting with the sufficient information to be able to assess on the project.

Their role is to provide an independent assessment of the project's success in meeting its objectives, its effectiveness in implementing the planned activities, and its contribution to advancing the use of Participatory Approaches (PAs) in higher education for engaging with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Output of the external evaluation:



The report produced by the evaluator will be discussed in the Project Management Committee. Key messages will be used to enhance procedures in the last project year and ensure the sustainability of results. SARUA will be in charge of preparing the Terms of Reference to be signed with the evaluator.

Therefore, after the appointment, the following steps were followed to guarantee a fruitful external evaluation analysis:

1. Initial Presentation of the Project
2. Attendance to a plenary Meeting
3. Meeting Assessment
4. Project Risk Analysis
5. Project Weaknesses and Strengths Analysis
6. Review of the deliverables & recommendations

From the information received from these tools, as well as from the expert's contributions a report will be produced.

This assessment is carried on from M12 onwards so, by M14 the external evaluator has been able to provide comprehensive feedback on the project, guaranteeing that his/her contributions and suggestions can be implemented in the second half of the project.

EXTERNAL EVALUATORS

Selection of external evaluators

An external evaluator will be appointed taking into account the expertise in the relevant fields as well as European and Erasmus projects will be selected.

The PMC will be asked to table viable candidates. The selection will be fairly managed to ensure that the selection process is fair, objective, based on expertise-related qualifications and experiences and free from discrimination (gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or any other) and bias.

Management of external evaluators

The external reviewers will be subcontracted to ensure a proper 'external reflection' on the project implementation and impact. The evaluator will conduct a review after the first year, verifying the quality of the deliverables and evaluating the results of each WP. The expert will interview partners and observe meetings. He/she will also examine project documents, the website and interview other relevant beneficiaries. The report produced by the evaluator will be discussed in the PMC

Key messages will be used to enhance procedures in the project last year and ensure the sustainability of results.

External evaluator meetings will be held back-to-back with other meetings and/or virtually, to render the project cost and time efficient.

Travel and subsistence have been allocated based on real cost and averages of previous project experiences operating in different Erasmus+ projects.

REPORTING

CONTINUOUS REPORTING SYSTEM



As the system on which this project is developed is that of continuous reporting, beneficiaries must continuously report on the progress of the action (e.g., deliverables, milestones, outputs/outcomes, critical risks, indicators, etc.). This is done through the coordinator in the Continuous Reporting tool of the Portal and according to the timetable and conditions set by the coordinator and agreed with the EACEA.

To ensure that the deadlines committed in the project are met and that the action carried out is of quality (reflected in its deliverables, milestones, products/results, critical risks, indicators, etc.), the PMC of the project will establish prior internal deadlines to, on the one hand, ensure a margin for review by the PMC itself or the Coordination, and on the other hand, to give a small margin to make changes within the committed deadline if deemed necessary. This internal deadline mechanism should also help with the communication with the Project Officer of any anomaly before the expiry of the committed deadlines. In this way, it is possible to discuss with the Project Officer the most optimal way to manage any obstacles that may arise.

Standard deliverables (e.g., non-payment status reports, accrued expenditure reports, special reports, etc.) should be submitted using the templates published on the Portal.

Beneficiaries must submit reports to request payments, in accordance with the timetable and modalities set out in the Data Sheet, which in this project includes two:

- RP No. 1: Additional Pre-financing.
- RP No. 2: Final Payment.

ADDITIONAL PRE-FINANCING REPORT

For this Reporting & Payment an "Additional pre-financing report" is required. Reporting must take place between M1 and M12, within 60 days after the end of the reporting period, i.e. before the end of M14. The deadline for the payment of this Additional pre-financing is 60 days from the date of receipt of the "Additional pre-financing report". The language of the report must be English.

The pre-financing includes a technical and a financial part.

- The **technical part** includes an overview of the implementation of the action. It should be prepared using the template available in the regular reporting tool of the portal.
- The **financial part** of the additional pre-financing report includes a statement on the use of the previous pre-financing payment.

