























in Sierra Leone (AQHEd-SL)

Quality Higher Education

Strengthening Higher Education Institutions: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Experience in Assuring Quality Higher Education in Sierra Leone Project

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Assuring Quality Higher Education in Sierra Leone (AQHEd-SL) Project Overview

- UK Department for International Development (DFID)
 Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR)
- April 2018 September 2021 (3.5 years)
- Problem
 Being unable to align course content with the needs of the job market and the aspirations of the growing number of students
- Objectives
 - Enhance the quality of higher education service delivery
 - 2. Improve management and implementation of outcome-based education
 - 3. Establishment of a National Qualifications Framework policy





























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Project Partners

Sierra Leone (SL)

Anchor Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

The University of Sierra Leone (USL) – Lead Njala University (NU)
The University of Makeni (UniMak)

Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Sierra Leone Institute of Engineers (SLIE) The 50/50 Group

Waterfalling HEIs

Eastern Polytechnic (EP)

Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology (EBKUST)

Freetown Teachers College (FTC)

Milton Margai College of Education and Technology (MMCET)

UK

Kings College London (KCL) – Grant management

King's Sierra Leone Partnership (KSLP)

International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP)

U.S.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)





























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Cluster-Based Structure and Waterfalling Approach

Phase 1

Receive external inputs

Health

Anchor: USL (COMAHS)

External: KSLP

STEM

Anchor: USL (FBC)

External: SLIE

Agriculture

Anchor: Njala External: UIUC Econ. & Business

Anchor: UniMak External: UIUC

Phase 2 - Waterfalling

Receive training from phase anchor HEIs

Deliver phase 2 program reviews

Deliver phase 1 program reviews

Receive external mentorship

Cluster Members:

- Njala
- UniMak
- **EBKUST**
- **MMCET**
- EP

Cluster Members:

- Njala
- UniMak
- **EBKUST**
- **MMCET**
- EP

Cluster Members:

- UniMak
- **EBKUST**
- **MMCET**
- EP
- FTC

Cluster Members:

- USL (IPAM)
- USL (FBC)
- Njala
- **EBK**
- **MMCET**
- EP
- FTC































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Overall Approach for Outcome-Based Education

1. Identify Skill Gaps with Stakeholders

Stakeholders

Ministries, FAO, BRAC, SLARI, banks, SMEs in agriculture, etc.

Identified Lack of Skills in:

Basic computer skills Problem solving Writing in English Understand emerging topics (CSA, gender)

2. Analyze **Existing Curriculum**

Curriculum Review (CR)1

Review of skills gaps Overview of CR process Introduction of pedagogical approaches

CR2

Define Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in Agricultural General (Njala) and Management (UniMak)

3. Apply and **Revise Curriculum**

CR3

Integrate SLOs from CR2 to specific course syllabi

CR4

Review updated curriculum and revise based on feedback

FAO: Food and Agriculture Orgzanization

SLARI: Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute

SME: Small and Medium Enterprise CSA: Climate Smart Agriculture



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Conceptual Framework Used in CR 1 and 2

- 1. Review stakeholder feedback
- 2. Define Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at two levels: <u>Program Level</u> and <u>Course Level</u>
- 3. Review Bloom's taxonomy
- 4. Introduce pedagogical approaches: Student Centered Learning, Active Learning, Experiential Learning, Early Learner Feedback, Effective Questioning, etc.
- 5. Analysis of curriculum against SLOs/Curriculum mapping exercise

Throughout the steps, participatory process/group work/real-time feedback on curriculum review inputs were used



























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Student Learning Outcomes and Bloom's Taxonomy

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

What is the most important student goal for your curriculum?

Identify Student Learning Outcomes SLOs

Campus-Wide

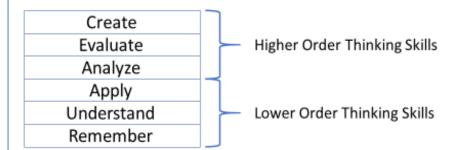
First step

University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign

- 1. Intellectual Reasoning and Knowledge
- Creative Inquiry and Discovery
- 3. Effective Leadership and Community Engagement
- 4. Social Awareness and Cultural Understanding
- Global Consciousness

Bloom's Taxonomy

Framework for categorizing educational goals



SLOs should be developed using Bloom's Taxonomy

SLOs should be written using action verbs, as per Bloom's Taxonomy

nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html



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Output 1

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Njala and UniMak both defined their SLOs

Njala SLOs

- 1. Written & Oral Communication
- 2. Basic Computer/ICT Adaptability
- 3. Research Methods: Ability to Analyze both Qualitative and Quantitative Data
- 4. Ability to Work Both Collaboratively& Independently in an InclusiveWork Environment
- Social Awareness & Cultural Understanding
- 6. Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- 7. Ability to Apply Agronomic Principles to Produce Solutions to Production,
 Processing and Marketing Problems

UniMak SLOs

- 1. Oral and written communication
- 2. Critical thinking and problem solving
- 3. Computer literacy
- 4. Research
- 5. Team work and self dependency (leadership)
- 6. Social and Cultural awareness

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Output 2

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Mapped existing curriculum around SLOs, and designed assessment benchmarks for progressive learning throughout years 1-4.

CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLUING Level of Skills Assessment	Year <u>level of Skilland Naslery</u> <u>Assessment Approaches</u>
group discussions of group discussions of presentations, Exams.	Understanding of background # writing assignment to display complehension of the concept of cultive and the concept of cultive the concept of cultive, values, norms, and institutions); developing a x-class prentations
yrz: Ability to analyse Tests, Exams, Case study & Group Rapovs yrs: Ability to analyse, Seminars, Practical	A bility to clearly analyze # field trip - reflections different cultures and compare report/essay them along the lines of values, # invited speakers (such
evaluate and Create new ideas Create new ideas Seminars, practical attachment/internship and Report writing, Exams, Preparation of Business	Developing a skill in a foreign others) to campus for presentation - students write an evaluative (sea) Students are able to critically the invite business leaders
YR4: Be able to Dissertations & Viva, demonstrate Greativity in problem Exams	Social conditions and apply this campus to discuss how knowledge in business settings, they address dylarat Achieving basic fluency in foreign language. In the business I Integrate the understanding of different students with a regional and social conditions of the business of the busi
Solving, decision Making and Impro- Ving Standards	stillent's business and management * business plan-does practice and be haviored. Independent speaking and writing continued in foreign larguage. The street in foreign larguage.



























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Lessons to Date

What has worked?

Interactive open format to discuss problems and ways forward. Presence in the field (Njala-based field coordinator).

What has not worked?

Silos/information dissemination, not all faculty have been present in CRs. Rigid financial rules putting administrative burden and less local buy-in.

Future Direction – CR3, CR4, and beyond

- Support implementation. Field project coordinator is a key.
- Besides CR3 and 4, coaching faculty directly by observing his/her class and providing feedback, and supporting waterfalling by coaching the anchor faculty, with follow-up tracking/monitoring.





























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THANK YOU



