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The Report on Dangara State University preparedness for future challenges

Dangara State University, Tajikistan

Triggering innovative approaches and entrepreneurial skills for students through creating conditions
for graduate's employability in Central Asia



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1. Introduction

This Report on HEI preparedness for future challenges at DANGARA STATE UNIVERSITY serves as a basic document for further work on the project “Triggering innovative approaches, entrepreneurial skills and attitudes in HEI learners through creating the favourable conditions for graduate’s employability in Central Asia” (TRIGGER) outputs preparation. The assessment is based on the HEInnovate tool - a free self-assessment tool for all types of HEIs, which is an initiative of the European Commission, DG Education and Culture and the OECD LEED Forum. Generally, it is intended for HEIs which are interested in assessing themselves against a number of statements related to the entrepreneurial and innovative nature of their higher education environment. The Report provides the first practical inside to eight areas:

1. Leadership and Governance.
2. Organizational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives.
3. Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning.
4. Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs.
5. Digital Transformation and Capability.
6. Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration.
7. The Internationalised Institution.
8. Measuring Impact.

The strength and weaknesses of HEI are identified and suggestions for strength support and weakness overcoming prepared.

The self-assessment of HEI was carried out from 4/19/2021.to 5/25/2021. The respondents included top management of the university, teachers, researchers, professional and support staff.

Altogether more than 85 respondents used HEInnovate tool.

D1.2. The Report on HEI preparedness for future challenges

General comments: Please provide average number for the period from 2016 to 2020. All questions are for the period 2020-2021, if not specified differently.

The Report on Dangara State University, Tajikistan preparedness for future challenges

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| b) Researchers | 320 |
| c) Non Academic Staff | 300 |

Budget of your University (in millions of Euros)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Total | 2233040,061 (21.06.2021) |
| b) From Private Sector | 2143718,458 (21.06.2021) |
| c) From Public Sector | 89321,60243 (21.06.2021) |
| d) For Research Activities | 558260,0152 (21.06.2021) |
| e) For International Operations | 55826,00152 (21.06.2021) |

How does your **Institution Rank** (# GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL RANK)?

The organization has no international ranking yet, but we aim to be ranked in the future.

Type of Institution

- a) Private Institution
- b) Public institution Yes**
- c) Mixed
- d) Other (please specify)

Is your organization certified for **Quality Assurance**? Yes. Agency for Supervision in the Field of Education and Science under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, which is responsible to conduct Accreditation and Attestation of the University and external quality assurance in all educational institutions in the Republic Tajikistan, that's every 5 Years. DSU was successfully certified for Quality Assurance in 2020.

Is training regularly offered to **service providers/technical staff** in the following areas:

Staff week: Professional development course for employees on a regular basis, 1 time in 4 years by the Institute for professional development of employees of HEI. End the end of the courses the staff will get diploma.

Leadership: Leadership training courses are conducted by various projects.

What percentage of your staff members have participated in **staff training opportunities** organized abroad in the last 2 years? - 2%, Staff of the University in 5 training/seminars abroad: Technical University of Dresden, Germany (4 people 2018-2019), Varna University of Economics, Bulgaria (1

person 2021), Technical University of Košice, Slovakia (2 people 2022), Cod Azur University, Nice, France (4 people 2022), Academia WSB University, Dabrowa, Poland (1 person 2022).

Does your institution have an **identity, or a brand**? DSU has got a distinguishable logo (www.dsu.tj). DSU is explained as follows: D-destination, S-success and U-universal-passion in education, work and life.

Is there a **Marketing and Communication** Plan in force at your institution? The university has a marketing and communication plan in place, which is frequently updated by the “council of scientists”.

Do you have a **marketing and communication office**? – Yes, the position of designer-referent of official correspondence functioning at the University, which provides services for the preparation and publication of promotional leaflets, banners, textbooks and other educational materials. This position also manages the electronic communication (webpage, Facebook).

Who/What office is responsible for **internal communication**? – Vice Rector of Academic Affairs and Quality Management Education, Vice Rector of Innovation and Distance Education and Vice-Rector of International Relations and Academic Mobility are responsible of it.

Who/What office or department is responsible for **external communication**? - Vice-Rector of International Relations and Academic Mobility and Faculty of Eurasia and International Relations.

Who/What office or department is responsible for **international communication**? - Vice-Rector of International Relations and Academic Mobility.

Regarding **your website**, do you consider that:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| a) The design is attractive | Yes, but improving |
| b) The information is well structured | No, the in information are not clear in English |
| c) The information is clear | No, the in information are not clear in English |
| d) The information is objective | Yes |

What **social networks** do you use to promote your institution?

- | | |
|-------------|---------|
| a) Facebook | Yes |
| b) Other | Youtube |

Do you have printed/electronic versions of your **brochures, guides**, etc.? - Yes, promotional leaflet of the University's specialties in Tajik, Russian, Uzbek and English languages. Also, the listed materials are placed electronically on website of the University.

Do you have **merchandise for sale** on campus?

- a) Only on campus - Yes, at the University the center of "Mudi Chamanoro" produces various products, such as small shirts, satin, adras, lace with national decorations. Product samples are given to guests as gifts, as well as sold by pre-order.

In your opinion, describe activities (up to 3) that were implemented in the last few years with relevant **marketing and communication impact**.

1. Fair for the sale of books in conjunction with the famous typography of Tajikistan
2. Fair demonstration and sale of models, handicrafts, pictures, etc.
3. Development and provision of various projects in the field of entrepreneurship, education and science to attract investments.

A Facebook profile of the University has been established, which has almost 12000, members and the role of the channel is to promote the university and give information about its services.

4. Education

Total number of students in your institution (specify number of International Students):

- Bachelor 11254 (505 international students from Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan)
- Master 287
- PhD Currently, the university has established a PhD degree in cooperation with other HEI and branch institutions, and 15 employees are enrolled. In the next year (2023), the organization of the PhD level in 3 specialties is planned.

Total Number of study programs (specify number of programs in English)

- a) Bachelor 74 (3 in English)
- b) Master 13
- c) PhD At the moment the University has not a curriculum education, in the next year (2023), the organization of the PhD level in 3 specialties is planned

There is the possibility to establish double degree programs, joint degree programs in the future.

