



# wheel

NETWORK FOR THE MODERNISATION OF  
THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN LIBYA

## Libyan Higher Education Blueprint

Challenges for improving systemic  
governance in Libyan Higher  
Education Institutions

December 2022



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## AUTHORING INFORMATION

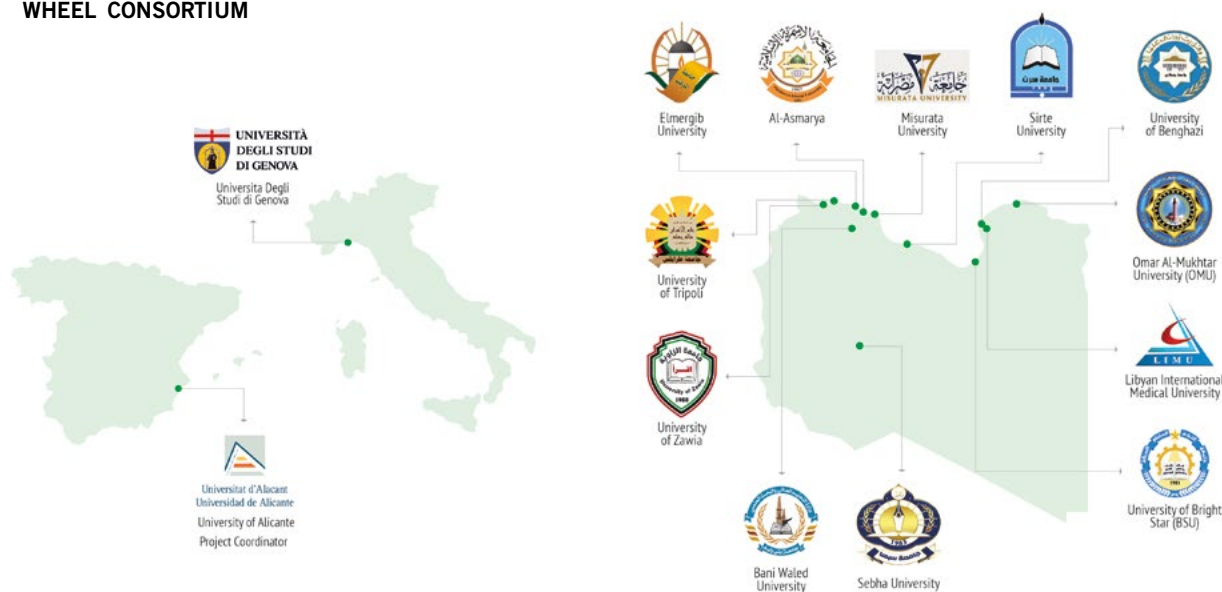
### PROJECT

WHEEL – “Network for The Modernisation of the Higher Education Sector in Libya”

### GRANT NUMBER

# 598610-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

### WHEEL CONSORTIUM



### LEGAL NOTICE

The present document was developed and edited by the partner institutions of the Erasmus+ project WHEEL “Network for The Modernisation of the Higher Education Sector in Libya”, under the coordination of the University of Alicante. The results, views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

All contents generated by the WHEEL E project are protected by intellectual property laws, in particular copyright.

Edited by Dr. Mario Guillo at the University of Alicante, Spain

© Universidad de Alicante 2022. All rights reserved. Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

Please cite this publication as: *Libyan Higher Education Blueprint: Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan Higher Education Institutions, 2022. WHEEL project. Erasmus+ programme.*

### CONTACT INFORMATION

International Project Management Office (OGPI) – University of Alicante

Website: [www.ogpi.ua.es](http://www.ogpi.ua.es)

WHEEL: <https://www.wheel-project.eu/>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Presentation .....   | 4  |
| <b>Chapter 1</b> <b>Current status of governance structures in Libyan Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)</b> ..... | 6  |
| 1.1 Objectives and design of the governance survey .....   | 7  |
| 1.2 Results .....  | 8  |
| 1.3 Conclusions and General Overview on Governance .....   | 19 |
| <b>Chapter 2</b> <b>Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs</b> .....                            | 23 |
| 2.1 Objectives and design of the delphi study .....  | 24 |
| 2.2 Results - Round 1 .....  | 28 |
| 2.3 Results - Round 2 .....  | 33 |
| <b>Chapter 3</b> <b>Proposals on how to boost institutional change</b> .....   | 38 |
| 3.1 Objectives and methodology .....   | 39 |
| 3.2 Proposals .....  | 39 |

# Presentation

The Libyan Higher Education Blueprint is conceived as a strategic document to be developed in the framework of WHEEL project (WP2 - Institutional Building via Networking).

This document contains an overview of the current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs, the main challenges to improve their governance systems and recommendations on how to boost institutional change in those areas.

To that aim, the blueprint includes the main findings from the following activities carried out in the framework of the project:

- ▶ Survey on Systematic Governance situation in partner institutions.
- ▶ Delphi study about challenges for improving systemic governance in IES.
- ▶ Focus groups for identifying opportunities to improve governance systems in Libyan HEIs.

Those main findings are structured in 3 main chapters:

- ▶ **Chapter 1** Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs.
- ▶ **Chapter 2** Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs.
- ▶ **Chapter 3** Proposals on how to boost institutional change.

The recommendations included in these document have been developed following a collaborative process including all WHEEL partner institutions from Libya and the European Union: Al-Asmarya Islamic University, Sebha University, University of Zawia, Elmergib University, Misurata University, University of Benghazi, Libyan International Medical University, Sirte University, University of Tripoli, Bani Waled University, University of Bright Star and Omar Al-Mukhtar University (LIBYA), Università Degli Studi di Genova (ITALY) and University of Alicante (SPAIN) acting as coordinator.

# Chapter 1

## **Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs**



## 1.1. Objectives & design of the governance survey

The objective of this survey on Systematic Governance situation in partner institutions is to collect data and extract some conclusions regarding the predominant governance models at Libyan universities. With this objective in mind, a self-administered questionnaire was sent to representatives from partner universities in Libya (public and private), with open and closed questions on following topics:

1. Administrative structures and advisory bodies
2. Rules and responsibilities
3. Decision making process
4. Curricula design and teaching activities
5. Research activities
6. Knowledge transfer
7. Resource allocation
8. Financial and human resources attraction
9. Quality assurance
10. Involvement of Students in University Governance
11. Involvement of External Stakeholders in University Governance

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.2. Results

In this section we present and discuss the main results obtained per each of the topics mentioned above.

#### Topic 1 – Administrative structures and advisory bodies

##### **Question: How is the political-administrative structure configured?**

Concerning the political-administrative structure of the universities participating in this survey the majority presents a centralized management activity, only of them shows a decentralized management activity that can be faculty or department with an autonomy academic financial.

