# CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) action supports international cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of higher education. The activities and outcomes of CBHE projects must be geared to benefit the eligible third countries not associated to the Programme, their higher education institutions and systems. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement, this action supports the relevance, quality, modernisation and responsiveness of higher education in third countries not associated to the Programme in adressing socio-economic recovery, growth and prosperity and reacting to recent trends, in particular economic globalisation but also the recent decline in human development, fragility, and rising social, economic and environmental inequalities.

Strand–1 - Fostering access to cooperation in higher education

This Strand is aimed at attracting inexperienced Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and smaller-scale actors to participate in the CBHE action. Its goal is to facilitate the involvement of newcomer organizations, especially those with limited operational capacity in third countries not affiliated with the Programme. Through forming partnerships, these initiatives serve as initial steps for HEIs and organizations to access resources and support, enabling them to reach individuals with fewer opportunities. The financing provided focuses on small-scale projects that address the internationalization gap among HEIs in eligible third countries not associated with the Programme. These projects primarily target specific regions within these countries, aiming to bolster capacity where international cooperation opportunities may be scarce or where there's a pressing need for development.

1. **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from Least Developed Third Countries:**
   * These are educational institutions located in countries categorized as least developed, where resources and infrastructure for higher education may be limited.
   * HEIs in these countries often face challenges in terms of funding, infrastructure, faculty expertise, and access to international cooperation opportunities.
   * By targeting HEIs in these countries, the aim is to provide them with support and resources to enhance their capacity and international engagement.
2. **HEIs in Remote Regions/Areas of Third Countries:**
   * These are institutions located in geographically isolated or underdeveloped regions within third countries.
   * HEIs in such areas may face additional challenges due to limited access to resources, technology, and opportunities for collaboration.
   * Supporting HEIs in remote regions can help bridge the gap between urban and rural areas in terms of educational opportunities and access to international networks.
3. **Newcomers or Less Experienced HEIs and Faculties from Third Countries:**
   * These are newly established or less experienced higher education institutions and faculties in countries not associated with the Programme.
   * Newcomers may lack the experience, expertise, and resources to effectively engage in international cooperation projects.
   * Providing support to these newcomers can help them build their capacity, establish partnerships, and integrate into the international higher education community.
4. **Students and Staff with Fewer Opportunities:**
   * This category encompasses individuals within HEIs who face socio-economic, geographical, or other barriers to accessing higher education opportunities.
   * Students and staff with fewer opportunities may include those from marginalized communities, low-income backgrounds, rural areas, or with disabilities.
   * Targeting support towards these individuals aims to promote inclusivity, diversity, and equity within higher education institutions and enhance their participation in international cooperation activities.

Activities The proposed activities and project results should have a clear added-value for the targeted beneficiaries. A nonexhaustive list of possible activities is provided below:

Activities aimed at bolstering the management and administrative capabilities of targeted Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) encompass various initiatives:

1. **Modernizing University Governance:**
   * Restructuring and updating governance frameworks within HEIs to ensure efficient decision-making and transparency.
   * Enhancing services dedicated to student welfare, such as improving guidance, counseling, and career orientation programs to support their holistic development.
2. **Strengthening International Relations Offices:**
   * Establishing new or reinforcing existing offices specialized in managing international relations within HEIs.
   * Developing comprehensive strategies for internationalization to foster collaborations, partnerships, and exchange programs on a global scale.
3. **Developing Quality Assurance Systems:**
   * Establishing robust quality assurance units or refining existing ones within HEIs to uphold educational standards.
   * Implementing effective processes and strategies to ensure the delivery of high-quality education and services, enhancing institutional accountability and continuous improvement.
4. **Enhancing Planning and Evaluation Mechanisms:**
   * Strengthening units responsible for planning and evaluating academic programs and institutional initiatives.
   * Providing training and resources to staff members, along with developing tools and methodologies for data collection and analysis to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.
5. **Improving Communication and Dissemination Channels:**
   * Enhancing mechanisms for sharing information and disseminating outcomes from international cooperation projects.
   * Developing targeted communication strategies and platforms to amplify the visibility, transparency, and impact of international initiatives both within the HEI and the wider community.
6. **Capacity Building for Mobility Support:**
   * Developing resources and infrastructure to facilitate mobility opportunities for both students and staff within the HEI.
   * Establishing dedicated support services such as advisory and logistical assistance to ensure seamless mobility experiences and promote internationalization and cross-cultural exchange.

