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Minutes of the 2nd Project meeting of IncEdu Project held on virtual platform

Date: 01st March 2021

Time: 2.00 p.m. (SL time)

Venue: On-line platform

Present:

University of Peradeniya

Anoma Abhayaratne	-	Coordinator
Leena Seneviratne	-	Member,
Samanmala Dorabawila	-	Member
Sakuntala Yatigammana	-	Member
Niroshi Senevirathna	-	Member
Shanaka Rodrigo	-	Member

Eastern University of Sri Lanka

Ravi Muniyandy-		Manager,
A Yogarajah	-	Member
Mr. Prahasan	-	Member

University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

Indu Gamage	-	Member
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Sri Lanka Technology Campus

Nanda Gunawardena	-	Manager
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Masaryk University, Czech Republic

Petr Peňáz		Manager
Borris Janca	-	Financial Officer

Transylvania University of Brasov, Romania

Carman Buzia	-	Manager
Victor Brucia	-	Member

Uppsala University, Sweden

Fanny Johnson	-	Manager
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Zagreb University, Croatia

Prof. Lilia Kis-Glavaz	-	Manager
Vesna Cavic	-	Member



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Anoma Abhayaratne, Coordinator/IncEdu Project joining online, welcomed the members present.

2.1 Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Kick-off meeting held on 26-28 Feb 20202 was confirmed.

2.2 Matters arising from Previous Minutes: None

2.3. Overview of the Project

Coordinator/IncEdu Project presented an overview of the project activities. There was a slow down in project activities due to the COVID 19 pandemic. However, some of the work of the project were completed, particulars of which are as follows:

- a. PMC committee meetings were held as required.
- b. Signing partnership agreements completed.
- c. The allocations of the first pre-financing of 50% were transferred to the partners.
- d. The preparation work of the building assigned for the Model Resource Centre been commenced with the co-financing of the University. (Design the model center, refurbishment, wiring, networking, fixing furniture, etc) However, work is progressing slowly due to the closure of the University and the closure of the country due to Covid.
- e. 3 Workshops (virtual) were conducted by the MU on identifying assistive technology and equipment for the model centre.
- f. Procurement of equipment and technology: progressing
- g. Duxbury software was purchased and purchasing of other equipment is in progress.
- h. Visited Eastern University, and had discussions, in respect of the Model Support Centre which is being built up by them.
- i. Project website is developed and launched.
- j. Lobbied with relevant stakeholders in Sri Lanka and as a result, was able to convince the need of supporting SWDs undertaking higher education at Universities. Towards this initiative, the Ministry of Higher Education had recommended to the National Planning, Dept. of Management Services, etc. to create cadres required for setting up support centers at all Universities. At the same time, UGC has issued a circular requesting all Universities to set up SNRUs at all Universities to extend support for SWDs to carry out their studies without any difficulty. They guaranteed its support in terms of financial and human resources as well as continuous development of these centres to enhance facilities for SWDs in the future.
- k. Briefed the members on the process followed in conducting the baseline survey. The first draft was shared with all partners and the final version of the same having incorporated all the comments received by members will be made available in Google Drive soon.



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- l. Preparation for Policy for SWDs has also been completed, which has through from many sub-committee. Once it is approved by the Senate in this March, will be sent to the Council, the Governing Authority for ratification. The approved policy will be shared with local partners to have their own policies drawn to be effective at their respective universities in the future.
- m. Presented the project at many other forms; viz ERASMUS+ day celebration, EU delegation where other Erasmus proposals were presented in Colombo, 02 presentations were made at Faculty Board of Arts; i.e. Our proposal followed by progress of activities of the project.
- n. A few visits were made; to Kandy Blind School, the Section available for PWDS in Kandy Library, mainly to get ourselves aware of facilities available for SWDs, and modus operandi etc.
- o. Lobbied to set up a sub-committee at the Faculty of Arts where our members are also part of it. The sub-committee meets once a month and decisions taken there will be tabled at the Faculty Board for its consideration. Likewise, made all attempts to give a hearing to the needs and requirements of SDWs in UoP.
- p. Currently, in the process of preparing guidelines and regulations for access to education, teaching methods and assessment criteria for SWDS.
- q. A request for 01 year extension of the project as decided at the last PMC held in November 2020 was sent to EACEA and is awaiting a reply.
- r. 02 PMC were held,
- s. Two meetings of the Quality Board were held, draft quality plan was circulated for comments.
- t. Newsletter and a brochure have also been prepared by SLTC and RU respectively which had also been shared among all partners

2.4 Key findings of the Baseline Survey as reported by Sakuntala Yatigammana

Sharing the key findings of the baseline survey in relation to Students with Disabilities (SWDs, Parents of SWDs, Academic Staff Members, and Administrative Staff members, Dr. Yatigammana explicitly briefed the members, on the manner in which the baseline survey was carried out and, the problems encountered during the process. She highlighted the important findings of the survey derived from responses received in relation to the stakeholders referred to here and opined that they would direct the IncEdu team to continue its future work.

2.5 Key findings of the baseline Survey as reported by Dr. Sumangala Dorabawila

Continuing the presentation on the same, Dr. Dorabawila brought to the notice of members the important findings arising out of the survey in relation to peers and was of the firm opinion that perceptions and suggestions of peers were promising. She shed light on conclusions derived and recommendations arrived at and was of the firm view that implementation of



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recommendations would strengthen the inclusion of SWDS with mainstream keeping in line with objectives of the project itself.

