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BOOKLET

INCLUSION IN INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS: A GUIDE FOR HEIs

UNICATION

TÉCNICO LISBOA

U LISBOA UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is designed as a practical guide for higher education professionals engaged in international cooperation, particularly those aiming to integrate inclusivity and intercultural understanding into every phase of their project cycle.

It is divided into three interconnected phases, ensuring that inclusion is not treated as a separate component but as an essential thread running through all actions and decisions:

Before: Focus on building inclusive partnerships and identifying institutional and local needs. This phase introduces tools for stakeholder mapping, participatory planning, and alignment with EU–ASEAN cooperation principles.

During: Emphasizes inclusive project management, communication, and governance. It explores how to lead intercultural teams, promote equity in participation, and design training that values diversity of perspectives and skills.

After: Concentrates on sustaining impact, disseminating inclusive practices, and embedding change within institutional strategies. This section provides strategies for long-term sustainability, knowledge transfer, and policy integration.

By following this structure, project teams can not only ensure compliance with Erasmus+ standards but also promote a genuine transformation towards more equitable and connected higher education environments.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Title
UNICATION – Unify Communication by International Projects in Cambodia and the Philippines

Project Code and Programme
Project Code: 101129724 – UNICATION
Programme: Erasmus+ – Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE)
Action Type: Strand 1 – Partnerships for Transformation
Duration: December 2023 – November 2025
Total Grant: €348,424.00

Coordinator
Instituto Superior Técnico – University of Lisbon (Portugal)

🔗 Website: https://unication.eu
🔗 IST Project Page: https://aai.tecnico.ulisboa.pt/en/nucleo-de-captacao-de-financiamento-internacional/projetos-eramus-em-destaque/unication

INTRODUCTION

The **UNICATION project (Unify Communication by International Projects in Cambodia and Philippines)** is a Strand 1 Erasmus+ initiative (Dec 2023 – Nov 2025, €348,424), with the contract N.º 101128292.

It aims to develop staff competences, strengthen inclusivity, and promote international cooperation between European HEIs and partners in Southeast Asia.

Inclusivity is not an "add-on" - it is a strategic driver of internationalization. By ensuring equitable participation of diverse staff, students, and stakeholders, HEIs become more resilient, innovative, and socially impactful.

This booklet captures the core lessons from UNICATION's training modules, especially the July 2024 and November 2024 workshops at Instituto Superior Técnico- Lisbon University (Portugal), and translates them into actionable tools for other institutions.

UNICATION

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Project Partner Profiles

Instituto Superior Técnico – University of Lisbon
Role: Project Coordinator
Country: Portugal
Profile: Portugal's leading school of Engineering, Science, and Technology. Responsible for project coordination, training design, and quality assurance.
https://tecnico.ulisboa.pt

Óbuda University
Role: Assiciated Partner Institution
Country: Hungary
Profile: Renowned for innovation and applied sciences, Óbuda University contributes expertise in digital tools and inclusive learning technologies.
https://uni-obuda.hu

PROJECT FINANCED FROM THE NRDI FUND

Université Côte d'Azur
Role: Partner Institution
Country: France
Profile: A multidisciplinary university driving excellence in internationalization, intercultural communication, and higher education policy.
https://univ-cotedazur.fr

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Project Partner Profiles

University of the Philippines
Role: Partner Institution
Country: Philippines
Profile: National university with a strong focus on inclusive education, sustainability, and leadership in international cooperation.
https://up.edu.ph

Batangas State University
Role: Partner Institution
Country: Philippines
Profile: A leading institution in Southeast Asia for applied research and community engagement, promoting inclusive academic ecosystems.
https://batstate-u.edu.ph

Phnom Penh International University
Role: Partner Institution
Country: Cambodia
Profile: A private Cambodian university enhancing educational innovation and staff capacity-building for inclusive higher education.
https://ppiu.edu.kh

University of Heng Samrin Thbong Khmum
Role: Partner Institution
Country: Cambodia
Profile: Public university dedicated to expanding access to higher education and integrating inclusion into institutional governance.
https://uhstk.edu.kh

National University of Management
Role: Partner Institution
Country: Cambodia
Profile: Cambodia's main institution for management and business education, committed to international cooperation and sustainable growth.
https://num.edu.kh

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Booklet Author
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1 Building Inclusive Partnerships

1.1 Inclusion as a Strategic Imperative

Inclusion is a driver of value. The success of the project (and the HEI) is intrinsically linked to its capacity to be inclusive.

Table 1. Proven Benefits of Inclusive Project Management

Strategic Benefit	Impact on Project Management
Enhanced Innovation	Diverse teams generate a richer tapestry of ideas, crucial for solving complex, cross-cultural problems.
Better Risk Management	Greater diversity of perspectives allows for the proactive identification of risks (blind spots) that would be ignored by homogeneous groups.
Quality and Relevance	The deliverables are more robust and globally relevant, as they reflect the needs of a wider audience and market.
Global Compliance	Alignment with UN SDGs and funder guidelines (Erasmus+, World Bank) ensures future sustainability and funding.
Talent Attraction	Strengthens the HEI brand, attracting high-calibre students and staff who value an equitable environment.

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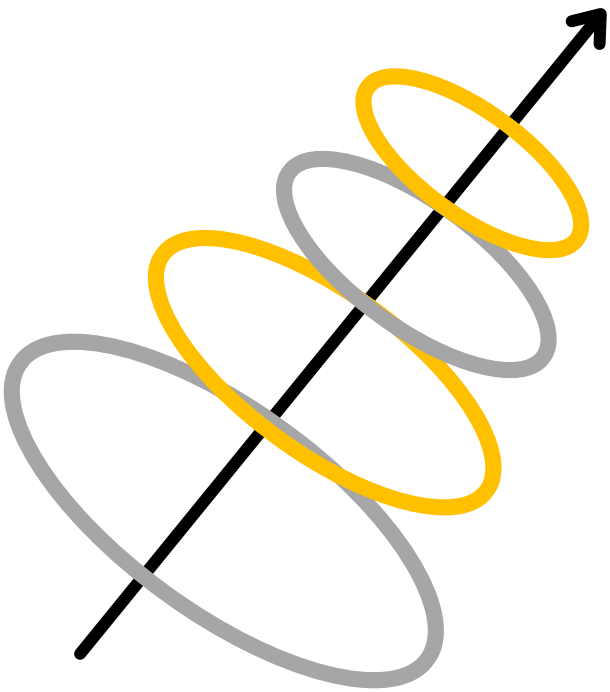
1.2 Why Inclusion Matters



Strategic Value

Inclusion is not just a legal requirement, but a strategic imperative that drives value, innovation, and excellence in international projects.

Addressing Inequalities

Embracing inclusivity generates diverse thoughts, addresses systemic inequalities, and shapes future leaders in HEIs.