Activities aiming at ensuring high quality and relevant education such as:

1. **Developing Tailored Modules and Study Programs:**
   * Crafting new modules and study programs with specialized technical or professional orientations to address emerging industry demands and educational requirements.
   * Tailoring curriculum content to reflect current advancements and trends in respective fields, equipping students with practical skills and knowledge necessary for success.
2. **Creating Intensive Study Programs:**
   * Establishing intensive study initiatives that bring together students and faculty from diverse HEIs for brief yet immersive study periods.
   * Providing platforms for collaborative projects, cultural exchange, and experiential learning to enrich participants' academic and personal development.
3. **Empowering Postgraduate Students and Academic Staff:**
   * Enhancing support for postgraduate students and academic staff, including resources for research endeavors, professional growth, and mobility opportunities.
   * Promoting mobility initiatives to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and exposure to diverse perspectives and methodologies.
4. **Implementing Targeted Training Programs for HEI Academic Staff:**
   * Delivering specialized training courses and workshops tailored to the unique needs of academic staff, augmenting their pedagogical skills, research acumen, and professional competencies.
   * Offering continuous learning opportunities to ensure faculty members remain abreast of cutting-edge pedagogical approaches and disciplinary advancements.
5. **Fostering Synergies with the Business Sector and Other Organizations:**
   * Cultivating strategic partnerships and collaborations with the business sector, private enterprises, and public entities engaged in labor markets, education, training, and youth development.
   * Facilitating joint endeavors such as internships, research endeavors, and curriculum co-development to bridge the gap between academia and industry, enhancing the relevance and applicability of education to real-world contexts.
   * Strengthening connections with pertinent stakeholders to ensure educational programs are aligned with industry requisites, promoting entrepreneurial initiatives, and facilitating seamless transitions from education to professional spheres.

Activities aiming at increasing the accessibility of the students/staff with fewer opportunities such as:

1. **Establishing Remote and Inclusive Learning Pathways:**
   * Creating pathways and opportunities for remote and inclusive learning experiences, leveraging digital technology and e-learning platforms.
   * Providing accessible and flexible education options for vulnerable students, ensuring they can participate regardless of their physical location or personal circumstances.
2. **Enhancing Digital Technology for Students with Disabilities:**
   * Updating digital infrastructure and services to develop specialized resources and accommodations that ensure equal learning opportunities for students with disabilities.
   * Implementing assistive technologies, accessible design principles, and inclusive features to remove barriers and enhance accessibility for all learners.
3. **Promoting Initiatives for Diversity and Inclusion:**
   * Launching initiatives aimed at positive discrimination, specifically targeting the empowerment of women, as well as ethnic and religious minorities.
   * Implementing programs, scholarships, mentorship opportunities, and support services designed to address historical inequalities and promote diversity within the educational landscape.
4. **Addressing Barriers Faced by Disadvantaged Groups:**
   * Developing initiatives that specifically target and reduce barriers faced by disadvantaged groups in accessing educational opportunities.
   * Identifying and addressing systemic challenges such as financial constraints, lack of resources, geographic isolation, and societal biases that hinder equitable access to education.
5. **Contributing to Inclusive Environments:**
   * Playing a role in creating inclusive environments within educational institutions that prioritize equity, equality, and responsiveness to community needs.
   * Implementing policies, practices, and resources that foster a sense of belonging, respect diversity, and accommodate the unique needs of all learners.
   * Collaborating with stakeholders to identify and address gaps in inclusivity, promoting a culture of empathy, understanding, and support within the wider community.