2.5.i Key Issues – Problems, Identification of required improvements in technological, human capacity, planning of activities – as reported by Prof. Lelia Kis-Glavaz, Zagreb University, Croatia

Sharing the revised work programme that Zagreb University wished to implement in relation to their Work package, Prof. Lilia said that the whole activities planned had to be revisited on account of the Covid-19 pandemic. She briefed on the plan that was to be operative initially and added that a new action plan was designed with alternate measures in hand to be made operative if the agency granted an extension only for 06 months, rejecting 01-year extension as requested. She also explicitly briefed the training programmes/workshops meant to be carried out for educators, the evaluation process involved and in turn how training of trainers educators programmes are conducted etc. She requested that recommendations of the baseline survey be made available to them as soon as possible, to enable them to formulate questions for focus group discussions. Prof. Abhayaratne said that the final version of the report will be made available on the Google Drive no sooner the fine tuning of the same, probably within **this week**.

2.6 Key Issues – Problems, Identification of required improvements in technological, human capacity, planning of activities – as reported by Dr. Petr Penaz, Masaryk University, Czech Republic

Dr. Peter Penaz, sharing his presentation explained the present situation of their work package. He added even though they recommended Assistive technology/software for purchasing having general view in mind, in order to implement their strategies in their work package, it is essential to know the key issues implicated in establishing a model support centre. He requested that information in respect of existing teaching and learning process available, specification of universal design, individual adjustments within the framework of the mainstream process, lack of information on SL education environment, Identification of human resources technological and financial needs for sustainability, identification of target groups (teachers, service providers, counselors) matters concerning the problems and improvements needed and lack of contacts among project partners (how to train staff, what are the tasks of the centre, how to raise awareness etc. are vital and be made available to them without any further delay. He further said that since SL partners are going to have their own model support centres, MU need information on the modus operandi of these centres and request all universities to contact MU if they deem necessary to do so. He further said they wanted to know how Croatian partners are going to train educators, so that they could also collaborate and mindful as to how they could take part in conducting training, for which he said if the situation improves, they wished to visit Sri Lankan partners in next autumn to get first hand information in this regard.

(The meeting adjourned for 10 minutes for a short break)



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2.6.i Creating community awareness – planning of activities as reported by Ms. Fanny Johnson, Uppsala University, Sweden

Sharing her presentation, Ms. Fanny Johnson, apprised members of the project on the present situation of their work package and said planned activities were delayed as for others. She explained the 04 steps approach involved in creating community awareness. She added and said which could go virtual if not the corona recedes with ½ d. She requested all partners to present their problem tree in relation to their work package so that they could have a clear idea and based on which their programme/workshops can be arranged as ½ day workshops and evaluation of same could also go on a virtual platform. She further requested the Coordinator to keep all partners informed of what is going on from time to time.

2.6.ii. Quality Plan –as reported by Prof. Carmen Buzea, Transylvania University of Brasov, Romania

Sharing her presentation with members, Prof. Carmen Buzea explained the present situation of the Work Package 4 and said draft quality assurance plan, quality matrix, and Annual Internal Quality Assurance Reports for the first year were done. She requested to send in their feedback and if deemed necessary by members. She added that the final version will be tabled at the Quality Board meeting scheduled for 22nd March 2021 for approval. Explaining the tasks in hand she said that the QA assessment questionnaire for the Project 2nd meeting, QA assessment & monitoring using online tools, and QA workshop – online in November 2021 were in line to be carried out this year.

2.7. Dissemination and Exploitation – as reported by Dr. Nanda Gunawardhana, Sri Lanka Technology Campus

Dr. Nanda Gunawardhana, who is entrusted with the Dissemination and Exploitation activities of the project explicitly briefed the members of the project regarding ongoing and expected activities to be performed. He said the IncEdu website, Twitter and LinkedIn Accounts, Project Logo have been successfully completed with the great assistance extended by UoP members. IncEdu Newsletter has also been completed and circulated among all members, Erasmus day celebration was conducted utilizing all possible avenues to popularize IncEdu activities and a brochure was prepared and circulated among relevant stakeholders, like UGC, Ministry of Higher Education etc.

2.8 Technical Report – progress in the 1st half of the project (Inputs from partners)

Coordinator/IncEdu Project shared the template of the Technical Report for the first reporting period and requested inputs from all partners and especially support from EU partners to complete it. She said that each partner could send in the progress of activities of their respective WPs. Once they are received, 1st draft will be made available to all partners.



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2.9. Any other business:

Prof. Abhayaratne said that arrangements are underway to write a book based on Sri Lankan Inclusive Education where 03 chapters are shared by UoP, SLTC and UNIZG. Prof. Abahayaratne, Dr. Sakuntala Yatigammana, Dr. S Dorabawila, from UoP, SLTC and Prof. Lelia from UNIZG will contribute to it. She requested all partners, to share available information in the google drive in respect activities they have already completed. She said that SLTC has done this and made a request to EU to share what they have done in the google drive.

Commenting on the activities the Ruhuna University has so far done, Ms. Indu Gamage said that information in respect IncEdu project activities are always updated in the main website of the University. A brochure has also been completed and shared.

Explaining the work so far done by Eastern University, Mr. Ravi said that they had 02 discussions, visited to 02 disable schools in the area and had opportunity meet their parents as well. Was able to get through the message. Meeting with Rotary and related NGOs will also be planned in the future.

Coordinator requested all partners to post information in respect of past activities in the google drive and as and when future activities are completed they should also be posted.

Furthermore, Coordinator also agreed to share the work plan of UNIZAG among other partners, so that they also can prepare their interrelated future activities in line with the UNIZAG schedule.

She further said that according to the circular issued by UGC/Sri Lanka, 03 posts, have already been approved (Braille Translator, Sign Interpreters, and Technical Officers) and was optimistic that the sustainability of SNRU that will be set up at universities is assured.

Meeting ended around 5.15 p.m (Sri Lankan time)

Abhayaratne

Cordinator/IncEdu



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