Accreditation of your study programmes

What % of your programs are **accredited by international organizations** – The accreditation process has started but not finished yet. A self-assessment report for institutional accreditation has been

presented to the European company EKKA. The process is supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan and the World Bank.

Mobility indicators (all mobility programs in the last 5 years)

	Incoming	Outgoing
Number of students	-	6
Number of teachers/professors	12	52
Number of non-academic staff	-	-
Number of international student traineeships	-	-

Offer of **free online courses/ MOOCs**. – DSU have a free course for international students who are studying in DSU. DSU organized a free online-seminar-course for teachers/trainers from Ukraine and Poland.

Offer of **summer schools or short training courses** (for staff or students). – Yes, German course around the program Praxx and Logo.

Offer of **new pedagogical models** (ICT/E-learning/Distance Learning) for students – at the University created a model of alumni (specialist). Internship department, work with employers and young professionals.

Alumni network and how it works (the activities in which alumni network is involved). – At the moment, the university has a special center called “Practice and Career Development Department”. For the future, we aim to implement a mechanism to improve communication with alumni.

The **database of companies** and **other institutions** interested in education provision and /or taking interns. – DSU has a database of the enterprises of the “Free Economic Zone of Dangara”, for which the Department of Free Labour Exchange is responsible.

5. Research and Innovation

Number of Research Units

Research fellowships (average number for the whole period) Currently, the University does not have Research fellowships.

Innovation indicators

The number of national patent applications is 15. Currently there are no international patent applications and no spin-offs.

6. International cooperation and internationalisation

Number of signed bilateral/multilateral **international agreements**.

Number of **international networks** in which the institution is involved – more than 30 HEI, including National University of Water and Environmental Engineering, Rivne, Ukraine; Politechnika Lubelska University, Lublin, Poland; Economic University of Varna, Bulgaria, Technical University of Košice, Slovakia.

Number of **grants available for international students** (average number for the whole period).

Scholarships are awarded by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan to foreign students.

The representatives of **international affairs in the Managing Board** (Board of Directors) – Vice-Rector of International Relations and Academic Mobility and Head of the Department of International Relations and Management of Grant Projects.

International activities management model:

Management of international activities is carried out through the Department of Foreign Relations and Academic Mobility of DSU within the scope of projects.

Rate your internal infrastructures and how they reflect your **level of internationalization**

- a) On campus English Signage – No
- b) On campus Help Desk – Yes
- c) Internal Communication in English – Yes, but will be improved in the future.
- d) University Newsletter or Magazine – Yes (Amri Vaqt)
- e) Merchandise Shop – No

The transparent **grading system**: formal document in **English** explaining the system

Numerical expression of scores		Literal expression of scores	Expression of points as a percentage	The traditional expression of assessment	
				With number	Rating according to the traditional system by letter
4,00	10	A	95-100	5	Excellent
3,67	9	A-	90-94		
3,33	8	B+	85-89	4	Good
3,00	7	B	80-84		
2,67	6	B-	75-79		
2,33	5	C+	70-74	3	Satisfactory
2,00	4	C	65-69		
1,67	3	C-	60-64		
1,33	2	D+	55-59		
1,00	1	D	50-54		
0,00	0	F _x	45-49	2	Unsatisfactory
0,00	0	F	0-44		

7. Informatisation

Do you have an **institutional information system**? Please choose all that apply and provide a comment on how it works:

The university uses Moodle as learning management system (www.moodle.org).

Is your **International Strategy** and annual objectives discussed throughout the University community?
– Yes, organization of clubs for intellectual development of students and preparing them to participate in international level Olympiads and achieve success in this process (no less than the 3rd place in the subject they participated in).

Is Internationalization formally **acknowledged** in your institutions Strategic Plan? – Yes

Do you have a minimum **English language requirement**? – Yes, Knowledge of English is one of the main requirements for the position competition.

Has there been a **formal restructuring** of your organization resulting from the internationalization process? This can be taken into consideration for further improvement.

Does your organization have **criteria for international partnerships/protocols**? – Yes, the growth of international students, the university's partnership with prestigious universities in other countries and

the gradual participation of university staff in international cooperation projects and mobility programs testifies to the development of international cooperation at the university.

Do you have **bilingual forms** or other important documents (national language and English)?

- a) Application Forms – Yes (DSU has in Tajik and Russian languages)
- b) Transcripts
- c) Diploma or Diploma Supplement

Is the **funding allocated to international operations** in agreement with the internationalization strategy? – No

In your opinion, what would be the single most important **change/improvement** to your **internationalization model**? The Development program of the university considers changing the name of the University to “International University of Leadership” in the next 5 years (2022-2027).

Select the **internationalization activities** that your institution focuses at:

Internationalization activities include:

- Academic staff mobility
- Bilateral or multilateral cooperation
- International traineeship
- Participation in international university networks
- Strategic partnerships
- Study programs in other foreign languages
- International research activities

Do you offer **free online courses/ MOOC** in English? – No, but DSU offers free Tajik course for international students.

Do you offer summer schools or short training courses **in English or other foreign language**? – Yes, English, German and Chinese courses.

Does your institution offer **new pedagogical models** (ICT/E-learning/Distance Learning) for **international students**? – Yes, Distance Learning. This approach to the formation of working curricula allows the university to develop and successfully adapt already established scientific and pedagogical schools in a rapidly changing environment, as well as make the most of the available information and library resources and educational and laboratory facilities.

Do your students have access to a **multinational work environment** at some period/time, during their academic path (e.g. job shadowing in an international company) – No.

In **how many languages** is your institution website available?

In more than two languages: Tajik, Russian and partly in English.

Which internal service(s) are focused and responsible for **international promotion**? Department of International Relations and Academic Mobility.

Do you have programs to encourage **international visibility** (e.g. Ambassador's Program)? – Within different projects professors/teachers visited foreign universities (e.g., in Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Frances, Italy, Slovakia)

Please indicate NUMBER, from 2016, in how many of the following **events** your institution participated:

a) International fairs – 5 (Ukraine 2016, 2018 and 2020)

d) International Days organized by your partners – 2

Do you participate in any **twinning programme**?