Regarding the governance model at each HEI, the distribution of responses goes as follows:

- 2 HEIs presenting a unitary governance model.
- 3 HEIs presenting a dual traditional model.
- 2 HEIs presenting a dual asymmetric model.

Additionally, half of the participants declare that the President/Rector is the main governing body, while the remaining half declares that the main governing body is the Academic Council/Senate.

##### **Question: Are there any advisory bodies? Which ones are they?**

Three of the participating HEIs do not count with advisory bodies. Among the ones that have these kinds of bodies, there is a wide variety of answers in regards to their nature: university councils, advisory body at each faculty, Ministry of Higher Education (HE) and quality assurance centers.



## 1.2 Results

**Topic 2 – Rules and responsibility**

**Question:** How are the Rector and the top academic leaders elected or nominated in your university? By whom?

Most of the institutions claim that the Rector and the top academic leaders are elected or nominated by the Ministry of HE and only few state that the Rector is still elected or nominated by the Ministry of HE but the vice-president is elected by the faculty's deans.

**Question:** E.g., to the executive board, to the Senate/Academic Council, to the external stakeholders, to the Ministry?

The majority of HEIs state that top leaders are accountable to the Ministry of HE.

**Question:** The Rector and the top academic leaders are expected to be accountable to whom? Have the middle managers (deans and department chairs) in your university gained more authority, formally or informally, in recent years? Were they strengthened strategically? What is the relationship between the top academic leaders and the top administrative managers in decision-making? Who takes the formal decisions with regard to recruitment?

Summarizing results obtained to the previous questions, we can observe that the university council (UC) is established and running. It is composed of Deans (a limited authority with informal improvement) and the middle managers are accountable to the president who is also responsible for their recruitment (based on recommendation).

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.2 Results

#### Topic 3 – Decision-making process

**Question:** How can you define the decision-making process?

The majority of the HEIs involved in the survey present top-down decision making processes, and only two of them declare to develop bottom-up decision making processes.

**Question:** How did the decision-making process and the distribution of power change as a consequence of recent reforms or reorganizations (new bodies, new actors, new procedures...)?

Participants in the survey confirm that there has been slight changes towards the empowering the role of academic councils.

**Question:** Could you summarize the changes in the relationship between the middle management and the top leadership in your university in the last decade? (more/less centralization, management of conflicts, etc...)?

All participants agree that middle management has gained more independence, resulting in less centralized structures and more participation from middle management.

**Question:** In your experience, are there any discrepancies between the formal decision-making processes and the informal ones? If so, can you mention the major ones?

Despite half of the participants did not mention any discrepancies, some have been mentioned by the other half:

- It occurs in a positive way, when the university president decides to delegate some of the full authority to them by law.
- Because of the absence of auditing and control in some institutes of the university, some top leaders and managers opt to overcome the formal processes of decision making.
- In some cases there is Overlap in powers and the way to make a decision.

## 1.2 Results

**Topic 4 – Curricula design and teaching activities**

**Question:** Who takes the formal decisions with regard to the design/revision of curricula and to the teaching activities in your university? Can you briefly describe the actors and procedures involved?

Proposals by the scientific departments are made and that the universities have a partial level of autonomy, but all their decisions in academic matters have to be later approved by the central government.

**Question:** Is the mix between first- and second-level education, PhD training, vocationally-oriented degrees, etc. roughly the same in all of your university's departments and schools? Or is the focus different in different schools, and if so why?

Main contribution in these regard highlighted 3 different aspects to be considered here:

- Totally the same.
- According to the Libyan Education Law, there are two different sectors in higher education, which are academic education and technical education, and both sectors have their own methodology and differ professionally from the other.
- This depends on the nature of the institution and the type of research specialization that the two parties are involved in.

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.2 Results

#### Topic 5 – Research activities

**Question:** Who takes the formal decisions with regard to research activities in your university? Can you briefly describe the actors and procedures involved?

The answers obtained show that most of the universities rely on the Research and Consultation Center for managing the research activity in each HEI. However, some differences were observed among the different responses:

- It depends on what type of research, for the graduation projects and thesis, the scientific departments and higher education department are responsible. But for other research activities, the university Research Center and its delegated department at each faculty are responsible for them.
- The Research and Consultation Center is primarily responsible for the research operations within each institution, and it is the one who sets the research plans and research strategy.
- The University's Research and Consultation Center is the authority authorized to do all that is related to the research of the university's staff members.
- The decisions made in the scientific departments are usually taken by the various research groups within the institution.
- Actually, there is no focus on research activities unless the graduate limited research projects. In spite of the presence of the Research Centre within the administrative structure of the university, it has no regular research activities and the main reason for that is the lack of enough funding for research.
- The University's Research and Consultation Center takes the formal decisions with regard to research activities in your university.
- The University's Research and Consultation Center is the authority authorized to do all that is related to the research of the university's staff members.

## 1.2 Results

**Question: Are there any rewards for better performing Faculties or Departments?**

The majority of respondents confirmed there are no rewards, and some of them considered that the main reason is because there is no focus on research.

Two universities mentioned the following reward schemes:

- Only non financial rewards, such as certificates of distinguishing or top ranking within the university.
- Yes, there are rewards for better performing Faculties by giving opportunities for them to have chances to visit abroad and training courses in international qualified institutions.

**Topic 6 – Knowledge Transfer****Question: How do you try to steer third mission activities?**

Three universities mentioned initiatives connected to this 3rd mission:

- By evolving phenomena linked to the social and economic mission of university with our society.
- Recently, there has been a movement to third mission activities such as community services.
- The society and stakeholders' inputs are taken into account before starting any new educational program at the university.

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.2 Results

**Question: Do you have one or more technology transfer offices at the university central level? Or at the faculty/department level? Which services do they offer? (Only one respondent per university)**

Only two universities mentioned specific initiatives in this regard. These initiatives are connected with centres devoted to promoting innovation, entrepreneurship and digitalization.

**Question: Which role does your university play in regional development and community engagement? How do you try to foster this role?**

The participants' responses to these questions show an increasing interest in fostering the role of Libyan HEIs as relevant actors for regional development and community engagement. Some of the initiatives mentioned are the following:

- Try to provide working forces that meet the demand of the local employers and be able to run private businesses that are crucial to the surrounding area. Also, capacity building programs provided for free to the public organizations and local communities.
- One of the universities claims to be pioneering one initiative focused on providing advice to institutions within the city and also leading the cultural orientation through holding seminars and dialogues that raise emerging issues and conducting the necessary research to obtain appropriate solutions. In addition to that the university runs frequent training sessions for developing and building capacity within the local community.
- The university regularly offers advice and consultation to state institutions.
- The university plays a role in regional development and community engagement through the outcome of many graduates who all play their role in the development of the community. It is also the sponsor for some academic, religious and cultural activities. Some technical universities also give technical support to some local organizations.
- University students engage in community services as they should complete 40 hours in community services to graduate.



