



## Enhancing ICT Competencies of Early Childhood Educators at HEIs in MENA Countries 2023-2025

### BIG STEPS IN CURRICULA DEVELOPMENT



This half-year, there has been great focus on the curricula development process of HEIs in MENA partners. Based on the findings of the surveys conducted in work package 2, all partners dedicated their efforts to update existing and create new university courses in innovative and flexible way that respond to the target group's educational needs and challenges, with focus on SDGs and ICT skills in early childhood education.

Previously, The partners have suggested a total of 46 courses to be developed, and in this half-year the actual curricula development process have been put into action.

This issue explores the project progress, with a focus on the curricula development process, presenting the meetings and workshops that was conducted through this half-year.



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# WORK PROGRESS

## NAVIGATING THE PATH TO ACHIEVEMENTS

### SURVEYS INFORMATION

Following the comprehensive surveys conducted with students, faculty staff, and stakeholders in the early childhood education field, we have derived invaluable insights that have influenced the project's development. The richness of these findings have prompted us to embark on the creation of a scientific paper, currently in the writing process, aiming to disseminate this valuable knowledge to a broader audience. Stay tuned for updates on this exciting endeavor!

### ICT LABS

Previously, the list of equipment was planned based on the findings of the surveys, and during this half year the partners have started establishing and developing their ICT labs, purchasing the equipment through tender procedures, and installing and setting up the lab. We are currently during the process, and all partners are exerting their efforts to complete the development of the labs to the best of their abilities.

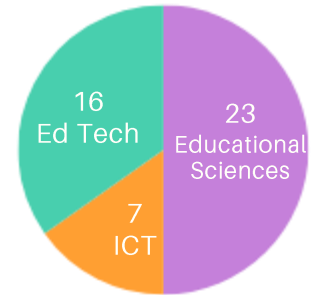
Alongside curriculum development, staff and students will engage in training workshops across program countries. These sessions, drawing from EU experiences, aim to enhance participants' abilities in preparing teaching materials using ICT tools and resources. This half year, university of Padova started the elaboration of the capacity building plan and presented the suggested timetables for the academic's visits, the student's visits and the in-house training workshops.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

# CURRICULA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

## COURSE SELECTION

The partners have suggested a total of 46 courses to be developed. However, in the second management meeting the partners agreed that enlarging the target group could be an extra benefit to the project, accordingly the selected courses have been modified, and the final selected courses came out as following chart:



## CRITERIA AND METHODOLOGY

The adequate embedding of ICT in the curricula is the central focus of the project, to equip teachers with the skills to leverage technology for dynamic and interactive learning experiences. Simultaneously, integrating SDGs is essential to equip future teachers with a deep understanding of global challenges, which enhances the quality of education. With that in mind, the partners agreed on using the DeCoRe+ Methodology in the development of courses, as it provides an applicable framework to integrate both ICT and SDGs into the curricula.

## COLLABORATION

To maximize the benefits derived from the European added value, an EU partner was assigned to each MENA university to offer direction and to evaluate their updated courses. Moreover, Fredrick University is assigned to evaluate the inclusion of SDGs in all the updated courses.

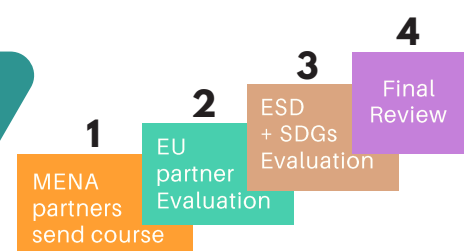


## TRAINING AND COMPETENCIES

To ensure the effective application of the DeCoRe+ Methodology, a technical workshop was conducted as a part of the second management meeting's activities with the participation of all partners. National training workshops will be conducted in MENA countries with attendance of technical committee from each partner university to carry out all final work of the validation of the courses.

## TIMELINE

It was agreed that the updated course documents will be submitted every 2 weeks for one course only from each university, starting from November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It's estimated that the last courses will be reviewed on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The courses are reviewed through the following process:





# SECOND MANAGEMENT MEETING

## BUCHAREST, ROMANIA



September 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2023



University of Bucharest campus



36 person



- The meeting activities included the partners presenting the project progress in terms of selected courses, equipment purchasing, labs, surveys participation, dissemination, risks and challenges, and discussing what is expected from each WP to be achieved in the upcoming months.

## ➤ HIGHLIGHTED TOPICS



The analysis of the outcomes of the four conducted surveys was presented, and It was agreed on writing a paper about the conducted surveys.



The timetables for the academic's visits, the student's visits and the in-house training workshops were presented.



It was agreed that each partner needs to have an action plan on how the equipment of ICT lab will be used, and how it serves target groups. Also, how the equipment will be used after the project ends (sustainability).

# TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

## DECORE PLUS METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

In line with our commitment in this project to develop curricula that align with the requirements of the changing world, University of Bucharest conducted a technical workshop as part of the second management meeting’s activities, entitled:

“Revising courses to embed ICT-enabled Education for Sustainability applying the DeCoRe plus methodology”

DeCoRe+ plus methodology is designed by Prof. Vassilios Makrakis to help in the embedding of sustainability issues and SDGs across curricula at all education levels. Therefore, it has been chosen to be the primary method adopted for curriculum development in this project.

The workshop included discussing the DeCoRe+ Template along with its processes, and an example of an undergraduate course applying ICT-enabled theme-based education for sustainability.



