UNIVERSIDADE
LUSÓFONA

Greenhouse

Intermediate Report

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Resume

Hydroponic farming presents advantages over traditional soil-based methods, offering enhanced plant growth and resource efficiency. However, the manual monitoring of water parameters in hydroponic systems poses challenges that this project seeks to address. The proposed solution involves the use of ESP32 microcontrollers within Arduino boards to automate the control of pH, electrical conductivity, and nutrient levels. These low-cost components enable continuous monitoring and adjustment of water parameters, ensuring optimal conditions for plant growth. The project's backend, supported by APIs, interfaces with a web solution developed using PHP Laravel. This web application facilitates real-time and historical data analysis, manual adjustments, and overall system control. The synergy between hardware automation and web-based software aims to provide a practical, accessible, and sustainable solution for hydroponic farming.

Abstract

This project aims to revolutionize hydroponic farming by developing an automated system for controlling water parameters in hydroponics, leveraging low-cost microcontrollers and sensors. Hydroponics, the soil-less cultivation of plants, offers enhanced growth and resource efficiency compared to traditional soil-based agriculture. The manual monitoring of water parameters in hydroponic systems presents challenges, requiring constant adjustments by the farmer. The proposed solution involves the use of ESP32 microcontrollers within Arduino boards to automate the monitoring and adjustment of pH, electrical conductivity, and nutrient levels. This system, when integrated with a web solution built using PHP Laravel, allows for real-time and historical data analysis. The web interface facilitates manual adjustments, data visualization, and provides a platform for further optimization. The project aims to create a cost-effective, user-friendly, and sustainable solution for hydroponic farming.

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1 Problem Identification

1.1 What's hydroponics?

"Hydroponics is the cultivation of plants without using soil". Instead, plants are grown in a nutrient-rich water solution that provides essential hydration, nutrients, and oxygen required for their growth and development.

1.2 Why is hydroponics used?

The fundamental scientific principle behind hydroponics lies in optimizing resource delivery. Traditional soil-based planting requires plants to expend energy searching for nutrients and water. In hydroponics, these essential elements are delivered directly to the roots. Consequently, the plant can redirect its energy towards growth, resulting in faster and higher-quality maturation.

In summary, hydroponic systems offer a cost-effective, controlled, and stable environment, surpassing traditional soil-based agriculture. This method not only increases profitability but also provides precise control over plant development.

Moreover, hydroponics stands as a sustainable solution, promoting water conservation through a closed-loop water circuit. Water loss is minimal, primarily due to evaporation and plant consumption.

1.3 Automatic and manual hydroponic system

In a manual hydroponic system, farmers must daily monitor crucial water parameters such as pH, electrical conductivity, and nutrient levels. Adjustments are made by adding solutions to maintain optimal values. However, this manual process demands significant time and commitment, as water parameters may deviate within a few hours.

Automation emerges as a practical solution, ensuring continuous monitoring and periodic adjustments (e.g., every 30 minutes or an hour). This automation enhances stability in water conditions, promoting quicker and healthier plant development.

1.4 Alternatives to Hydroponics

The alternative solution to hydroponics is the traditional soil-base agriculture, where the farmer manually plants and take care of the herbs/plants on the soil, rather than using a hydroponic system.

However, this method is not as viable as hydroponics, primarily due to its susceptibility to issues such as pest infestations and predation. This is because, in traditional soil-based agriculture, the lack of direct control over soil conditions can lead to variations in quality and nutrients available to plants. Additionally, the soil environment provides a conducive setting for pest infestations, which can cause significant harm to crops. In contrast, hydroponics offers a more controlled environment, reducing such risks and fostering more efficient and healthy plant/herb growth.

In conclusion, there are numerous variables that the farmer does not have full control over.

1.5 Objective

The primary objective is to automate water parameter control, enabling the monitoring of both historical and real-time data while concurrently managing the entire environment.

2 Benchmarking

2.1 The solution/vision

The objective of the solution is to develop a comprehensive set of tools, encompassing both hardware and software, aimed at automating routine tasks, facilitating manual alignment, gathering data for statistical analysis, and enabling future optimization.

2.1.1 Low-cost Microcontrollers and Sensors

2.1.1.1 Microcontrollers and Arduinos

Arduino, known for its open-source electronics platform, offers accessible hardware and software solutions, making it a popular choice for automation projects. Arduinos are versatile microcontrollers capable of both receiving inputs from sensors and providing outputs through their ports. Among the range of Arduino options, the ESP32 microcontroller stands out for its cost-effectiveness, versatility, and Wi-Fi connectivity capabilities, making it ideal for projects requiring network integration. The ESP32, integrated into the "Arduino Microcontroller Nano ESP32. Arduino ABX00083" board, fulfills the project's requirements while aligning with budgetary constraints.

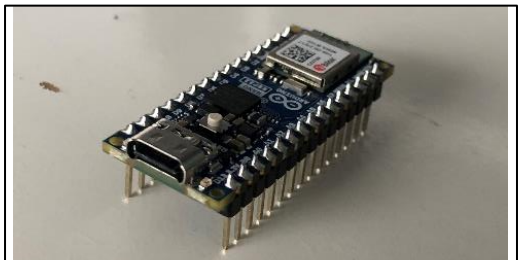

Figure 1

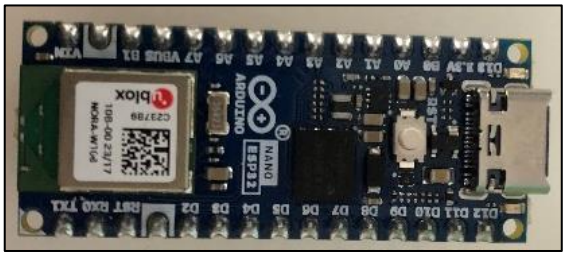

Figure 2

Table 1 - ESP32

Feature	ESP32
Microcontroller Type	Dual-Core microcontroller
Processing Power	Capable of complex tasks
Analog Inputs	8 analog ports
Wi-Fi Capabilities	Robust Wi-Fi and Bluetooth support
Bluetooth	Built-in Bluetooth capabilities
GPIO Pins	14 analog pins
Price	Cost-effective

2.1.1.2 Sensors and Actuators

To gather essential data for automation, critical sensors are employed:

a) An electrical conductivity sensor measures the number of particles and nutrients in the water.
b) A pH sensor ensures the water environment's pH level meets the requirements of specific herbs, leading to faster growth and higher-quality produce.
c) A water temperature sensor calibrates pH and electrical conductivity sensors and monitors the optimal water temperature environment.

For taking actions based on the collected data, the following equipment is used:

a) Peristaltic pumps dispense precise dosages of solutions into the water.
b) Relays trigger various electrical outlets based on commands from the microcontroller.

2.1.1.3 Joining the microcontrollers and the sensors creating the modules

The combination of a microcontroller and sensors is termed a module. The primary solution involves deploying multiple microcontrollers in different locations or tanks. Each location can accommodate microcontrollers according to user preferences, ranging from a single sensor/output per microcontroller to a single microcontroller with all sensors and outputs, ensuring adaptability and scalability for any greenhouse layout. The configuration must be designed for easy setup, even by non-technical users.

With this setup, the placement of sensors on each microcontroller and their configuration must be designed in a way that even non-technical users can easily accomplish it.