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1.3 The Social Dimension in Higher Education (EHEA)

In the European context, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) requires HEIs to strengthen their Social Dimension. This translates into management principles that directly affect mobility and cooperation projects.

Key Objectives for HEIs (EHEA Principles)

- **Equitable Access:** Guarantee access to HE for students from diverse socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds.
- **Retention and Success:** Implement robust support programs (mentoring, counselling) to increase the retention and success rates of vulnerable groups.
- **Staff Diversity:** Promote inclusive human resources policies to ensure that faculty and staff reflect the diversity of society.

👉 Key reflection: "Inclusion and equity must be the foundation and the distinctive feature of European cooperation in Higher Education."

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1.4 Pillars of the Human Rights Model

4 **Accountable Project Impact**

Projects must be held accountable for their impact, necessitating transparent feedback for continuous improvement and overall project success.

3 **Inclusive Stakeholder Participation**

Stakeholders, particularly vulnerable groups, should actively participate in decision-making, as their input shapes the project's direction.

2 **Equitable Treatment & Affirmative Action**

Fair treatment requires affirmative action to ensure equitable outcomes, especially for underrepresented groups in project activities.

1 **Universal Fundamental Rights**

Fundamental rights are inherent to all individuals and must be safeguarded without regard to background or circumstances.

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1.5 Defining Inclusivity in Higher Education Projects

Inclusivity in international projects goes beyond representation. It involves **active participation, shared decision-making, and equitable access to opportunities** for all partners and stakeholders. In the context of UNICATION, inclusivity means:

- **Institutional inclusivity** – ensuring all partner HEIs (EU, Cambodia, Philippines) have a meaningful role in decision-making and implementation.
- **Cultural inclusivity** – acknowledging and respecting differences in academic traditions, communication styles, and local realities.
- **Stakeholder inclusivity** – engaging not only academic staff but also administrative staff, PhD students, and local actors.

During the **UNICATION training by IST**, participants reflected on how inclusivity builds **trust** within consortia. Exercises showed that when roles are not evenly distributed, some partners feel excluded from ownership. Inclusivity, therefore, is also about **balancing responsibilities** and **avoiding tokenism**.

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1.6 Institutional Needs and Local Realities (Cambodia & Philippines)

Inclusivity must be rooted in **local contexts**. Cambodia and the Philippines have rapidly growing higher education systems but face challenges of **geographic dispersion, uneven resources, and limited international exposure**.

Key takeaways from **Module 1**:

- **Cambodia** – Universities in remote provinces often struggle with the same visibility and resources as capital-based institutions. Inclusivity means creating **mechanisms to bring peripheral HEIs into the core of partnerships**.

- **Philippines** – The archipelagic nature of the country makes **decentralized access** critical. Training strategies need to account for online and hybrid participation to avoid excluding institutions outside Metro Manila.

  Inclusivity therefore becomes a **corrective measure**: balancing the voices of institutions with different capacities so that project outcomes are **co-created**, not imposed.

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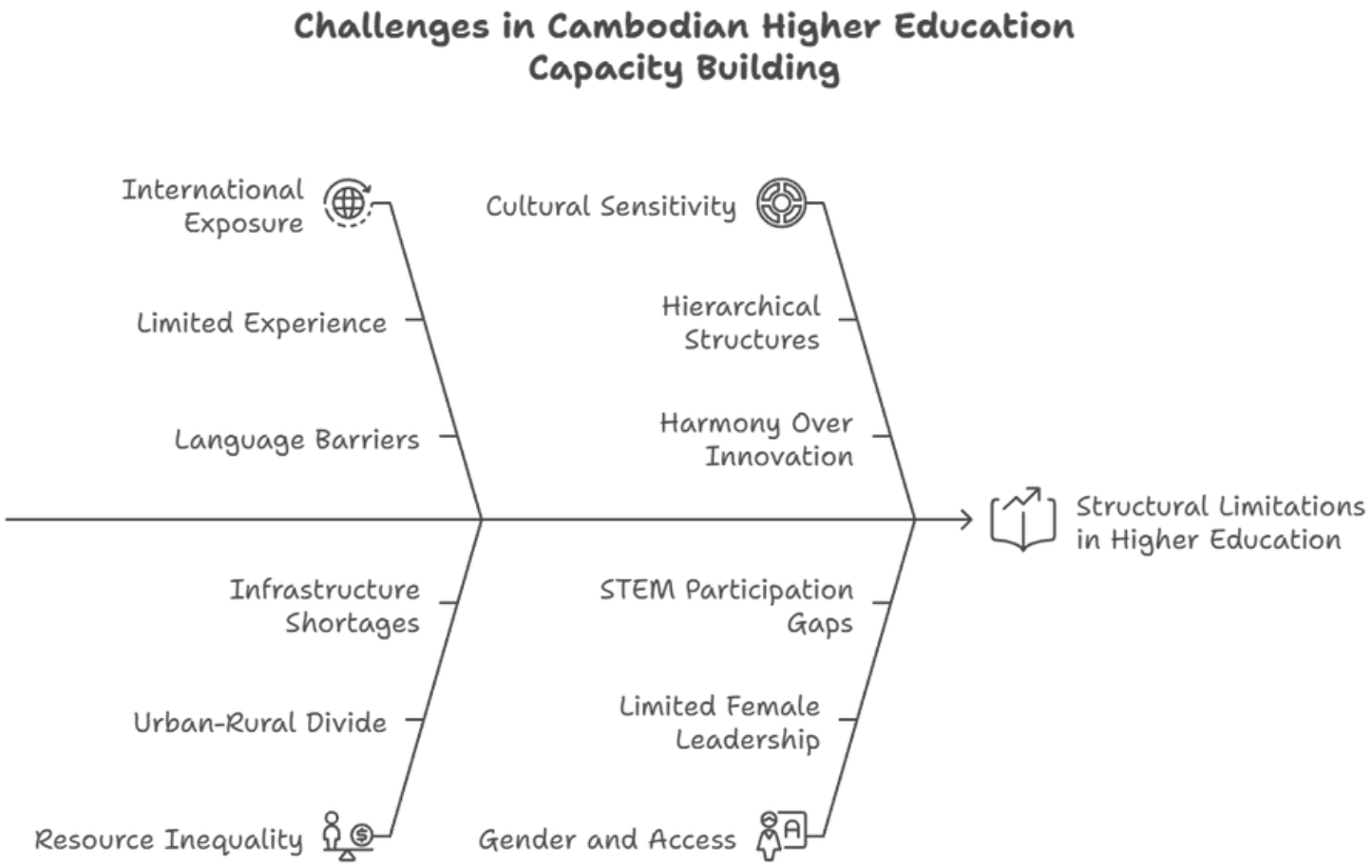
Building Inclusive Partnerships

Cambodia



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Building Inclusive Partnerships