## 1.2 Results

**Topic 7 – Resource allocation**

**Question:** Is there a performance-based component in the funding mechanism used by the national or regional government? Is this component the same for the whole system, or is it agreed with each university?

In this case all participants clearly stated that public HEIs are funded by the government only, and there are no other resources. On the other hand, Libyan private universities are not financially dependent on the government.

**Question:** Are student fees set autonomously or are they subject to any limitation? Is there any differentiation on fees for different type of students (e.g.: non-EU, degree level, failing students)?

No disagreement has been found among the answers to this question: for local and Palestinian students, the study is totally free. Fees only applicable to international students.

**Topic 8 – Financial and human resources attraction**

**Question:** Are there any policies and incentives, at the university or at the department level, to attract external financial resources?

The majority of respondents confirmed that there are no institutional policies to attract external financial resources.

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.2 Results

**Question:** How does your university try to attract top professors and researchers? (e.g. with higher salaries, research funds, facilities, agreements on private activities and patenting, etc.)?

Responses to this question show that recruitment is very complicated and needs to get approval from the ministry, and that makes it very difficult to put in place such policies or strategies. In the case of private universities it is possible to offer promotions, financial incentives, and more research opportunities.

## Topic 9 – Quality Assurance

**Question:** Are research assessment exercises conducted regularly? If so: are they internal or external? Who is assessed and who is evaluating?

Responses show that in most of the Libyan HEIs these assessment exercises are carried out regularly by external examiners and evaluators. In some cases, these responsibilities are centralized by administrative staff members. Research studies are only assessed for staff promotions and this assessment is conducted by both internal and external reviewers. Finally teaching assessment exercises are developed by the quality assurance department at each faculty, but respondents show a different vision on how consistent these exercises are.

The results of the evaluation mainly affect the annual and scientific promotions of staff and professors, as well as the scientific evaluation of the college and thus the university in general.

## 1.2 Results

**Topic 10 – Involvement of students in university's governance****Question: Are students involved in governance?**

Most of the participants expressed the students are involved in University governance, however their level of engagement seems not satisfactory to any of the parts involved. Main barriers to boost this engagement is 1) the lack of a legal framework and 2) their limited influence in decision making processes.

**Topic 11 – Involvement of external stakeholders****Question: What is the role of university new governance in strengthening partnership?**

Participants in the survey confirmed that relations with stakeholders have been ignored by the Higher Education System and the ones that have been developed were characterized by lack of meaning and control. However, responses from some participants to the previous question have shown high expectations about the positive role that new governance models boosting partnerships between university and civil society organizations and stakeholders. Some of the most relevant opinions offered by the participants are presented here:

- The new governance of the university has given a high priority to strengthening relations with local institutions, especially the municipal council, as well as giving a strong impetus to establishing relations with civil society institutions within the city to participate in overcoming difficulties and raising competencies within the city.
- It allows civil society organization, stakeholders to share, involve decision making, and strategic planning.
- University new governance will allow civil society organization and stakeholders to share in the decision making and strategic planning. Which means more involvement.

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.2 Results

#### **Question: How well are the principles of governance in Libyan universities?**

All participants agree on the fact that principles of governance are not satisfactory enough among Libyan HEIs. These principles include laws and regulations, transparency and disclosure, accounting and accountability, the rights of all stakeholders, the responsibilities of the board of directors and academic freedom, among others.

#### **Question: To what extent do universities support partnerships with organizations and stakeholders?**

Respondents agree that there is a current trend among Libyan HEIs giving top priority to these agreements. However, current legal frameworks are a huge barrier for developing those partnerships.

#### **Question: To what extent do universities support partnerships with organizations and stakeholders?**

The majority of participants agree on the fact that the implementation of “real governance” will allow the universities to set their own priorities and goals, and hence decide to whom and to what level could the partnership serve the university strategy. It can also help to strengthen the partnership with international organizations as they share the same principles.

### 1.3. Conclusions and General Overview on Governance

The main points of the survey topics to be highlighted here are the following:

- ▶ It is clear that the decision-making process goes in a Top-down direction, as stated by the majority of the participants.
- ▶ Bodies at all levels only make suggestions, and the real decision is made by top management: the president, as shown in the survey results.
- ▶ Through the survey we understood that there was a reform recently in these universities. The results show that there has been a slight change towards the empowerment of the role of academic councils and that the changes in the relationship between middle managers and senior management in their institutions in the last decade is less centralized and there has been more participation of the middle managers.

Summing up, the survey results show, on one hand, that in the Libyan context, for most universities, the principles of governance are old and in need of a major updating and the governance principles are not satisfactory. The financial system faces big constraints, instability of the political situation and, definitely, law and regulations are outdated. On the other hand, lack of incentives and awareness are the obstacles that limit the application of partnership with organisations and stakeholders.

As a general conclusion, representatives from the HEIs participating in the survey provided their vision on different aspects related with governance in Libyan HEIs (responses are ranked here according to the number of votes obtained):

The importance of governance in Libyan HEIs is:

1. To contribute to the creation of independent institutions, their councils and governing bodies which are responsible for determining the strategic direction of these institutions, and to ensure the effectiveness, quality and efficiency of their management.

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.3 Conclusions and General Overview on Governance

2. To enhance a system of supervision and self-supervision, which leads to the safety of the legal application of legislation, and thus good management and guarantee the rights of employees, in order to achieve the satisfaction of the performance of the community on the universities.
3. To achieve universities for their goals in the best possible way.
4. To identify weaknesses and shortcomings in performance, and outputs of their services.
5. To ensure the rights and interests of employees from the administrative and academic bodies without discrimination.

The governance objectives of Libyan university should be:

1. Enhancing the effectiveness of universities and increasing their internal and external efficiency by creating a suitable working environment.
2. Achieving justice and equality among university employees; for high performance.
3. Achieving transparency through clear mechanisms and frameworks, enabling employees to fully practice their work and actively participate in all activities within and outside universities.
4. Developing laws and rules that guide the leaders and officials of universities in the practice of administrative work, so as to ensure democracy and justice for all parties concerned.
5. Strengthening the participation of all academic, administrative, leadership, and student members in decision- making processes.
6. Providing accounting and accountability to all parties benefiting from the presence of universities.



