

# The Higher Education Institutions Institutional Cooperation Instrument HEI ICI 2020-2024

## HEI ICI projects on a map



## Synthesis report 2023: Programme level results and progress

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Background of the programme period.....	3
Overview of the progress in 2023 .....	5
Achievement of programme level results .....	7
Consistency with development policy.....	9
The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) .....	9
Cross-cutting objectives: Gender, reduction of inequality, climate sustainability.....	10
Agenda 2030.....	12
Project management .....	13
Quality management.....	13
Financial management .....	14
Monitoring.....	16
Communication and Dissemination .....	16

## Introduction

The Higher Education Institutions Institutional Cooperation Instrument (HEI ICI) support cooperation projects between higher education institutions in Finland and the developing world that are designed to enhance higher education provision in these countries. The projects support the higher education institutions in developing their subject-specific, methodological, educational and administrative capacities. Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs provides funding for the programmes through its development cooperation funds. The Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) administrates the programme.

This is a summary report of fourth round of annual reports of the HEI ICI 2020-2024 projects (the 4th HEI ICI programme period), covering the implementation during the year 2023. All nine projects funded by the HEI ICI programme submitted their reports by the end of March 2024. The reports were analysed and all projects were provided written feedback with the main findings and recommendations.

As the projects will come to the end of their implementation period in August 2024, in this annual reporting covering the implementation in 2023 there are already strong indications on the results to be achieved during the entire programme period – and the situation looks promising. After the years of implementation heavily affected by the COVID-19 and its aftermath, the HEI ICI projects have been able to further accelerate the implementation of their activities. However, the overall results will be confirmed in the final reporting.

A lot of impressive changes and impact has already been achieved through the collaboration. For 2022 and 2023 the HEI ICI projects have been able to resume to onsite meetings and trainings, which has accelerated the progress towards the programme level indicators, improved the quality of the collaboration and created more trust between the partners. However, even with the flexibility and creativity in finding solutions to adapt to the sudden requirements of moving into online mode from the very beginning of the projects' implementation, this exceptional period has affected the overall results to be predicted for the projects compared to the originally set level.

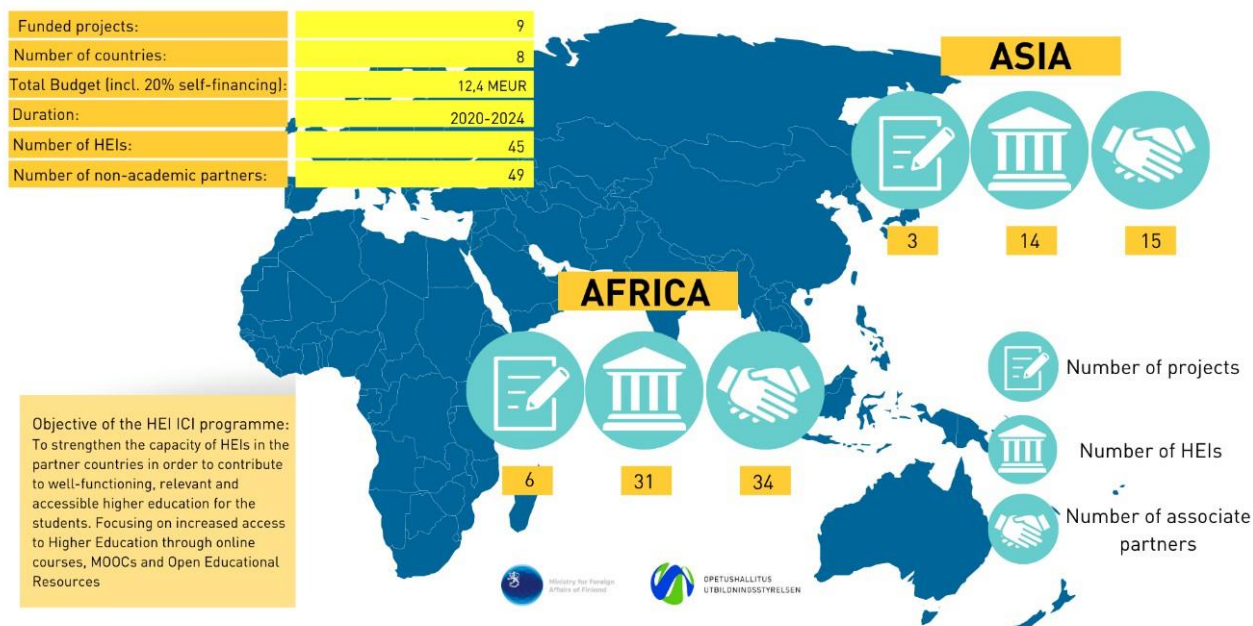
## Background of the programme period

Ministry for Foreign Affairs granted 11,2 million euros for the HEI ICI programme 2020-2024. In total nine project received funding. The total budget including the self-financing share of the HEIs (20%) is 12,4 million euros. The aim of the cooperation is to support capacity to develop distance learning and improved access of higher education for students in the global south. One of the main objectives of the HEI ICI programme 2020-2024 is an improved capacity of open and distance learning in partner countries. In terms of the COVID-19 pandemic, the objective was timely, and supported well higher education institutions in the changing operational environment.