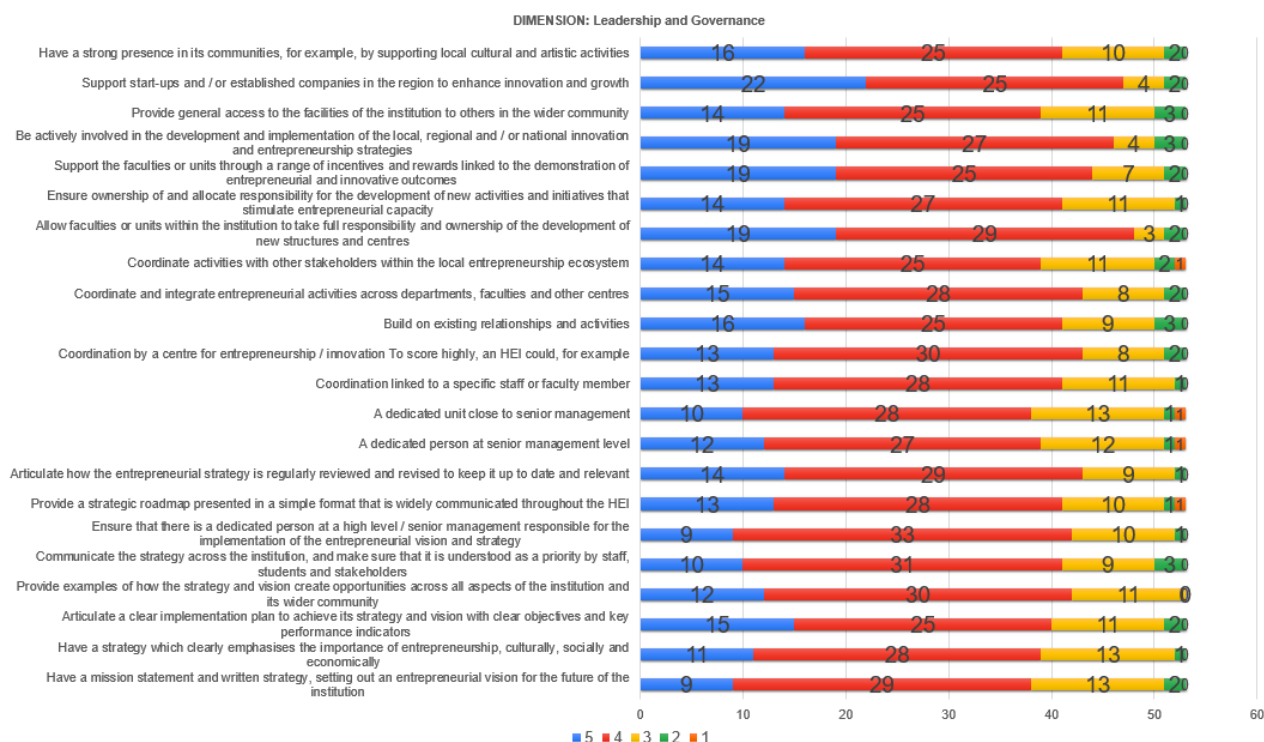
University employees did not participate in the twinning program.

Do you have electronic versions of your brochures, guides, etc. in any **foreign language**? – Yes, Student handbook - travel guide in Tajik and Russian languages (Guideline). The university is planning to translate the student handbook to English.

8. Self- assessment of dimensions based on HEINNOVATE

DIMENSION: Leadership and Governance

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.



1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

Please indicate at least 3 measures to be taken by your HEI.

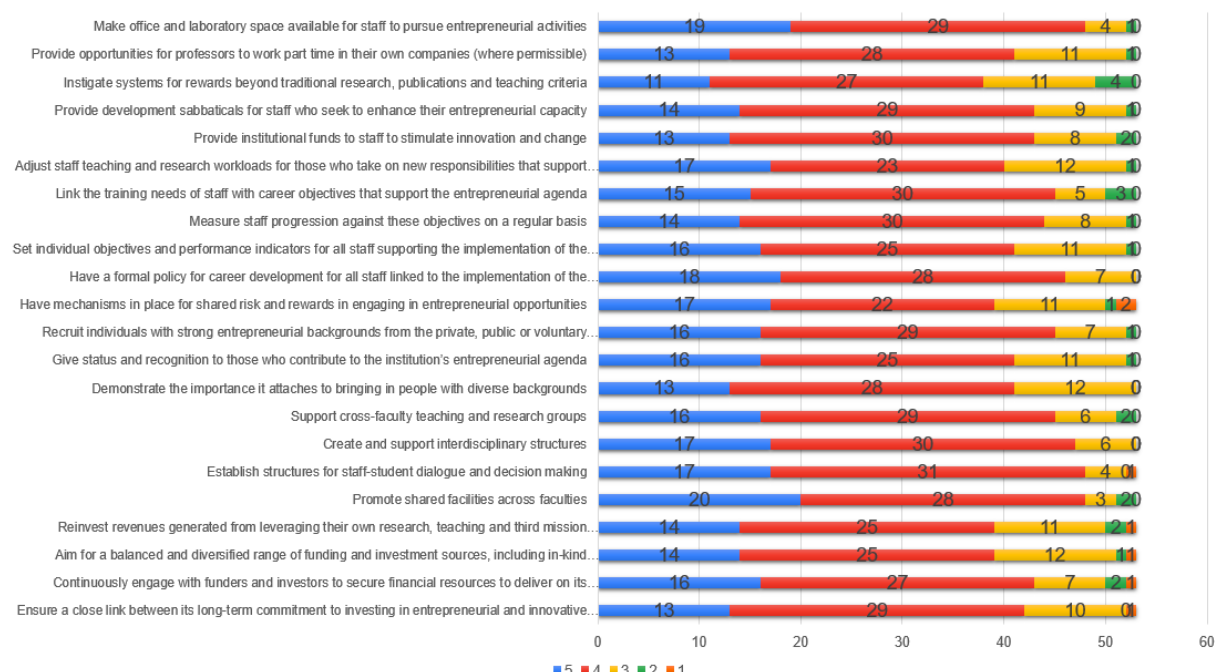
- A dedicated unit close to senior management.
- Support the faculties or units through a range of incentives and rewards linked to the demonstration of entrepreneurial and innovative outcomes
- Support start-ups and / or established companies in the region to enhance innovation and growth

DIMENSION: Organisational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.

1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high

DIMENSION: Organisational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives



0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

Improving the organisational capacity of HEIs would positively affect their capacity to generate societal and economic value. This dimension highlights the roles of HEIs beyond teaching and research, incorporating entrepreneurship and innovation, social outreach and contributions to their respective ecosystems.

