

# **Erasmus+**

# Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices sub-programme

# **FINAL REPORT form**

Programme	Erasmus+
Sub-Programme	Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
Action	Capacity Building in higher education
Sub-Action	Joint Projects
Call for Proposal	EAC-A02-2019-CBHE
Project number	618803-EPP-1-2020-1-FI-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
Agreement/decision number	
Project Title	Forests, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation: Higher Education Cooperation in Mekong Region

# **Contractual Data**

## **Dates and Beneficiaries**

#### **Dates**

Project Start: 15/11/2020 Project End: 14/11/2023

Activities Start: Activities End:

Project Duration(months): 36

#### **Beneficiary Data**

Role	PIC	Name	Country
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	923006411	SAVANNAKHET UNIVERSITY	Laos
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	917307564	SOUPHANOUVONG UNIVERSITY	Laos
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	998378030	CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY	Thailand
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	998205661	KASETSART UNIVERSITY	Thailand
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# **Project Summary and Horizontal Issues**

# Short description of the project's results in English, French or German

#### Background

The Mekong region's economic growth based on the use of natural resources and agriculture has harmed the region's forests and local livelihoods. Insufficient skills and knowledge among researchers and officials contribute to unsustainable forest management. Therefore, enhancing university capacity in sustainable forest management, and climate adaptation and mitigation is vital to address these challenges and promote a resilient future.

#### Objectives

Strengthening forest-related higher education system in Partner HEIs by modernizing, improving accessibility, internationalisation, and supporting the development of new learning and teaching tools

#### Objectives

- Introduce innovative learning tools
- Develop 2 MSc forestry programmes in Laos
   Improve 2 existing forestry programmes in Thailand
- Upgrade facilities
- Improve the employability of graduates
- Support N-S-S cooperation & exchange
- Improve access to national and international funding

#### Implementation

In general, implementation worked as planned with only minor delays due to supply chain issues and limited experience by junior partners. Courses and programmes were accredited with minor delays and already 18 students graduated from one of the MSc programmes. High intercontinental travel costs reduced the number of exchange visits, but more emphasis was given to exchanges among beneficiaries. All partners participated actively in the implementation and reporting of activities.

#### Results

- 18 courses reviewed and updated
- 22 new or redesigned courses
- 2 MSc programmes accreditated
- 1 book (two languages) published and distributed
- 31 academic staff trained on new learning and teaching tools
- 2 research applications were submitted by Partner HEIs, and one approved 4 online courses are running, one as MOOC
- 20 teachers from Partners HEI visited Europe for training
- 16 capacity-building activities at Partner HEIs
- Wood technology, environmental monitoring, and remote sensing labs upgraded

## **Horizontal Issues**

Previous recommendations/follow-up

From the mid-term report, there were four key recommendations for improvements that were addressed as follows:

1- Partnership Agreements (PAs) not included in the Quality Control Control Plan (QCP): The original agreements between UH and project partners were upgraded to PAs and aligned with the QCP. The CBHE project officer got access to this documentation.

2- Unclear distribution of tasks and cooperation arrangements: The upgraded PAs also included information related to each partner's responsibility for managing and monitoring different work packages.

3- Insufficient information on the project's website: the Czech University of Life Sciences upgraded the Communication and Dissemination strategy and reallocated responsibilities among partners. The website (https://frameerasmus.eu/en) and social media page (https://www.facebook.com/frameerasmus) have been maintained more consistently since then.

4- Accreditation plans: All local partners prepare an explanation of the accreditation process in each HEI and a tentative timetable for the different stages of the accreditation process. The necessary accreditations were completed by August 2023.

5- External evaluations: This was already mentioned in the project proposal but was encouraged as part of the midterm feedback. A review of the updated and new syllabus was done by professors at the University of Freiburg and Technical University in Zvolen while a professor from the South China Agricultural University did a general review of the project outcomes and impact.

Remediations for issues 1 to 4 were submitted to the project officer within a month after receiving the feedback for the mid-term report. Issue 5 was left open as it was included in the project document.

#### Transversal issues

The project addresses transversal issues such as climate action, sustainable development, and gender balance. - Climate action: this was addressed from the perspective of sustainable forest management, and how it can reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. This approach also covers the efficiency of wood processing, plantations as an alternative for timber, and the promotion of agroforestry systems to increase carbon stocks in the landscape. The topic of forest restoration played a linking role between climate action and sustainable development as it recovers the productive capacity of certain areas (including the availability of non-timber forest products -NTFPs-) while reducing pressure on remaining forest resources.

- Sustainable development: here the project dealt with the importance of environmental services/products on the well-being of rural communities. This included understanding the role environmental services/products have on subsistence and commercial activities and assessing the impact of an unregulated and unsustainable collection of

NTFPs for commercial activities (usually driven by external stakeholders).

- Gender balance: Beneficiary HEIs considered gender balance when supporting beneficiaries of local capacitybuilding activities while EU HEIs support special arrangements to support the participation of women with small children. This meant that women's participation increased from 30% (based on previous experiences) to 41% in this project. Gender issues were also included in the content of several courses and the topic is also covered in the academic book on forest restoration prepared by the project.

#### Involvement of people with fewer opportunities

One of the capacity-building activities in Laos took place partially in a deer reserve populated by indigenous peoples. The participants were shown how the indigenous peoples manage the landscape and what kind of restrictions they have.

The MOOC course is offered free of charge to low-income participants and members of local and indigenous communities.