HEI ICI Projects 2020-2024				
Acronym	Partner countries	Project themes	Coordinating HEI in Finland	Granted funding
<b>21<sup>st</sup> CS Nepal</b> Developing Pedagogy for 21ST Century Skills in Nepal	Nepal	Solving the Learning Crisis	JAMK University of Applied Sciences	986 071 €
<b>CLIDEV</b> Strengthening Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development in Vietnam	Vietnam	Climate Change	University of Helsinki	1 208 726 €

<b>GeoICT4e</b> Social innovations in Geo-ICT education at Tanzanian HEIs for improved employability	Tanzania	Innovations	University of Turku	1 923 365 €
<b>MOPEDE</b> Capacity Building for Modernizing TVET Pedagogy in Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Solving the Learning Crisis	JAMK University of Applied Sciences	986 341 €
<b>Olive</b> Teacher Education without Walls – New models for STEM and Teacher Education in the Digital age	Palestinian Territories	Solving the Learning Crisis	University of Helsinki	1 479 059 €
<b>PBL-BioAfrica</b> Problem-based-learning Bioeconomy Entrepreneurship and Capacity Building Programme in Africa	Kenya, Zambia	Climate Change, Innovations	HAMK University of Applied Sciences	1 478 921 €
<b>SUSIE</b> Sustainable Business and Employability through HEIs' Innovative Pedagogy	Tanzania	Innovations	Turku University of Applied Sciences	959 412 €
<b>TEPATE</b> Theory-practice balance in teacher education	Mozambique	Solving the Learning Crisis	JAMK University of Applied Sciences	1 024 500 €
<b>TOTEMK</b> Training Trainers for Teacher Education and Management in Kenya	Kenya	Solving the Learning Crisis	University of Helsinki	1 183 609 €

## HEI ICI Key figures



The HEI ICI programme (read more on the [web page](#)) has three main themes: **Solving the global learning crises** (5 projects), **Climate change** adaptation and mitigation (2 projects) and **innovation** development to increase employability at large scale (3 projects).

Selected projects operate in eight countries in Asia and Africa. Partner country institutions include HEIs from capital regions as well as smaller institutions from other regions. Partnerships also support thematic institutional networking between Finnish higher education institutions as in many projects, there is collaboration between universities and universities of applied sciences.

Moreover, multi-stakeholder cooperation is emphasized. In addition to academic partners, there are non-governmental organizations, ministries of education, other government organizations and private companies (for example ed-tech companies) involved from Finland and partner countries.

The selected projects develop digital learning environments such as MOOCs, study modules and distance courses. They will strengthen teacher's pedagogical capacity of digital and blended learning, develop digital learning platforms, improve IT skills and working life conditions of the HEIs.

### Overview of the progress in 2023

Overview of the progress of the HEI ICI projects in 2023 is positive: the projects advanced more and more towards the originally set goals with several milestones and set indicator levels already achieved. Many of the revised courses and curricula could be opened for students and this is clearly reflected on the number of students reached through the programme. Projects had the opportunity to work closely together in face-to-face meetings and trainings both in Finland and in partner countries. Projects also continued active and regular online engagement to ensure smooth implementation of the project management and activities.

The projects have been able to take further the very concrete milestones set in the result frameworks both on project and programme level. Developing pedagogical approaches towards more competence-based and student-centered approaches is a shared focus of many of the HEI ICI projects and significant process has been achieved in this respect. Also increased methods of student engagement, introducing and developing mentoring practices and alumni involvement are areas of progress reported.

Increasing online learning as well as open and distance learning are shared goals of many of the HEI ICI projects. There have been significant efforts to further this goal, resulting in concrete changes such as increased use of technology at the partner institutions. The sustainability of these changes continues to be strengthened during the remaining implementation period. There has also been discussion of the attitude changes that these changes require and how these can be best tackled. Also identifying the technical solutions best suitable and sustainable at the partner institutions have required dedicated efforts in many projects. As an example of these efforts, OLIVE project continued developing pedagogical approach in digital learning involving integration of technology into the teaching and learning process, incorporating a variety of digital tools, platforms, and resources to enhance instructional methods.

As part of online course development, to improve the accessibility of education, several projects have committed in launching MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), and this work has progressed significantly in 2023. A lot of work has been done towards these contents, but for many projects these courses will be either launched or more widely available in 2024. To mention some examples, TOTEMK project launched at the end of 2023 a massive open online MOOC focusing on the competency-based curriculum, which will be made available for all universities in Kenya. For 21<sup>st</sup> CS Nepal project, there was progress towards launching a MOOC in early 2024 and CLIDEV project in Vietnam has trained the partner institutions on MOOC and online training development further.

Several projects will produce concrete learning materials and books to document and disseminate the results. This is the case for example in TEPATE project producing a Teaching Practice Booklet in Mozambique, OLIVE project in Palestine with a book to capture the lessons learned in Education in Emergences as well as for SUSIE project with a Pedagogy handbook in Tanzania.

Projects have been able to collaborate intensively towards the impact not only between the project partners, but wider networks and actors. Dissemination and communication efforts intensified in 2023 to reach different stakeholders and wider impact. In several of the projects, there have been strong efforts on building partnerships with wider networks of stakeholders, such as governmental organizations, companies and NGOs. Such examples include promoting collaboration with government organizations across all seven provinces in Nepal in 21<sup>st</sup> CS Nepal project focusing on teacher education development as well as cooperation for dissemination and innovation in GeoICT4e project with several private companies in Tanzania. Wide networks with NGOs and companies have been created in PBL BioAfrica project in the framework of building collaborative training ecosystem in Kenya and Zambia. In addition, the project has reached 75 higher education institutions in wider Sub-Saharan Africa through RUFORUM (The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture) for deeper impact.