### 1.3 Conclusions and General Overview on Governance

The advantages of applying governance in Libyan universities are:

1. To improve university performance, improve economic efficiency and increase economic growth by providing appropriate conditions.
2. To establish an accounting system for all parties associated with universities.
3. To provide a competitive position for the university in comparison to other universities and to increase its ability to attract academics who can support financial growth.
4. To create incentives for the university board of directors to pursue the achievement of the goals that achieve the interest of the university through effective supervision of the universities.
5. To strengthen integrity and efficiency in universities.
6. To improve the rates of academic scholars and the stability of university staff.
7. To pay more attention to environmental and ethical issues in the educational system.
8. To prevent universities from being exposed to potential crises.

The principles and foundations of governance required by Libyan universities are:

1. Accountability and responsibility.
2. Transparency and disclosure.
3. Compliance with laws and regulations.
4. Independence.
5. Responsibilities of the Board of Directors.
6. Equity.
7. Equitable treatment of shareholders.
8. Independence.

## CHAPTER 1 Current status of governance structures in Libyan HEIs

### 1.3 Conclusions and General Overview on Governance

**9.** Role of stakeholders.

**10.** Clarity.

The main constraints to the application of governance in HEIs are:

- 1.** University legislation and legislation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research.
- 2.** Culture in society.
- 3.** General political climate inside and outside the university.
- 4.** Absence of faculty members from university life.
- 5.** University Management Method.

A series of thin, light green wavy lines that flow horizontally across the page, creating a sense of movement and design.

## Chapter 2

# Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

## 2.1. Objectives and design of the delphi study

This study is conceived as an exploratory research study to identify and evaluate the main challenges in systemic governance for HEIs in Libya. To that aim, it is expected to collect and analyse national experts' estimates on this topic, via the application of the Delphi method.

Delphi has been conceived as a research method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem.

This method helps experts to reach consensus on estimates, structuring the data collection in consecutive rounds of responses to an online questionnaire. In this case, the Delphi process was developed in two rounds:

- ▶ **Round 1** was focused on identifying and evaluating current and future challenges in systemic governance for HEIs in Libya.
- ▶ **Round 2** was focused on reaching consensus and establishing priorities among the results from the first round.

### Questionnaire Design

The design of the Delphi questionnaires was carried out taking into account the following requirements:

- **Questionnaires were brief and simple** to facilitate the understanding of experts who were working online responding to self-administered questionnaires.
- Questionnaires were presented in **English** in order to **facilitate the data analysis** by the European partners involved in the project.
- Each questionnaire included **rating scales** (in order to evaluate degree of consensus among the panel) as well as **open questions** (providing the possibility to exchange expert's opinions on the proposed topics).

## 2.1 Objectives and design of the delphi study

- Questionnaires incorporated **key challenges already identified** in previous WHEEL initiatives, as well as **UNIGOV report** “Exploring the challenges for Higher Education in Libya”. UNIGOV was a 3 years project (2016-2019) co-funded by the European Commission’s Tempus programme. It aimed at facilitating and reinforcing the governance reforms in Libya Higher Education through enhancing accountability and promoting institutional change.



September, 2016



Co-funded by the  
Tempus Programme  
of the European Union

Project Ref. Number 530720 - TEMPUS - 1 - 2012 - 1 - ES - TEMPUS - JPR

## CHAPTER 2 Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

### 2.1 Objectives and design of the delphi study

The questionnaires for the Delphi rounds were structured in three main sections:

- **Governance models in Libyan HEIs:** focused on structural challenges (at national and institutional level) for the improvement of governance systems at Libyan HEIs.
- **Governance structures and functions:** focused on current and future challenges that Libyan universities need to face in order to improve their governance structures.
- **Students and Stakeholders involvement in University Governance:** focused on identifying and analysing barriers for the involvement of students and external stakeholders in the governance of HEIs in Libya.

### Participants profile and panel composition

Coordinators from each of the WHEEL partners institutions have selected 3 representatives for participating in the Delphi process. These participants are expected to have -at least- 4 years of experience in governance, quality assurance or other relevant areas for the scope of this study.

After being appointed and confirmed, the selected participants received a formal letter of invitation to join the Delphi process, providing information about the objectives of the study and the selection criteria. The letter also included details about the procedure of the Delphi method in different rounds and the expected dates for each round. Another important point is to ensure the preservation of the anonymity of their contributions in order to give the participants the total freedom to express their opinions.

### Questionnaire – Structure and main topics

Each round of the Delphi process included questions regarding the 3 main topics above mentioned:



## 2.1 Objectives and design of the delphi study

### **TOPIC 1: Governance models in HEIs**

This topic will include specific questions aiming to identify and evaluate structural challenges (at national and institutional level) for the improvement of governance systems at Libyan HEIs.

### **TOPIC 2: Governance structures and functions**

This topic will include specific questions about current and future challenges that Libyan universities need to face within their own institutions in order to improve their governance structures.

### **TOPIC3: Students and Stakeholders involvement in University Governance**

This topic will focus on identifying and analysing main barriers for the involvement of students and external stakeholders in the governance of HEIs in Libya. This specific topic was subdivided as follows:

- **Topic 3A:** Students involvement in university governance.
- **Topic 3B:** Stakeholders involvement in university governance.

## CHAPTER 2 Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

### 2.2. Results - Round 1

This 1<sup>st</sup> round was devoted to 1) set priorities among the challenges presented, and 2) identify additional challenges proposed by the participants. The results to the questions presented for each topic are discussed below.

#### TOPIC 1: Governance models in HEIs

**Question:** Previous analysis carried out within the framework of **UNIGOV Tempus project** concluded that **main priorities for improving university governance models** in Libya are...

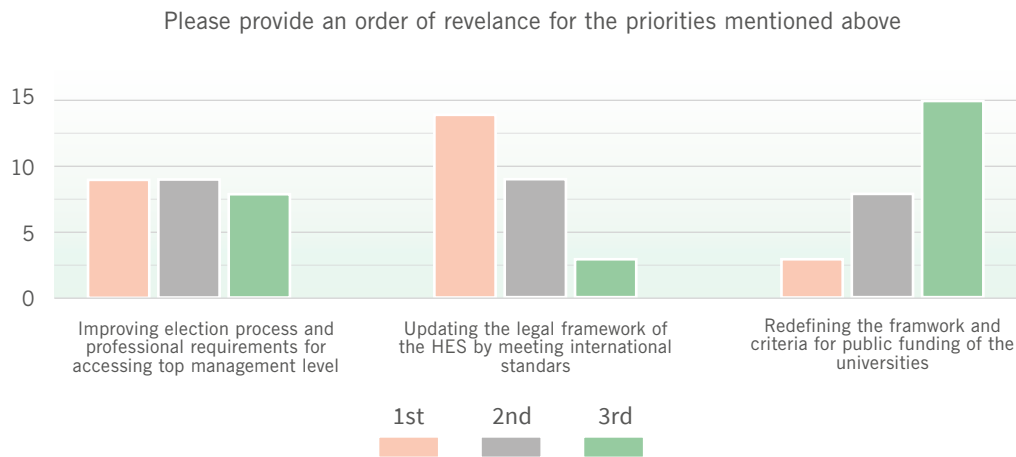
- **Priority 1:** Updating the **legal framework** of the HES by meeting **international standards**.
- **Priority 2:** Improving **election process** and **professional requirements** for accessing **top management** level.
- **Priority 3:** Redefining the **framework** and criteria for **public funding** of the universities.