The financial statement must contain the flat-rate contributions indicated in the table below (referenced to Annex 2 of the Grant Agreement), for the work packages that were completed during the reporting period. Breakdown of the approved budget by partner & budget category [EURO] as stated in Annex 2 of the Grant Agreement (G.A.):

ESTIMATED BUDGET (LUMP SUM BREAKDOWN) FOR THE ACTION



¹The University of Dortmund (TUDO) has decided to withdraw from the EngageSDG project. The tasks and responsibilities originally assigned to TUDO are now redistributed among the remaining partners to realize the smooth running of the EngageSDG project and the achievement of its objectives. Cognizant of the importance of equipping these institutions with the necessary resources to effectively perform the newly added tasks, changes are made to the budget originally allocated to them. This is done by redistributing TUDO's share of the budget to the remaining partners. The redistribution is done in the manner explained below.

Under Work Package 1, tasks and responsibilities assigned to TUDO concerning Project management and coordination are reassigned to the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), University of Lusaka (UNILAS), and University of Barcelona (UB). In terms of personnel, 2 person/month in category 1 was allocated to SARUA which is now changed to 4 person/month in category 1. Similarly, the 2 person/month in Category 2 and the 1 person/month in Category 1 allocated to UB and UNILAS respectively now changed to 4 person/month in Category 1 for UNILAS and 3 person/Month in Category 2 for UB.

Furthermore, €5,000 was allocated to SARUA for subcontracting an external reviewer under the initial budget distribution. The estimate was done conservatively, mainly aimed at ensuring maximum utilization of resources. However, in the process of recruiting external reviewers, the management recognized that the estimated budget would not suffice. Therefore, the budget allocated to SARUA for subcontracting is increased from €5,000 to €12,000 using a portion of the budget allocated to TUDO.

Under work package 2, tasks and responsibilities assigned to TUDO in developing a report on the 'State of Play relating to the use PAs in higher education in three SADC countries and in the SADC more widely, to draw attention to their relevance in achieving the SDGs through the higher education sector', are now redistributed to other partners. As such, the following changes are made to the personnel allocated to SARUA, Mauritius University, Mauritius Technological and UCC: 2 person/month in Category 1 and 2 person/month in Category 4 are added to SARUA; the 1 person/month in category 1 assigned to Mauritius is now increased to 4 person/Month in category 4, and the 1 person/month in category 1 assigned to Mauritius technological is now increased to 4 person/month in category 1.

TUDO was tasked with organizing meetings and seminars, including hosting the Annual Project Planning and Review Meeting in year three. This responsibility has now been reassigned to UCC, who will host the annual project planning and review meeting in year three, supported by SARUA. For this reason, the budget originally allocated for TUDO for service for meetings and seminars is redistributed to UCC and SARUA. Therefore, an additional €2,727 and €3,000 are allocated for SARUA and UCC respectively. Additionally, taking the added responsibility UCC took as the host of the meeting, 1 person/month in category 4 is added to UCC's personnel.

In work package 7, TUDO's tasks and responsibilities are re-assigned to UB. For this reason, the 1 Person/month in category 2 assigned to UB in the initial budget is now increased to 2 person/month in category 2.

(*) The 'maximum grant amount' is the maximum grant amount fixed in the grant agreement (on the basis of the sum of the beneficiaries' lump sum shares for the work package)

¹ Summary of reallocation of tasks and resources after withdrawal of the University of Dortmund from EngageSDG project



Lump sum contributions that are not declared in a financial declaration will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial declaration (directly in the Periodic Reporting tool of the Portal), the coordinator confirms (on behalf of the consortium) that:

- The information provided is complete, reliable, and accurate.
- The flat-rate contributions declared are eligible (that the work packages have been completed, that the work has been properly executed and/or that the results have been achieved in accordance with Annex 1; see Article 6 of the Grant Agreement).
- Correct execution and/or achievement can be justified by appropriate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) to be submitted on request (see Article 19 of the Grant Agreement) or in the context of controls, reviews, audits, and investigations (see Article 25 of the Grant Agreement).

In case of recoveries (see Article 22 of the Grant Agreement), beneficiaries shall also be liable for the flat-rate contributions declared for their affiliated entities (if any). The financial statements must be drawn up in Euro.

FINAL REPORT

For this Reporting & Payment a "Periodic report" is required. Reporting must take place between M36 and M37, within 60 days after the end of the reporting period, i.e. before the end of M38. The deadline for the payment of this Final Payment is 90 days from the date of receipt of the "Periodic report". The language of the report must be English.