In addition, there are significant results achieved on the level of wider institutional impact and systemic change that will strengthen the impact of the HEI ICI programme. The projects have seen significant progress in the capacities for international cooperation at the partner institutions. Networking between higher education institutions in the partner countries have strengthened as well as linkages and cooperation internally at the partnering higher education institutions between different departments and teachers, increasing peer learning. A strong trust has been built between the project partners, with a focus on co-creation and inclusive ways of cooperation. Many projects stress the importance of inclusion of all partners and building trust for achieving impact and sustainable change. Strong support and commitment from the leadership for the change is seen as essential for sustainability.

Challenges that are shared in many HEI ICI projects are slight delays in procurements and online course development discussed above. Also cost increase has affected some project activities, such as procurements and led to some changes in travel plans. Some challenges have also been reported in coordinating between the different financial management procedures between partners.

Contextual factors affected the project implementation of two projects in particular. On a positive note, in MOPEDE project, the satellite colleges in the war-affected Tigray area of Ethiopia could reopen and continue also the project activities, which has resulted in progress of the planned direction in the project.

For OLIVE project the year 2023 was exceptionally sad and turbulent. After the war between Hamas and Israel halted the activities in Gaza, the OLIVE project now continues the activities only with the Westbank partners. The project partners remain committed and resilient to work together towards quality education despite the extremely challenging context.

The close collaboration for several years in the framework of HEI ICI projects have laid a good foundation for further joint development work. As the programme is coming to an end soon, the project partners have mapped the funding options for further collaboration, discussed the future and in many cases, made concrete actions to secure continuation also after the HEI ICI project ends.

### Achievement of programme level results

For the HEI ICI programme period 2020-2024 there are five programme-level indicators of which Indicators 1 & 2 measure impact and outcome of the programme. The indicators 3-5 are indicators set by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as the MFA has been assigned to report to the minister annually and to the parliament every fourth year on the advancement of the major programmes like HEI ICI. These indicators are based on the Sustainable Development Goals and the same indicators are used also in other development cooperation instruments funded through the MFA.

As the projects have been able to implement their activities without the pandemic-related restrictions already for two full years, increasing progress towards the programme level impact and outcome are reported accordingly. Overall progress towards the set indicators has progressed in a positive way during 2023. There are already indications of the overall picture concerning the entire programme period, even though the overall numbers will be confirmed at the final reporting stage in autumn 2024.

For the programme level impact indicator 1, measuring the benefit to students in terms of passed new training (number of students who have passed education equivalent to min. 5 ECTS), the number reported for 2023 was in total 14933, which is significantly more than in previous years (2022: 5783; 2021: 693). Still, the numbers calculated together from the implementation this far have not reached the overall programme indicator target set to over 30 000 students. However, the number is significantly closer to it as the implementation of the revised and new courses has been accelerated towards the end of the programme period.

For the programme level outcome indicator 2 concerning the number of faculties, schools or equivalent in the partner universities where capacity building process has been finalized and approved by the university administration the total number reported in 2023 is 117, again with significant growth compared to previous year (65). This means, that the set target of 88 faculties have already been exceeded.

Concerning indicator 3 on the number of higher education institutions reached through measures aimed to increase their capacity the HEI ICI projects report the overall number of 114 for 2023 implementation. This is slightly lower than in previous year (173), but the overall number has also here already exceeded the set target level of 50 higher education institutions.

For indicator 4 following the number of teachers and teacher education students who participated in pre- or in-service training there was also a clear decrease from total of 4800 in 2022 to an approximated 1324 in 2023. However, when looking at the total numbers from all implementation years this far, the progress towards set target indicator of 13 000 teachers is clear, the overall number being close to 10 000 teachers and teacher students reached.

For the indicator 5 following the number of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) partnerships with education and research institutions and private sector actors there was stable progress reported as the total number was 103 in 2023, compared to 288 in 2022. Again here, the progress during all implementation years this far has been convincing, with a total of almost 700 STI partnerships.

Indicator	Target	Results 2023
1: The benefit to students in terms of passed new training (number of students who have passed education equivalent to min. 5 ETCS). (IMPACT)	Over 30 000 students	14933 (2022: 5783; 2021: 693; 2020: no results)
	Approximately 88 schools or equivalent in the partner countries	117 (2022: 65; 2021: 15; 2020: no results)
3: Number of educational institutions, incl. higher education, reached through measures aimed to increase their capacity	Approximately over 50 HEIs	114 (2022: 173; 2021: 99; 2020: 33)
4: Number of teachers and teacher education students who participated in pre- or in-service training	Over 13 000 teachers, and teacher education students	1324 (2022: 4778; 2021: 3768; 2020: no results)
5: Number of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) partnerships with education and research institutions and private sector actors	No target available	TOTAL: 103 (2022: 288; 2021: 274; 2020: 12)