Additionally, some experts mentioned the **need of reducing the impact of tribal society** in the development of IES in Libya.

Additional comments from the participants in regards to these priorities:

- Main Priority is to **restructure the whole framework of HE in Libya as taking into account the pre-university framework and the international standards**. Once done, the influence of **public funding** needs to be estimated and organized once the **framework** is designed and developed. This should be followed by **updating the legal framework**, meanwhile setting the professional credentials for the top management.
- Updating **HEIs regulations to meet the international framework** definitely will improve the university **governance**, but on other hand we need to work deeply on the **employees by training** them to improve their knowledge and rights for both sides (organization side and employees side).
- Values such as **Integrity** and **justice** shall be present in all previous matters.

## 2.2 Results - Round 1



## TOPIC 2: Modernizing Governance structures in HEIs

**Question:** Previous analysis carried out within the framework of UNIGOV Tempus project concluded **that main priorities for the modernization governance structures and functions of HEIs in Libya are...**

- **Priority 1:** Management of the universities at top level level
- **Priority 2:** Physical infrastructures
- **Priority 3:** Quality assurance
- **Priority 4:** Use of technology
- **Priority 5:** Funding model
- **Priority 6:** Management of the universities at medium level

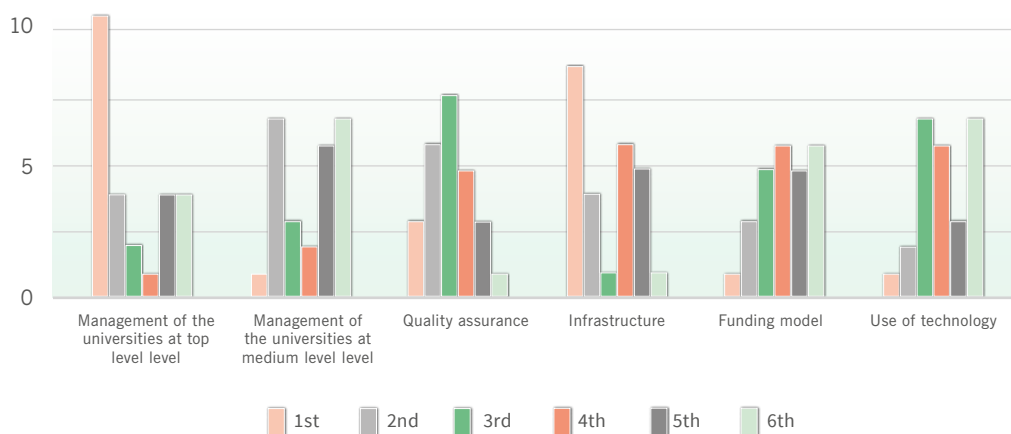
**Priority 1 and Priority 2** were considered at the top **by an important margin**. **Curriculum development** was mentioned as an additional priority by some experts.

## CHAPTER 2 Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

### 2.2 Results - Round 1

Additional comments from the participants in regards to these priorities:

- **Similar level of importance** was considered for all the priorities presented here.
- These similar levels of importance also reveal the interconnections among them: **Top and middle management** are well structured and in place, then they should plan and arrange for the **funding model** and use the funds in developing the **infrastructure**. Once these are there, **quality assurance** or TQM should be implemented with the aid of **technology**. Once the **top management** is convinced and the **Infrastructure** available, everything else could be somehow planned and implemented.



### TOPIC 3A: Students involvement in university governance

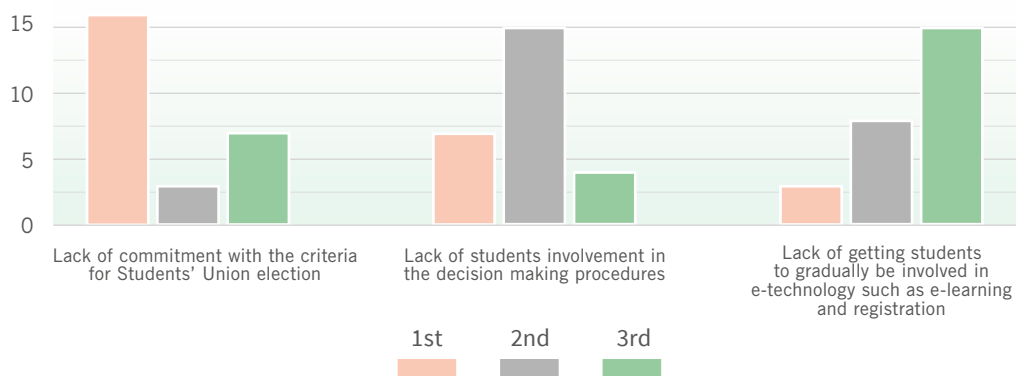
**Question:** Previous analysis carried out within the framework of WHEEL project have concluded the following: “Although **students** are represented in the university council through an elected body which is the Students’ Union, it **does not positively perform its role** as it should”. Main reasons considered are:

- **Priority 1:** Lack of commitment with the criteria for Students’ Union election.
- **Priority 2:** Lack of students involvement in the decision making procedures.
- **Priority 3:** Lack of getting students to gradually be involved in e-technology such as e-learning and registration.

## 2.2 Results - Round 1

Additional comments from the participants in regards to these priorities:

- In **some colleges** at universities they do **not have a students' union**.
- Relative **lack of understanding and appreciation of students' roles** on the side of **management leaders and staff** as well as on the side of the **students themselves**.
- **Lack of e-learning** initiatives involving students is one of the most challenges facing universities because of **weak infrastructure and e-services**.
- **Students** have a lack of **knowledge and experience** about the strategy and the vision.



### TOPIC 3B: Stakeholders involvement in university governance

**Question:** Previous analysis carried out within the framework of WHEEL project have concluded the following: **External stakeholders** are supposed to be part of the university council but they are **not really involved**. Main reasons considered are the following:

- **Priority 1:** Absence of communication between Stakeholders and university council.
- **Priority 2:** Lack of awareness of the importance of Stakeholders among civil society organizations.