Philippines

Navigating Innovation in the Philippines

Geographic Fragmentation

Challenges in connectivity and access due to islands

Socio-economic Inequality

Disparities in resources and opportunities

Digital Divide

Gaps in digital literacy and access

Urban-Rural Inequalities

Disparities in resources between urban and rural areas

Digital and Emotional Readiness

Needs for digital skills and mental health support

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Importance of linguistic pluralism and cultural inclusion

Global Competence and Intercultural Communication

Enhancing soft skills for global partnerships

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1.7 Aligning Inclusivity with Erasmus+ Priorities

Erasmus+ 2021–2027 identifies **Inclusion and Diversity** as a cross-cutting priority. For UNICATION, this alignment was central from the start:

- **Digital Transformation & Access** – Providing training via online modules ensures staff from remote campuses can participate.
- **Capacity Building & Mutual Learning** – By embedding mentoring and cascading training, inclusive knowledge transfer is achieved.
- **Equity in Governance** – Decision-making bodies in the project (e.g., Steering Committee) include representation from all partner countries, preventing dominance by EU institutions.
- **Inclusivity as Competitiveness** – As highlighted in the **training workshop**, inclusive projects are not only fair but also more **sustainable and innovative**, since diverse inputs lead to more robust outcomes.

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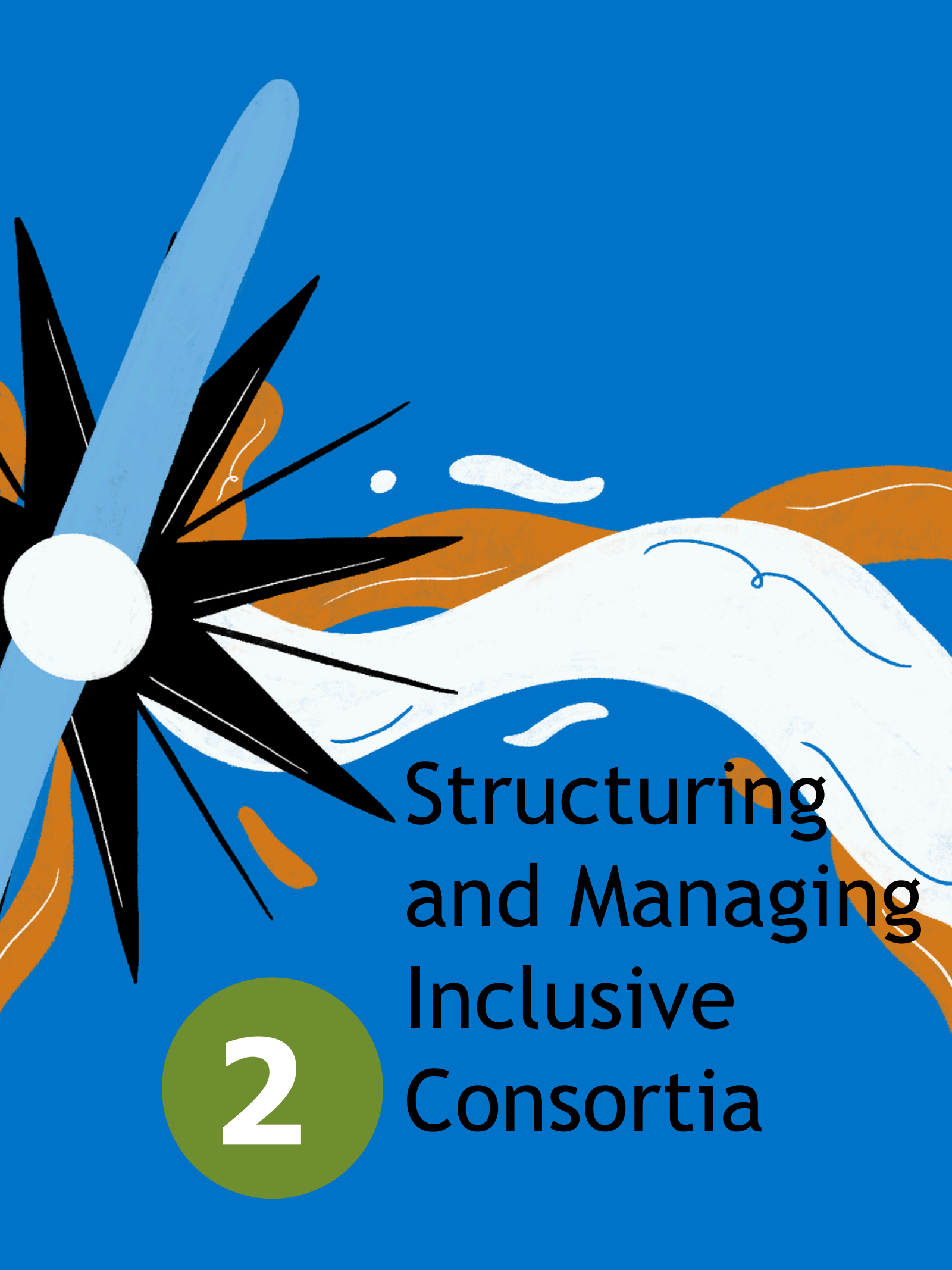

2 Structuring and Managing Inclusive Consortia

2.1 Inclusive Governance and Roles

A consortium's governance model determines whether inclusivity is a principle in theory or a practice in reality. In UNICATION, inclusivity was operationalized through:

- **Shared leadership** – Although ULisboa/IST acts as coordinator, Cambodian and Philippine partners co-lead work packages and chair subcommittees.
- **Rotating responsibilities** – Meeting moderation and reporting tasks rotate among partners, ensuring visibility of diverse voices.
- **Transparent decision-making** – All governance structures use consensus-based approaches, with records shared openly among partners.

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2.2 Communication and Intercultural Skills

Effective communication is the backbone of inclusivity.

- **Acknowledge different communication norms** (direct vs. indirect styles, hierarchy-driven vs. egalitarian exchanges).
- **Develop common language tools** – glossaries, simplified templates, and shared terminology reduce misunderstandings.
- **Practice active listening** – including silent spaces for reflection, particularly in contexts where open criticism may be culturally sensitive.

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2.3 Lessons from Trainings

The UNICATION trainings provided practical methods for embedding inclusivity in daily project management:

- **Bridge-Building Approach** – Partners should not only transfer knowledge but also co-create solutions, recognizing local expertise as equally valuable.

- **Inclusivity Checklists** – A practical tool developed in training, prompting coordinators to ask:
- Are all partners represented in decision-making?
- Are training materials accessible across different technological infrastructures?
- Are gender and diversity dimensions considered in every activity?

- **Peer Mentoring** – Each EU partner is paired with an Asian partner for ongoing mentoring, ensuring capacity building flows both ways.

👉 Key reflection: Inclusivity is less about adding marginalized voices and more about redesigning processes so those voices shape outcomes from the start..

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Structuring and Managing Inclusive Consortia

Type of Barriers

01 **Financial Limitations**
Financial constraints limit participation, highlighting the crucial role of funding support.