The Karen Forest Department were trained on how to prepare a training program on forest restoration using materials from the project and with the support of project partners in Thailand (Karen people are a minority group in western Thailand).

Refugees	
Least Developed Countries and regions	

Some key innovating processes include:

- Training on Virtual Reality (VR) and remote teaching didactic methods: One harvesting simulator is now in use at KU in the plantation management and timber harvesting courses. VR material has been introduced to the remote restoration course as well as in online courses.
- Online courses: three online courses were established using the Google Classroom platform, this has been an innovation at Lao universities where the use of Moodle is still limited due to insufficient in-house IT support.
- MOOC: One MOOC course was developed from scratch and more than 220 people have enrolled at CMU. Other partners will continue to learn from the experience of CMU in preparing and running MOOCs
- Use of drones in teaching: CMU provided training to other partners in the use of drones and sensors for teaching and research on forest restoration. In Thailand, a restoration project by local communities in Nan province was trained in the use of drones for monitoring; in Laos SU is supporting the Ministry of Environment in testing the use of drones for land use planning (500 ha testing area).
  - Smart (automated) nursery at SU was started with the support of the project. This is part of a long process to
- establish a forest restoration centre in northern Laos.

## **Award Criteria**

## **Assessment Criteria**

#### Relevance of the project

#### Relevance of the results

#### 1. Main achievements:

Shared:

- Training of academic staff on new learning and teaching tools: most of the 31 teachers trained later participated in the curricular review.
- Coaching and participation in a regional call for multi-country research projects: beneficiary HEIs developed two different consortiums to participate in an international call under the Explore programme (https://www.recoftc.org/projects/explore), two applications submitted and one funded
- (https://www.recoftc.org/projects/explore), two applications submitted and one funded.

   Academic exchanges to Europe: Two rounds of exchange visits, participants stayed two weeks in Helsinki followed by a similar stay in Prague. Gender balance was 50/50.
- Academic book on Forest Restoration: two language versions are available and will be used as part of the teaching materials for several courses.

Thailand:

- Ten upgraded or new courses
- Six capacity-building events
- Two online courses developed
- One MSc programme update

Lao PDR:

- Thirty upgraded or new courses
- Nine capacity-building events
- Two online courses developed
- One new MSc programme and another programme updated
- 2. Relevance of the results

Regional:

The project focused on the regional thematic priorities of EDUCATION, FORESTRY, and ENVIRONMENT; however several other related priorities were also included, such as agriculture, social and behavioural science, and manufacturing and processing. The project provided curricular upgrades under two thematic priorities: (1) Sustainable forest management and (2) Forest restoration and rural livelihoods; climate change adaptation and mitigation were the main cross-cutting themes. The list of new and updated courses as well as the capacity-building activities implemented strengthened the regional thematic priorities.

The updated academic offering makes Partner HEIs' future graduates more competitive and competent in the larger SE-Asia region. Partner HEIs already took part in competitive multi-country applications to form research consortia. Junior academic staff are already using their involvement in the project as leverage to apply for study grants abroad, they will be better prepared to address current and future challenges related to SFM and the restoration of forest landscapes in the region.

National:

All of the general needs identified during the application process were addressed. Innovative and open-source learning tools are under use and support was provided to develop and update MSc programmes, equipment for environmental monitoring, remote sensing, VR and wood technology was upgraded, soft skills such as scientific and grant writing, project management, research supervision and communication were improved, short-term N-S-S mobility and internationalisation was expended, and continue-education activities have been introduced by Partner HEIs.

More specifically, CMU now has an open MOOC on Forest Restauration where public officials and community representatives are already updating their knowledge and skills on the topic. KU introduced VR and a simulator to their teaching tools, SKU added new equipment to support their wood technology speciality, SU accredited their first MSc programme in forestry and initiated the process to open a forest restoration research unit following the model in Chiang Mai. Partner HEIs also organised two Erasmus+ events in Thailand and Lao PDR to showcase the impacts of the programme and promote internationalisation.

3. Challenges

The aftermath of the Covid pandemic affected the impact of some activities. Inflationary pressures and supply chain problems meant that less equipment was purchased and some of it was delivered later than expected. Increasing travel costs also meant that intercontinental travel (with real costs well above unit costs) was reduced and partially substituted by regional travel.

#### Regional cooperation

Regional cooperation

The combination of two senior and two junior partners from different countries created a good spirit of international cooperation without the contradictions of competing at the national level. KU and SKU expanded cooperation on wood processing while CMU and SU emphasised forest restoration; this matching was based on the strategic priorities of the junior partners and was further expanded to other key players in SE Asia. Examples of this regional cooperation include:

- Signed South-south cooperative agreement between project partners (MoU) between SKU and KU on sustainable forest management
- SKU is including visiting KU's lecturers in their MSc programme and they are planning a joint course on Sustainable Forest Management
- CMU and KU are working on a shared online course
- Collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Sciences to build on the FRAME results and complement biodiversity conservation curricula.
- New research collaboration between Siam Cement Group (SCG) and KU on wood material for packing.
- Established new relationships between local wood processing plants and SKU.
- New research funding through collaboration with RECOFTC.
- More collaboration with FAO's regional office.
- SKU and KU established relations with Silvicarbon (based in Laos), a company willing to provide infrastructure for internships, field trips, research, etc.
- Purchase of equipment helped establish a relationship with equipment providers SCG, FIO, AA Group
- Agreements between KU, SKU and CZUP for mobility, research and the creation of a joint degree programme.
- Agreement between CMU and SU for the development of a Forest Restoration Centre for Northern Laos
- Negotiation is ongoing for a cooperation agreement between CMU and SKU.
- Partner HEIs gain membership to the Global Landscape Forum.