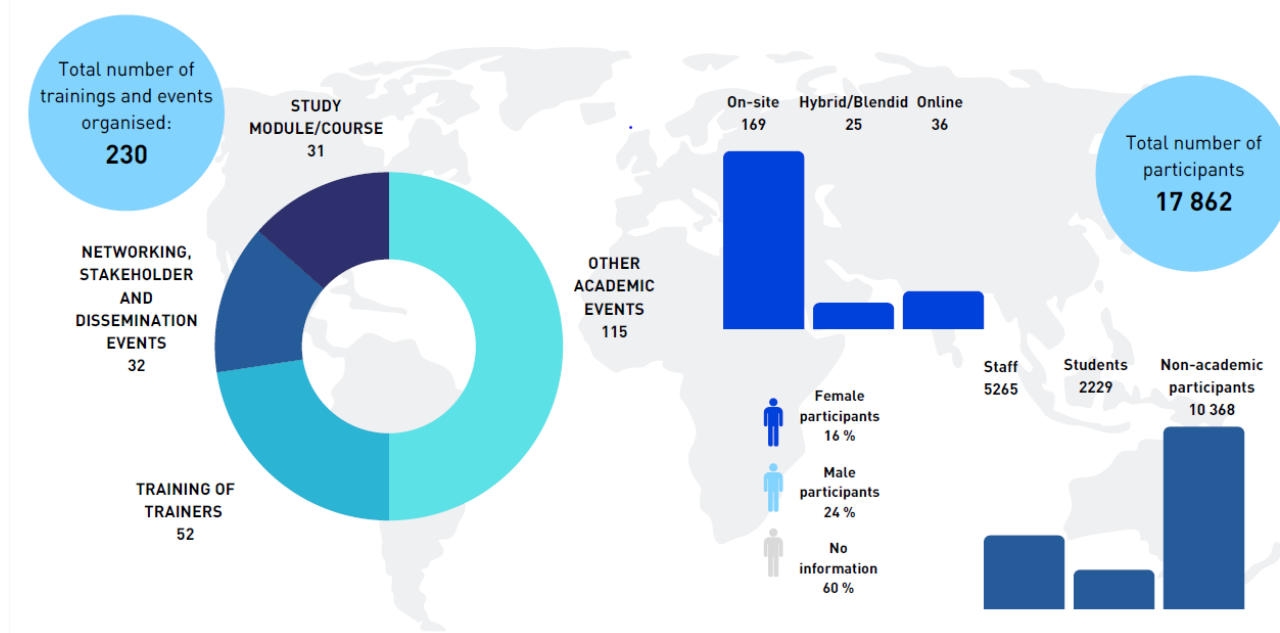
In addition to reporting towards the set indicators on the programme and project levels, the HEI ICI project report on the different trainings and event they have organized during the reporting period.

The total number of trainings and events organized by the HEI ICI projects in the reporting period 2023 was 230, compared to 301 in 2022. The majority of trainings and events reported by the HEI ICI projects for 2023 were different academic events (115), such as workshops, seminars, conferences and field trips. Also training of trainers category had a lot of reported activities this year (52). Activities reported included also networking, stakeholder and dissemination events (32) and study modules and courses (31).

The type of events and trainings varied from fully on-site (169), to fully virtual (36) and to blended/hybrid events (25). Large majority of the reported activities were organized fully on-site.



## Trainings and events organised by the HEI ICI projects in 2023



Even when the total number of organized events and trainings is lower than in previous year, the number of participants in these activities increased significantly to an impressive total of 17862 participants – compared to 8605 in the previous reporting for the year 2022. This is especially due to the large number of non-academic participants that were reached through networking and dissemination events, 10 368 participants in total. There were in total 5265 staff members and 2229 students participating in the trainings and events, of which approximately 57% were male. This share was similar to the 2022 reporting. For non-academic participants this information is not collected, which affects the overall information available and the high share of participants with no gender aggregated data.

The progress has continued to be good considering the set indicators on programme level concerning the students and teachers reached by the programme activities – discussed also under the dedicated section in this report.

### Consistency with development policy

The main goal of Finland’s development policy is to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities. Finland’s development policy and development cooperation are guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted within the UN in September 2015. The 2030 Agenda includes 17 different goals and Finland is committed to reaching them both at home and in its international cooperation. Finland’s development cooperation supports this commitment. In accordance with the above-mentioned principles, the HEI ICI Programme supports Finland’s development policy, cooperation objectives and guidelines.

### The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)

Respect for human rights and their promotion is a principle that guides the planning and implementation of Finland’s development policy and development cooperation to ensure that even the poorest know their rights and are able to act for them. It is equally important that the authorities are aware of their human rights obligations and have the capacity to implement them (<https://um.fi/goals-and-principles-of-finland-s-development-policy>).

The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) entails the systematic integration of human rights as a means of development cooperation. Human rights principles are considered and applied in all phases of the project cycle. The minimum level is that all Finnish development interventions are human rights sensitive, which requires a basic assessment of human rights to ensure sufficient awareness of them. It also seeks to ensure that the intervention does not contribute to discriminatory structures, norms and practices. Human rights

progressive interventions usually require cooperation with different stakeholders including state authorities as well as inclusion of right-holders in the process.