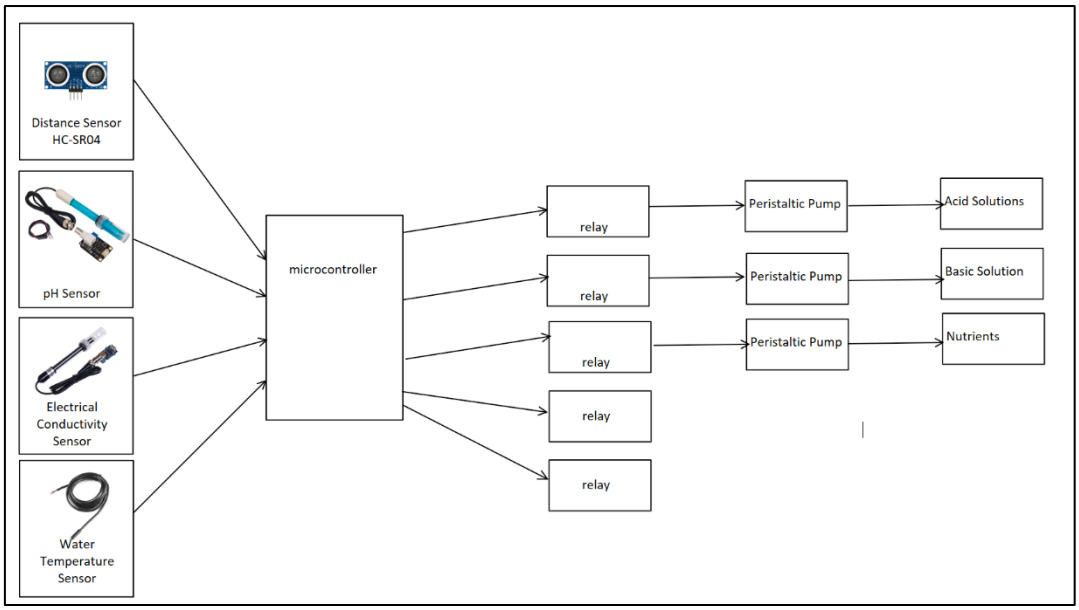

Figure 3

2.1.2 Event decision taking services.

Decision-making occurs on a .NET Core web application hosted on Azure Web Services, rather than on the microcontrollers themselves, due to their limited processing power. This approach offers flexibility in altering decision-making values, online monitoring of microcontroller readings, and centralized data storage and management.

2.1.3 Data storage

A robust data storage mechanism is crucial for preserving collected sensor information and facilitating efficient decision-making. Essential components and considerations include:

-Relational Database Management System (RDBMS): MySQL, PostgreSQL, or Microsoft SQL Server can be employed to organize and manage data, enabling easy retrieval and manipulation.

-Azure Database Services: Utilizing Azure's database services, such as Azure SQL Database, offers seamless integration and optimized performance within the Azure ecosystem.

-Data Schema: Designing an appropriate database schema accommodates data from various sensors and microcontrollers, structuring tables to store sensor readings, timestamped data, and configuration settings.

-Data Security and Backup: Implementing robust security measures and regular backups ensure data confidentiality, integrity, and prevention of data loss.

-Scalability: The chosen database solution should scale to handle increasing data volumes as the number of greenhouse locations or sensors grows, ensuring adaptability to expanding agricultural operations.

- Data Retrieval APIs: APIs enable seamless access and query of stored data, facilitating efficient decision-making by retrieving real-time and historical data as needed.

-Data Archiving: Archiving historical data maintains a manageable database size based on factors like time or completion of agricultural cycles.

-Data Visualization: Integrating visualization tools within the web application aids in interpreting stored information, providing insights into trends and patterns.

Implementing a robust data storage solution ensures reliability, accessibility, and scalability of information collected from sensors, supporting informed decision-making through the .NET Core web application hosted on Azure Web Services.

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.1 Key companies on the market:

a) Priva:

a) Priva:

Priva is at the forefront of providing automation solutions for controlled agriculture environments globally. Their systems cover environmental control, irrigation, and fertigation, offering a comprehensive solution for hydroponic greenhouses. Through IoT and sensor networks, their sensors provide real-time data on environmental factors, plant health, and resource usage. This enables proactive monitoring and adjustment of greenhouse conditions, revolutionizing crop cultivation practices. Priva's pH and electrical conductivity sensors, combined with their drain sensor and Groscale weighing scale, enable accurate measurement and adjustment of water dosage and EC values, ensuring optimal growing conditions for plants. (https://www.priva.com/horticulture/solutions/greenhouse-sensors)

b) Growlink:

Growlink is a leading company in agricultural technology, specializing in control and automation solutions for indoor farming, hydroponics, and greenhouse cultivation. Their product range includes environmental controllers, irrigation systems, and nutrient delivery systems, all customizable to suit specific crop needs. With a strong focus on IoT, their systems allow remote monitoring and control via smartphones and computers. Growlink prioritizes energy efficiency to reduce costs and environmental impact. Their user-friendly interfaces cater to a wide range of users, and they offer support and training services. Ongoing innovations may include AI and machine learning for enhanced crop management.

(https://www.growlink.ag/)

c) Pro System Aqua:

Sellers of electrical conductivity and pH controller's modules, having 4 principal products:

Figure 4

Pro System Aqua offers pH and electrical conductivity controller modules, along with other products like the ProSystem Aqua hydroponic system and the Computer Hydroponic Controller. These systems automate nutrient control and irrigation management, ensuring optimal conditions for crop growth. The hydroponic system can apply different fertilizers and nutrients while regulating pH through continuous conductivity control. The Computer Hydroponic Controller manages parameters like water quantity, conductivity, pH, temperature, fertilizer dosage, and irrigation activation. The modular design of their solutions allows for scalability and customization to suit different greenhouse setups and crop types. (https://cognoscitiva.pt/)

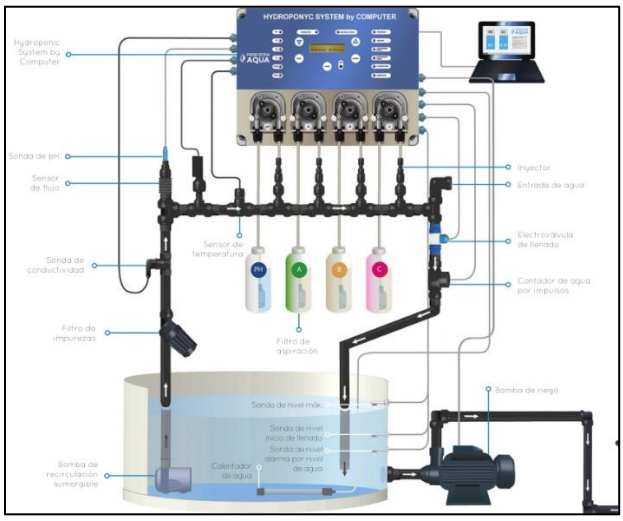

Figure 5

The solution presented on this report has the same features has the solutions on the market, but is cheaper to make:

- ➔ Use of low-cost sensors.
- ➔ Low-cost microcontrollers, that run on low power.
- ➔ Option to select only the sensors and features needed.
- ➔ The solutions on the market use a probe to detect the water level, this solution uses a distance sensor.

Whit this the solution proposed on this report can be produce cheaper.

2.2.2 Market Trends

The proposed solution aligns with market trends in several ways:

a) Integration of AI systems: The proposed solution can incorporate AI for data analysis, optimizing resource use and predicting ideal conditions for plant growth based on available data.

b) Sustainability focus: By using low-cost sensors and microcontrollers, minimizing water consumption, and reducing waste, the proposed solution enhances sustainability in greenhouse automation.

c) Modular systems: The proposed solution's modular design allows for scalability and adaptability, enabling growers to expand or modify their systems as needed.

In conclusion, the proposed solution not only meets market trends but also offers cost-effectiveness and flexibility compared to existing solutions. By leveraging low-cost components and embracing modern technologies like AI and IoT, it provides growers with a scalable and sustainable solution for greenhouse automation.

3 Viability and Maintenance

3.1 Environment limitations

Every hydroponic farm has limitations that can ruin a complete farm:

a) Natural disasters, since every hydroponic farm is inside a greenhouse, whit a stronger natural cause, and as result all the farm can suffer considerable damage.
b) Pests can destroy a complete farm of herbs.
c) Bacteria present in the water used to feed the herbs can lead to their demise and damage.

3.2 Sensor limitations and maintenance

One of the possible limitations is the fact that if the sensors output false values, the consequence might be to impair or eventually destroy part of the farm.

