

Evaluation of The Kazakhstan – US University Consortium Partnership Program

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AGENDA



KUUC structure overview



What is M&E?



KUUC Goals and M&E Approach

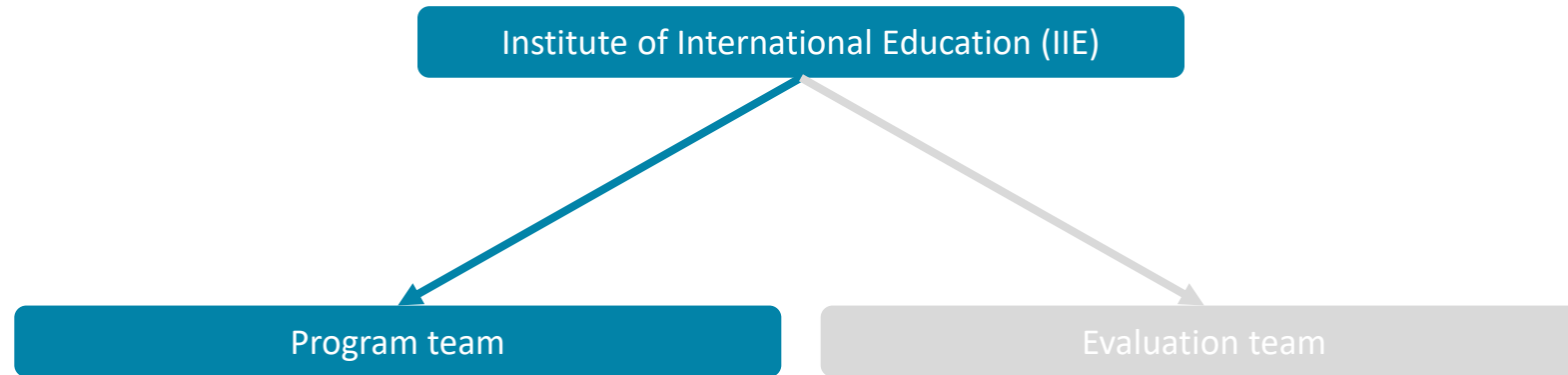


Operationalizing Objectives

KUUC structure overview

Who is who at IIE

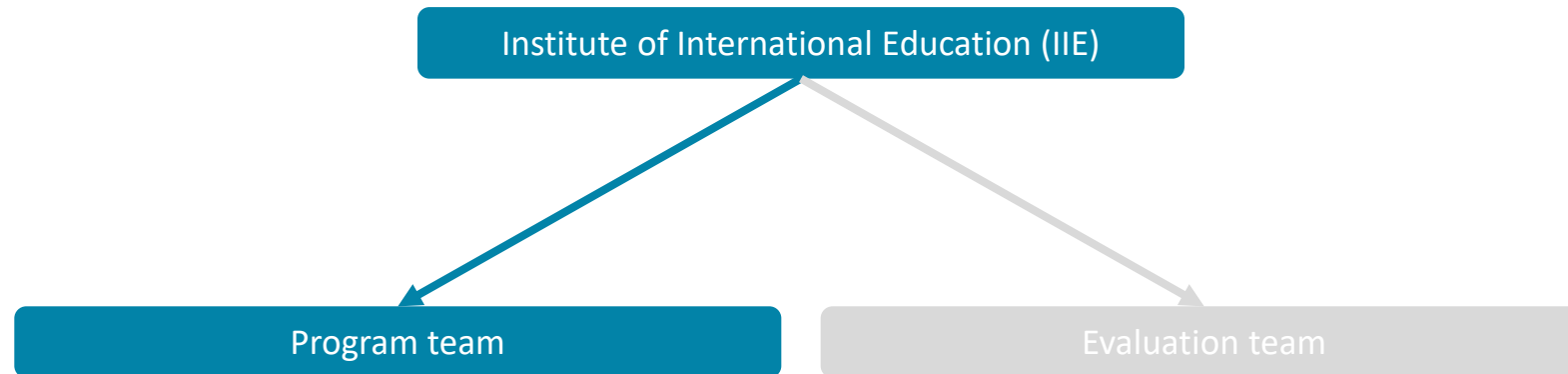
IIE KUUC Overview: Team Structure



Mandate:

1. Support partnership formation in the Consortium of Kazakh and U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs)
2. Deliver webinars and facilitate knowledge-sharing among the Consortium members
3. Offer seed grants to selected Consortium members to facilitate partnership between Kazakh and U.S. HEIs on adoption of efficient and transparent university management models and production of quality research publications
4. Provide coaching during the seed grant application on how to partner with HEIs in Kazakhstan or U.S.