Qua	ality of the project implementation
С	Description of the implemented activities

After the technical report, the main activities implemented were (detailed descriptions available in the results

- 1. Coaching & peer-review of research applications (Jul 2022): Coaching the preparation of a research proposal to the "Explore Network" on the topic of "Forest landscape governance"

  2. Communication Plan updated (Aug 2022): Clarification of responsibilities related to the communication and
- dissemination activities
- 3. Workshop on wood Processing & machinery (Sep 2023): Five teachers from the wood technology programme
- at SKU visited Bangkok for this activity organised by KU
  4. Online courses & MOOC launching (Oct 2022): Courses were ready with a 6-month delay, this was due in part to early implementation delays and technical difficulties faced by Lao partners
- 5. Forest Restoration course (Nov 2023): Twelve staff members participated in this intensive course and workshop organised in Chiang Mai
- 6. Coaching & support to ensure the quality of courses and teaching material (Nov 2022): Beneficiary HEIs proposed a list of BSc and MSc courses for review. Programme HEIs review those courses and several rounds of peer review
- 7. Purchase of equipment (Dec 2022): Around 95% of the purchases were completed before the mid-term technical report, but the final piece of equipment was delivered in December
- 8. Sustainable Forest Management & Bioeconomy (Nov 2022): Eighteen staff members participated in this workshop organised with the support of CZU in Bangkok
- 9. External review of new curricula (Dec 22): Two professors from Technical University in Zvolen and one from the University of Freiburg reviewed the new curricula
- 10. Technology and Virtual Reality in Teaching (Dec 2022): Seventeen staff members participated in this training event organised with the support of CZU in Bangkok
- 11. Field course: Tropical Forests and Agroforests (Jan 2023): Sixteen staff from Partner HEIs joined other international staff in the field course organised by UH in Luang Prabang
- 12. Field survey & nursery work for developing future forest restoration programme (Jan 2023): Ten professors participated in this planning event in Luang Prabang
- 13. Workshops on Sustainable Forest Management and Bioeconomy in Laos & Wood Technology (Jan 2023): Twenty-one people participated in these back2back events organised by CZU in Savannakhet
- 14. Automated Forest Restoration course (Feb 2023): Twelve participants from the project joined other
- participants in this course organised in Chiang Mai 15. Sustainable Forest Management & Forest Bioeconomy, academic coordination (Mar 2023): Twelve people participated in the workshop that took place in Savannakhet
- 16. Learning management for sustainable forest management & community forestry (Mar 2023): Nine staff and 14 MSc students participated in the event in Savannakhet
- 17. Academic staff visits (Oct 2022 & Apr 2023): Twenty staff members from Partner HEIs travel to Helsinki and Prague for intensive academic training
- 18. Field trip on wood industry and sustainable forest management (May 2023): Eight staff members and nine MSc students participated in the field visit in Sakhon Nakhon, Thailand

- 19. ToT on Timber Harvesting and Work Safety (Jun 2023): Eight people participated in this ToT in Savannakhet 20, Effective teaching (Jun 2023): Eight people participated in this exchange in Savannakhet 21. Furniture's heavy machine training (Jul 2023): Ten people trained in Savannakhet 22. Final consortium meeting (Aug 2023): The meeting took place in Thailand & included representatives from the consortium and some special guests
- 23. QGIS application and Carbon Estimation (Oct 2023): Thirteen people trained in Luang Prabang
- 24. Cluster meetings (Oct 2023): Two cluster meetings in Thailand & Laos
- No significant deviations to mention

#### **Quality Assurance Measures**

The first quality assurance measure was negotiating and approving the Partnership Agreement with all partners. The PAs followed most parts of the suggested template, but it clarified how staff and travel costs were going to be paid for people participating in the project. Following the suggestions of the mid-term review, these PAs were improved and shared with the CBHE's project officer.

The second quality assurance measure was negotiating and approving the Quality Control Plan (QCP). The first version of the QCP (with all templates and forms) was modified to improve clarity, the latest version of the QCP can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-yqXtJ7uxBnrS3cMa3qf1vtp\_9wxDycS/view?usp=sharing The QCP includes communication and data management protocols as well as a series of templates to monitor and report activities such as meetings and capacity-building activities. The QCP also include a series of satisfaction and feedback forms tailored not only to beneficiaries of the activities but also to the facilitators of activities. These forms were regularly used and when there are key issues expressed, the partners involved in the implementation are informed about the issues and discuss the necessary measures to improve the quality of activities.