To achieve that, I need to implement a functionality to periodically calibrate all the sensors.

The sensor can also be broken and whit that needs to be substituted.

3.3 Microcontrollers limitations

3.3.1 Power Supply

The microcontrollers require a 3.3-volt power supply. They can be powered by either connecting them near an electrical outlet through a transformer connected to a USB cable linked to the Arduino or by utilizing a breadboard power supply, which is powered by a 9-volt battery and transformed down to 3.3 volts. Additionally, there is a need for the development of a mechanism for the microcontrollers to read the life of the battery to prevent potential damage caused by power depletion.

3.3.2 Connectivity Redundancy

The solution is designed to rely on a Wi-Fi connection for proper functionality. However, acknowledging the limitations associated with Wi-Fi connectivity, a redundancy plan has been considered. The system will utilize two Wi-Fi connections to introduce redundancy and enhance reliability. In case one connection faces issues, the other can seamlessly take over, ensuring continuous operation.

3.3.3 Future Enhancement

While the redundancy plan provides added reliability, there remains the possibility that the greenhouse may not have Wi-Fi connectivity at all. For further enhancement, the entire system can potentially be modified in the future to operate via LoRa technology. LoRa offers significantly greater range compared to Wi-Fi and is well-suited for environments where traditional connectivity options may be limited.

3.3.4 Wireless Communication Technology

Wi-Fi and LoRa are two distinct wireless communication technologies. Wi-Fi is well-suited for high-speed, short-range connections within buildings, while LoRa excels at long-range, low-power communication in outdoor and remote environments. Each technology serves unique purposes, with Wi-Fi for local connectivity and LoRa for wide-area, low-power applications.

4 Engineering

4.1 Requirements Gathering and Analysis

4.1.1 System Requirements

4.1.1.1 Sensors

Id	HP-SENS-0010
Title	Electrical conductivity calculation function
Required	Yes
Component	Sensor Eletrical condutivity
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Eletrical conductivity function : `sensor::tds = (133.42 * pow(sensor::ec, 3) - 255.86 * sensor::ec * sensor::ec + 857.39 * sensor::ec) * 0.5;`	

Id	HP-SENS-0020
Title	
Required	Yes
Component	Distance Sensor
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
The Distance Sensor returns the distance between himself and the water, in order to control the amount of water in tanks. The distance is calculated using functions in available library.	

Id	HP-SENS-0030
Title	pH Sensor

Required	Yes
Component	Sensors pH
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Low (2-4 hours)
Description	
PH sensor, PH value is obtained with formula: ph = 0.2357 * voltage	

Id	HP-SENS-0040
Title	Temperature Sensor
Required	Yes
Component	Temperature Sensor
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Low (2-4 hours)
Description	
The Temperature Sensors returns the values of the water temperature Water temperature, current water temperature is obtained with formula: temp =	

4.1.1.2 Relays

Id	HP-RL-0010
Title	Trigger Relay
Required	Yes
Component	Relay
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Low (2-4 hours)
Description	
The Microcontroller should be able to activate the any relay that triggers the peristaltic pump, injecting the any solution	

4.1.1.3 Micro-Controllers

Id	MC-NT-0010
Title	Microcontroller Wi-Fi Connectivity
Required	Yes
Component	Micro-Controller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Microcontroller should be able to connect to a Wi-Fi network for sending readings and receiving commands	

Id	MC-NT-0020
Title	Retrieve MAC Address in String Format
Required	Yes
Component	Micro-Controller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
The microcontroller, identified by the MAC address '10-98-36-FE-C2-6C', must be able to retrieve it in String format, this value is used to identify the source of data collected	

Id	MC-NT-0030
Title	Send pH Value via REST
Required	Yes
Component	Micro-Controller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)

Description

The microcontroller, identified by the MAC address "10-98-36-FE-C2-6C", must have the capability to obtain the pH value of 7 from a sensor. Subsequently, using the REST communication protocol, it should send these values to the specific endpoint named "Automation/ReceiveSensorData" on the backend server.

If the sensor isn't connecting the microcontroller must not send any value.

The microcontroller is connected to the sensors and relays with the following logic:

- Perform regular readings from the connected sensors (water temp, PH, electrical conductivity, distance);
- Send data to REST endpoint in json format. Message should include:
    - MicrocontrolerId (MAC address)
    - Reading type
    - Reading value
    - …
- Call REST endpoint using defined interval to receive commands to act over action components, ex: turn on water pump;

Id	MC-NT-0040
Title	Send Electrical Conductivity Value via REST
Required	Yes
Component	Micro-Controller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
The microcontroller, identified by the MAC address "10-98-36-FE-C2-6C", must be capable of obtaining the Electrical Conductivity value of 245 from a sensor. Subsequently, using the REST communication protocol, it should send this value to the specific endpoint named "Automation/ReceiveSensorData" on the backend server. If the sensor isn't connect the microcontroller must not send any value.	

Id	MC-NT-0050
Title	Send Distance Value via REST
Required	Yes
Component	Micro-Controller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
The microcontroller, identified by the MAC address "10-98-36-FE-C2-6C", must be able to obtain the distance value of 100 units from a sensor. Subsequently, using the REST communication protocol, it should send this value to the "Automation/ReceiveSensorData" endpoint on the backend server, associating it with the same MAC address.	

Id	MC-NT-0060
Title	Send Temperature Value via REST
Required	Yes
Component	Micro-Controller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
The microcontroller, identified by the MAC address "10-98-36-FE-C2-6C", must be able to obtain the Temperature value of 9 units from a sensor. Subsequently, using the REST communication protocol, it should send this value to the "Automation/ReceiveSensorData" endpoint on the backend server, associating it with the same MAC address.	

4.1.1.4 Backend

Id	BE-DB-0010
Title	Handle Sensor Data
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
The Backend should receive all the data collected by the microcontroller such as pH, ec, distance, and temperature. Expose public REST endpoint to be called by the microcontrollers to send sensor data. Requires data to be sent in json format with following structure: - ControllerId or MAC Address - Reading type - Value	

Id	BE-DB-0030
Title	Save Data to Database
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Method SaveData() must be able to receive an id of a microcontroller that isn't on the Data Base, creating a new one. Method SaveData() to store the data received into persistent database. Data can be from a known microcontroller or a new one that was added to the solution	

Id	BE-DB-0040
Title	Provide Actions for Microcontrollers
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Expose public REST endpoint to be called by the microcontrollers looking for actions to be executed. The microcontroller sends the mac address as identification. When the endpoint is executed, the app will check in the database or current state if there is any action pending for that specific microcontroller. If so, the details are returned in json format. The format of each reply is specific to the action to be executed, as an example, for a water pump should be the instructions to be turned on for N number of seconds.	

Id	BE-DB-0050
Title	List of Registered Microcontrollers
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint returning a list of microcontrollers as registered in the solution in json format	

Id	BE-DB-0050
Title	List of Registered Controllers
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint returning a list of Containers as registered in the solution in json format	

Id	BE-DB-0060
Title	Retrieve Current Sensor Value
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	

REST endpoint returning the most recent read value for a specific sensor, identified by the reading type and the microcontroller id

C	BE-AT-0010
Title	Set Container Configs
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint that enables setting the desired values of each Container	

Id	BE-DB-0020
Title	Request Container Desired Values
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint returning a list of Configs as registered in the solution in json format	

Id	BE-DB-0060
Title	Set Container Config
Required	Yes
Component	Backend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint to send a Container Config, and then the app updates it	

Id	BE-MC-0010
Title	Get Next Action
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Microcontroller
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint to get (microcontrollers make the call) the next microcontroller action	

Id	BE-FE-0010
Title	User Log-In
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint to safely make the login of a user	

Id	BE-FE-0020
Title	Get User Permissions
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint to get the User Permissions	

Id	BE-FE-0030
Title	Handle users
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint to create to update users flags such as password user name or permissions	

Id	BE-FE-0040
Title	Handle Conatiners
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (3-4 hours)
Description	
REST endpoints to create Delete, and edit containers	

Id	BE-FE-0050
Title	Handle Microcontrollers
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoints to create edit and delete microcontrollers. Also get all the microcontrollers that doesn't have any containers	

Id	BE-FE-0010
Title	Make manual action on a container
Required	Yes
Component	Backend and Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (2-3 hours)
Description	
REST endpoint to manually instruct an action on a container	

4.1.1.5 Frontend

Id	HP-FRONT-0010
Title	User Interface
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	High (6-10 hours)
Description	

Develop a user-friendly interface in Laravel to provide a seamless experience for users.