The HEI ICI projects are advised to screen their project cycle based on the human rights principles, in particular ensuring possibilities of beneficiaries to participate on equal manners, with a gender sensitive lens. This is to ensure that all processes and information on the projects are transparent and the activities do not contribute to any indirect or direct discrimination.

The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) has been embedded in HEI ICI programme as a guiding principle from the very beginning, reflected in the selection requirements where the strategic choices of the projects made to address HRBA and cross-cutting objectives have been included as part of their project document.

The commitment to adhere to the principle of participation and inclusion has been demonstrated in all projects through a joint planning process since the very beginning, contributing to accountability and strong ownership in the administration at the partner universities.

In the annual report of 2023, all nine HEI ICI projects reported various activities demonstrating how human rights principles have been applied in the project.

In their reporting, the HEI ICI projects have reflected on the aspects of promotion of inclusion and equal opportunities to participate in project activities and trainings, adopting open communication and transparency in project management and leadership methods, as well as advancing wide access to project meetings.

Projects have good practices to ensure participation and inclusion of rural, vulnerable, and socially excluded communities. For example, digital technology has supported in several projects to improve access to education. Addressing the operational environments with challenging aspects to human- rights based approach has been on the agenda of several projects. This can include navigating hierarchical working environments, oppressive social environment, as well as addressing sensitive human rights related topics as part of trainings, workshops and study programmes. In many projects emphasis is placed on opportunities for the academic young generation to participate equally in the project activities.

The human rights principle of transparency in the HEI ICI projects is described in several ways in the reports. All the projects emphasize wide and equal access to the project documentation, development work, goals and activities. Virtual meetings and shared online platforms are considered significant online tools to ensure open and transparent communication between all the HEI ICI partners as well as availability and access to information. The cooperation phase during COVID when it was possible participate only virtually has proved the value of joint online project management tools and procedures in providing equal and wide access to project information to all relevant actors.

In this reporting period the projects also particularly emphasized students' free and transparent access and selection to studies. One project reported that bullying in higher education context was found to be a phenomenon that has not featured much in discussion. In Finland this issue has been studied quite a lot and therefore the project was set up to do some research, write an article *Bullying in Higher Education* and a Masterclass was delivered on this topic.

### Cross-cutting objectives: Gender, reduction of inequality, climate sustainability

All development cooperation activities take into account the cross-cutting objectives of Finland's development policy. Gender equality is one the values and principles guiding Finland's long-term action in the development. By integrating a gender perspective into all development interventions, it is possible to identify different roles and responsibilities for women and men as well as access to, for example, information, resources and decision-making.

All the HEI ICI projects have considered the gender equality throughout the whole project cycle. The projects are requested to provide annual gender-disaggregated data on trainings and events organised in the

framework of the project implementation and the expected results of the projects are gender-disaggregated. The projects have set targets for women's participation in training and project activities. Some projects aim for more active participation of female students, others have set gender quotas and others pursue gender equality goals by choosing female junior staff members for training.

As examples of good practices on programme level the GEOICT4e project runs the LULU group to proactively facilitate networking and peer support between the female members of the project.

Some projects report that they have tried to emphasize the visibility of female participants in their communication activities. One project also reports that their long-term aim is to reach gender balance in research and writing applications for funding needs.

Concerning climate sustainability, the projects have reported activities which link in some cases directly to the project's main focus area (CLIDEV and PBL-BioAfrica), as well as embedding climate change perspective to courses as explicit topics to raise awareness and understanding. Most projects report that the climate sustainability is affecting the ways of operating the activities on practical level, even when the possibility to travel and organise meetings has caused increase in emissions caused by the project activities.

In the 2023 reporting, projects were asked to focus in particular, how they take climate sustainability into account in their operations. Below are some examples how projects reported reducing negative environmental impacts:

#### **MOPEDE and 21st Century Nepal**

Consortiums have produced online courses in the spirit of Urai and Kelly (2023)'s call to rethink academia in light of Raworth (2012)'s donut economics concept. In other words, institutionalisation and digital learning transformation has been created and conducted in such a manner as to **minimise the effect on climate change**. This has included, for example, **reducing energy consumption** with the installation of modern, more efficient electronic systems, and **reducing waste production** by reusing natural packing and transportation materials and recycling plastics wherever possible.

#### **GEOICT4e**

Climate sustainability is a strategic element of the **content of the learning materials and MCL challenge topics** of the project. Project is also in process of **creating e-learning contents** related to climate change and sustainability and formulating the 2022 MCL campaign umbrella challenges, which all are related to complex nature-human problems in the Tanzanian context.

#### **PBL Bio Africa**

**Climate smart bio entrepreneurship trainings** have been organized, and the **new knowledge** incorporated to the education delivery.

#### **SUSIE**

Sustained efforts in **integrating Climate Sustainability** by promoting **Circular Economy and recycling models**. The collaboration with Tanzanian industry partner Zaidi Recyclers (<https://zaidi.co.tz/>) has continued and Zaidi has acted as an external consultant towards each of the Tanzanian partners to provide staffs and students with **up-to-date industry knowledge** in the field of **Responsible Consumption and Production**.

### CLIDEV

Climate sustainability was addressed from the perspective of **sustainable forest management**, and how it can reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. This approach also covers the efficiency of wood processing, plantations as an alternative for timber, and the promotion of agroforestry systems to increase carbon stocks in the landscape.