02 **Addressing Prejudices**
Attitudinal barriers stem from prejudices, and education is vital for dismantling them.

03 **Policy Revision**
Institutional barriers within systemic issues need policy reviews to promote inclusivity.

04 **Accessibility Adaptation**
Environmental barriers include physical obstacles, and adapting spaces promote accessibility.

05 **Cultural Sensitivity**
Socio-cultural barriers arise from unacknowledged cultural differences; sensitivity is key.

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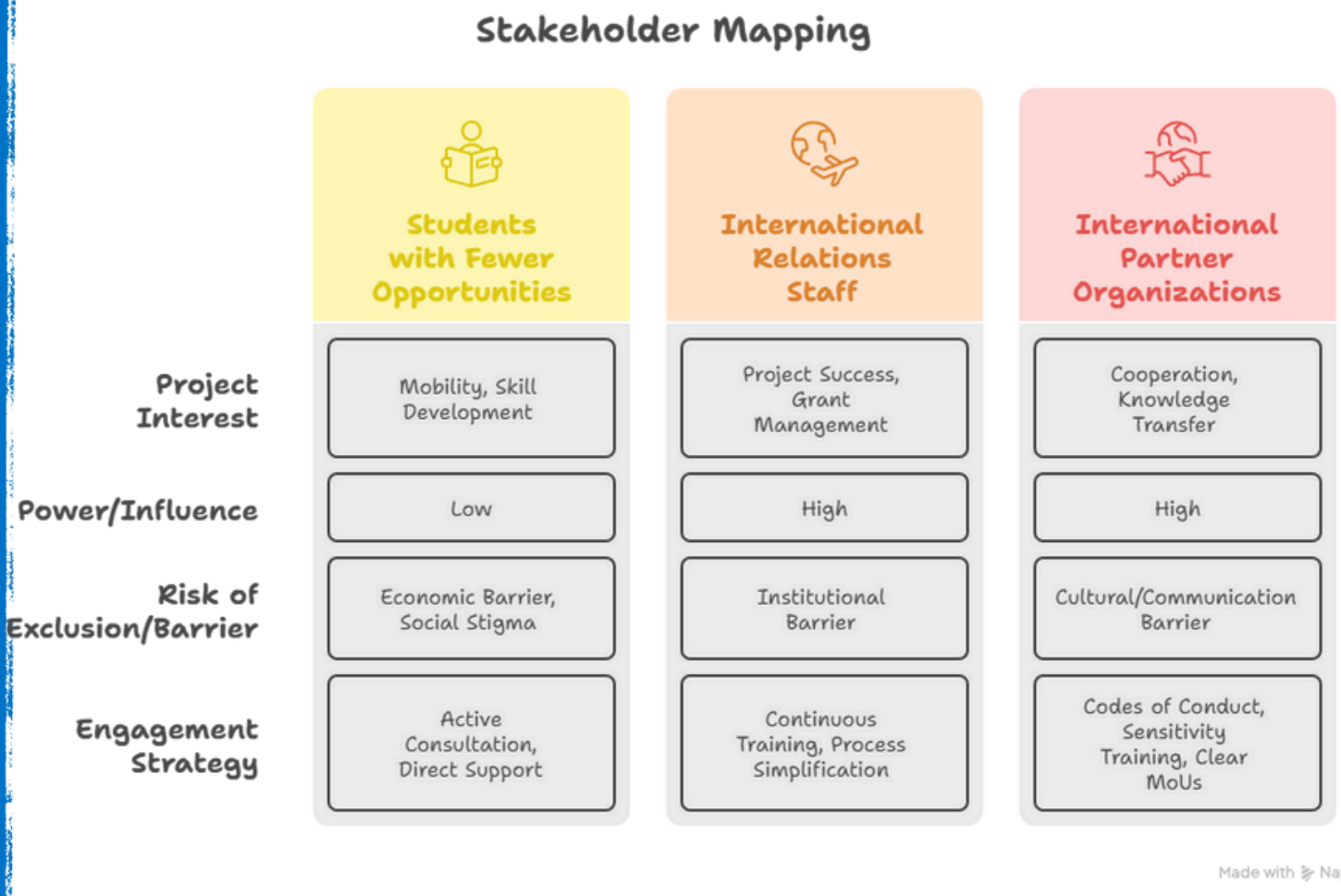
Structuring and Managing Inclusive Consortia

Stakeholder Mapping



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Inclusive Design Strategies

Inclusive Design Thinking places the participant's needs at the center of project planning, ensuring that solutions are co-created.

Key Strategies (World Bank/Erasmus+):

- **Focus on Outcomes:** Concentrate on **learning outcomes** (and not difficulties) for all participants.
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Provide **multiple means** of representation, engagement, and expression (e.g., documents in various formats, flexible assessments).
- **Flexible Curriculum:** The project must allow for curriculum adaptation to **diverse needs** (e.g., blended intensive programs that reduce the physical duration of mobility).
- **Strong Partnerships:** Involve NGOs, disability associations, and minority groups as **implementation partners** from the outset.

👉 Key reflection : "The UDL is the architecture of inclusion in Higher Education."