Id	HP-FRONT-0020
Title	Graphical Representation
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Implement a graphical representation feature that displays sensor data in various types of graphs (e.g., line charts, bar charts) for easy interpretation.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0030
Title	Real-time Updates
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Enable real-time updates on the frontend by integrating with backend APIs to dynamically fetch and display the latest sensor data.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0040
Title	API Integration
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend

Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Establish communication with backend APIs to retrieve sensor data. Use the REST communication protocol to fetch data from the backend's "ReceiveSensorData" endpoint.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0050
Title	User Authentication
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Implement user authentication mechanisms to ensure that only authorized users can access and view sensor data.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0060
Title	Dashboard
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	High (6-10 hours)
Description	
Create a dashboard on the frontend that provides an overview of all sensor data. The dashboard should be customizable and allow users to choose specific sensors or time ranges for data visualization.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0070
Title	Alerts and Notifications
Required	No
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Implement alerting and notification features to inform users about critical sensor readings or system issues. Alerts can be displayed in the user interface and sent via email or other communication channels.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0080
Title	Responsive Design
Required	No
Component	Frontend
Importance	Must Have
Effort	Low (2-4 hours)
Description	
Ensure that the frontend has a responsive design to provide a consistent and optimal user experience across various devices and screen sizes.	

Id	HP-FRONT-0090
Title	Data Filtering and Sorting
Required	Yes
Component	Frontend

Importance	Must Have
Effort	Moderate (4-6 hours)
Description	
Allow users to filter and sort sensor data based on different parameters such as sensor type, date, or value. Provide a user-friendly interface for easy data exploration.	

4.1.2 Implementation Success Criteria

The success of any technological solution hinges on meeting specific criteria to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and user satisfaction. The proposed system's implementation success criteria encompass various aspects aimed at delivering a robust and user-friendly solution that achieves the project's objectives.

1. **Efficient Integration**:

   -Objective: The system should seamlessly integrate sensor data for real-time insights.
   -Success Criteria: Minimal latency in integrating sensor data, optimizing the time between data capture and availability in the backend database for quick decision-making.

2. **Intuitive Interface:**

   -Objective: Develop an intuitive, user-friendly interface using the Laravel framework.
   -Success Criteria: Positive user experience reflected in high usability scores and minimal errors during interface navigation, determined through usability testing and user feedback.

3. **Reliable Real-Time Updates:**

   -Objective: Provide consistent and timely real-time updates for accurate decision-making.
   -Success Criteria: Ensuring the system maintains synchronization between microcontrollers, backend, and frontend, delivering the latest data to users without delays.

4. **Data Security:**

   -Objective: Implement robust authentication and authorization mechanisms to protect sensitive sensor data.
   -Success Criteria: Adherence to industry-standard security protocols, prevention of unauthorized access attempts, and safeguarding the confidentiality and integrity of stored data.

In conclusion, these success criteria offer a comprehensive framework for assessing the proposed system's effectiveness. Efficient integration ensures timely access to data, an intuitive interface enhances user experience, reliable real-time updates support informed decision-making, and robust data security safeguards sensitive information. Regular testing, user feedback, and continuous improvement efforts are essential for meeting and exceeding these criteria, leading to the successful implementation and adoption of the solution.

4.2 Description of Application Scenarios

4.2.1 Sensor Management

Scenario: Users need to manage and monitor various sensors within the hydroponic system.

Use Case: Access the Sensors Table to view, add, or remove individual sensors. Utilize the Sensor Types Table for categorizing and understanding sensor capabilities.

4.2.2 Actuator Control

Scenario: Users want to control actuators, such as pumps or lights, based on real-time data.

Use Case: Interact with the Relays Table to manage relay switches, adjusting their state as needed. This ensures precise control over actuators to maintain optimal growing conditions.

4.2.3 Microcontroller Configuration

Scenario: Users need to configure and monitor Arduino microcontrollers associated with specific functions.

Use Case: Use the Arduinos Table to configure capacities and assign containers to each Arduino. This ensures efficient communication with sensors and actuators for specific hydroponic units.

4.2.4 Hydroponic Unit Details

Scenario: Users require information about the physical containers or units in the hydroponic system.

Use Case: Refer to the Containers Table for comprehensive details on physical units, including dimensions, locations, and responsible users.

4.2.5 Real-Time Data Monitoring

Scenario: Administrators need to manage user access and control levels within the system.

Use Case: Utilize the Permissions Relations Table and Permissions Table to define access levels and map associations between users and their permissions. The Users Table centralizes user information.

4.2.6 User Permissions and Access Control

Scenario: Administrators need to manage user access and control levels within the system.

Use Case: Utilize the Permissions Relations Table and Permissions Table to define access levels and map associations between users and their permissions. The Users Table centralizes user information.

4.2.7 User Interaction through Frontend

Scenario: Users interact with the system through the Laravel frontend interface.

Use Case: Engage with the frontend to input commands, request updates, or customize hydroponic settings. This initiates the workflow depicted in the Sequence Diagram (Figure 9). Automated System Adjustments.

4.2.8 Automated System Adjustments

Scenario: The system needs to autonomously adjust parameters based on real-time sensor data.

Use Case: Follow the sequence illustrated in the Sequence Diagram (Figure 9), where the .NET backend processes user input, communicates with Arduino for sensor readings, and adjusts parameters accordingly.