External evaluators (senior professors) evaluated the improved curricula (selection of courses) developed as part of the project. The evaluators assessed whether the improved curricula matched the objectives of the different study programmes. The reporters are available here

(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nTZ\_1qTDPL8f0xfO1O3XQKRdKHG6y\_1o/view?usp=sharing) and here (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1udxSNniiy5VNwoMG4MX1vulZiOR7cuB1/view?usp=sharing)
The first report reviewed courses under the MSc of Forest Resource Management at SKU, the MSc of Science in

The first report reviewed courses under the MSc of Forest Resource Management at SKU, the MSc of Science in Forestry, and the BSc of Forest Resource at SU. The reviewer provides suggestions for minor improvements in several courses and finds the overall curricular update relevant as it matches the demands of similar MSc programmes in the region. The review of the BSc programme is more critical as the programme is longer than other international programmes due in part to a heavy emphasis on improving English skills. The second report revived courses under the MSc of Wood Processing Technology at SKU, and the MSc. on

The second report revived courses under the MSc of Wood Processing Technology at SKU, and the MSc. on Agriculture and Environmental Forestry at SU. The reviewer takes a critical view of the study programme on Wood Processing Technology and suggests significant changes to the order courses are arranged in the programme, increase coordination among teachers to reduce overlappings, and better define the aims of the programme. As a response to these recommendations, additional capacity-building activities targeting this programme were implemented with the support of KU.

There was an external evaluation of the project's impact and execution, the review included a series of interviews and a review of the project's documentation. The outcomes of the evaluation were positive. The evaluation can be found here (https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1Zdo\_OyAFN8QY5mrLWJIzIREYd\_gVNLkD)

Some quality mechanisms included in the QCP (such as students' feedback, and communication protocols) are likely to remain and be reused for the improvement of courses and as part of other cooperation projects. Unfortunately, we cannot ensure that quality control activities such as external curricular reviews, periodic internal reviews, and coordination among teachers, will be replicated later within Partner HEIs as such activities could not be included as part of the official practices within academic units.

#### Equipment

Global delays in supply chains have delayed some of the purchases. Nonetheless, 95% of the purchases have been completed at the time of this report and the final piece of equipment (harvester simulator) should be in use before the end of the year. A general description of the equipment purchased includes: Souphanouvong University: basic teaching equipment (laptops, monitors, projectors, software), field equipment for monitoring environmental factors and pollution (water, gases, soil), and equipment for the new tree nursery (tools, shade, software). These materials will be used in some of the courses that are under review. Chiang Mai University: basic forestry field equipment (densiometer, telescopic rods, tablets, callipers, GPS, etc), equipment to create VR content (360 camera, workstation, VR kit), and drones. These materials will be used to upgrade the current programme on forest restoration using remote methods.

Savannakhet University: equipment for the new wood technology laboratory (small sawing equipment, small kilns, software, maintenance tools). These materials support courses under the wood technology programme. Kasetsart University: equipment to create VR content (360 camera, workstation, VR kit) and a harvester simulator. To support teaching as part of the forest management programme.

#### Curriculum development

A total of 40 courses were reviewed, and their syllabi and curricula were updated. These courses are:

Souphanouvong University -BSc on Forest Resources 1. Environmental Pollution

- 2. Natural tourism management
- 3. Geography Information System
- 4. Water resource management
- 5. Forest resource economics
- Agroforestry
   Silviculture
- 8. Participatory Ecotourism
- 9. Forest Restoration
- 10. Climate Change Adaptation of Agriculture and Forestry
- 11. Agriculture and Forestry Environmental Impact Assessment
- 12. Agricultural land use planning and forestry
- 13. Biodiversity Conservation
- 14. Sustainable Agricultural Production systems
- 15. Chemistry Forest Environment and Management

Chiang Mai University -BSc Biology for Restoration Ecology

1. Restoration ecology

Savannakhet University -Master of Science in Forest Resource Management1. Forestry Ecology 2. Forestry Plantation

- 3. Non-Timber Forest Products Management
- 4. Agroforestry
- 5. Forest restoration science and research
- 6. Principles and Practice of Restoring Tropical Forest Ecosystems MOOC

Kasetsart University - Master of Science Program in Forestry

- 1. Farm Forestry
- 2 Silviculture systems for forest certification3. Mapping Technology in Forestry
- 4. Logging Systems
- 5. Application Programming in Forestry
- 6. Social Aspects for Sustainable Forest Resource Management in the Tropics
- 7. LiDAR Application and Modern Forest Technologies for SFM

Savannakhet University -Master of Science in Forest Resource Management

- 1. Advanced Kiln Drying
- 2. Economic Valuation of Forestry Resources
- 3. Dendrology
- 4. Woody analysis
- 5. Woody Chemistry
- 6. Woody Characteristics
- 7. Wood-Industrial Machines
- 8. Technology of Wood Processing
- 9. Technology of Woody Protection
- 10. Labour Management in Factory of Wood Processing
- 11. Wood Utilization and Management

In Thailand, all the mentioned courses account for 3 local credits. The situation is similar in Lao PDR except for courses of theoretical courses (no field or lab practices) which account for 2 local credits.

Programme HEIs are the main ones responsible for reviewing the courses. However, Thai HEIs are supporting Lao HEIs with teaching materials for some courses as the two languages are very similar.

#### **Teaching / Training Activities**

Preparation of training & selection of participants:

Once an activity was fixed in the training calendar, partners agreed on their available budget to either host or participate in the training activity. For most training activities, an announcement of the event was circulated among local staff at partner HEIs at least one month before the activity and people interested could apply online. The application form included a section to explain why the applicant would like to join the training, these applications were used to select participants when the travel budget was limited.

How the project has contributed to improving the competencies of staff?

Around 70% of the topics for training activities were already identified and mentioned in the project document. The remaining topics were selected based on the curricular reviews, feedback from previous activities, and direct suggestions by partners.

The first round of capacity-building activities concentrated on innovative training methods, curricular alignment, development of online courses, academic writing and research supervision. These trainings were the theoretical base for the curricular update.