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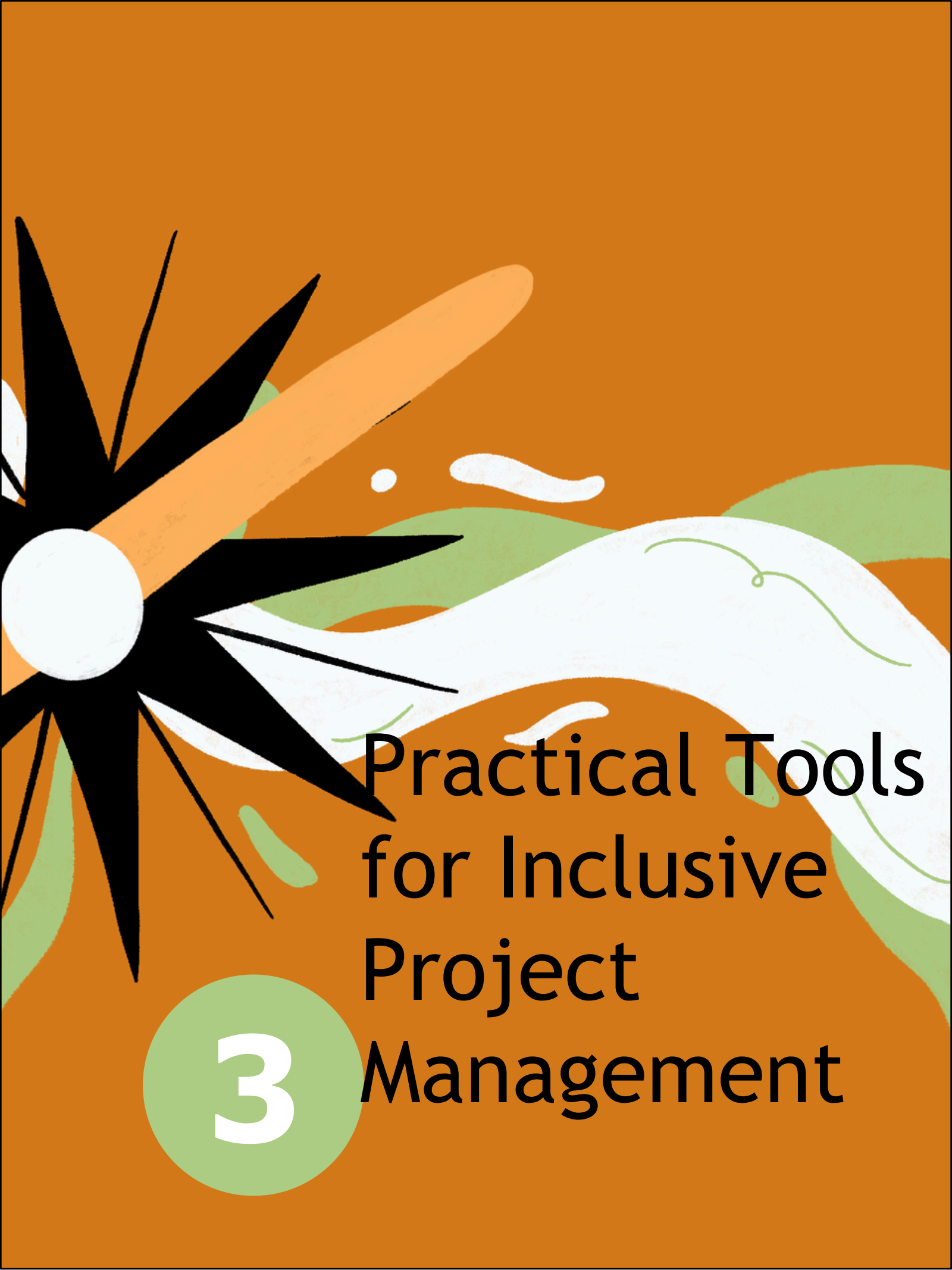

3 Practical Tools for Inclusive Project Management

Practical Tools for Inclusive Project Management

3.1 Frameworks for Inclusive Communication

Inclusive communication is the backbone of every successful international project. It ensures that all partners — regardless of culture, language, or institutional capacity — can participate meaningfully in dialogue and decision-making.

An inclusive communication framework should rest on three pillars:

1. Accessibility: All materials — from meeting minutes to training modules — must be linguistically, visually, and technologically accessible. Use plain language, provide subtitles and alternative formats (e.g., text and video), and ensure compatibility with assistive technologies.

2. Transparency:Decision-making processes, budget allocations, and responsibilities should be clearly communicated and documented. This prevents hierarchical imbalances and fosters mutual trust among partners.

3. Reciprocity:Communication must not flow only from coordinators to partners, but also from partners to coordinators and among partners themselves. This horizontal exchange nurtures a sense of ownership and collective agency.

   European initiatives such as the Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy (2021–2027) and the EU Guidelines for Accessible Communication (2023) provide strong foundations for developing inclusive communication frameworks.

   For instance, in the UNICATION project, multilingual toolkits and visual glossaries allowed Cambodian and Philippine partners to actively co-design outputs, rather than passively implement them.

   👉 Key reflection:"Inclusive communication is not only about what is said, but about who feels safe enough to speak."

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3.2 Mentoring and Cascading Approaches

In capacity-building projects, mentoring acts as a bridge between learning and implementation. A mentoring structure should aim to empower rather than instruct.

- **Peer Mentoring:** Junior and senior staff collaborate in co-mentorship cycles, reinforcing intergenerational learning.
- **Cascading Training Models:** A small group of trained professionals replicates knowledge within their institutions — multiplying the project's reach. This "train-the-trainer" model is particularly effective in low-resource contexts.
- **Digital Mentorship Hubs:** Using collaborative platforms such as Moodle, Teams, or Canvas allows continuous exchange of good practices, even beyond the project's duration.

In the Inclusive Future project, cascading mentorship was critical to embedding inclusive pedagogy within schools. Each trained teacher mentored two colleagues, ensuring that inclusivity became part of institutional culture rather than a temporary intervention.

👉 Key reflection: "Mentorship transforms training into transformation — it creates continuity where projects often end."

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Practical Tools for Inclusive Project Management

Institutional Barriers in HEIs (Maturity)

University Management is the most critical level of intervention. The HEI must evolve from a **passive** approach to a **proactive** one.

Levels of Institutional Maturity in Inclusion (Based on the EUA Report)

Maturity Level	Project Management Characteristics	Key Indicator
1. Compliance	Focus on meeting the legal minimum. Inclusion is a bureaucratic obligation.	Only offers basic support, if legally required, with no proactive outreach.
2. Ad Hoc/ Reactive	Responds to individual crises. Inclusion based on the efforts of individuals or departments.	Projects do not have a specific budget for inclusion; support depends on the project manager's goodwill.
3. Strategic/ Integrated	Inclusion is part of the HEI's mission and policy. Allocation of specific, protected resources.	All new mobility projects have a mandatory Inclusion Plan and a dedicated budget line.
4. Transformative	The HEI is a leader and active promoter of inclusion. Internal policies change to reflect the commitment.	Staff and faculty receive continuous training in DEI; participation data is used for curricular reforms and policy change.

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Practical Tools for Inclusive Project Management

Exclusion Factors in International Projects

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3.3 Building Bridges – Strategies for Global Collaboration

Global collaboration requires sensitivity to cultural diversity and respect for differing academic and administrative systems.

Effective strategies include:

- **Cultural Intelligence Training:** Prepare teams to work across cultures through workshops on communication styles, gender norms, and negotiation practices.
- **Shared Leadership Models:** Rotate coordination responsibilities or co-lead work packages to distribute power and reinforce ownership.
- **Regional Learning Labs:** Organize thematic exchanges among countries to showcase context-specific solutions (e.g., local policy adaptations, digital inclusion models).
- **Digital Storytelling for Collaboration:** Use digital media to document partner stories and voices, humanizing global teamwork.

👉 Key reflection: "Bridges are not built from stone; they are built from shared understanding and mutual respect."