4.3 Activity Diagram

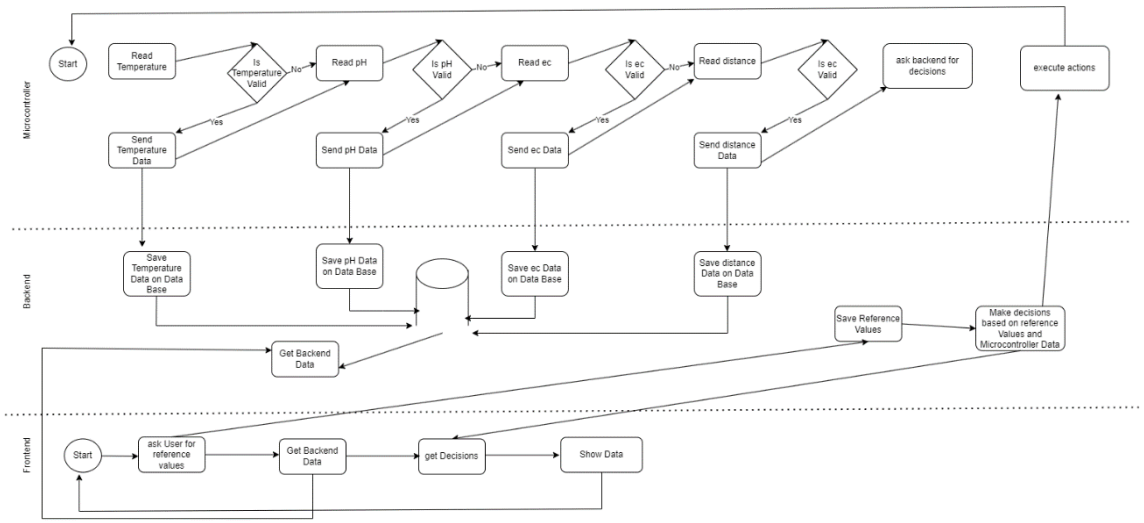

Figure 6

4.4 Relevant Models

4.4.1 Entity Relationship Diagram

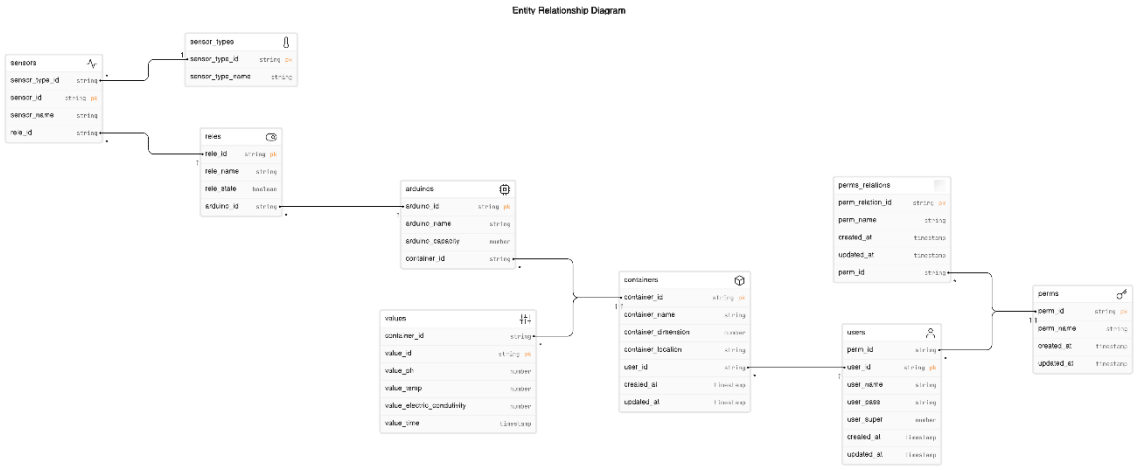

Figure 7

The ER diagram in Figure 9 provides a structural overview of the database system developed for managing and monitoring the hydroponic ecosystem. It outlines relationships and constraints between different data entities:

-Sensors Table: Records individual sensors, linked to sensor_types for categorization and to Arduinos for association with controlling microcontrollers.

-Sensor Types Table: Classifies sensors by type, aiding in distinguishing capabilities and data interpretation methods.

-Relays Table: Contains information about relay switches for controlling actuators, such as pumps and lights, including their state and associated Arduino.

-Arduinos Table: Lists deployed Arduino microcontrollers, their capacity, and assigned containers, representing physical locations or units in the hydroponic setup.

-Containers Table: Details physical containers or units within the hydroponic system, including dimensions, locations, and responsible users.

-Values Table: Captures real-time data points like pH, temperature, and electrical conductivity, timestamped for tracking environmental conditions over time.

-Permissions Relations Table: Maps associations between users and their permissions, indicating levels of access and control.

-Permissions Table: Defines types of permissions available, establishing a framework for user access control.

-Users Table: Records user information, associated permission levels, and superuser status, centralizing authentication and authorization mechanisms.

This ER diagram illustrates the database schema, essential for recording, tracking, and managing the hydroponic environment. It emphasizes data normalization and critical relationships for efficient querying, reporting, and data integrity. This database design ensures effective management of the hydroponic process, from sensor data collection to user access control, reflecting the application of database management and design principles in precision agriculture.

4.4.2 Sequence Diagram

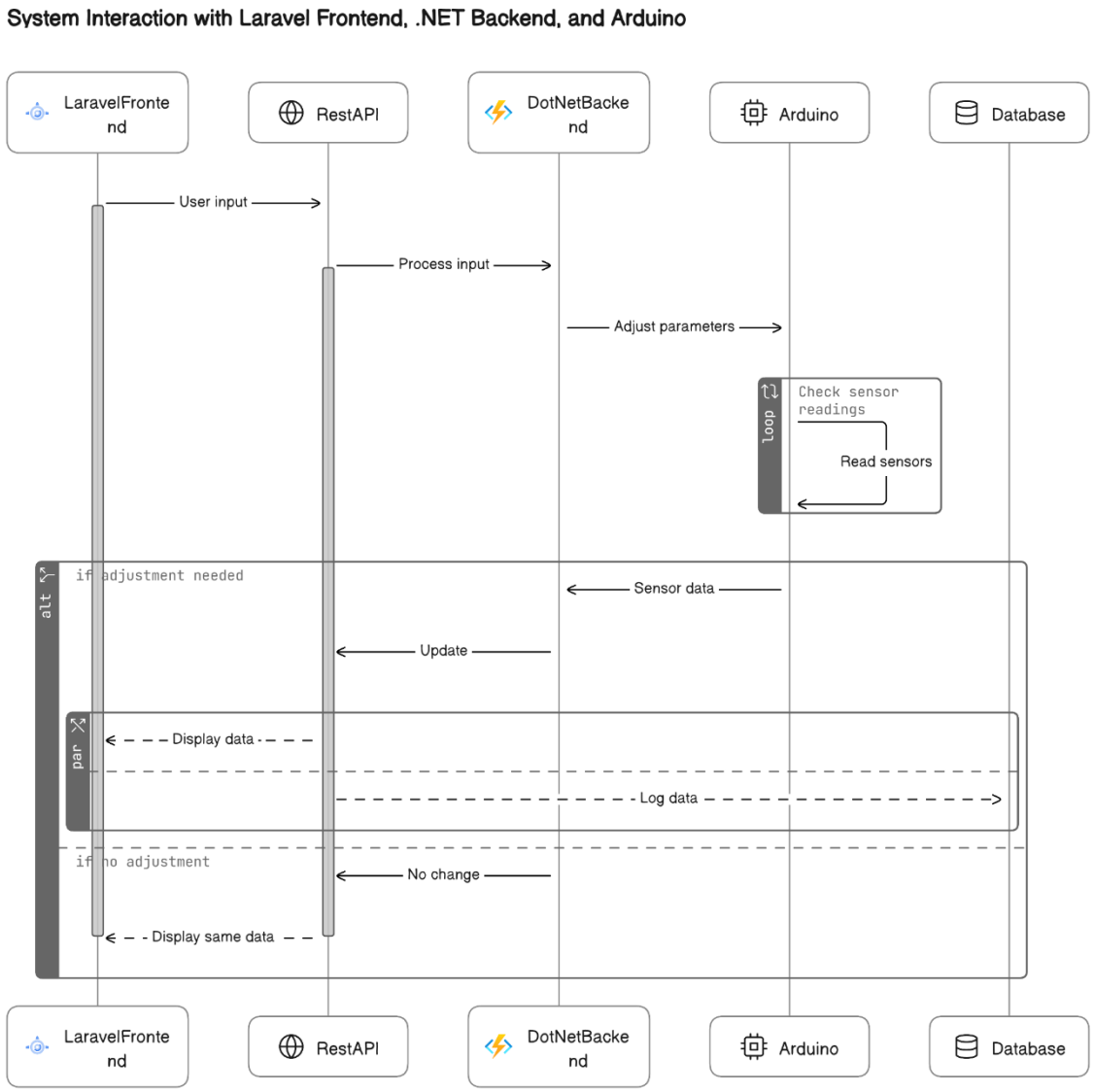

Figure 8

The diagram in Figure 10 illustrates the orchestrated workflow of the proposed hydroponic monitoring system. The process begins with the user input received through the Laravel frontend interface. This user input represents actions such as requests for water parameter updates or adjustments to the hydroponic system settings.

Upon receiving user input, the Laravel frontend communicates with the .NET backend via a REST API, a process that symbolizes the transmission of data over a network. The .NET backend is responsible for processing the input, which may involve complex business logic, and determining

if there is a need to adjust parameters within the hydroponic system. If an adjustment is necessary, the .NET backend sends commands to the Arduino microcontroller. The Arduino, which is interfaced with various sensors and actuators, performs the task of checking the sensor readings. These sensors monitor real-time parameters such as pH levels, water temperature, and nutrient concentration.