The regular reports include a technical and a financial part.

- The **technical part** includes an overview of the implementation of the action. It should be prepared using the template available in the regular reporting tool of the portal.
- The **financial part** of the regular report includes the financial statement (consolidated statement for the consortium)

The financial statement must contain the flat-rate contributions indicated in the table below (referenced to Annex 2 of the Grant Agreement), for the work packages that were completed during the reporting period.

For the last reporting period, beneficiaries may exceptionally also declare partial lump sum contributions for work packages that have not been completed (e.g., due to force majeure or technical impossibility).

Lump sum contributions that are not declared in a financial declaration will not be taken into account by the granting authority.

By signing the financial declaration (directly in the Periodic Reporting tool of the Portal), the coordinator confirms (on behalf of the consortium) that:

- The information provided is complete, reliable, and accurate.
- The flat-rate contributions declared are eligible (in particular that the work packages have been completed, that the work has been properly executed and/or that the results have been achieved in accordance with Annex 1; see Article 6 of the Grant Agreement).

- Correct execution and/or achievement can be justified by appropriate records and supporting documents (see Article 20) to be submitted on request (see Article 19 of the Grant Agreement) or in the context of controls, reviews, audits, and investigations (see Article 25 of the Grant Agreement).

In case of recoveries (see Article 22 of the Grant Agreement), beneficiaries shall also be liable for the flat-rate contributions declared for their affiliated entities (if any). The financial statements must be drawn up in Euro.

PROJECT MEETINGS REPORTS

A Project Management Committee (PMC) will be formed to oversee the progress of all activities, composed of one member from each consortium member and chaired by SARUA/OBREAL who will make strategic decisions on the development of the project and ensure that activities are well organised and completed according to schedule, and that all deadlines are met, and objectives achieved. It will also be involved in the financial and content management of the project.

This PMC will take advantage of project events and organise at least one physical meeting per year (and at least two conference calls per year) to discuss and organise the project activities. As far as possible, (management) meetings were held immediately after training, workshops and other events to save costs and be more efficient.

To be more agile and operational, the plenary at the Kick-off Meeting may decide to delegate responsibilities to a smaller, executive team that forms the PMC in which the Coordinator is always present.

All PMC meetings will be reported and shared with all partners to maintain trust and transparency among the whole consortium, and to have a history of the decisions taken. These reports may be made by the Coordinator or by the Coordinator's delegate among the participants.

TOOLS

One of the responsibilities of the Coordinator is the selection of project management (PM) tool from where he/she promotes the overall smooth running of the project. Among other responsibilities, he/she is also assigned the final communication strategy within the partnership. To help develop these responsibilities, the PMC will decide on a couple of technological market tools: such as MS TEAMS or ZOOM (or similar, agreed upon with the consortium based on their availability of access and knowledge of the use of the tools) as a tool for a regular conference call with the partnership, MS TEAMS or DROPBOX (or similar, agreed with the consortium based on their availability of access and knowledge of the use of the tools) as a repository for updating project documents, plans and reports etc.. The use of other tools may be assessed during the course of the project, even if they were not initially detailed in the proposal.



Engage**SDG**



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Annexure A

Call for Reviewers

CALL

The Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) is seeking a qualified and experienced external reviewer to conduct an independent assessment of the EngageSDG Project, a project which is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The reviewer should represent the demography of the SADC consortium partners as indicated below. He/she will co-assess the project with an appointed EU external assessor.

The project aims to enhance regional collaboration and capacity building in higher education institutions across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region with a focus on sustainable development goals (SDGs). This call invites experts to contribute to the evaluation of the project ensuring an unbiased and comprehensive review of its outputs and outcomes.

Due date for applications: 31 July 2024

Duration of service: 1 September 2024 – 30 November 2026

ABOUT THE ENGAGESDG PROJECT

Project Name: Developing the capacity of SADC higher educations to use participatory approaches for community-based engagement with selected SDGs.

Project Acronym: EngageSDG.

Programme manager: Prof. René Pellissier.

Consortium members:

SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES ASSOCIATION (SARUA, The “Coordinator”) and

SADC: University of the Western Cape, North-West University, University of Zambia, University of Lusaka, University of Mauritius, University of Technology Mauritius.