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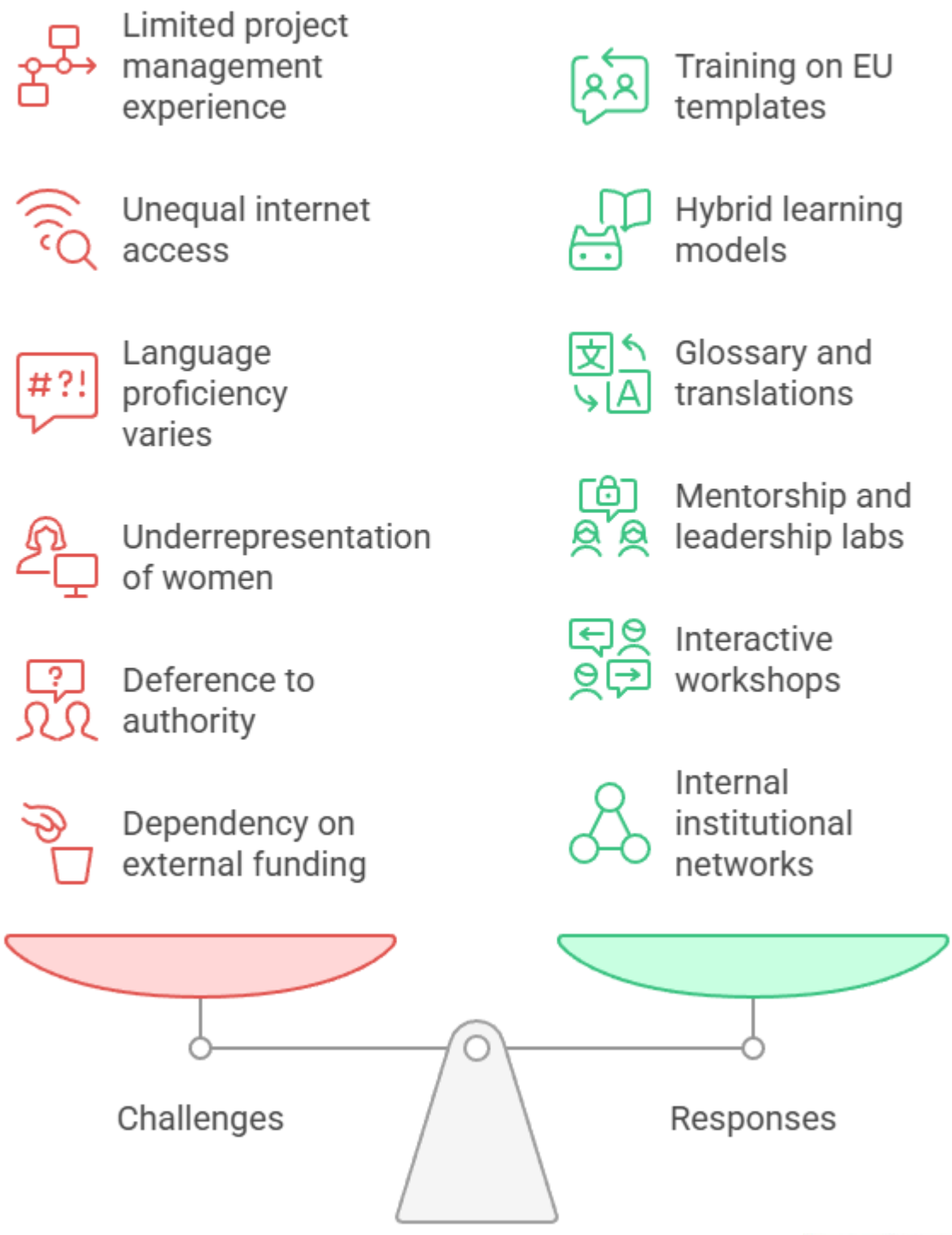
Practical Tools for Inclusive Project Management

Addressing Regional Challenges with Inclusive Responses



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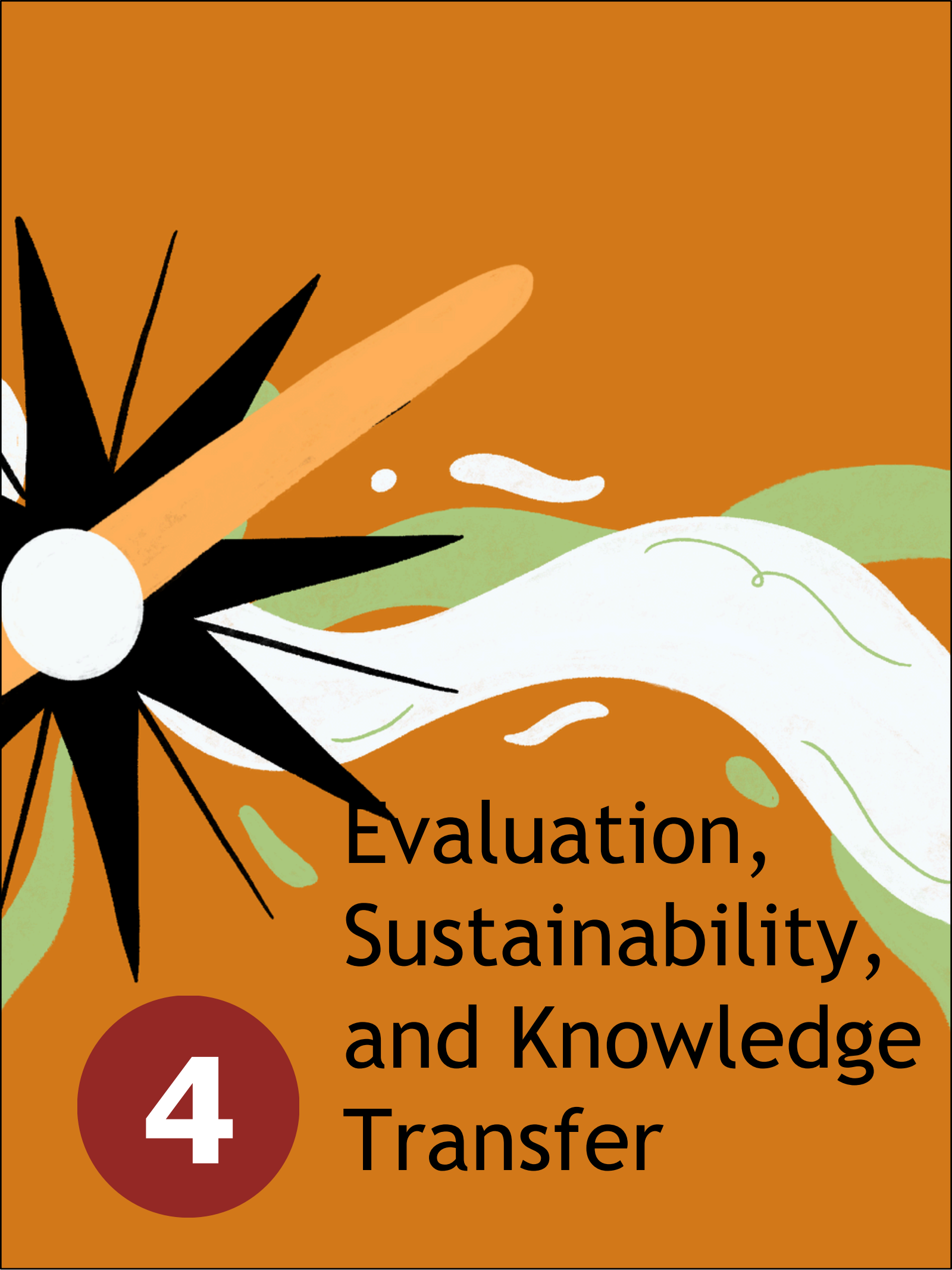

4 Evaluation, Sustainability, and Knowledge Transfer

4.1 Assessing Inclusivity and Engagement

Evaluation must go beyond quantitative indicators to capture the quality of inclusion.