IIE KUUC Overview: Team Structure



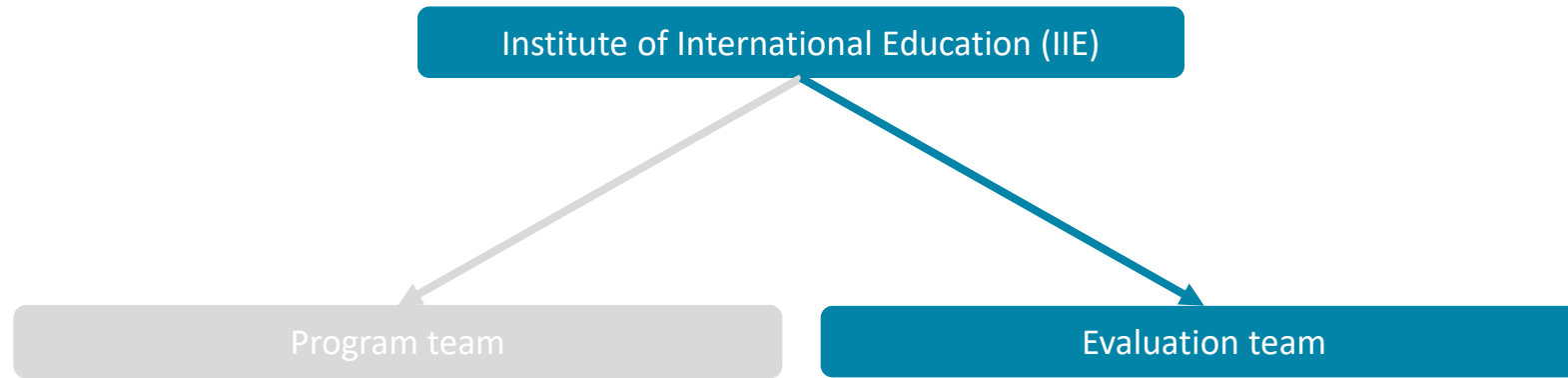
Sylvia Jons (US), Lead, Center for International Partnerships
Project Director, provides overall program oversight

Joel Ericson (Almaty), Head of Steppe Global Education/IIE Almaty Office
Project Lead, provides executive leadership and financial oversight of the program.

Gaukhar Turganbekova (Almaty), Program Officer
Provides critical on-the-ground support for the Program in Kazakhstan, focusing on outreach and recruitment, communication with participating HEIs, and support for events in Kazakhstan.

Susan B. Sutton (US), IIE Fellow for Academic Partnerships
Assists colleges and universities in creating and sustaining long-lasting academic partnerships to take higher education partnerships to the next level.