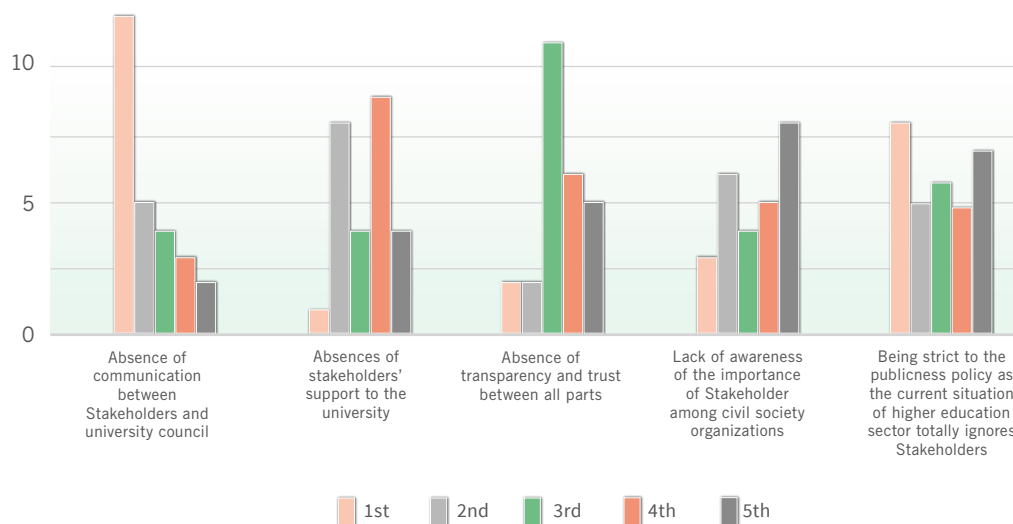
## CHAPTER 2 Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

### 2.2 Results - Round 1

- **Priority 3:** Absence of stakeholders' support to the university.
- **Priority 4:** Absence of transparency and trust between all parts.
- **Priority 5:** Being strict to the public policy as the current situation of the higher education sector totally ignores Stakeholders.

Additional comments from the participants in regards to these priorities:

- **Policymakers** must participate in education because they make the **laws and regulations** that govern universities. They also appropriate the **funds** that universities need to operate.
- The **HEI law and the relevant resolutions ignore communication** policies between the stakeholders and the university council.
- **Raise of awareness** is a critical part to be performed to change peoples' mentality and way of thinking about their perception of university's governance.





## 2.3. Results - Round 2

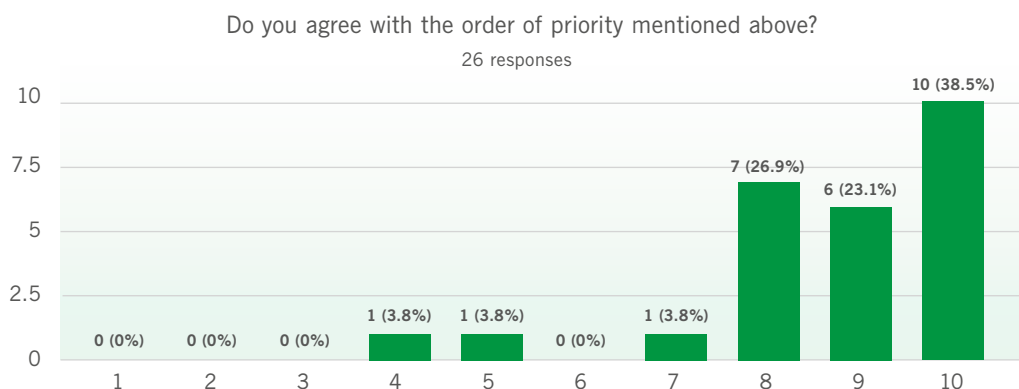
This 2<sup>nd</sup> round was devoted to 1) build consensus about priorities and challenges identified. Experts were asked to express their level of agreement with the order resulting from the results produced during the previous round. The results for each topic are shown on the figures below.

### TOPIC 1: Governance models in HEIs

**Question:** According to results from the previous round, the priorities for improving university governance models in Libya have been established in the following order:

- **Priority 1:** Updating the **legal framework** of the HES by meeting **international standards**.
- **Priority 2:** Improving **election process** and **professional requirements** for accessing **top management** level.
- **Priority 3:** Redefining the **framework** and criteria for **public funding** of the universities.

Additionally, some experts mentioned the need of **reducing the impact of tribal society** in the development of IES in Libya.



Additional comments from the participants in regards to the results showed above:

- Improving the election **process** should be the main priority.

## CHAPTER 2 Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

### 2.3 Results - Round 2

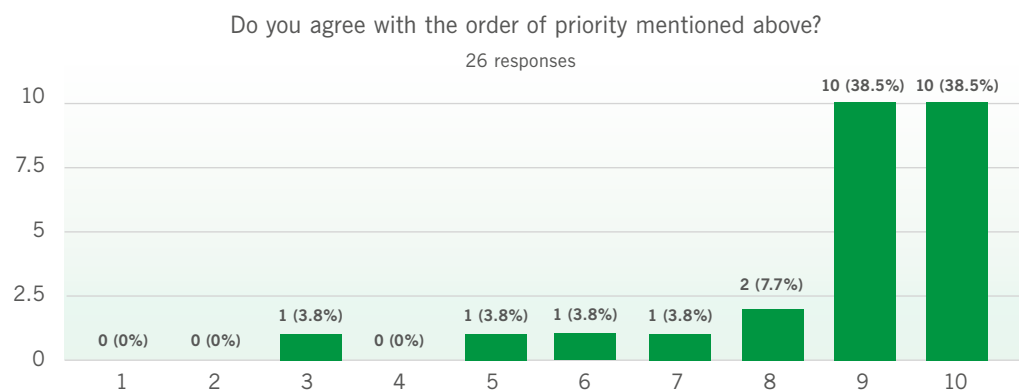
- The need to reduce the impact of **tribal society** in the development of IES in Libya should be first priority.
- **Limiting** the **influence of parliamentarians** in the development of IES in Libya.

## TOPIC 2: Modernizing Governance structures in HEIs

**Question:** According to results from the previous round, the priorities for improving university structures in Libya have been established in the following order:

- **Priority 1:** Management of the universities at top level level
- **Priority 2:** Physical infrastructures
- **Priority 3:** Quality assurance
- **Priority 4:** Use of technology
- **Priority 5:** Funding model
- **Priority 6:** Management of the universities at medium level

**Priority 1 and Priority 2** were considered at the top **by an important margin**. **Curriculum development** was mentioned by some experts as an additional priority not included in the previous round.