Key assessment tools include:

- Inclusivity Scorecards: Track participation diversity across gender, age, disability, and institutional representation.
- Engagement Mapping: Measure how actively partners contribute in meetings, decision-making, and dissemination.
- Feedback Loops: Establish safe, anonymous channels for feedback — especially for underrepresented voices.

A mixed-method approach (quantitative + qualitative) ensures that project evaluation captures both outcomes and experiences. For example, you can implement a "Reflection Café" format — informal, facilitated dialogues where participants discussed inclusion challenges, later integrated into policy recommendations.

👉 Key reflection: "If we do not measure inclusion, we risk mistaking visibility for participation."

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Practical Tools for Inclusive Project Management

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

01 Retention Rate

Percentage of participants from underrepresented groups who successfully complete the project within the program.

02 Sense of Belonging Index

Surveys to gauge satisfaction and psychological safety of participants and stakeholders involved with inclusivity projects and initiatives.

03 Diversity in Decision-Making

Representation of vulnerable groups in governance structures, affirming that every perspective influences actions relating to inclusion.

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4.2 Validating Learning Outcomes

To ensure credibility and transferability, learning outcomes must be validated against international frameworks such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) or ESCO Competence Frameworks.

Steps to validate inclusive learning:
Define measurable competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes).
Use micro-credentials or digital badges to recognize achievements.
Engage external evaluators for impartial validation.

In some projects, learning validation integrates self-assessment tools for emotional intelligence, empathy, and digital citizenship — vital competences for online inclusion.

👉 Key reflection: "Validation transforms learning into legacy — ensuring that inclusion is recognized, not just practiced."

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4.3 Disseminating Inclusive Practices

Sustainability depends on how well results are shared, adapted, and adopted.

Dissemination should therefore be interactive, inclusive, and continuous.

Multi-format Dissemination:

- Use podcasts, infographics, short videos, and policy briefs to reach varied audiences.
- Inclusive Networks: Engage ministries, NGOs, schools, and student associations to co-own results.
- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships: Encourage replication through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and peer learning events.

Projects like UNICATION demonstrate that sustainable dissemination is not about volume, but connection. Their success came from co-created platforms where results evolved into open educational resources accessible worldwide.

👉 Key reflection: "Knowledge becomes sustainable only when it is shared — not as a product, but as a relationship."

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Action Plan for Barrier Elimination

This table details how the project manager should translate barrier identification into **corrective measures** and **responsibilities**.

Identified Barrier	Specific Corrective Measure	Responsible (HEI)	Deadline
Content Accessibility	All training materials must be available in accessible formats (DAISY, Braille).	Content Manager and Technical Team	Before Module Launch
Multilingual Communication	Ensure interpretation services or translation for non-official languages (when relevant).	Communication Coordinator	During synchronous events
Cultural/Social Stigma	Inclusion of a mandatory training module on Cultural Sensitivity for all project staff and host staff.	HR/Training Staff	Pre-mobility
Inaccessible Accommodation	Auditing and pre-booking of adapted accommodation for participants with disabilities	Mobility Manager	3 months before arrival

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The Role of AI and Assistive Technologies

Digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are powerful allies in removing barriers, especially in distance learning and communication (blended projects).

AI Tools for Inclusive
Key Phrase: "Technology is not a panacea, but an **inclusion multiplier**."

Barrier Type	Assistive Technology/AI	Project Advantage
Visual/Reading	Voice Narration (Text-to-Speech)	Makes documents and presentations (PPT) accessible to participants with visual impairment.
Communication/ Auditory	Real-Time Captioning	Essential in virtual meetings for deaf/hard-of-hearing participants and for non-native speakers (improves comprehension)
Linguistic	High-Quality Automatic Translation	Facilitates written communication between partners from different regions (e.g., Asia-Europe), reducing misunderstandings

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5 Internationalization Strategies and Leadership for Inclusion

5.1 Adapting to Change: The New Paradigm of Global Education

The internationalization of higher education is no longer limited to mobility or exchange; it has evolved into a transformational process that demands equity, empathy, and adaptability.

In a world shaped by digital acceleration and socio-political uncertainty, inclusive projects must prepare institutions not only to compete globally, but to collaborate responsibly.

To adapt, leaders and institutions should focus on three dimensions:

1. Digital Transformation for Inclusion

Digitalization must serve as a tool for democratization — expanding access to learning, not reinforcing exclusion.

- Use open educational resources (OER) and MOOCs to reach learners in remote regions.
- Ensure digital platforms are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Incorporate AI ethically to personalize learning while safeguarding data privacy.

2. Continuous Professional Growth

International projects must invest in people. Leadership is not static; it evolves through reflection, cultural exposure, and lifelong learning. Encourage cross-border mentorship, peer learning, and exposure to new teaching paradigms.

3. Institutional Resilience

Adaptability requires flexible governance. Institutions should revise policies regularly, integrating feedback from diverse stakeholders, and aligning with European frameworks like the European Education Area (EEA) and Horizon Europe's Open Science Principles.

👉 Key reflection: "Adaptability is the new intelligence. In internationalization, the most inclusive institutions are those that evolve, not those that dominate."

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5.2 Best Practices in Inclusive Projects

Inclusive projects succeed when vision, execution, and ethics align. Drawing from European and global experience, several best practices can guide future initiatives:

1. Inclusive Visioning
Start with a shared mission that reflects all voices. Use participatory design methods — workshops, surveys, co-creation sessions — to ensure ownership.

2. Transparency and Accountability
Build trust by maintaining open-access documentation, transparent budgets, and participatory evaluation. This reflects the principles of the Erasmus+ Transparency Charter and EU Code of Conduct for Partnership.

3. Equitable Capacity Building
Transfer knowledge through reciprocal partnerships — avoiding one-way "capacity export."European universities can share frameworks, but must also learn from local practices in the Global South. As seen in UNICATION, Cambodian and Philippine partners introduced innovative community engagement strategies later, trough National Multiplier Events adopted by other HEI around the regions.

4. Measurable, Human-Centered Impact
Quantitative outcomes (trainings, publications, mobility) must be balanced with qualitative impact — empowerment, belonging, and institutional culture change.
Use both Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Human Indicators (KHIs) to measure real transformation.

👉 Key reflection: "A truly inclusive project measures success not only by numbers, but by the dignity it restores."