For the HEIs has the capacity and culture to build new relationships and synergies across the institution, for the HEI is open to engaging and recruiting individuals with entrepreneurial attitudes, behavior and experience and for the HEI invests in staff development to support its entrepreneurial agenda were marked highly by academic staff.

Please indicate at least 3 measures to be taken by your HEI.

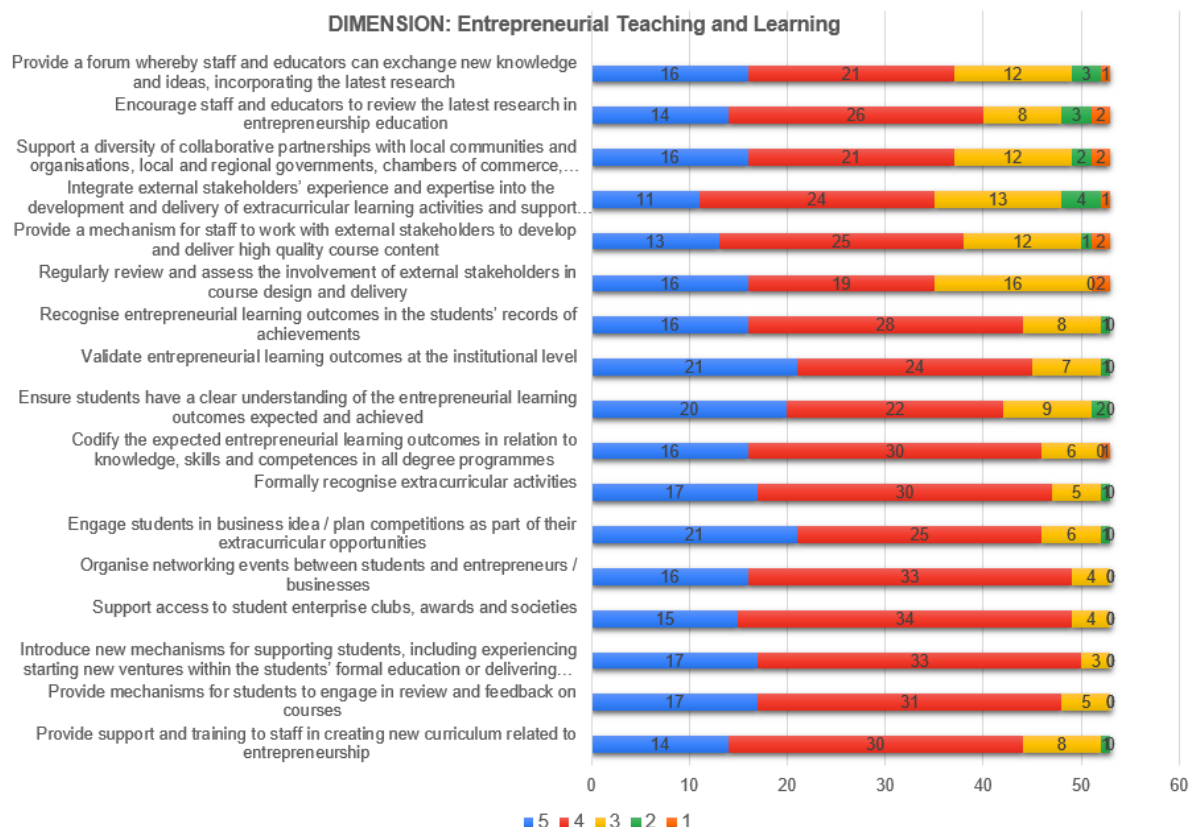
- The university administration should create structures for communication between employees and students, as well as for joint decision-making
- People with strong entrepreneurial experience should be recruited from the private sector, public or voluntary sectors
- Key performance indicators should be set for all employees who support the implementation of the business program

DIMENSION: Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.

Interest in entrepreneurship education is growing over the world. However, we know rather little about the outcomes of entrepreneurship education, in particular with respect to which type of course content produces the best results (i.e. most high performing entrepreneurs) and how this affects different types of students.

There is a great variety of different views in the field of research concerning the content and structure of entrepreneurship courses, but no comprehensive study has yet been done in which these competing views are clearly articulated as rivals and tested against each other. There is also a lack of program evaluations. Therefore, the assessment of DSU staff regarding evaluation of Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning processes is highly marked. Despite the fact that this process get high scores from the respondents, actually entrepreneurial education is taught not in whole university.



1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

As a result of survey is entrepreneurship has a special position in economic relations, in which it reflects the attitude and adoption of non-standard and innovative decisions. It is clear that not everyone can do business. Because this business requires special characteristics of behavior, thinking, the presence of certain skills from the entrepreneur. A true entrepreneur is a strong person who understands the business environment very well and has the skills to make operational and economic decisions.

Please indicate at least 5 measures to be taken by your HEI.