## 2.3 Results - Round 2

Additional comments from the participants in regards to the results showed above:

- Management of the universities at **top and medium levels** should be the main priorities.
- **Curriculum development** should be considered one of the top priorities after physical infrastructures.
- Increasing **funding** for university is a top priority as it helps all other factors to be achieved.
- **Quality assurance** is considered as very crucial to improving the services provided by the universities.
- **Technology** is the main factor we need to consider to be at the top of our priority.

### TOPIC 3A: Students involvement in university governance

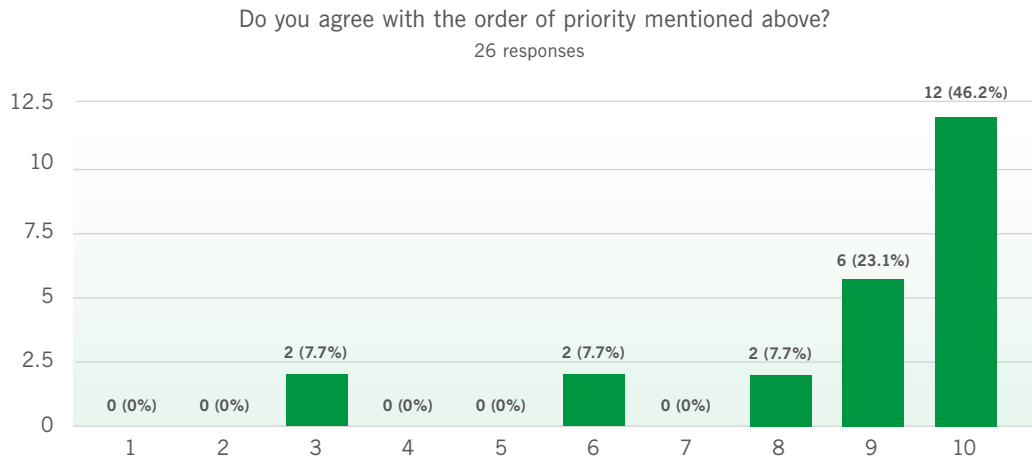
**Question:** According to results from the previous round, the priorities for improving Students involvement in university governance in Libya have been established in the following order:

- **Priority 1:** Lack of commitment with the criteria for Students' Union election.
- **Priority 2:** Lack of students involvement in the decision making procedures
- **Priority 3:** Lack of getting students to gradually be involved in e-technology such as e-learning and registration.

Priority 1 and Priority 2 were given a similar level of importance, while Priority 3 was considered less relevant compared to Priority 1 and Priority 2.

## CHAPTER 2 Challenges for improving systemic governance in Libyan HEIs

### 2.3 Results - Round 2



Additional comments from the participants in regards to the results showed above:

- The current **management system personnel** and the **majority of stakeholders** believe in some thoughts such as students' **lack of sufficient knowledge and inexperience**. This, in fact, is a popular opinion in society in general.
- Students are **already involved** in the process.
- **Lack of students' involvement** in the **decision making** process.

### TOPIC 3B: Stakeholders involvement in university governance

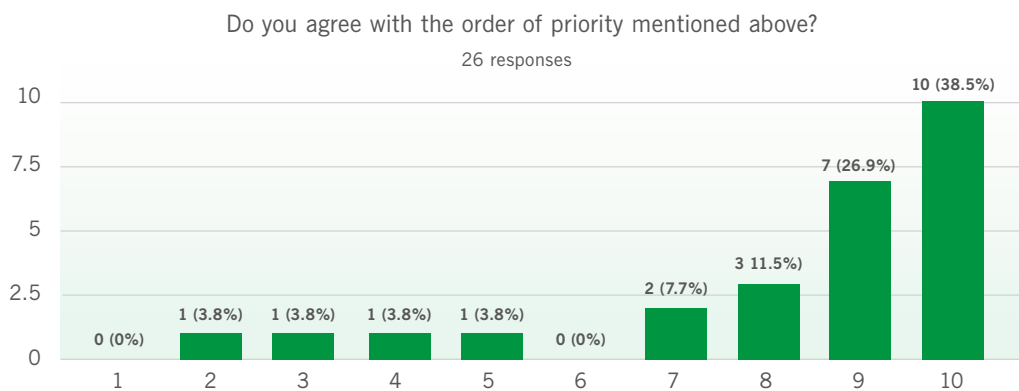
**Question:** According to results from the previous round, the priorities for improving Stakeholders involvement in university governance in Libya have been established in the following order:

- **Priority 1:** Absence of communication between Stakeholders and university council.
- **Priority 2:** Lack of awareness of the importance of Stakeholders among civil society organizations.

## 2.3 Results - Round 2

- **Priority 3:** Absence of stakeholders' support to the university.
- **Priority 4:** Absence of transparency and trust between all parts.
- **Priority 5:** Being strict to the public policy as the current situation of the higher education sector totally ignores Stakeholders.

Priority 1 was considered at the top by an important margin, followed by Priority 2. The remaining priorities shared a similar level of importance, in expert's opinion.



Additional comments from the participants in regards to the results showed above:

- Absence of **stakeholders' support** to the university should be listed among the **top priorities**.
- **Policy** as the current situation of the higher education sector totally **ignores stakeholders**.
- **Universities** don't care and usually **ignore the importance of stakeholders**.
- Finally, some experts disagree with this idea, considering that **students are already involved**.

## Chapter 3

# Proposals on how to boost institutional change

### 3.1. Objectives and methodology

The 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Delphi study was also devoted to provide ideas on how IES can contribute to face the challenges identified. The results obtained from the study were validated by representatives of each partner university participating in the WHEEL National Conference held in Tunisia (September 2022). During the validation workshop, the participants were divided in 3 working groups for topic discussion:

- ▶ **Topic 1:** Governance models in HEIs.
- ▶ **Topic 2:** Structures (modernizing governance structures and functions).
- ▶ **Topic 3A:** Students involvement in university governance.
- ▶ **Topic 3B:** Stakeholders involvement in university governance.

### 3.2. Proposals

This final section presents all the proposals generated by representatives of all Libyan partners involved in the WHEEL project. The proposals are presented as generic ideas connected to each of the topics and priorities presented in chapter 2.

#### TOPIC 1: Governance models in HEIs

Proposals for “Updating the legal framework of the Libyan Higher Education System by meeting international standards”

- **Requesting support** from related organisations from developed countries like the EU countries and **focusing on** meeting the **international standards**.
- **Involving different stakeholders** in the development framework.