Europe: Asociacion Observatorio De Las Relaciones Union Europea-America Latina (Obreal), Universitat De Barcelona, University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork, Alma Mater Studiorum - Universita Di Bologna, Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

Project websites:

<https://engagesdg.sarua.africa/>

<https://sarua.africa/sdgengage/>

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES, WORK PACKAGES (WPS) AND DELIVERABLES

Governance & mgt	WP1: Project management and coordination (ongoing)
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SO1: To develop a report on the State of Play relating to the use PAs in higher education in three SADC countries and in the SADC more widely, so as to draw attention to their relevance in achieving the SDGs through the higher education sector	WP2: Situation Analysis on the use of PAs towards the SDGs in the SADC
SO2: To develop a conceptual framework, and supporting digital ecosystem, to support decision-making, capacity development and collaboration amongst higher education institutions in the SADC in the use of PAs for local engagement.	WP3: Building the Integrated Participatory Framework
	WP4: Development of a Digital Academic Eco-System (DAE) (ongoing)
SO3 To develop the capacity of higher education institutions in South Africa, Mauritius and Zambia, and in the SADC more widely, to adopt PAs for local engagement.	WP5: Pilot projects on PAs for Knowledge Production at SADC Partner Universities
	WP6: Developing and Implementing a Capacity Development Programme on the use of PAs for SADC HEIs
SO4. To create a sustainable community of practice amongst regional higher education institutions in the SADC for the use of PAs in community-oriented knowledge production.	WP7: Dissemination, final report and sustainability (ongoing)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF REVIEWERS

For the EngageSDG project, selecting external reviewers is crucial to ensure an unbiased evaluation of the project's outcomes, methodologies, and overall impact.

Purpose: The SADC external reviewer's role is to provide an independent assessment of the project's success in meeting its objectives, its effectiveness in implementing the planned activities, and its contribution to advancing the use of Participatory Approaches (PAs) in higher education for engaging with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The selection of the external reviewer will be based on a competitive process, with candidates required to submit a proposal outlining their approach to the evaluation, a CV highlighting relevant experience and qualifications, and a statement confirming their independence from the project.

The selected reviewer will be responsible for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the EngageSDG project over the course of the project life cycle, in cooperation with an EU reviewer who offers expertise and prior knowledge of EU funding mechanisms for higher education cooperation. This includes reviewing project materials, platforms, and reports as well as conducting interviews with partners and other regionally relevant stakeholders outside the partnership. The evaluation should provide detailed recommendations on the medium- and long-term exploitation and expansion of the project's outputs.

Applicants who are directly related to any of the consortium members, will be disqualified.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWER OF THE ENGAGESDG PROJECT

Qualifications and experience

1. Expertise in sustainable development and HE: The reviewer should possess a deep understanding of the SDGs and significant experience in the higher education sector, particularly in the context of SADC countries. This includes familiarity with participatory approaches to teaching, learning, and research.
2. Experience in project evaluation: A strong background in evaluating educational or development projects, with the ability to assess methodologies, outcomes, impact, and sustainability.
3. Knowledge of Participatory Approaches: Proficiency in various participatory approaches and their application within higher education for community engagement and sustainable development.
4. Understanding of SADC HE Context: An awareness of the challenges and opportunities within the SADC higher education sector, including policy, institutional, and socio-economic factors influencing the adoption of PAs for SDG engagement.

Responsibilities

1. Review of project documentation: Thoroughly examine all project documents, including reports, frameworks, digital platforms, and outcomes of pilot projects.
2. Stakeholder interviews: Conduct interviews with project stakeholders, including participating institutions, project team members, community partners, and beneficiaries, to gather insights into the project's implementation and impact.
3. Assessment of objectives and outcomes: Evaluate the project's success in achieving its stated objectives, including the effectiveness of the Integrated Participatory Framework (IPF), the digital academic ecosystem, capacity-building initiatives, and the establishment of a community of practice.
4. Evaluation of methodologies: Assess the methodologies employed by the project for appropriateness, effectiveness, and potential for scalability and replication.
5. Impact analysis: Analyze the project's impact on enhancing the capacity of higher education institutions in the SADC to engage with the SDGs through pas, including its influence on teaching, learning, and community engagement.
6. Recommendations for future initiatives: Provide recommendations for strengthening the project's outcomes, enhancing sustainability, and informing future initiatives aiming to integrate pas and SDG engagement in higher education.