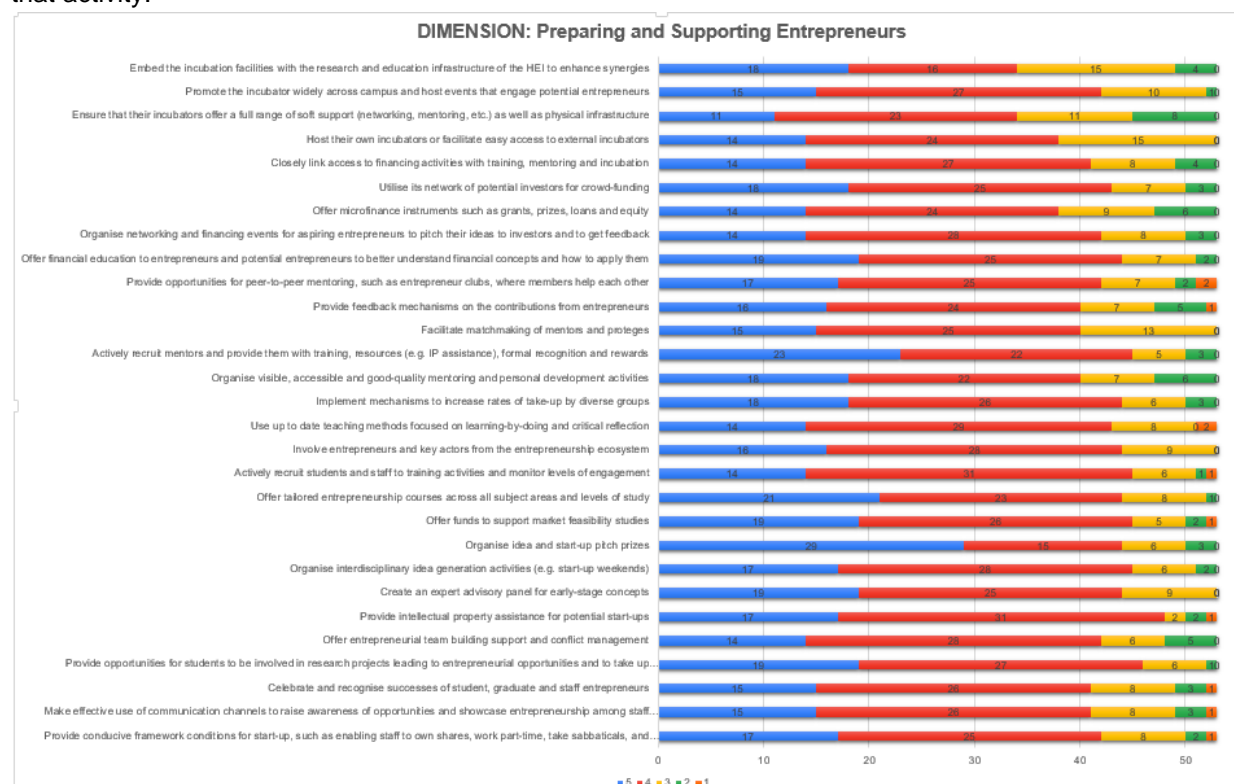
- Support curriculum change to stimulate and develop entrepreneurial mindsets and skills through new pedagogies, student-centered, cross-disciplinary and practice-based learning (e.g. living labs, the use of case studies, games and simulation)
- Provide support and training to staff in creating new curriculum related to entrepreneurship
- Introduce new mechanisms for supporting students, including experiencing starting new ventures within the students' formal education or delivering entrepreneurship education with practicing entrepreneurs

- Support access to student enterprise clubs, awards and societies
- Organize networking events between students and entrepreneurs / businesses

DIMENSION: Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.

Here will be discussed the performance of the higher education system in the HEInnovate dimension “preparing and supporting entrepreneurs”. Students and faculty that engage with entrepreneurship could receive more recognition in the higher education system. At the level of HEIs there is lack of initiatives that could be put in place. However, the diagram shows another picture, the Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs marked highly. University is able to promote the incubator widely, provide opportunities for monitoring, implement the mechanisms to increase rates and to provide conditions for that activity.



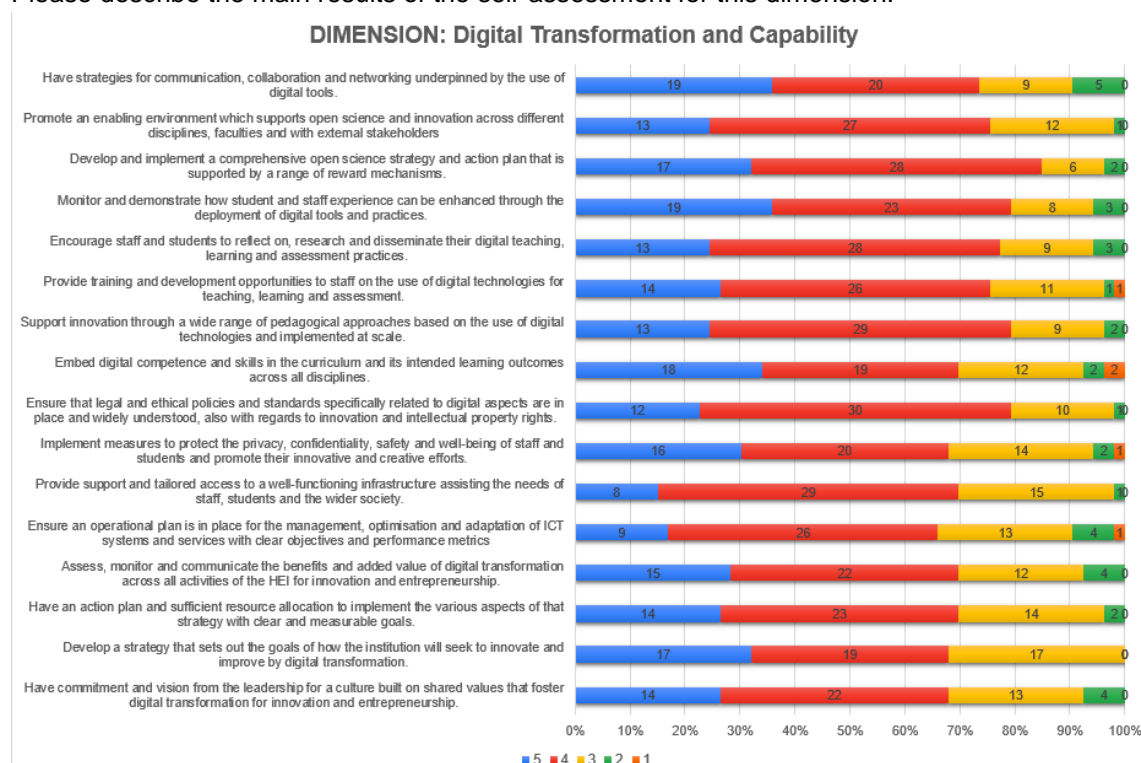
1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

Please indicate at least 3 measures to be taken by your HEI.

- Offer funds to support market feasibility studies
- Closely link access to financing activities with training, mentoring and incubation
- Embed the incubation facilities with the research and education infrastructure of the HEI to enhance synergies

DIMENSION: Digital Transformation and Capability

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.