A second round of training activities concentrated on tools and methods needed in research and field practices. Hands-on intensive training in Nambak, Chiang Mai, Helsinki, and Prague fall into this category.

The last round of training activities covered particular topics prioritised by Partner HEIs. These included for example additional training on wood technology and machinery, the use of drones, and forest restoration. These training activities have a strong S-S cooperation with EU HEIs providing marginal support and advice.

This structured training approach contributes incrementally to the development of competencies among Partner HEIs. The strong S-S cooperation also reduced language barriers and supported a faster intake of information and lessons learnt.

How the knowledge/skills gained have been used/disseminated at their home institutions: As mentioned before, the first two rounds of training activities were designed to guide the curricular update of several courses and MSc programmes; under this approach, new knowledge was put into practice in the curricular development. Something similar can be said about the rest of capacity capacity-building activities as they were designed and implemented to complement specific academic gaps identified by partner HEIs. The project's approach to training and the impact on curricular development was well disseminated in home institutions through social media and other dissemination events including representatives of the government, civil society and other E+ projects.

How the multiplier effect of the training has been ensured:

The project targeted a young generation of teachers and researchers -with international aspirations- who are part of the ongoing generational change at Partner HEIs. Unintended outcomes such as the successful research application, the additional cooperation agreements between Partner HEIs and Associated Partners, the opportunities for academic exchanges and further education abroad, and the access to new equipment will work as an incentive to the academic staff at partners HEIs that the approaches used by the project open new opportunities for professional development. Therefore we expect that our approach will be followed by staff in other academic units

Governance reform		
Links with society		
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#### Quality of cooperation

Involvement of partners and stakeholders

As mentioned before, a co-leading approach has been used to manage and coordinate WPs. This has worked as expected with some minor issues (details about the rules applied to CBHE) with UH, as the most experienced partner, intervening to support other WPs.

In terms of sharing the responsibility for implementing capacity-building activities, all partners contributed with their share. Laos and Vietnam are very bureaucratic countries and implementing activities requires a sizable number of official letters and coordination with local authorities. These bureaucratic redundancies have generated small delays in the implementation (e.g., getting official invitation letters for the consultation process took more days than expected). Beneficiary HEIs are involved in the development of working schedules and topics for capacity-building activities and were responsible to support online activities on their end.

The project also promotes south-south cooperation by encouraging the most advance HEIs in Thailand to improve the capacities of Lao HEIs. Two training visits are under preparation where Lao staff will be trained on wood technology at Kasetsart University and forest restoration at Chiang Mai University. These activities support the development of specific study programmes in Lao HEIs.

Programme HEIs provide support for the preparation and review of documentation. They also provide suggestions and staff for the implementation of training activities in beneficiary HEIs. Programme HEIs have also explored alternative forms of funding and cooperation; UH has supported beneficiary HEIs in the preparation and submission of one international funding call in the region, both UH and CZUP also supported local staff with their application for MSc and PhD grants in the region.

Financial and management coaching is provided by UH to all project partners, particularly beneficiary HEIs. There have been the usual difficulties to match local administrative and reporting capacities with the particularities of CBHE, however, the spirit of cooperation has prevailed and there are little few conflicts in this chapter. Public authorities and other stakeholders have been involved in the project. The first contact with them was during the Needs Assessment consultations and continue with the regional interviews. Since then, local authorities and other stakeholders have been consulted for the implementation of activities they have provided support during the implementation of activities. Nonetheless, project members should increase the outreach towards external stakeholders.

The most consulted and involved external stakeholders include: provincial and district authorities (particularly forestry officials), RECOFTC (supporting partner HEIs with funding opportunities), StoraEnso company (with projects in several parts of Laos), Ministries of Education and Sport (reviewing academic programmes).

#### Management of the grant

A summary of the budget and description of Work Packages was prepared by UH to share and discuss during the first administrative meeting, the activity also included a quick explanation of the financial particularities of the CBHE programme. After the meeting, other summaries were prepared dealing with: Guidelines for the use of the grant, Final Auditory, Reporting, and others.

When it came to the implementation of activities, UH also provides guidance in every situation about how to

When it came to the implementation of activities, UH also provides guidance in every situation about how to finance and report on activities. This has been vital for the running of the project as beneficiary HEIs have a hard time distinguishing between different projects and modalities.

This frequent consultation of financial issues increased the load of management activities at UH. Fortunately, after implementing a couple of activities, some financial concerns by beneficiary partners have disappeared. Partners were given the option to monitor travel and staff costs using an online spreadsheet prepared by UH and accessible online, partners in Laos and Kasetsart University are using this option while Chiang Mai University modified their existing monitoring tool to fit the requirements of the project. EU partners have the option of using the online spreadsheet or implementing their own system.

All HEIs are responsible to maintain their own proof of travel and official reporting forms and provide them if requested by UH. All partners have access to the online spreadsheet and they can review them or request clarification if considered necessary.

One issue affecting mostly the travelling to/from Finland is the calculation of travel costs. Because of the 'direct distance' rule, travel between Finland and Laos/Thailand always ends in a deficit for the institution covering the travel. UH is likely to deal with the deficit, but beneficiary HEIs cannot deal with this financial imbalance (this is the main reason why we don't have a meeting in HeIsinki and the reason for planning the mobility exchanges as a tour -visiting Finland and continue to the Czech Republic).

#### IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

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Less experienced partners received a similar level of responsibility as experienced partners but received additional coaching and academic support (not only from EU partners but also from local experienced patterns). After the mid-term management meeting, less experienced SU and SKU were matched with CMU and KU respectively to ensure that junior HEIs received further support on issues relevant to their academic programmes.

Key institutional impacts:

- CZUP established links to Thai HEIs, promising long-term cooperation
- KU is considered a pioneer in using virtual reality as a teaching method
  KU, SKU funding was unlocked by the FRAME project to improve existing infrastructure to accommodate the new tools and devices provided by the project
- CMU's experience with MOOCs allows them to work towards a programme on distance education
- SU' staff (2 people) are now at the IRD France for a joint research project

Key national impacts:

- There is now a second university with a Wood Technology programme in Laos, serving the southern part of the country and connecting to international stakeholders present in the region.

  - The project enabled the broadening of the reach of SFM teaching through online platforms in Thailand. This will
- make it possible to reach other interested stakeholders outside the students of the faculties
- Lao universities have improved their internationalization through the links developed during the project implementation

Key international and long-term impacts:

- Partner HEIs produced academic material in the form of a restoration book that will be used in teaching not only by Partner HEIs but also by other stakeholders in Lao PDR and Thailand
- Enhanced South-South cooperation between Thai and Lao institutions
- Interest from the Thai Embassy in Finland to learn more about the experiences on forest and bioeconomy and the transfer of relevant knowledge from EU to ASEAN
- Expansion of methods and experiences in the use of methods for virtual reality and remote sensing in teaching and research

Partner HEIs are already monitoring the impact of online teaching to justify the needed investment in infrastructure and equipment. This monitoring includes the number of participants and the feedback they provide. Partner HEIs will more systematically include the consultation of stakeholders as the basis for curricular updates. this is now a common request by the Ministries of Education but the quality of the consultation varies due to methodological inconsistencies (for example, graduates are sometimes excluded from the consultation).

#### Dissemination

Dissemination commitments underperformed during the first part of the project. The website and social media channels were open, but there was limited content despite all the activities implemented. Towards the mid-term report, it was clear that dissemination activities were insufficient and corrective measures were taken. The Dissemination Plan was updated and responsibilities were clarified among partners. Some technical constraints also delayed the use of the main website, after several attempts it was not possible to run a multilingual template (with .eu domain). Therefore it was decided that Thai Partner HEI will prepare a multilingual webpage for the project and content will be shared among partners. The main website will remain available for at least 3 years and the secondary websites for at least two years. The links for these websites are:

- https://frameerasmus.eu/en (main site)
- https://www.forru.org/projects/frame—forests-climate-change-mitigation-adaptation-mekong-region-higher-
- https://frame.forest.ku.ac.th/

Dissemination activities substantially improved during the second part of the project and there is content available in English, Thai, and Lao languages and the feedback from the midterm report was taken into consideration.

Some key dissemination activities included:

- Interview in Universitas magazine (in Czech)
- KU National Agricultural Day roll-up produced to promote the project in 2022-23
- SKU promoted the project during the Graduate ceremony and the Agriculture Product Exhibition 2023
- Focus seminar on Erasmus+ capacity building in Higher Education (CBHE)" in July 2022 organized by Erasmus+ Network in Thailand
- UH promoted the project at RECOFTC and FAORAP events
- Dissemination video: Two promotional videos were prepared for the project and some other smaller videos showcasing events are available from the website (https://frameerasmus.eu/en/r-16843-project-outputs-blog/r-
- Cluster meetings and dissemination events in October 2023: These were organised both in Thailand and Lao PDR to present the results of the project and share experiences with other Erasmus Plus projects in the region.

#### Sustainability / exploitation of results

All partner HEIs completed the accreditation of their updated and new courses and the upgraded academic programmes. This ensures that the new tools and teaching methods will continue to be used in the following years. Cooperation agreements -signed before the end of the project- between CMU-SU and KU-SKU on further academic cooperation will expand the project experiences into other academic programmes. The use of online courses and MOOCs are of particular interest to different academic units and they are following the experiences of the FRAME project in detail. These actions will continue with minimal external funding as they are now part of the institutional strategy for academic development.

Regional cooperation with organisations such as FAO-RAP, RECOFTC, The Chinese Academy of Science, and other stakeholders will continue, with a level of intensity linked to the availability of funds, nonetheless, the research funding applications -completed with the coaching of the projects- were a good opportunity to approach

regional funds. The exception here is the Chinese Academy which comes with its own funding.

CZUP's cooperation with KU and SKU has already produced a couple of research articles and the collaboration is expected to continue based on small research grants, particularly from CZUP. KU and CZUP's plans to develop a joint degree programme will require more substantial funding from both ASEAN and EU sources. UH continues to have a regional footprint and has active research and academic cooperation with all partners.

Cooperation with non-academic partners will be maintained and expanded. KU-SKU collaboration on wood technology includes several industrial stakeholders open to providing practice opportunities to students. Other specific examples of cooperation include:

- Testing the use of drones for land use planning in collaboration with the Laos Ministry of Environment (SU) Collaboration with Rajapreuk Institute Foundation (NGO) to develop protocols for carbon sequestration

- Forest restoration activities with local communities in NAM province (CMU)

- Established relations with Silvicarbon (based in Laos), a company willing to share, providing infrastructure for internships, field trips, etc (SKU and KU).