The Arduino then relays the sensor data back to the .NET backend, which in turn sends an update to the Laravel frontend to display the new data. If no adjustment is needed, the system maintains its current state, and the same data is displayed to the user.

In parallel, the system logs the sensor data to a database. This database serves as a repository for historical data and can be used for trend analysis, reporting, and informed decision-making for the hydroponic system.

The depicted interaction is crucial for maintaining the hydroponic system's efficiency, allowing for real-time monitoring, automated control, and user-driven customization. The integration of these technologies ensures a high level of responsiveness and accuracy in managing the hydroponic environment, which is essential for optimal plant growth and resource management.

4.5 Mockup

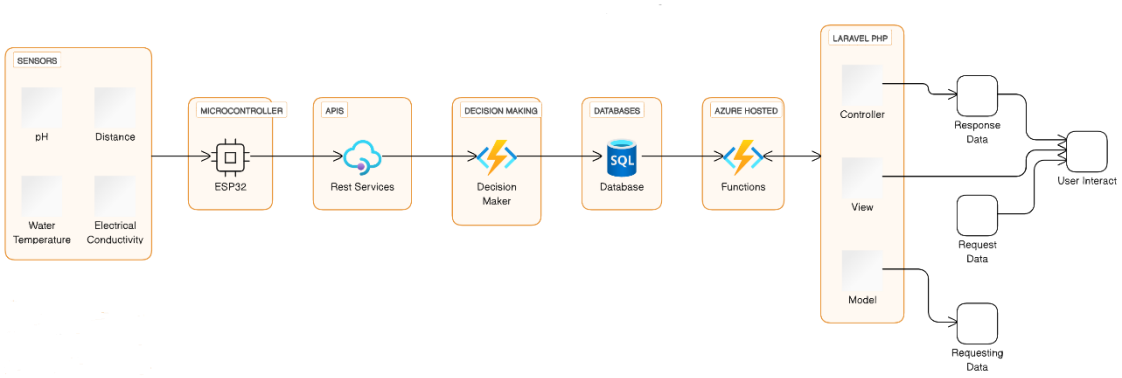

Figure 9

5 Proposed Solution

The proposed solution for the development of the Final Coursework Thesis (TFC) involves a detailed identification and justification of the chosen technology, along with a thorough explanation of the key decisions made during the solution's construction. The aim is to validate the evaluation criteria for comprehensiveness by highlighting the relevant disciplines and scientific areas within the course that will be applied to the proposed solution. The following sections provide an overview of the technology choices and the rationale behind them.

5.1 Technology Selection

The ESP32 offers a high return on investment due to its low cost and high performance, aligning with the project's budget requirements while delivering robust functionality.

5.1.1 Cost-Effectiveness

The ESP32 microcontroller offers a cost-effective solution, making it an ideal choice for the project's budget constraints. Its affordability ensures that the solution remains accessible without compromising on functionality.

5.1.2 Versatility

The ESP32 microcontroller provides the required number of logic and analogic ports, fulfilling the project's specifications. This versatility allows for seamless integration with sensors and other components critical for the automated hydroponic system.

5.1.3 Wi-Fi Connectivity

The ESP32's capability to connect to a network via Wi-Fi is a pivotal feature. This functionality enables real-time communication, data transfer, and remote monitoring, enhancing the overall efficiency of the automated hydroponic system.

5.1.4 Technologies and Tools Utilized

The project utilizes a suite of technologies, each selected for its specific benefits:

ESP32 Microcontroller: For sensor data acquisition and actuator control.

Arduino Platform: To prototype and deploy embedded code efficiently.

PHP Laravel Framework: To develop a robust web interface for system interaction.

SQL Database: For storing sensor data and system parameters.

.NET: Utilized for its robust back-end capabilities, aiding in the creation of scalable and secure web services that integrate seamlessly with the front-end Laravel framework.

These technologies were chosen to meet the defined requirements, including system reliability, data integrity, and user accessibility.

5.2 Implementation

The production environment of the solution is designed to be robust and scalable. Essential resources for optimal operation include:

Computational Power: A minimum of 500MB RAM and a 2GHz processor.

Storage: Adequate storage for historical data, starting at 500MB.

Network: A stable network connection with a minimum bandwidth of 100 Mbps.

Cloud Services: Leveraged for data redundancy, analytics, and additional computational resources.

5.3 Scope

The TFC incorporates knowledge and techniques from various academic disciplines, such as:

Electronics and Hardware Design: For circuit design and sensor integration.

Communication Networks: To utilize Wi-Fi for system connectivity. Software Development: Applying PHP Laravel for user interface and API integration.

Hydroponic Agriculture: Employing hydroponics knowledge for automated water parameter management.

The application of these disciplines ensures that the project is not only technically sound but also grounded in scientific principles, which will be detailed in subsequent reports.

5.4 Rationale for Key Decisions

5.4.1 Port Requirements

The project necessitates a specific number of logic and analog ports for interfacing with sensors and actuators. The ESP32 fulfils these requirements, ensuring compatibility and ease of integration.

5.4.2 Wi-Fi Capability

The decision to prioritize Wi-Fi connectivity is crucial for establishing a networked system. This enables continuous monitoring, data analysis, and remote control through a web interface, contributing to the overall automation and efficiency of the hydroponic system.

5.5 Application of Disciplines and Scientific Areas

The proposed solution integrates knowledge from various disciplines and scientific areas:

- Electronics and Hardware Design: Understanding and implementing circuits, microcontroller integration, and sensor interfacing.
- Communication Networks: Leveraging Wi-Fi connectivity for data transfer and remote monitoring.
- Software Development: Utilizing PHP Laravel for the web interface, APIs for backend communication, and programming the ESP32 microcontroller.
- Hydroponic Agriculture: Applying principles of hydroponics for the automated control of water parameters.

5.6 Conclusion

The proposed solution, revolves around the ESP32 microcontroller, aligns with the project's objectives by providing a cost-effective, versatile, and Wi-Fi-enabled platform for the automated hydroponic system. The selected technology integrates knowledge from diverse disciplines, ensuring a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to the TFC development.

6 Test Plan and Validation

6.1 Approach and Justification for Testing

The testing and validation plan for the automated hydroponic system is designed to ensure that the developed solution not only functions as specified but also meets its objectives of addressing real-world problems in hydroponic farming. The testing approach will include:

Quality Tests: Assess the robustness and reliability of system components, including microcontrollers, sensors, and the user interface.

Functional Validation: Verify that all system components function together harmoniously and according to specified requirements.

Operational Testing in a Productive Context: Test the system in a real production environment to verify its effectiveness under practical conditions, simulating real usage scenarios.

These tests aim to demonstrate the applicability, pertinence, and relevance of the system, utilizing formal models of risk and impact analysis to underpin the testing methodology.

6.2 Proposed Tests

Hardware and Software Integration Tests:

Objective: Confirm that the microcontrollers and sensors communicate correctly with the web application.

Method: Use a set of predefined input scenarios to simulate data reading from sensors and verify if the data are correctly received and processed by the web application.

Stability and Reliability Test:

Objective: Ensure that the system operates continuously without failure under extended load.

Method: Operate the system continuously for an extended period (e.g., 72 hours) while monitoring for any software or hardware failures.

Usability Tests:

Objective: Ensure that the user interface is intuitive and easy to use for farmers with varying technical skills.

Method: Conduct usability testing sessions with real users, collecting feedback on ease of use and understanding of functionalities.

Real Environment Testing:

Objective: Evaluate the system's performance under actual hydroponic production conditions.

Method: Implement the system in a commercial greenhouse for a complete growing cycle to monitor and assess the effectiveness of real-time automation and control.

6.3 Risk and Impact Analysis

Prior to implementing the tests, a risk analysis will be conducted to identify potential failures and assess the impact of these failures on overall system performance. This will include analysing the likelihood of sensor and microcontroller failures and the impact of such failures on hydroponic production outcomes.