The topic of **forest restoration** played a linking role between climate action and sustainable development as it recovers the productive capacity of certain areas (including the availability of non-timber forest products -NTFPs-) while reducing pressure on remaining forest resources.

Sustainable development: here the project dealt with the **importance of environmental services/products** on the **well-being of rural communities**. This included understanding the role environmental services/products have on subsistence and commercial activities and assessing the impact of an unregulated and unsustainable collection of NTFPs for commercial activities (usually driven by external stakeholders).

### OLIVE

The rationale and need of the visits have been carefully considered. Timetables and programs of the visits were planned to make full use of the face-to-face time. Additionally, planned **online modules** included climate change and climate sustainability as an example.

The project encourages faculty members to consider incorporating and using educational activities (such as case studies) that **raise awareness and understanding** of climate change and climate sustainability.

### TEPATE

Climate sustainability (SDG16) has been considered in the project so that all materials used in workshops with the key experts have been in **digital format**. The modules to the teacher students have been digitalised, which not only save printed materials but reduce also the need to travel and related resources.

### TOTEMK

**Travelling** has been **reduced** and online participation has been encouraged only when there was a physical event taking place (e.g. the MOOC launching event). The project **reduced use of plastic bottles** and used either class bottles or refilled bottles and tried to **reduce copy prints**.

## Agenda 2030

As Finland's development policy and development cooperation are guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the HEI ICI projects are also in line with the Agenda2030. Already in their application, the projects have listed the SDGs they have linkages with.

The projects are contributing and have linkages through their activities to several sustainable development goals. Naturally all projects are contributing to SDG 4 Quality Education and with its sub-goals (especially 4.3,

4.4., 4.5 and 4.7). Especially the five projects under the learning crises theme have special focus on SDG 4 but all the other projects are also strongly connected to this goal. All the HEI ICI projects have also linkages with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals) and SDG 5 (Gender equality). The projects under the climate change theme contribute to SDG 13 (Climate Action) and the projects under the innovation theme has strong linkages with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure). In addition to these goals, the picture below shows all the SDGs that the projects have linkages with.



## Project management

Capacity development in international project management at the partner institutions is an aspect that has been reflected by several projects in their reports. Efforts have resulted in smoother project management and increased project management capacities. Dedicated measures to support and the recognition of the capacity improvement of the administrative skills in partner institutions can be seen as a best practice on programme level.

Each HEI ICI project has a basic project management structure as a requirement from the programme level, which consists of project board and nominated coordinators at each institution. The coordinator of the Finnish coordinating HEI is the contact point for the MFA and EDUFI.

The function of the Project Board is to monitor project progress and to support the cooperating HEIs in carrying out the activities. The Project Board takes actions if there is a risk that the stated objectives of the project are not adhered to. The Board also approves the possible significant changes in the Project Document, any change requests from the project and the annual reports before they are submitted to EDUFI. In each project the members to the board have been invited based on the needs, scope, stakeholders, and structure of the project. The chair of the board should always come from the southern partner institution.

Projects have reported that depending on the structure of the project management the project board is meeting at least once in a year. Several meetings in a year is the most common procedure. In many projects the responsibilities are divided between the members of the board and project management is supporting all activities.

In 2023 project management teams have been able to continue meeting face-to-face, which has created a basis for smooth collaboration and build trust.

## Quality management

In the annual reports all HEI ICI projects have reported several methods supporting internal quality management and monitoring to follow the progress of the project and to be able to jointly react to any detected challenges where needed. These methods include dedicated quality working groups or teams, which follow the progress of the project against the set indicators in the agreed cycle of internal reporting. Relevant data collection methods, collecting and analysing feedback on project activities, self-evaluation,

regular follow-up, open communication culture as well as regular review and update of project specific results frameworks and risk matrix are central activities of continuous internal quality management in HEI ICI projects.

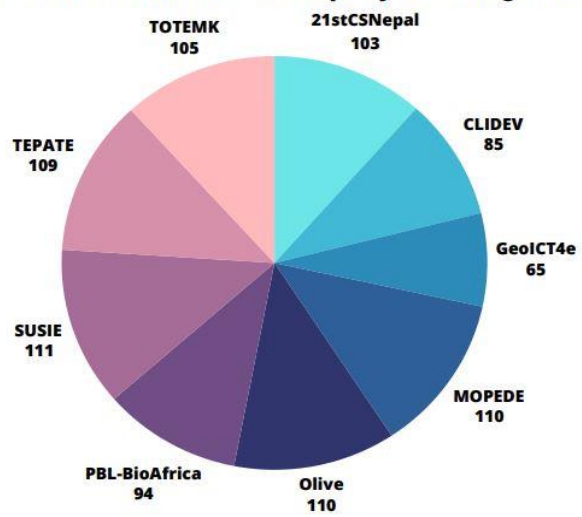
In addition to the internal quality management procedures, some HEI ICI projects have had external evaluations performed to their project to support their quality management in 2023. This has been reported at least for 21<sup>st</sup> CT Nepal and MOPEDE projects.