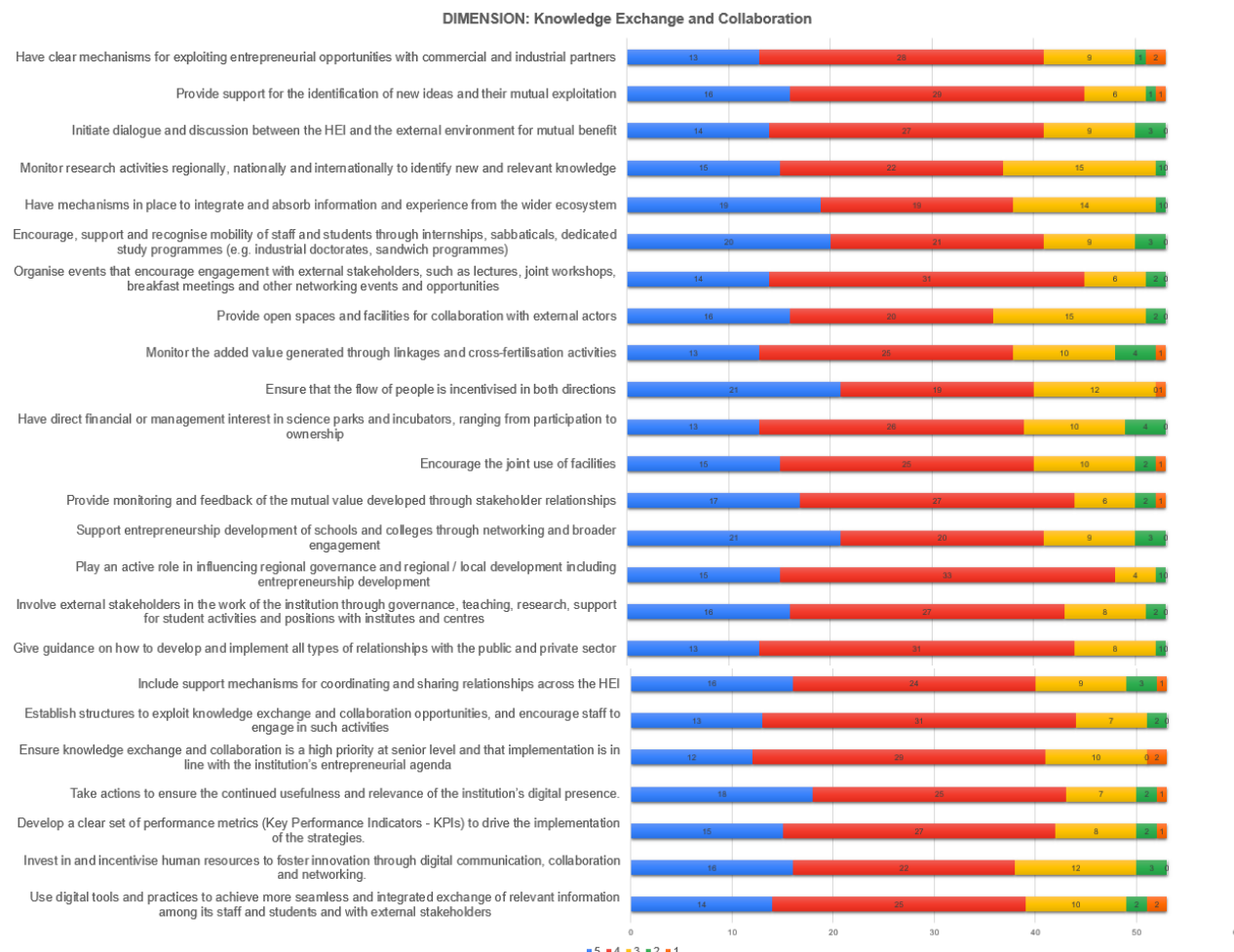
1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

Despite the fact that the university is attempting to greater engagement with digital technology to provide opportunities for innovative curriculum design and delivery, new model pedagogies, learning processes and assessment methods, the university staff and students are still missing digital competence and skills, which are crucial today for every aspect of life.

- Provide training and professional development opportunities for staff to use digital technologies in teaching, learning, and assessment.
- Ensure that an operational plan is in place to manage, optimize, and adapt ICT systems and services with clear goals and performance metrics.
- Support innovation through a wide range of pedagogical approaches that digitally based and implemented at the appropriate level.
- Incorporate digital competencies and skills into the curriculum and intended learning outcomes for all disciplines.
- Take steps to protect the privacy, confidentiality, safety, and well-being of staff and students and to foster their innovative and creative efforts.
- Encourage staff and students to analyze, explore, and disseminate their own digital methods of teaching, learning, and assessment.

DIMENSION: Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.



1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

Employers, ie individuals and legal entities applying to the Exchange, can belong to the following groups: industrial enterprises (regardless of their form of ownership), organizations and agencies, general and vocational education institutions, rural communities, dehqan farms, public associations. Limited time, companies and individual entrepreneurs, as well as any citizen who has applied to the relevant management structure of the Exchange for a set of works and has signed a mutual agreement.

1. Involve external stakeholders in the work of the institution through governance, teaching, research, support for student activities and positions with institutes and centres;
2. Organise events that encourage engagement with external stakeholders, such as lectures, joint workshops, breakfast meetings and other networking events and opportunities;

3. Work directly with Technopark built by Free Economic Zone of Dangara where students can internship and at the same time work in company/enterprises;

DIMENSION: The Internationalised Institution

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.



1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

For the recognition of the University, clearly the most important part plays the explicit support of its staff and students in their international mobility, while the university should strengthen its efforts to attract international and entrepreneurial staff.