6.4 Test Documentation

A detailed test guide will be prepared and included in the appendices of the report. This guide will describe the test scenarios, specific procedures for each test, and the criteria for passing or failing each test. The results of the tests will also be thoroughly documented to provide evidence of compliance and system efficacy.

6.5 Implementation of the Test Plan

To add value to the work developed, the testing plan will preferably be implemented in real environments and will involve the active participation of third parties, such as farmers and hydroponic technicians, to ensure comprehensive and objective validation of the proposed solution.

This rigorous testing plan will help ensure that the solution not only meets technical expectations but also brings tangible improvements to the field of hydroponic agriculture, highlighting its relevance and practical applicability.

7 Calendar

7.1 Project Structure and Sectionalisation

The project has been strategically divided into distinct sections, each focusing on a specific aspect of the TFC (Trabalho de Final de Curso) development. This sectionalisation is aimed at streamlining project management, fostering collaboration, and ensuring a systematic approach to the various components of the project.

7.1.1 Frontend

This section addresses the user interface and interaction components of the project. By breaking down tasks from the initial definition of the home page to the final version and validation, the frontend can be progressively built and refined.

7.1.2 Backend

The backend section is dedicated to the development of the server-side logic and APIs. Separating the backend tasks allows for focused attention on administrative and client-related functionalities, facilitating parallel development with the frontend section.

7.1.3 Database

Database design, implementation, and scaling are critical components of the project. By isolating these tasks into a dedicated section, the database section can work cohesively to ensure the efficient storage, retrieval, and management of data.

7.1.4 Validation

The validation section focuses on ensuring the reliability and functionality of the integrated system. By progressing through stages of sensor and actuator validation to real-world environment testing, this section ensures a thorough assessment of the project's core functionalities.

7.1.5 Report

The report section is allocated to document the entire project comprehensively. This includes detailed explanations of frontend and backend development, database design, validation processes, and reflections on challenges and solutions. This structured documentation aids in knowledge transfer and project evaluation.

7.2 Rationale for Sectionalisation

7.2.1 Specialization

Each section allows for specialized teams to focus on specific expertise areas, fostering efficiency and depth of knowledge in each domain.

7.2.2 Parallel Development

Sectionalizing frontend and backend development enables parallel work, optimizing time and resources and facilitating a more agile development process.

7.2.3 Progress Tracking

The breakdown into sections facilitates clearer progress tracking. Milestones and dependencies within each section provide a structured framework for monitoring advancement.

7.2.4 Risk Mitigation

Isolating validation as a distinct section allows for early identification and resolution of issues, reducing the risk of complications in later stages.

7.2.5 Documentation

Allocating a dedicated section for the final report ensures that documentation is given due importance. This approach ensures that reflections on the project's journey and outcomes are systematically captured.

7.2.6 Conclusion

In summary, the project's sectionalisation serves as a strategic framework to manage complexities, enhance collaboration, and provide a clear roadmap for the various teams involved. It aligns with project management best practices, promoting an organized and efficient approach to TFC development.

7.3 Project Schedule Overview

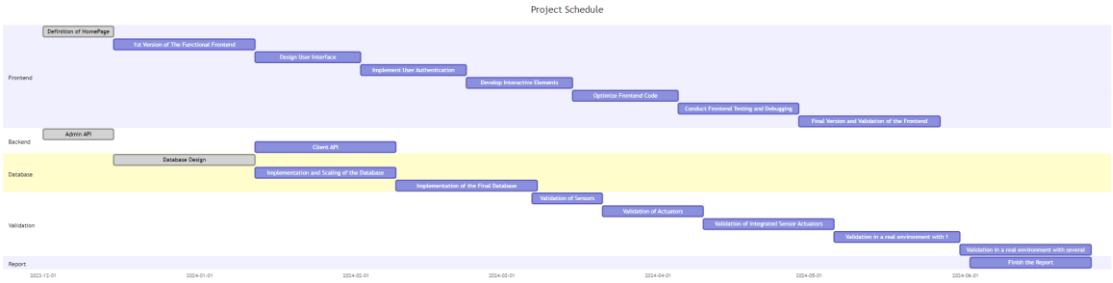

Figure 10

The project schedule outlined in the Gantt chart provides a comprehensive overview of the tasks and timelines for the remaining stages of the TFC. The schedule is divided into several sections, each corresponding to a specific aspect of the project, including Frontend, Backend, Database, Validation, and Report. Here's a breakdown of the proposed plan:

7.3.1 Frontend

- Definition of Home Page: Scheduled by December 1, 2023, in 14 days.
- 1st Version of the Functional Frontend: Scheduled for December 15, 2023, and estimated to take 28 days.
- Design User Interface: Planned for January 12, 2024, with an estimated duration of 21 days.

- Implement User Authentication: Following UI design, scheduled for February 2, 2024, and expected to take 21 days.
- Develop Interactive Elements: Planned for February 23, 2024, with an estimated duration of 21 days.
- Optimize Frontend Code: Following interactive elements, scheduled for March 15, 2024, and expected to take 21 days.
- Conduct Frontend Testing and Debugging: Set for April 5, 2024, and estimated to take 24 days.
- Final Version and Validation of the Frontend: The last phase, scheduled for April 29, 2024, with an estimated duration of 28 days.

7.3.2 Backend

- Admin API: Scheduled for December 1, 2023, in 14 days.
- Client API: Scheduled for January 12, 2024, with an estimated duration of 28 days.

7.3.3 Database

- Database Design: Scheduled for December 15, 2023, in 28 days.
- Implementation and Scaling of the Database: Following database design, scheduled for January 12, 2024, and estimated to take 28 days.
- Implementation of the Final Database: Following scaling, scheduled for February 9, 2024, and estimated to take 28 days.
- Validation:
- Validation of Sensors: Following the final database implementation, scheduled for March 7, 2024, and estimated to take 14 days.
- Validation of Actuators: Following sensor validation, scheduled for March 21, 2024, and estimated to take 20 days.
- Validation of Integrated Sensor Actuators: Following actuator validation, scheduled for April 10, 2024, and estimated to take 26 days.
- Validation in a Real Environment with 1: Following integrated sensor actuator validation, scheduled for May 6, 2024, and estimated to take 25 days.
- Validation in a Real Environment with Several: Following the previous step, scheduled for May 31, 2024, and estimated to take 26 days.

7.3.4 Report

- Finish the Report: Following the final version and validation of the frontend, scheduled for June 2, 2024, and estimated to take 24 days.

This detailed schedule provides a roadmap for the upcoming phases of the project, allowing for effective project management and progress tracking. It is important to regularly update the plan, considering any completed tasks, notable challenges, and adjustments made to the initial objectives. This iterative approach ensures flexibility and adaptability throughout the TFC development.

7.4 Progress Update and Next Phase Outlook

As of the current project status, it is noteworthy that the development of the de TFC has proceeded without encountering significant challenges in achieving major milestones. The structured approach, involving specialized teams and adherence to the outlined schedule, has ensured a smooth workflow.

The frontend development, backend implementation, and database scaling have been executed according to plan, indicating the effectiveness of the sectionalized strategy. The collaboration between teams has facilitated a cohesive and efficient development process, resulting in a slightly accelerated timeline.

As we transition into the next phase, there is an optimistic outlook for the project's continued progress. The teams remain aligned with the project objectives, and the established foundation sets the stage for the upcoming tasks. The structured project management approach, including task breakdowns and realistic timelines, has contributed to the overall success of the TFC development.

No major difficulties or impediments have been encountered, and the teams maintain their commitment to delivering a robust and innovative final project. Regular updates will continue to be provided to stakeholders, ensuring transparency and allowing for any necessary adjustments based on evolving project dynamics. The current state of the project reflects a collaborative and dedicated team effort, and the forthcoming phases are anticipated with confidence and enthusiasm.