### Financial management

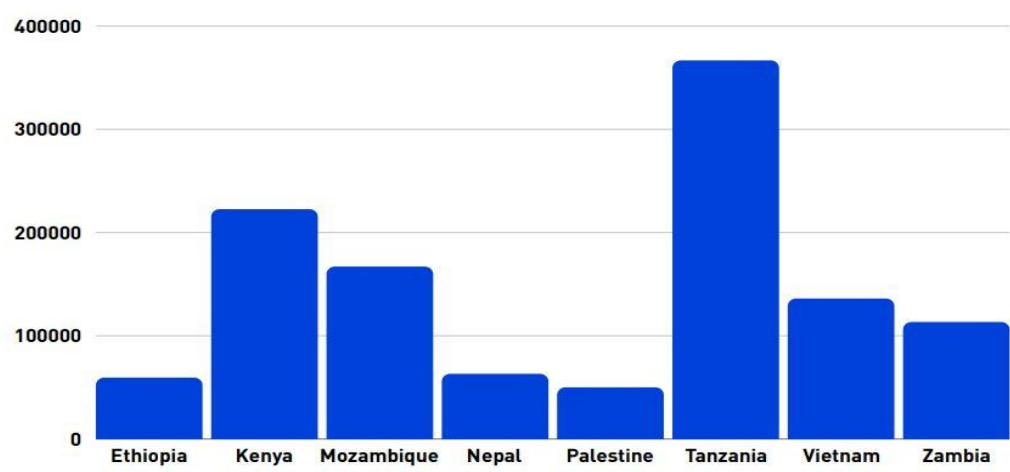
Like the previous year, the year 2023 was very active for the HEI ICI projects, and this was also reflected in the average budget utilization rate (99,18%), which was almost the same as last year. Several projects had a budget utilization rate of over 100% because they used funds that had not been spent in the initial years. The graphic below shows the project-specific budget utilization percentages in 2023.

The second graphic shows the allocation of funding per partner country in 2023. There are two projects in Kenya and Tanzania and one project in other countries.

**Use of the annual (2023) project budget (%)**



**Allocation of funding by country in 2023**



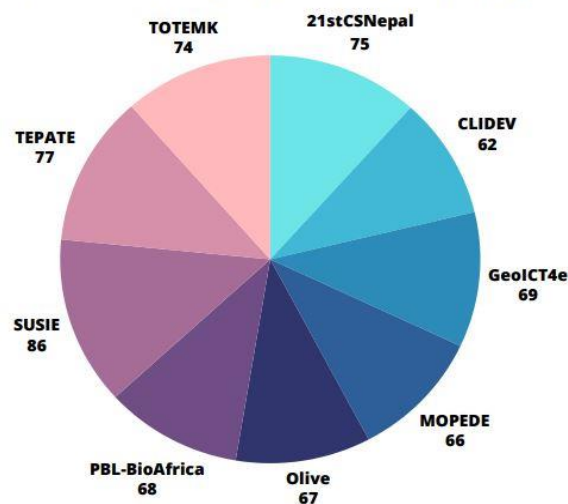
The total expenditure of the HEI ICI projects in 2020-2023 has been about 9 937 827 euros of which 80 % was covered by the MFA funding and 20 % by self-financing. The average usage of the total budget is about 71,5 %. The use of the total budget by 2023 per project is presented in the graphics below.

As the projects approach their end, many have updated their budgets and requested changes throughout the year. The projects are scheduled to conclude on time at the end of August 2024.

### Use of the projects budgets(€) 2020-2023



### Use of the total project budget (%) by 2023



## Monitoring

The year 2023 was an intensive year for HEI ICI project monitoring conducted by EDUFI programme management team, both at the southern partner institutions as well as at the coordinating Finnish institutions.

During the reporting period 2023 EDUFI team visited the partner institutions of TOTEMK project in Kenya and the partners of CLIDEV in Vietnam. The EDUFI team monitored the Finnish coordinators of OLIVE, TOTEMK, TEPATE, MOPEDE, CLIDEV, GeoICT4e and SUSIE projects.

The purpose of the HEI ICI monitoring visits is to assess the implementation and impact of the HEI ICI programme in the Finnish and southern higher education institutions. Monitoring is a complementary and supporting measure to the annual reporting procedure and continuous monitoring and guidance of projects in day-to-day programme management.

During the field visit the project progress is discussed, the development policy relevance analyzed, and the relevance and possible impact of the project analyzed. Also, the appropriate use of funds is always monitored. Furthermore, EDUFI interviews project staff and beneficiaries from all project partner universities. According to the monitoring plan for the HEI ICI programme period of 2020-24 all coordinating institutions in Finland and part of the institutions in partner countries will be monitored. Focus during this programme period is monitoring the partner institutions in the newly established partnerships.

Based on the monitoring visits the project received reports presenting the main findings and recommendations on the issues that should still be paid attention to during the remaining implementation period of the project. Each project is also asked to describe their actions taken based on these recommendations in the annual reports.

## Communication and Dissemination

All projects have created communication and dissemination plans for the programme period and have launched a project web page that functions as the main communication platform. News or blog posts are regularly posted by all projects. Also, social media channels mainly Twitter and Facebook but also Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn are actively used to promote ongoing projects. To enhance visibility projects have participated in different webinars and conferences to disseminate information on project activities for stakeholders.