#### Unexpected outcomes/ spin-off effects

Several spin-off outcomes connected to the project can be mentioned\_

- Two papers co-authored by Asian partners + ĆZUP on the topic of bioeconomy perceptions in ASEAN and CEE: this is boosting research cooperation in the field of bioeconomy among Partners

- Research design outlined for a third paper on the topic of CTL machine operation in harvesting: idem

- RECOFTC - research proposal developed: coaching was provided to prepare a research proposal with a consortium of regional universities in SE Asia in the topics of resource management and governance. One application was successful.

- Additional capacity-building activities by KU with SKU dealing with NTFPs, agroforestry, SFM, and wood science are in the planning as part of new academic cooperation.

- Established a relationship between KU and the Chinese Academy of Sciences to build on the experiences of FRAME and apply them to biodiversity education.
- The project helped establish a link between project partners and the Global Landscape Forum

- MoU between KU Grad school and CZUP to prepare joint degrees.

 EU partners used the lessons learned from the project to apply for a new Erasmus Plus project involving Vietnamese and Bangladeshi universities, the project is ongoing.

## Statistics and Indicators

#### Indicators for the Programme

Туре	of equipment:
<b>✓</b>	books and pedagogic material
<b>✓</b>	audio-visual equipment
<b>✓</b>	Computers and software
<b>✓</b>	lab material
<b>✓</b>	Other
	Not Applicable

	Development proj	
Courses updat	ed (/developed/a	accredited) in line with Bologna principles.
Number of new/ DEVELOPED	updated courses	0
Number of new/ RECOGNISED/	updated courses ACCREDITED	0
Number of new/ IMPLEMENTED	updated courses /DELIVERED	0
Level of new/up	odated courses:	
✓ Short cy	/cle	
✓ 1st Cyc	e (e.g. Bachelor)	
✓ 2nd Cyc	cle (e.g. Master)	
☐ 3rd Cyc	le (e.g. Doctoral)	
☐ Vocation	nal Education an	d Training
☐ Not App	licable	
Type of recogn	ition:	
✓ HEI Deg	gree	
Nationa	l degree	
☐ Multiple	Degree	
☐ Joint De	egree	
☐ Not App	licable	

✓ Placements/interns	hips for students
Career orientation :	service
Career developmen	nt measures
☐ Not Applicable	
Number of learners / trainee enrolled (per intake / course delivery)	20
Type of skills/competence	developed:
✓ Transversal/behavi	oural skills
✓ Technical /academ	ic /scientific / research skills
Linguistic competer	nces
☐ Not Applicable	
% of the new curriculum t	aught in foreign language of the the total of new curriculum developed by the
10	
For Training/Mobility Activities	
Number of partner country "HEIs' students" trained	0
Number of partner country "HEIs' academic staff" trained	120
Number of partner country "HEIs' administrative staff" trained	8
Number of partner country "non-HEI individuals" trained (priv. sector, NGOs, civil servants, etc.)	0
IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY	
Impact at individual level	
Extent of attention given to vulnerable groups	to a high extent
Number of direct beneficiaries in	

		7
the Partner country(ies) per year: academic staff from HEIs	20	
Number of direct beneficiaries in the PCs (/year): administrative staff from HEIs	5	
Number of direct beneficiaries in the PCs (/year): HE students	40	
Number of direct beneficiaries in the PCs (/year): non HE individuals	10	
mpact at institutional level		_
Extent of impact at institutional level: for instance new courses / strategies (policies, regulations) / services (units, centres)	to a very high extent	
Potential of planned project measures to contribute to new national cooperation activities in the Partner countries HEIs as a result of the project (Memorandum of Understanding /research projects / joint publications /participation in networks or associations etc.)	to a high extent	
Potential of project to contribute to new international cooperation activities in the Partner countries HEIs as a result of the project (international agreements / Memorandum of Understanding / research projects / joint publications / participation in networks or associations, etc.)	to a very high extent	
mpact on the HE Sector		
Potential of project to contribute to new (/updated) national or regional policies / laws / regulations in HE	to a small extent	
Potential of project to contribute to the establishment (/ further development) of external bodies (/associations /agencies)	to a small extent	
Potential of project to contribute to improve the excellence / competitiveness / attractiveness of the Higher Education institutions	to a high extent	
Innovative character of the planned results (i.e. the courses developed; the new tools, services, procedures delivered; the strategies implemented for reaching the target groups; etc.)	to a very high extent	

Impact on the society as a whole	
Potential of the project to pay particular attention to least developed countries	to a high extent
Potential of the project to engage Partner Countries HEIs in new means of cooperation with employers and other stakeholders (e.g. NGOs, associations, etc.)	to a very high extent
Measures contributing to improving lifelong learning approaches in the Partner Country HEIs	to a high extent
Sustainability	
Institutional support for Partner Country HEIs to sustain project results	to a high extent
Measures to collect Sources of fin-	ancial (/logistic) support for sustaining the project results from:
✓ Partner HEIs	
✓ Public authorities in Partne	er countries
✓ NGOs	
✓ Private sector	
European Union	
✓ Other	
☐ Not Applicable	
QUALITY OF PARTNERSHIP & CO	OPERATION
Involvement of students in the project implementation	to a small extent
Involvement of non-educational stakeholders in the project implementation	to a high extent
RELEVANCE in relation to project ob	pjectives
To what extent the project contributes to the policy objectives of the Partner Countries	to a high extent