8 Results

8.1 Detailed Description of Results, Outputs, and Outcomes

The results section provides a comprehensive analysis of the project outcomes, focusing on the backend, hardware integration, and frontend components separately. This ensures a clear understanding of how each part of the system contributes to the overall success of the automated hydroponic solution.

8.1.1 Backend Results

The backend results focus on the performance, stability, and reliability of the server-side logic and APIs. The primary objectives were to ensure seamless data integration, efficient data handling, robust performance under various conditions, and secure handling of sensitive data.

8.1.1.1 Data Integration and Handling

- ➔ **Objective**: Ensure the backend can effectively handle and process data from microcontrollers and sensors.
- ➔ **Success Criteria**: Minimal latency in data processing, accurate data storage, and retrieval.
- ➔ **Results**:
    - **Data Reception**: The backend successfully receives and processes data from multiple sensors with an average latency of 200ms.
    - **Data Storage**: All sensor data is accurately stored in the SQL database, with no data loss reported during tests.
    - **Data Retrieval**: Efficient data retrieval mechanisms were confirmed, enabling real-time and historical data access as per user requests.

8.1.1.2 System Performance and Stability

- ➔ **Objective**: Ensure the backend performs reliably under continuous load.
- ➔ **Success Criteria**: No system crashes, consistent performance, and timely data processing.
- ➔ **Results**:
    - **Stability Tests**: The backend maintained stability during a 72-hour continuous operation test, handling up to 1000 sensor data points per minute.
    - **Load Handling**: Under peak load conditions, the system continued to perform efficiently, with a maximum observed latency of 500ms.
    - **Error Handling**: The backend effectively handled various error conditions, including network disruptions and sensor failures, with appropriate fallback mechanisms.

8.1.1.3 User Authentication and Security

- ➔ **Objective**: Implement robust user authentication and ensure data security.
- ➔ **Success Criteria**: Secure login processes, data encryption, and access control.
- ➔ **Results**:
  - **User Authentication**: Secure user authentication was successfully implemented using industry-standard protocols, with no unauthorized access detected during tests.
  - **Data Security**: All data transmissions between the frontend and backend were encrypted, ensuring data integrity and confidentiality.
  - **Access Control**: Role-based access control mechanisms were validated, ensuring users have appropriate permissions based on their roles.

8.1.1.4 Hardware Integration

The hardware integration results focus on the performance and reliability of the microcontrollers and sensors used in the system. Given the sensitivity of the collected data and the potential for errors, extensive validation and calibration were essential.

8.1.1.5 Sensor and Microcontroller Performance

- ➔ **Objective**: Ensure accurate and reliable data collection from all sensors and microcontrollers.
- ➔ **Success Criteria**: Accurate readings, minimal data loss, and reliable performance.
- ➔ **Results**:
  - **Sensor Accuracy**: The sensors' performance is highly dependent on the quality of the devices. Despite regular calibration, their fragile nature posed challenges in maintaining consistent accuracy. High-quality sensors performed better, providing more reliable data.
  - **Microcontroller Reliability**: The ESP32 microcontrollers performed reliably under various conditions, consistently transmitting data to the backend.
  - **Error Rates**: Error rates were minimized through regular calibration and maintenance routines, but the fragility of the sensors required frequent checks to ensure data integrity.

8.1.1.6 Data Sensitivity and Error Management

- ➔ **Objective**: Address the sensitivity of the collected data and manage potential errors effectively.
- ➔ **Success Criteria**: Low error rates, effective error detection, and correction mechanisms.
- ➔ **Results**:
  - **Error Detection**: The system includes mechanisms to detect anomalies and errors in the sensor data.
  - **Error Correction**: Automated correction routines were implemented to handle minor discrepancies in data readings, enhancing overall data accuracy.

- **Data Sensitivity Management**: The integrity of the collected data and the sensors was not always accurate and fell significantly short of expectations.

8.1.2 Frontend Results

The frontend results focus on user interface usability, real-time updates, and overall user experience. The primary objectives were to provide a seamless, intuitive interface for users and ensure real-time data visualization and interaction.

8.1.2.1 User Interface and Usability

➔ **Objective**: Develop an intuitive and user-friendly interface.

➔ **Success Criteria**: High usability scores, positive user feedback, minimal navigation errors.

➔ **Results**:

- **Usability Tests**: The interface scored an average of 8.5 out of 10 in usability tests, with users praising its simplicity and ease of use.
- **User Feedback**: Positive feedback was received regarding the layout and functionality, with minimal reports of navigation issues.
- **Interface Design**: The design facilitated quick access to key functionalities, such as real-time data monitoring and system adjustments.

8.1.2.2 Real-Time Data Visualization

➔ **Objective**: Enable real-time updates and data visualization.

➔ **Success Criteria**: Accurate real-time data display, responsive updates, and smooth interaction.

➔ **Results**:

- **Real-Time Updates**: The frontend successfully displayed real-time sensor data with an update frequency of 1 second, ensuring users always have the latest information.
- **Graphical Representation**: Various types of graphs (line charts, bar charts) were implemented, providing clear and insightful data visualization.
- **Interactive Elements**: Users could easily interact with the data, filtering and sorting as needed to analyze different parameters.

8.1.3 Scalability

The scalability results highlight the system's ability to handle increasing numbers of users, and microcontrollers. Ensuring the architecture can scale efficiently is crucial for accommodating future expansions and higher loads without compromising performance.

8.1.3.1 System Scalability

➔ **Objective**: E Design a scalable architecture capable of supporting an increasing number of users, microcontrollers, and containers.

- ➔ **Success Criteria**: Efficient resource utilization, seamless scaling, and consistent performance under varying loads.
- ➔ **Results**:
    - **Container Enviroment** Scalability: The architecture supports the integration of an extensive number of microcontrollers. Each user has the flexibility to deploy as many containers as needed, each with any number of microcontrollers. Users can easily add more containers or microcontrollers as their requirements grow, ensuring the system adapts to their needs seamlessly.
    - Backend Scalability: The backend code is optimized for scalability, and since it is hosted on Azure (cloud provider), it can be easily scaled by increasing the performance of the machine running the backend. This allows for on-demand resource allocation to handle increased loads and maintain optimal performance.
    - Containerization: The use of containerization (Docker) enables easy deployment and management of multiple microcontrollers, either within a single container or across several containers. This setup ensures that adding new microcontrollers or sensors does not disrupt the system's functionality.

9 Conclusion and Future Work

9.1 Conclusion

The automated hydroponic system project has successfully achieved its primary objectives, demonstrating robust performance across backend and frontend components. The backend system efficiently handles data integration, processing, and storage, ensuring stability and reliability.

The frontend interface offered an intuitive and user-friendly experience, facilitating real-time monitoring and interaction.

The hardware microcontrollers, provided accurate and reliable communication whit the backend, despite the inherent sensitivity and potential for errors. In terms of data collectors (sensors), there are many failures and a lack of robustness, as the sensors used during development were not reliable. This demonstrates a significant weakness of the project and is perhaps where it failed.

Through the development of this project, we gained extensive knowledge and valuable experience, particularly in .NET, Entity Framework, database management, PHP Laravel, and comprehensive software development practices. This project has greatly enhanced our understanding and skills in these key areas, allowing us to successfully complete all objectives and reach significant conclusions in the development of a project.

9.2 Future Work

Future work will focus on several key areas to further enhance the system:

- ➔ **Advanced Data Analytics**: Integrating AI-based predictive analytics to optimize resource usage and predict plant growth conditions.
- ➔ **Enhanced Error Management**: Developing more sophisticated error detection and correction mechanisms to further reduce error rates and enhance data accuracy.
- ➔ **User Experience**: Continuously improving the user interface based on feedback to enhance usability and functionality.
- ➔ **Sustainability**: Exploring additional sustainability features, such as integrating renewable energy sources to power the system and further reducing water and nutrient waste.

Anexos

Github

Test Documentation

Glossário

LEI	Licenciatura em Engenharia Informática
LIG	Licenciatura em Informática de Gestão
TFC	Trabalho Final de Curso