The HEI ICI projects have been active in publishing about their activities via different channels. Below the webpages of the HEI ICI projects as well as some highlights of the published content on recent activities from different projects:

Project	Links
21st CS Nepal	<p>Project website: <a href="https://www.jamk.fi/en/project/hei-ici-projects-tackling-the-global-learning-crisis/developing-pedagogy-for-21st-century-skills-nepal">https://www.jamk.fi/en/project/hei-ici-projects-tackling-the-global-learning-crisis/developing-pedagogy-for-21st-century-skills-nepal</a></p> <p>Susimetsä, M. and Korkealehto, K (2023). Opettajankoulutuksen kehittäminen Nepalissa (Schoolteacher development in Nepal) published by Hamk Unlimited: <a href="https://unlimited.hamk.fi/ammattillinen-osaaminen-ja-opetus/opettajankoulutuksen-kehittaminen-nepalissa/">https://unlimited.hamk.fi/ammattillinen-osaaminen-ja-opetus/opettajankoulutuksen-kehittaminen-nepalissa/</a></p>



CLIDEV	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://blogs.helsinki.fi/cli-dev/">https://blogs.helsinki.fi/cli-dev/</a></p> <p>Laakkonen, Salmikangas &amp; Pekkarinen (2023) Korkeakoulutuksen kehittämistä Vietnamissa. Inpublication: Oppija aktiivisena toimijana - Uudistavaa ja osallistavaa korkeakoulupedagogiikkaa, pp. 110-116 (only in Finnish)  <a href="https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/794349/Laurea%20julkaisut%20205.pdf?sequence=5&amp;isAllowed=y">https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/794349/Laurea%20julkaisut%20205.pdf?sequence=5&amp;isAllowed=y</a></p>
GeolCT4e	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://www.geoict.org/">https://www.geoict.org/</a></p> <p>MCL 2.0 Workshop Highlights for 2023 in Lushoto.  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OPn08m4fnE&amp;t=33s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OPn08m4fnE&amp;t=33s</a></p>
MOPEDE	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://www.jamk.fi/en/project/hei-ici-projects-tackling-the-global-learning-crisis/mopede-ethiopia">https://www.jamk.fi/en/project/hei-ici-projects-tackling-the-global-learning-crisis/mopede-ethiopia</a></p> <p>Podcast episodes:  In Jamk's series Solving the learning crisis:  1. Evolving TVET Pedagogy in Ethiopia. Published August 2023  <a href="https://soundcloud.com/jamkaokk/evolving-tvet-pedagogy">https://soundcloud.com/jamkaokk/evolving-tvet-pedagogy</a>  2. Sharing and exploring in the heart of Europe. Published in December 2023  <a href="https://soundcloud.com/jamkaokk/sharing-and-exploring-14">https://soundcloud.com/jamkaokk/sharing-and-exploring-14</a></p>
OLIVE	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://www.helsinki.fi/en/projects/teacher-education-without-walls">https://www.helsinki.fi/en/projects/teacher-education-without-walls</a></p> <p>Vivitsou, M.; Hamad, F.K.; Janhonen-Abuquah, H. A Metaphorical Analysis of Mentoring for Education without Walls in Palestine and Finland with the OLIVE International Project as a Key Example. Educ. Sci. 2023, 13, 290.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13030290">https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13030290</a></p>
PBL-BioAfrica	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://www.pbl-bioafrica.net/">https://www.pbl-bioafrica.net/</a></p> <p>Experiences in problem-based learning published by HAMK Beat:  <a href="https://blog.hamk.fi/hamk-beat/experiences-in-problem-based-learning/">https://blog.hamk.fi/hamk-beat/experiences-in-problem-based-learning/</a></p>
SUSIE	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://susie.turkuamk.fi/">https://susie.turkuamk.fi/</a></p> <p>On 17th Aug SUSIE organized together with Business Finland Nairobi office and Turku World Trade Center a business event called East Africa - Dynamic and Growing Markets. The event was targeted to Finland's South-West companies, encouraging them to start new business in this region of Africa. A blogpost was made about the event: <a href="https://susie.turkuamk.fi/general/east-africa-a-dynamic-and-growing-market/">https://susie.turkuamk.fi/general/east-africa-a-dynamic-and-growing-market/</a></p>
TEPATE	<p>Project website:  <a href="https://www.jamk.fi/en/project/hei-ici-projects-tackling-the-global-learning-crisis/tepate-mozambique">https://www.jamk.fi/en/project/hei-ici-projects-tackling-the-global-learning-crisis/tepate-mozambique</a></p> <p>More than 900 people participated in the trainings  <a href="https://www.jamk.fi/en/article/more-than-900-people-participated-in-the-trainings">https://www.jamk.fi/en/article/more-than-900-people-participated-in-the-trainings</a></p>

TOTEMK	<p>Project website: <a href="https://www2.helsinki.fi/en/projects/training-trainers-for-teacher-education-and-management-in-kenya">https://www2.helsinki.fi/en/projects/training-trainers-for-teacher-education-and-management-in-kenya</a></p> <p>Finnish-Kenyan collaboration spurs transformation in education with TOTEMK initiative <a href="https://strathmore.edu/news-articles/finnish-kenyan-collaboration-spurs-transformation-in-education-with-totemk-initiative/">https://strathmore.edu/news-articles/finnish-kenyan-collaboration-spurs-transformation-in-education-with-totemk-initiative/</a></p>
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More information on the HEI ICI programme available on EDUFI website:

<https://www.oph.fi/en/programmes/hei-ici-programme>