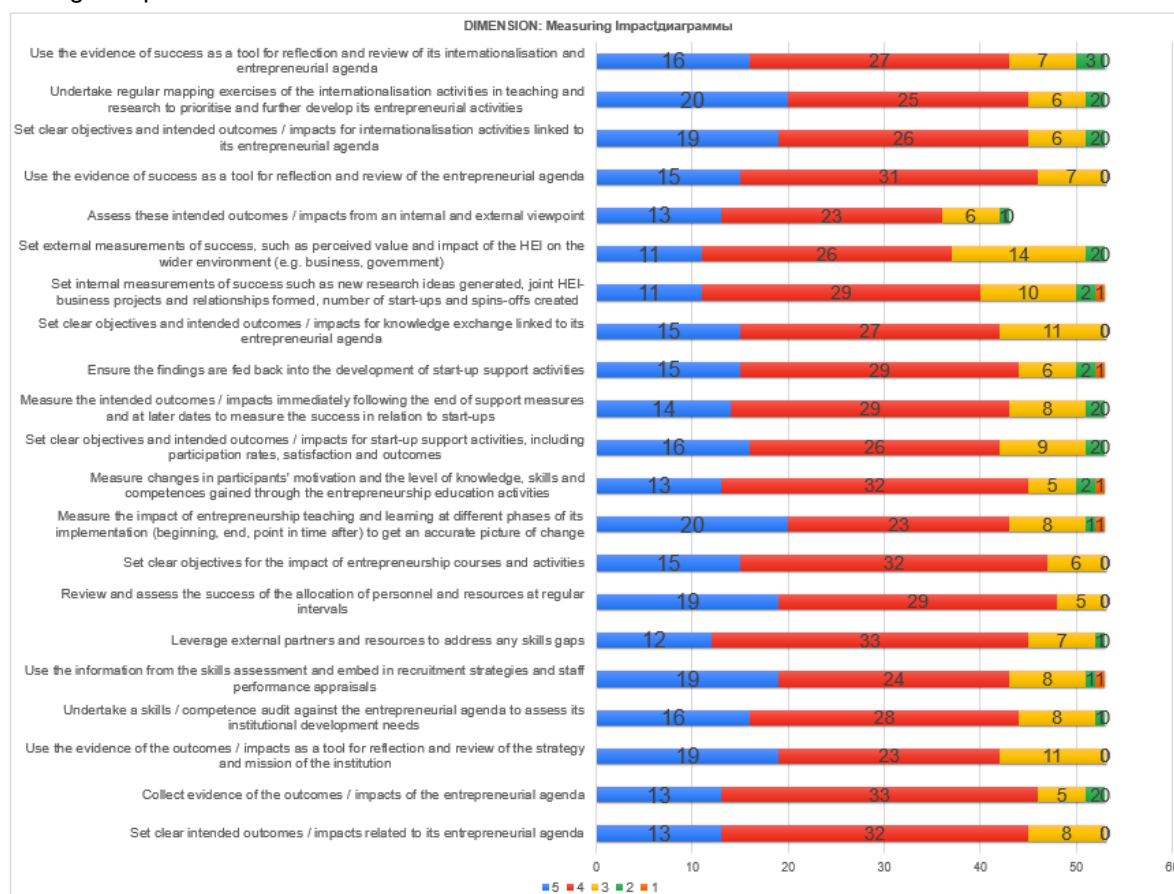
Please indicate at least 3 measures to be taken by your HEI.

- Build common objectives and synergies between internationalization and the entrepreneurial agenda
- Invest in an international-orientated curriculum, which supports the institutions Entrepreneurial agenda
- Include classroom-based activities with an international perspective

DIMENSION: Measuring Impact

Please describe the main results of the self-assessment for this dimension.

Finally, the last researched dimension - Measuring Impact, showed minor fluctuations among the posed questions; therefore, pointing out specific areas for improvement not supported with the research results. It was highly marked from all the respondents. Respondents answered 22 questions, with an average response score of 3.94.

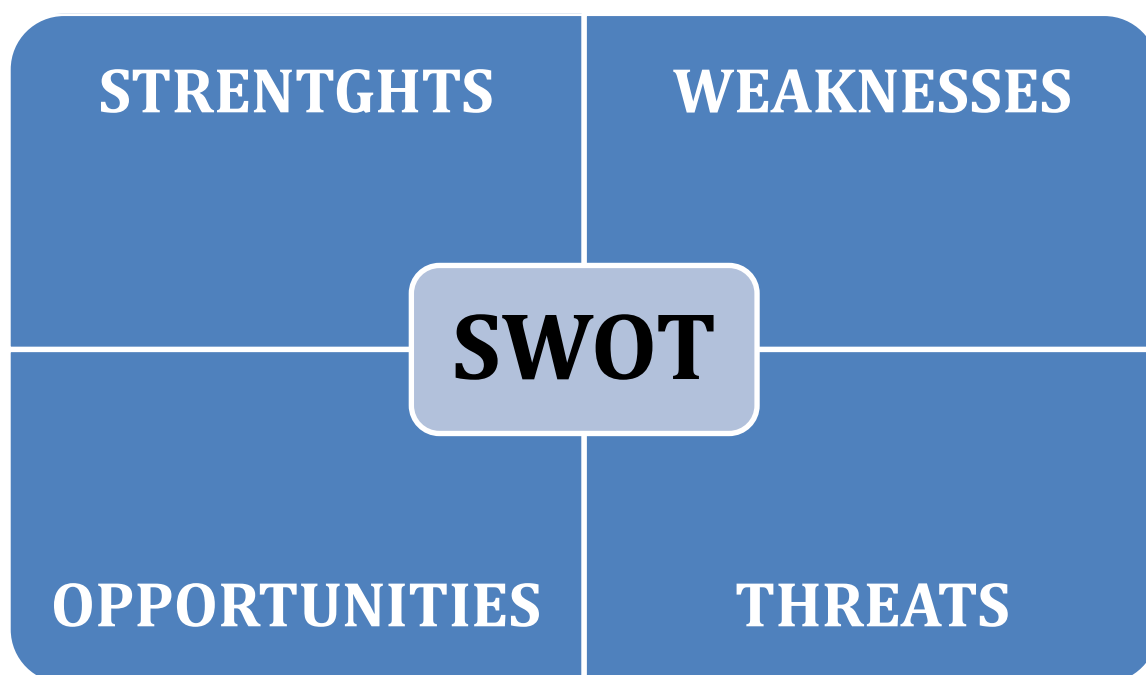


1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = average; 4 = high; 5 = very high
0 – 60 the number of persons participated in the questionnaire

Please indicate at least 3 measures to be taken by your HEI.