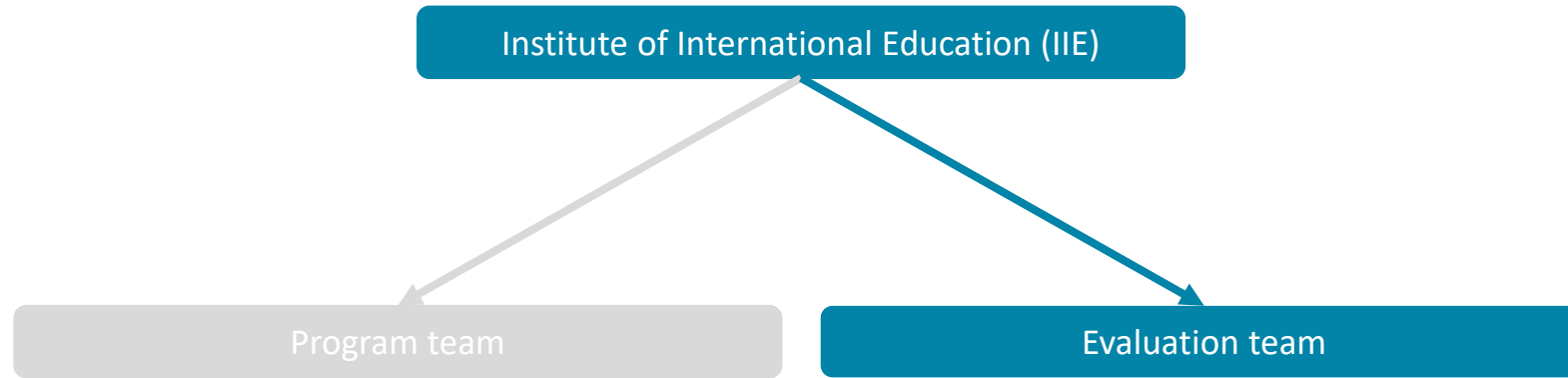
IIE KUUC Overview: Team Structure



Mandate:

1. Assess the implementation of the Program
2. Evaluate the outcomes of the Program, including how various activities and institutional contexts influence the outcomes
3. Develop recommendations and identify success factors

IIE KUUC Overview: Team Structure



Evgenia Valuy (New York), *Evaluation and Learning Lead*
Manages the MEL activities on KUUC

Zhamin Yelgezekova (Almaty), *External consultant*
Supports the MEL activities on KUUC

What is M&E?

Basic of monitoring and evaluation concepts.

Reach out to us if you want to learn more!

WHAT IS M&E?

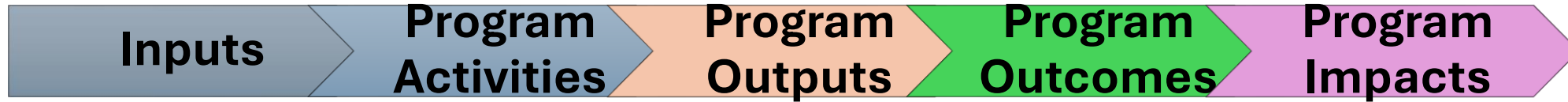
Monitoring

Systematic collection of data to identify changes over the lifetime of a program

Evaluation

Analysis of the effectiveness of a program in achieving the intended goals

WHAT IS M&E?



Outputs speak to program monitoring

- “How many university representatives attended all webinars?”

Outcomes and longer-term Impacts are related to the evaluation

- “What concepts were implemented at the participating universities?”
- “How did participants use their knowledge and practical gained through webinars, Consortium experience, and seed grant projects to strengthen the financial sustainability of their university?”

WHY DO WE NEED M&E?

- 1 To measure success
- 2 To communicate success
- 3 To learn from mistakes
- 4 To identify best practices
- 5 To increase accountability
- 6 To build morale
- 7 To improve programs in the long run

KUUC: Goals & M&E Approach

Recap of what KUUC aims to achieve and high-level approach to KUUC monitoring and evaluation

KUUC OVERVIEW: GOALS

Greater financial
management and
entrepreneurship
capacity

Greater research
capacity

Increased US-
Kazakhstan
institutional
partnerships

*In fields that support diversified economic growth
in Kazakhstan, including agriculture, renewable
energy, IT and STEM-related sectors

KUUC OVERVIEW: FOCUS AREAS

Financial Management
Systems in Higher
Education

Entrepreneurial Models
in Higher Education

Efficient and
Transparent University
Management Models,
including Financial
Sustainability
Principles

Research and
Commercialization
Models

Production of Quality
Research Publications

Research partnerships
with the private sector,
specifically with
agriculture, renewable
energy, IT, and STEM-
related fields

KUUC OVERVIEW: ACTIVITIES

- Consortium of Kazakh and U.S. higher education institutions
- Webinars and knowledge-sharing among the Consortium members
- Seed grants to selected Consortium members
- Coaching on how to partner with HEIs in Kazakhstan or the United States

M&E APPROACH: HOW?

Diversified data collection

- Institutional profiles
- Baseline survey
- Brief post-webinar surveys
- Seed grant recipients' survey
- Final survey
- Webinar observations
- Focus groups

Stakeholder engagement

- Co-define outcome categories
- Facilitate co-interpretation of findings

M&E APPROACH: OUTCOME EXAMPLES

- # of Kazakh HEIs who reported implementing two or more concepts about the diverse university financial management systems by the end of the Program
- # of Kazakh HEIs reporting understanding how their institutions may implement the new financial and research models.
- # of partnerships who successfully implemented proposed projects related to efficient and transparent university management models
- # of Kazakh HEIs who increased knowledge of research methodologies, and the publication process, particularly in STEM fields and improved academic writing as a result of the seed grant project

M&E ACTIVITIES: WHAT'S COMING?