Selection criteria

- Demonstrated independence from the project to ensure an unbiased review.
- Experience in conducting evaluations of large-scale projects, preferably within the SADC region.
- Academic credentials and publications in related fields.
- Availability to complete the review within the project's timeline.
- Proven expertise in higher education, regional development, and sustainable development goals.
- Strong analytical and report-writing skills.
- Ability to conduct interviews and engage with a diverse range of stakeholders.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates should submit the following documents:

1. A detailed CV highlighting relevant experience and qualifications.
2. A cover letter outlining their approach to the evaluation and why they are suitable for this role.
3. Two references from previous similar work.

Submission deadline:

All applications must be submitted by **30 July 2024**.

Selection Process: Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee, and shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an online interview.

Contact

For any inquiries and submission of application, please contact:

Information:

Prof SARUA EngageSDG R Project
rene.pellissier@sarua.africa

Pellissier
Manager

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXTERNAL EVALUATION

ASPECTS TO BE ASSESSED BY EXTERNAL EVALUATORS

The main purpose of the external evaluation is to provide partners with an external perspective on the project implementation and impact, offering recommendations for optimal implementation of upcoming activities and the project's sustainability.

Three main elements will be reviewed. The work will be divided amongst the two reviewers according to specific expertise and availability:

1. **Results of each Work Package (WP):** Assess deliverables associated with each work package, the extent of their achievement, and their quality. In addition, comment on the methodology used.
2. **Partnership dynamics:** review and comment on partners' satisfaction with project structure, management, internal communication, transparency of decisions, and access to information.
3. **Impact of the project:** Evaluate the positive and negative impacts on target groups, assessing both intended and unintended results.

EVALUATION APPROACH AND DELIVERABLES

REPORTS WILL BE CO-DEVELOPED BY THE TWO REVIEWERS WITH RESPECTIVE ROLES AGREED AT A VIRTUAL INCEPTION MEETING. Three reports presented two months after year 1, year 2 and at completion of project (see description above). These reports detail the findings of the review, including assessments of the project's objectives, methodologies, outcomes, impact, and recommendations for future work.

1. **Inception report (Report 1):** A short report outlining the methodology, timelines, and key areas of focus for the evaluation. Review project documentation, including the project proposal, reports, websites, and event documentation. (year 1 report).
Due Date: 28 February 2025.
2. **Interim report (Report 2):** Progress report: Implementation, partner perceptions, short term impact and recommendations. Observe project meetings and conduct interviews with relevant partners and participants. (year 2 report).
Due Date: 28 February 2026.
3. **Presentation of findings:** A presentation summarizing the final evaluation report to consortium members.
Due Date: 20 November 2026.
4. **Final report and synthesis (Report 3):** Summarize results in a final report presented to the Project Management Committee (PMC) and present to consortium. (year 3 report). This report will provide an executive summary of key

findings and recommendations; a detailed analysis of the project's effectiveness in achieving its objectives; an assessment of the sustainability and scalability of project outputs and recommendations for future exploitation and expansion.

Due Date: 30 November 2026 (final report).

EVALUATOR WORK PLAN AND TIMETABLE

The evaluation will span 18 working days, with a flat fee of € 6000 (excluding travel and subsistence). The evaluation will start in the first year of the project and cover the duration of the project.

The evaluator will be financed to attend two project meetings during the project, to conduct interviews on site. Attendance will be agreed with SARUA and OBREAL, who manage the M&E plan of the project.

REMUNERATION AND PAYMENT

Payment will be made within 30 working days after submission of all required documentation, including reports and invoice, according to the payment structure below.

Payment structure:

35% upon submission of inception report

30% upon submission of interim report

35% upon submission of final report.

Payment will be made via bank transfer, with the evaluator assuming charges linked to such payments.

DISCLAIMER

All actions and opinions expressed or conducted by the Evaluator are at his/her sole responsibility.

DISPUTES

Any disagreement in the interpretation of the terms of reference is to be taken solely to South African law where SARUA is registered.

I,

with ID/Passport number no

accept these terms of reference.

SIGNATURE:.....

NAME:.....

DATE:.....

PLACE:



We look forward to receiving your applications and working together to enhance the impact of the EngageSDG Programme.

NNEXURE: CALL FOR REVIEWERS