 **INSTRUCTOR**

**Prof. Dr. Vassilios Makrakis**

Professor of ICT in Education with particular reference to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

### AL-AZHAR UNIVERSITY’S WORKSHOP

Within higher educational organizations, knowledge transfer fosters a collaborative environment where insights are shared, innovation flourishes, and the pursuit of knowledge becomes a collective journey.

Therefore, Al-Azhar University conducted a two-days workshop entitled: “Implementing the DeCoRe+ Methodology in Curriculum Design”

This workshop aimed to train the teaching staff of Kindergarten Education department on using different stages of the DeCoRe+ methodology and incorporating ICT tools in developing courses. The participants collaborated in small groups to fill in module descriptions, benefiting from mutual feedback and insights.



October 31, 2023



8 person



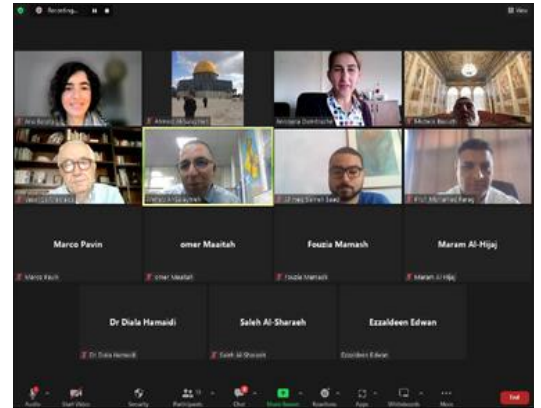
# ONLINE MANAGEMENT MEETINGS



CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING WITH PARTICIPATION FROM ALL PARTNERS.

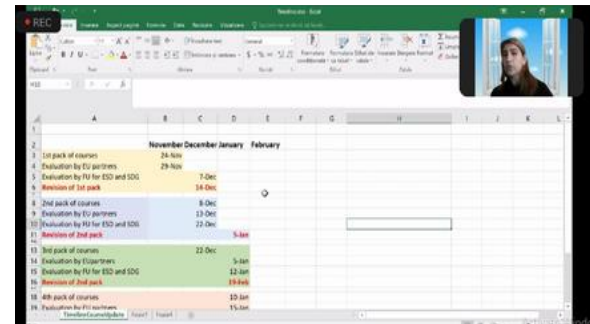
**THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ONLINE MANAGEMENT MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 26, 2023**  
**12:00 PM (AMMAN TIME)**

The meeting started by Prof. Ahmed Al-Salaymeh the general coordinator for the project, he mentioned the main tasks that are currently working on. Dr. Anisoara presented report on selected courses per institution. Accreditation was discussed and how revising more than 10-15% of the courses content needs approval. Prof. Makrakis raised how this can be overcome by focusing on student activities.



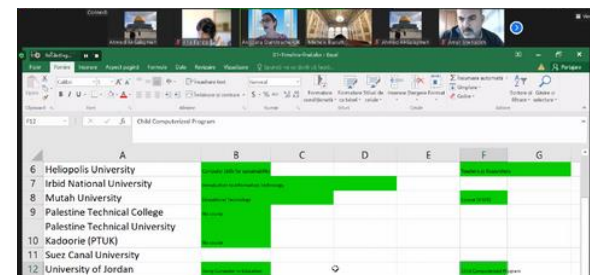
**THE 6<sup>TH</sup> ONLINE MANAGEMENT MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 23, 2023**  
**12:00 PM (AMMAN TIME)**

The meeting started by Prof. Ahmed Al-Salaymeh, he mentioned the main tasks that are needed to be discussed during the meeting. The main tasks highlighted were the scientific paper about the conducted surveys, the curricula development process outline, the 1<sup>st</sup> ICT Lab biannual report, and the call for external evaluator for quality control.



**THE 7<sup>TH</sup> ONLINE MANAGEMENT MEETING**  
**DECEMBER 21, 2023**  
**12:00 PM (AMMAN TIME)**

The meeting started by Prof. Ahmed Al-Salaymeh, he mentioned the main tasks that are needed to be discussed during the meeting. The main tasks highlighted were the progress in the curricula updating process, and the status of purchasing the equipment process by MENA partners.





# TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETING

In a recent milestone meeting, the Technical and Scientific Committee gathered to deliberate on the course outline, shaping the path of our curriculum development process. During this meeting, the entire process, along with its detailed procedures, was thoroughly discussed and mapped out.

It was agreed that the development and evaluation work would be carried out according to two essential templates: a course outline template designed for our MENA partners to develop their courses, and a quality evaluation sheet designed for our EU partners.

Additionally, the courses have been organized into clusters, encouraging MENA partners within each cluster to share their expertise and insights, enhancing the development of courses through collaborative efforts and shared knowledge.



## PALESTINIAN PARTNERS

### PERSISTENCE DESPITE CHALLENGES

Due to the current tragic events in Gaza, the situation in Palestine has been unstable. However, our Palestinian partners have shown great signs of determination in completing this project in the best possible way.

Palestine Technical College - Deir El-Balah is currently closed. However, their team members are putting their effort to keep pace with the project, and how to proceed will be discussed with EU.

Palestine Technical University - Khadoori and Al-Istiqlal University are experiencing difficulties due to higher prices and electricity/network cut-off in Palestine, which caused obstacles in the process of purchasing and equipping of the computer labs, yet they are trying their best to proceed and complete their labs as soon as they can.

## UPCOMING

First Regional Workshop

Third Management Meeting



February



Egypt

## CONTACT INFORMATION



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