## CHAPTER 3 Proposals on how to boost institutional change

### 3.2 Proposals

- Working through the **Supreme Council of Universities** to put pressure on the legislative bodies to update the regulations in line with international institutions.
- **Training** on the requirements of applying governance and developed **models suitable for Libyan institutions** and the local political, economic and social environment.
- **Each college should be represented in the ministry** (medical, art, economic etc).
- Focusing on the **university's independence** to exercise independent control over its daily operations and curricula.

#### Proposals for “Improving election process and professional requirements for accessing top management level”

- The **election itself does not exist** in the Libyan higher education institutions, so we need to **develop such a process to ensure equality and transparency**.
- Adopting **successful electoral models** from countries of reference.
- Boosting **independence** under very **transparent** procedures (not influenced by the political situation and the massive corruption in Libya at present).
- A transparent election combined with an auditable election process makes it clear to members that an organization is run for the benefit of its members, but **the tribes and politicians have a big influence** on the elections.
- Limiting mandates to 3 years.

#### Proposals for “Redefining the framework and criteria for public funding of the universities”

- Opening **new financing channels: private funding, tuition fees and other government funds**.
- Set up **priorities for funding** given the limited resources.

## 3.2 Proposals

- It shall include **private universities** which meet the requirements and transparent evaluation.
- Based on **transparency, equality and non-discrimination**

## TOPIC 2: Modernizing Governance structures in HEIs

## Proposals for “Management of the universities at top level level”

- Top managers in universities shall have **extensive management training and experience**.
- Management of a university is a **complex task** which cannot be done without **administrator help** at each level. So to **understand the management hierarchy is crucially important**.
- Being **flexible** as much as they can, and activating the role of the university’s council.

## Proposals for “Physical infrastructures”

- Develop a **plan based on the university priorities**, and try to get funds from internal and external funders that are not restricted from the Libyan legal framework.
- Universities more affected by the destruction need **extra support** of its infrastructure.
- **Prioritize common needs** among Libyan HEIs, such as **libraries, labs and modern buildings**.
- Investing on special **elements for disabled people** (i.e. elevators, ramps,...).

## Proposals for “Physical infrastructures”

- **Benchmarking** of good practices, support of international **experts and case studies**.
- Improving access to **relevant know-how** on building innovative and effective **Internal Quality Assurance**.

## CHAPTER 3 Proposals on how to boost institutional change

### 3.2 Proposals

- **Training in quality management** for quality assurance staff, top and middle managers.
- Reconsidering the organizational structure of universities, **including jobs and positions devoted to quality management.**
- Push of the **ministry towards quality** at HEIs.
- **Strategic plan in QA** for all Libyan universities.

#### Proposals for “Use of Technology”

- **Benchmarking** international experiences in this field.
- Adaptation to digital communication channels and tools. Moving **from paper-based** administration and libraries **to digital.**
- Including the **tech in all the education processes** and launching a campaign to improve the society’s usage of technology in daily life. **Increasing the budget allocation for equipment,** since most faculties don’t use technology in the classroom.
- Well designed **training courses based on real tech skill’s gap,** targeted to all internal stakeholders ranging **from students to professors.**
- Provide **electronic services / resources** such as e-Library, interactive learning portals, internet, computer labs, etc.

#### Proposals for “Funding model”

- Universities need to adopt an **active role** in the process of **developing the financial regulations** of HEIs.
- Diversifying resources by **utilizing some available funds that are not prohibited** by the current laws, for example Erasmus+ and Europe Horizon.
- Allow universities to get support from the **private sector without restrictions.**

## 3.2 Proposals

## Proposals for “Management of the universities at medium level”

- Launching **training** to develop the employees **skills and knowledge**.
- Selecting **qualified people** and **providing training and incentives** for all mid-level employees.

**TOPIC 3A: Students involvement in university governance**Proposals for “Lack of commitment with the criteria for **Students’ Union election**”

- Creating a **legal framework for students’ unions** in Libya according to the international standard.
- **Increasing societal awareness** in this regard: **Both students and decision makers at HEIs** should be encouraged to pay attention to the importance of enrolment of students in the decision making process.
- Conducting **workshops to inform about their rights and duties** in relation to the Students’ Union election.

Proposals for “Lack of students involvement in the **decision making procedures**”

- Raising **awareness** about the importance of students **getting engaged** in such activities. There is a **lack of understanding** by the students **of the nature and importance of their roles**.
- Students union must be actively involved in the **university** council meetings and **faculties** council meetings.

## CHAPTER 3 Proposals on how to boost institutional change

### 3.2 Proposals

Proposals for “Lack of getting students to gradually be **involved in e-technology** such as e-learning and registration”

- **Boosting the digital transformation** of HEIs at all levels.
- **Rewarding students** for using tech within the education process.
- **Raising awareness** of students to e-technology.
- **Updating teaching programs and methodologies.**

### TOPIC 3B: Stakeholders involvement in university governance

Proposals for “Absence of communication between Stakeholders and university council”

- Scheduling regular **meeting with Stakeholders**, and **nominating a committee** consisting of members from different stakeholder.
- **Updating the regulations** to make stakeholders part of the university council.
- Regulations need to be enhanced accordingly and adopting **transparency and open channels for communications.**
- Boosting **reciprocal trust, commitment, continuity and understanding** between HEIs and external stakeholders.

Proposals for “Absence of **stakeholders’ support** to the university”

- Developing a **legal framework that will provide legal coverage to university-society cooperation.**
- Attracting the interest of stakeholders **by modernizing structures and decision-making processes within HEIs**, avoiding traditional procedures (i.e. managers of the university and teaching staff members being appointed by **tribal affiliations**).

## 3.2 Proposals

Proposals for “Absence of **transparency** and trust between all parts”

- Apply the **transparency regulations for all aspects related to the higher education sector**.
- Universities can adopt a **transparent system by relying on technology** and giving access to partners.

Proposals for “Being strict to the publicness policy as the current situation of higher **education sector totally ignores Stakeholders**”

- Governmental universities is also fully dependant on oil industry. **Universities should pay attention to investors or other stakeholders.**
- HEIs should start to positively deviate from the **incapability of the current legal framework and take actions toward stakeholders.**

Proposals for “Lack of awareness of the **importance of Stakeholder among civil society organizations**”

- Minimizing the influence of tribal cleavages of the society, which normally have a stronger influence than civil society organizations.
- Running campaigns on local media, targeting the various stakeholders to raise their awareness on the importance of their role in the HEIs.
- Developing a mechanism to get feedback from civil society organizations about the university’s performance.

# Libyan Higher Education Blueprint

Challenges for improving systemic  
governance in Libyan Higher  
Education Institutions

December 2022