June

Evaluation workshop
&
Baseline survey

Sept

Seed grant recipients
survey

Nov-April

Webinars'
observations

July

Presentation &
discussion of
findings

Sept-Oct

Observation and
focus groups at the
in-person event

**May-July
2025**

Final survey, focus
groups, and
presentation &
discussion of
findings

Operationalizing Objectives

How do we know that any of these are happening?

FOCUS AREAS SURVEY QUESTIONS

Current status of the concept of focus at your institution

Existing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capacities related to concept of focus

This question will be asked regardless of focus area selection.

All other questions will be asked only if you selected this focus area as your program priority.

FOCUS AREAS SURVEY QUESTIONS

Current status of the concept of focus at your institution

Existing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capacities related to concept of focus

What do you intend to achieve in the sphere of the concept of focus?

How will you be able to **observe** that you have achieved these objectives?

FOCUS AREAS SURVEY QUESTIONS

Current status of the concept of focus at your institution

Existing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capacities related to concept of focus

What do you intend to achieve in the sphere of the concept of focus?

How will you be able to **observe** that you have achieved these objectives?

Have you **previously worked** on implementing these in other projects and initiatives for improvement in your institution?

What **challenges** do you anticipate in achieving your objectives? How do you plan to mitigate and overcome these challenges?

What other **support might you need** from the Program or Consortium partners in managing these challenges?

Focus A: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

A comprehensive approach to overseeing the university's finances.

It involves planning future needs, allocating funds strategically, managing risks, and implementing secure processes for handling financial data.

This system, often supported by enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, ensures the university's long-term financial health, **allowing it to use resources and fulfill its educational mission effectively.**

Focus A: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- **Documented financial plans** from short– to long-term trajectories with policies and measurable goals related to the university’s financial stability and its overarching mission.
- Regular **financial reporting and analysis** that is accurate, comprehensive, and widely accessible.
- Regular meetings and documented decisions for **using the financial analysis for the planning and management.**
- **Technologies and automated processes** for financial management, including ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software, online payment gateways, student information systems, and data security.
- Clearly outlined **processes and procedures for handling financial data** (i.e., invoices, payments, and reports).
- **System for students to access their financial information** (aid status, payment history, outstanding fees) in a secure, transparent, and convenient manner.
- Fair, **transparent budgeting and resource allocation system** that is aligned to the financial plans and goals and allows room for necessary flexibility and autonomy.
- **Financial risk assessment and management system** with timely and proactive identification of financial risks, risk mitigation, and strategies to deal with the losses.

Focus B: ENTREPRENEURIAL MODELS IN HEI

A way for universities to foster innovation and entrepreneurship among staff and students and enabling knowledge and technology transfer and commercialization between university, public and private sectors.

It requires strong leadership, incentives for entrepreneurial behavior, integrating entrepreneurship into teaching, creating a culture of entrepreneurship, building relationships with stakeholders, and internationalization. This approach aims to equip students and graduates with the skills and mindset to solve real-world problems and contribute to economic and social development.

Entrepreneurship activity as a new university business model has manifested itself as part of this response and commitment of resources to academic entrepreneurship, university-industry collaboration and knowledge commercialization.

Focus B: ENTREPRENEURIAL MODELS IN HEI

- Economic and social entrepreneurship (putting knowledge to use) is **explicitly reflected as defining elements in the institutional identity.**
- Regular and widely (within and outside of the university) **accessible communication products about the university's entrepreneurial outcomes and innovations**
- **Documented record of technology transfer or other entrepreneurial outcomes and innovations** that address economic and social objectives of external partners in the private and public sectors: patents, spin-offs, start-ups, projects, and consulting contracts
- **Financial planning budgets for anticipated revenue** from entrepreneurial activities
- Existing domestic and/or international partnerships and **projects connected to economic and social entrepreneurship.**
- Existing trainings and programs for students and faculty to **learn about entrepreneurship and opportunities to participate in the university's entrepreneurial activities.**
- **Regular intentional engagements with industry, public sector, and community partners** to understand their needs and challenges that could be addressed via entrepreneurial activities.