Projec	t potential to promote EU's horizontal policies
<b>✓</b>	Agriculture, fisheries and foods
	Business
<b>✓</b>	Climate action
<b>✓</b>	Cross-cutting policies
	Culture, education and youth
	Economy, finance and tax
	Employment and social rights
<b>✓</b>	Energy and natural resources
	Environment, consumers and health
	External relations and foreign affairs
	Justice, home affairs and citizens' rights
<b>✓</b>	Regions and local development
<b>✓</b>	Science and technology
	Transport and travel
	Not Applicable

# **Training and Mobilities**

#### **Training and Mobilities**

#### **Training and Mobilities**

Event	Purpose	Type of participants	Gender	Number of participants	Country of Origin	Country of destination	Duration (in weeks)	%compared to objectives
25,4	Training	Non- academic staff	Female	3	Laos	Laos	1	10
25,3	Training	Academic staff – teaching	Male	10	Laos	Laos	1	10
17,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10

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17,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10
4,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10
4,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10
6,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Thailand	Laos	3	10
6,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Thailand	Laos	3	10
24,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
24,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
13,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
13,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
12,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
12,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
1,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	-	-	1	10
1,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	4	-	-	1	10
2,8	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	-	-	1	10
2,7	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	-	-	1	10
23,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Laos	Laos	1	10
23,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	4	Laos	Laos	1	10
20,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Laos	Laos	1	10
20,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	6	Laos	Laos	1	10
18,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Laos	Laos	1	10
18,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	6	Laos	Laos	1	10

17,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
17,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
24,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Laos	Laos	1	10
24,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	Laos	Laos	1	10
8,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	Laos	Laos	1	10
8,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Laos	1	10
10,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Thailand	1	10
10,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	Laos	Thailand	1	10
6,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Laos	3	10
6,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Laos	3	10
5,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Thailand	1	10
5,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Thailand	1	10
13,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Laos	Thailand	1	10
13,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	0	Laos	Thailand	1	10
12,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Thailand	1	10
12,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Thailand	1	10
22,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	Laos	Thailand	1	10
22,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Thailand	1	10
4,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
4,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
2,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	-	-	1	10

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2,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	-	-	1	10
1,6	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	-	-	1	10
1,5	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	7	-	-	1	10
17,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
17,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
10,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Thailand	1	10
10,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Thailand	1	10
24,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Laos	1	10
24,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Laos	Laos	1	10
8,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Laos	1	10
8,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Laos	Laos	1	10
6,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Laos	3	10
6,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	5	Laos	Laos	3	10
13,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Thailand	1	10
13,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	4	Laos	Thailand	1	10
12,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Laos	Thailand	1	10
12,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	4	Laos	Thailand	1	10
5,4	Workshop	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Thailand	1	10
5,3	Workshop	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	Laos	Thailand	1	10
4,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10
4,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Laos	Czech Republic	4	10

3,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	Laos	Czech Republic	1	10
3,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	Laos	Czech Republic	1	10
1,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	-	-	1	10
1,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	7	-	-	1	10
2,4	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	-	-	1	10
2,3	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	6	-	-	1	10
21,2	Other	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
21,1	Other	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
20,2	Teaching	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Laos	1	10
20,1	Teaching	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
19,2	Teaching	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Thailand	Laos	1	10
19,1	Teaching	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
18,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
18,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
17,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10
17,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10
16,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
16	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
15,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Thailand	Laos	1	10
15,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Thailand	Laos	1	10
14,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	4	Thailand	Laos	1	10

14,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
13,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	4	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
13,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
12,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	5	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
12,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
11,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Laos	1	10
11,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
10,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	0	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
10,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	2	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
9,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Laos	1	10
9,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	0	Thailand	Laos	1	10
8,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
8,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
7,2	Other	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
7,1	Other	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Laos	1	10
6,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	2	Thailand	Laos	3	10
6,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	0	Thailand	Laos	3	10
5,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
5,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Thailand	1	10
4,2	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Female	1	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10
4,1	Intensive course	Academic staff – teaching	Male	1	Thailand	Czech Republic	4	10

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	3,2	Other	Academic staff – teaching	Female	3	Thailand	Czech Republic	1	10
	3,1	Other	Academic staff – teaching	Male	0	Thailand	Czech Republic	1	10
	2,2	Training	Academic staff – teaching	Female	4	-	-	1	10
	2,1	Training	Academic staff – teaching	Male	3	-	-	1	10
	1,2	Training	Academic staff – teaching	Female	4	-	-	1	10
	1,1	Training	Academic staff – teaching	Male	4	-	-	1	10

# **Budget**

## Costs

Item	Contractual	Declared
Staff costs	391 763,00	388 575,00
Travel and subsistence	114 370,00	112 020,00
Costs of stay	259 920,00	192 125,00
Equipment	180 000,00	163 226,10
Subcontracting	52 000,00	21 818,81
Exceptional costs	0,00	0,00
Total:	998 053,00	877 764,91

## Income

Item	Contractual	Declared
EU Grant requested for the project activities	998 053,00	877 764,91
Total:	998 053,00	877 764,91

## **Attachments**

Type of File	Name of the File
Table of achieved/planned results	Annex_c_table_achieved_planned_results_FRAME.docx
Declaration of honour (including Check-list)	DoH_UH.pdf
CBHE 2017 – Annex VI - Financial Statements (Excel file)	2020_financial_statements_Final.xlsm
Final Financial Statement	Final Financial Statement.pdf
Audit Certificate	AknowledgmentOfReceipt.txt
Reporting table for unit costs - Covid-19	