- Set clear intended outcomes / impacts related to its entrepreneurial agenda
- Collect evidence of the outcomes / impacts of the entrepreneurial agenda
- Assess these intended outcomes / impacts from an internal and external viewpoint

9. SWOT analyses based on self-assessment



STRENGTHS

- Close contact with organizations and enterprises in Free Economic Zone of Dangara
- Advertising and career guidance activities of the university
- Support of students' innovative activities: Students Parliament
- Students can study and work
- Interest of students and teachers for learning foreign languages
- Educational programs on entrepreneurship
- Exhibition of projects and innovative achievements of students and teachers

WEAKNESSES

- International marketing
- Lack of summer schools

- Insufficient number of international capacity building projects
- Missing joint/double degree study programs with international partners
- Low degree of internationalization of curricula
- Low number of students and teachers going abroad for internship, studying and teaching
- Insufficient staff training
- Low number of online activities and courses
- Low number of scientific and educational-methodical publications in foreign editions
- Insufficient knowledge of foreign languages (including English)
- Insufficient innovation activities
- Website performance

OPPORTUNITIES

- Study and internship of students and teachers abroad
- Passing the international institutional accreditation of the university
- Performing in the international university ranking

THREADS

- The onset of financial crises
- Restrictions on international cooperation in all areas of university activities in connection with the threats of COVID-19
- Restrictions on employment in labor markets, attracting foreign teachers and specialists

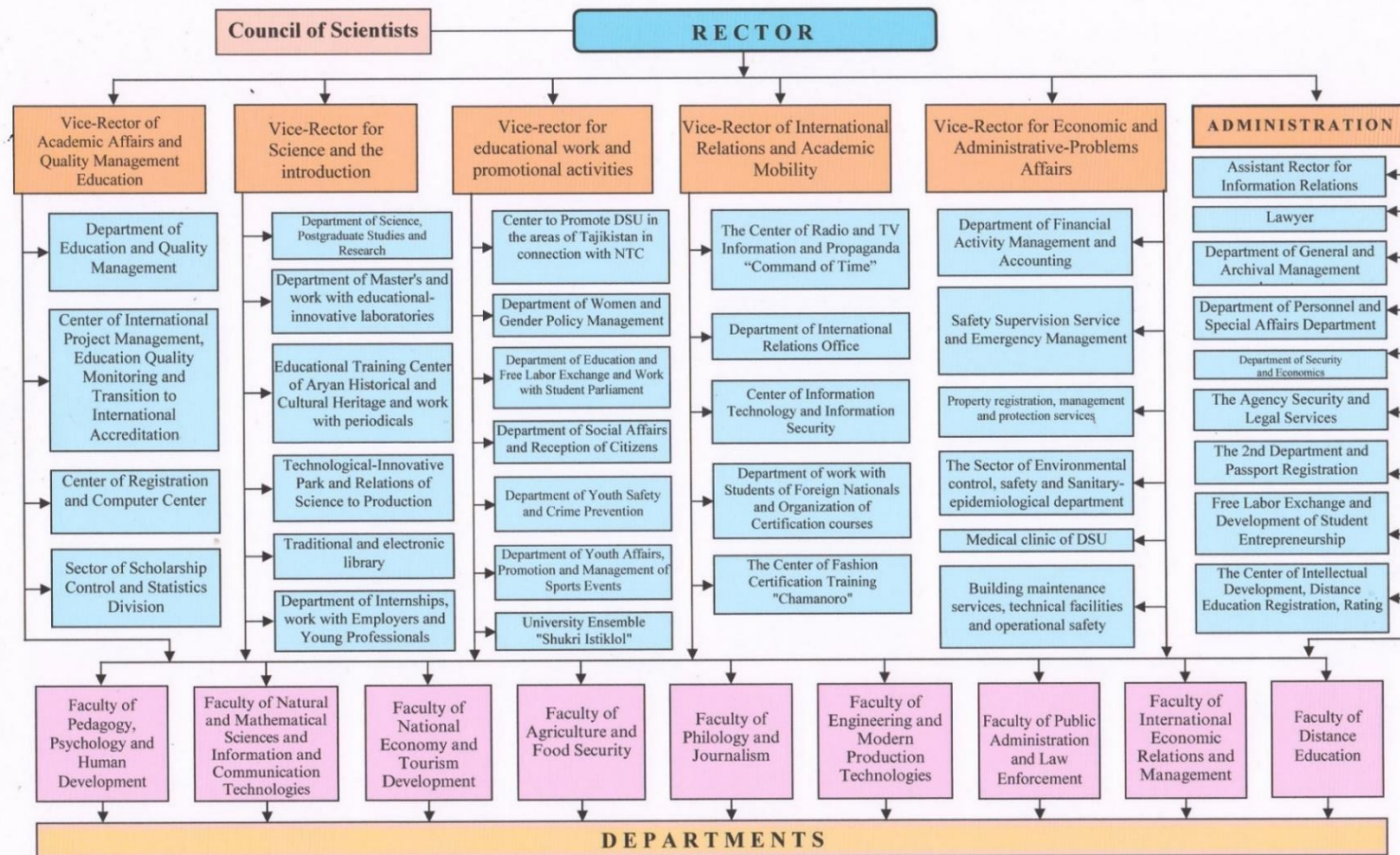
10. The main areas for further intervention on DSU's preparedness for future challenges

Please select and prioritize least 10 activities, which can be done by your HEI until end of 2023.

Activity	Dimension	Who	When
Development of SPI for DSU from 2021 - 2024 (after analyzing TRIGGER project self-assessment)	The Internationalize Institution	IRO department and other industry structures of the University	September 2022
Strategic Plan for preparing and supporting entrepreneurs	Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs	Vice rector for International Relations Office and Academy Mobility and other industry	End of project TRIGGER

		structures of the University	
Development of modernized curriculum for entrepreneurial teaching and boosting research and innovation in the sphere of entrepreneurship and innovation	Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning	Department of International Relations Office and Department of Economics	June 2023
Strategy to prepare the entrepreneurship education of the university for the digital transformation (teaching contents, teaching methods...)	Digital Transformation and Capability	Vice rector for Innovation and Distance Education and the Faculty of Distance Education	August 2023
Increasing the number of projects for capacity building in the sphere of HE and staff mobility projects	Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration	Vice rector for International Relations Office and Academic Mobility, Vice rector for Innovation and Distance Education	Ongoing
Acquiring of international accreditation	Measuring Impact	IRO and all faculties	October 2023
Strategy for the development of the organizational capacity (especially human resources)	Organizational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives	Vice rector for International Relations Office and Academic Mobility, Vice rector for Innovation and Distance Education and all faculties	End of project TRIGGER
Elaboration of strategy for entrepreneurial education	Leadership and Governance	Vice rector for Innovation and Distance Education and all faculties	End of project TRIGGER

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF DANGARA STATE UNIVERSITUY



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Triggering innovative approaches and entrepreneurial skills for students through creating conditions for graduate's employability in Central Asia