Focus C: UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT MODELS, incl. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Systems for governing universities that emphasize achieving high-quality education and research at a reasonable cost, while openly communicating financial information, decision-making processes, and performance results.

This fosters accountability and financial stability through long-term strategies for generating revenue, controlling costs, and responsible budgeting, ensuring the university's ability to fulfill its core mission for the long term.

Focus C: UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT MODELS, incl. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

- Regular and sustainable flow of internally generated **revenue that exceeds the expenditures**.
- **Long-term, strategic financial planning** in addition to annual budgeting
- **Regular review of expenditures** for potential cost efficiencies and savings.
- Use of **digital tools and IT-facilitated communications** for considerable cost-savings without sacrificing quality
- **Successful pursuits of external sources of revenue**, such as grants, donations, and tech-transfer.

Focus D: RESEARCH AND COMMERCIALIZATION BEST PRACTICES

A way to transfer technology, knowledge, and innovations from academia to market for economic growth and public benefit, e.g., in cases of social entrepreneurship.

University commercialization turns academic research into practical applications that benefit society and the university.

By dedicating resources and fostering interdisciplinary teams, universities can identify discoveries with commercial potential (latent commercializability). This is driven by a dual desire to make a positive social impact and generate economic benefits for the university. These benefits can then be reinvested in further research and education, creating a cycle of innovation and progress.

Focus D: RESEARCH AND COMMERCIALIZATION BEST PRACTICES

- University receives **income from commercialized research**.
- University leverages **intellectual property as a source of income** (licensing patents, copyrights, and trademarks to companies).
- University leverages **real estate and auxiliary services as sources of income** (renting out space on campus for shops, cafes, offices, vending machines).
- University offers **non-degree, short-term and/or online programs and courses that provide an additional source of income**.
- University has an intended **proportion of tuition-paying students**.
- University **markets its researchers' innovations**.

Focus E: Production of Quality Research Publications

Rigorous, methodologically sound, ethical research that is original, contributes new insights and knowledge and is published in reputable international journals with a strong peer-review process (high-impact factors, number of citations).

Focus E: Production of Quality Research Publications

- **Reputable research programs**, including in KUUC priority fields: agriculture, renewable energy, IT. and STEM-related fields
- Researchers in these programs regularly **present their results in both national and international conferences.**
- Researchers in these programs regularly **publish in central Asian journals and venues.**
- Researchers in these programs regularly **publish in journals and venues beyond central Asia.**
- Publications by researchers at my institution regularly **appear in SCOPUS databases**
- Intentional trainings available to students, faculty, and other researchers on **how to write articles for publication in international peer-reviewed journals.**
- Intentional trainings available to students, faculty, and other researchers on **best practices to conduct research that fits the rigour requirements of international peer-reviewed journals.**
- Researchers at my university have access to **research facilities, necessary software, and other resources needed to conduct quality research**

Focus F: Research partnerships with the private sector, incl. in priority fields

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are collaborative ventures between universities/academia (the public sector) and private entities (companies, foundations) aimed at achieving mutually beneficial goals in education and research.

These partnerships are becoming increasingly common as universities face financial pressures and a need to stay relevant in a rapidly changing world.

Focus F: Research partnerships with the private sector, incl. in priority fields

- **Demonstrated relationships with external stakeholders in private and public sector**, i.e., regular meetings, contracts, joint ventures, etc.
- Dedicated records and **intentional discussions about the private sector contacts**, their interest, and potential opportunities for engaging the private sector
- Agreements, formal or informal, with **private and public sector organizations to offer internships and create employment pipelines** for university students
- **Regular investment from private sector**: research funding, access to labs, investment research facilities, and collaboration on projects.
- **Regular engagement with the private sector**, governmental agencies, and community organizations understand their needs that can be supported by the HEI.
- **Private and public sector partners co-design curricula and programs** that prepare students and company employees to be effective researchers.
- An **explicit internal strategy for promoting, safeguarding, and supporting the commercialization** of its research.
- **Web-based or other materials to inform the private sector** about potential ways how they might leverage the university's research capacity.

Provide Your Input

Open link in the Zoom chat

Use sticky notes to provide your feedback and input on how we operationalized the KUUC areas of focus

Read and react to others' input

<https://app.mural.co/t/iiemel8718/m/iiemel8718/1717580863436/8803a5f0151c88dfc43f403271946ca407d36741?sender=u16a4759863fc1b8197c77195>