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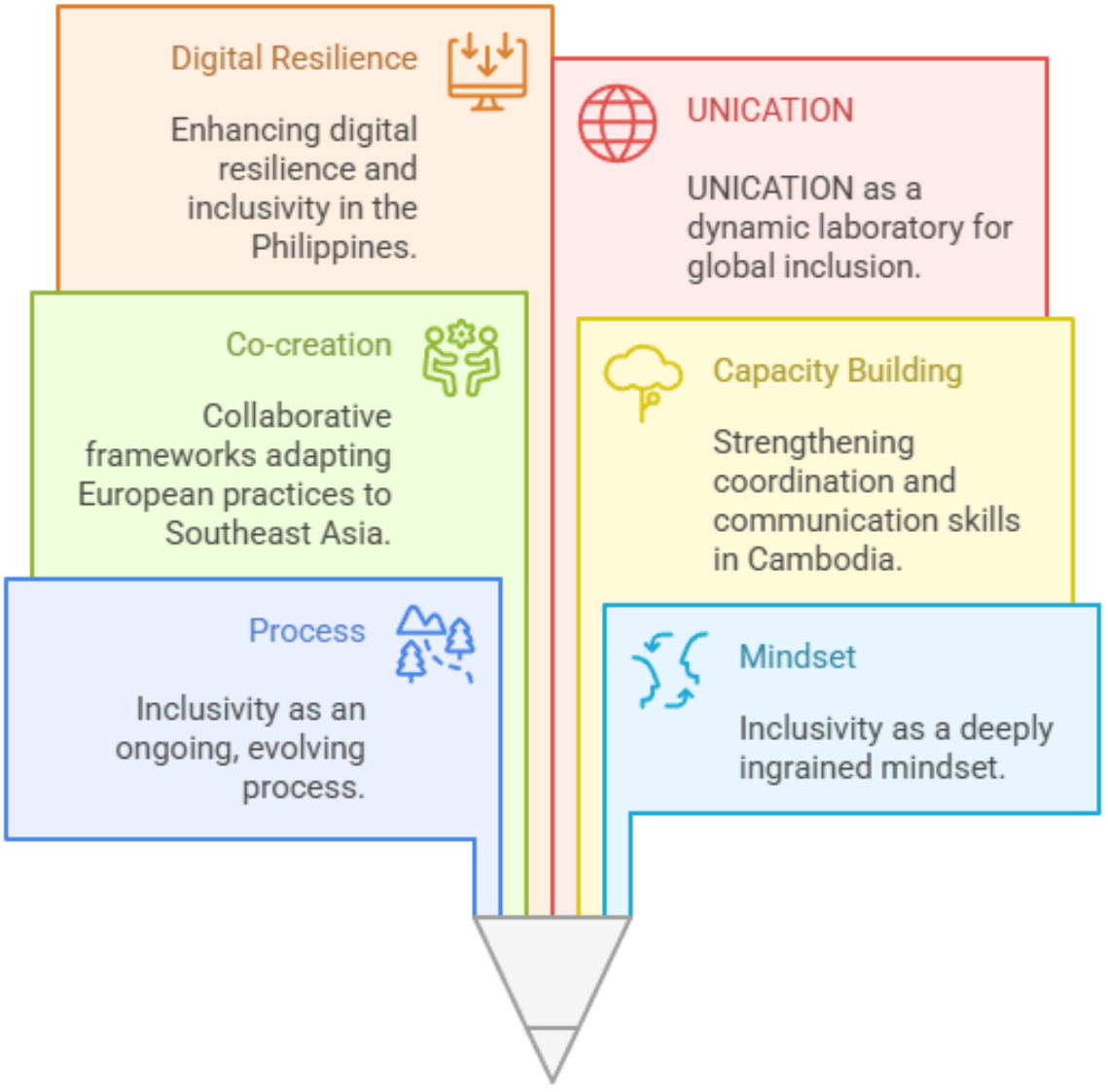
Internationalization Strategies and Leadership for Inclusion

Pathways to Global Inclusion



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5.3 Building Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership is the cornerstone of sustainable internationalization.It combines strategic foresight, emotional intelligence, and ethical commitment.

1. Leading by Example
Leaders set the tone. Inclusion starts with how we conduct meetings, delegate responsibilities, and respond to conflict. As Idalberto Chiavenato reminds us, "people are not resources — they are partners in the creation of value.

"An inclusive leader recognizes diversity not as a challenge, but as an advantage in achieving institutional excellence.

2. Cultural Empathy and Negotiation
Inclusive leaders understand that collaboration across continents means embracing ambiguity and learning from discomfort. Cultural intelligence (CQ) is now as critical as technical expertise — enabling leaders to navigate diverse expectations and values.

3. Empowering Future LeadersLeadership must cascade.
This creates a living legacy of inclusion that extends beyond the project cycle.

4. Purpose-Driven Global Collaboration
Leadership today requires purpose. International cooperation must serve people and planet — aligning with the UNESCO Futures of Education Report (2021), which calls for education rooted in solidarity, sustainability, and social justice.

👉 Key reflection: "Leadership in inclusion is not about holding the spotlight — it's about turning it toward others."

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Internationalization Strategies and Leadership for Inclusion

Competencies for Project Managers

1 **Technical Excellence**

Ensuring projects meet highest standards while promoting inclusive outcomes with comprehensive methods.

2 **Technical Excellence**

Adopting a leadership style prioritizing empathy, cultural awareness, and ethical conduct that bolsters collaborative environments.

3 **Strategic Alugnment**

Connecting project aims with the institution's broader inclusivity goals for sustainable, meaningful diversity and fairness.

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Internationalization Strategies and Leadership for Inclusion

Principles of Inclusive Leadership

Courage and Vulnerability

Acknowledge biases and foster a culture of learning, promoting transparency and continuous skill improvement.

Proactive Conflict Resolution

Quickly address incidents of discrimination and exclusion, creating an environment of respect and immediate aid.

Effective Communication

Use inclusive language in all communications to make every individual feel acknowledged and esteemed.

Mentoring

Establish support systems for participants from underrepresented backgrounds to facilitate their upward mobility and project engagement.

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5.4 Sustaining Change Beyond Funding

Most projects fade when the grant ends. Inclusive leadership ensures continuity. To achieve long-term sustainability:

Institutionalize inclusive practices: integrate them into policies, curricula, and staff training plans.
Create post-project alliances: maintain working groups or alumni networks that continue collaboration.
Diversify funding sources: connect with local governments, private foundations, and social enterprises.
Disseminate through open platforms: publish results as Creative Commons resources to encourage replication.

Projects like UNICATION demonstrate that sustainability is cultural, not financial: by nurturing trust, transparency, and shared ownership, results endure far beyond the funding period.

👉 Key reflection: "The end of a project is not the end of inclusion — it is the beginning of autonomy."

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Closing Remarks

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Closing Remarks

Inclusion Project Checklist

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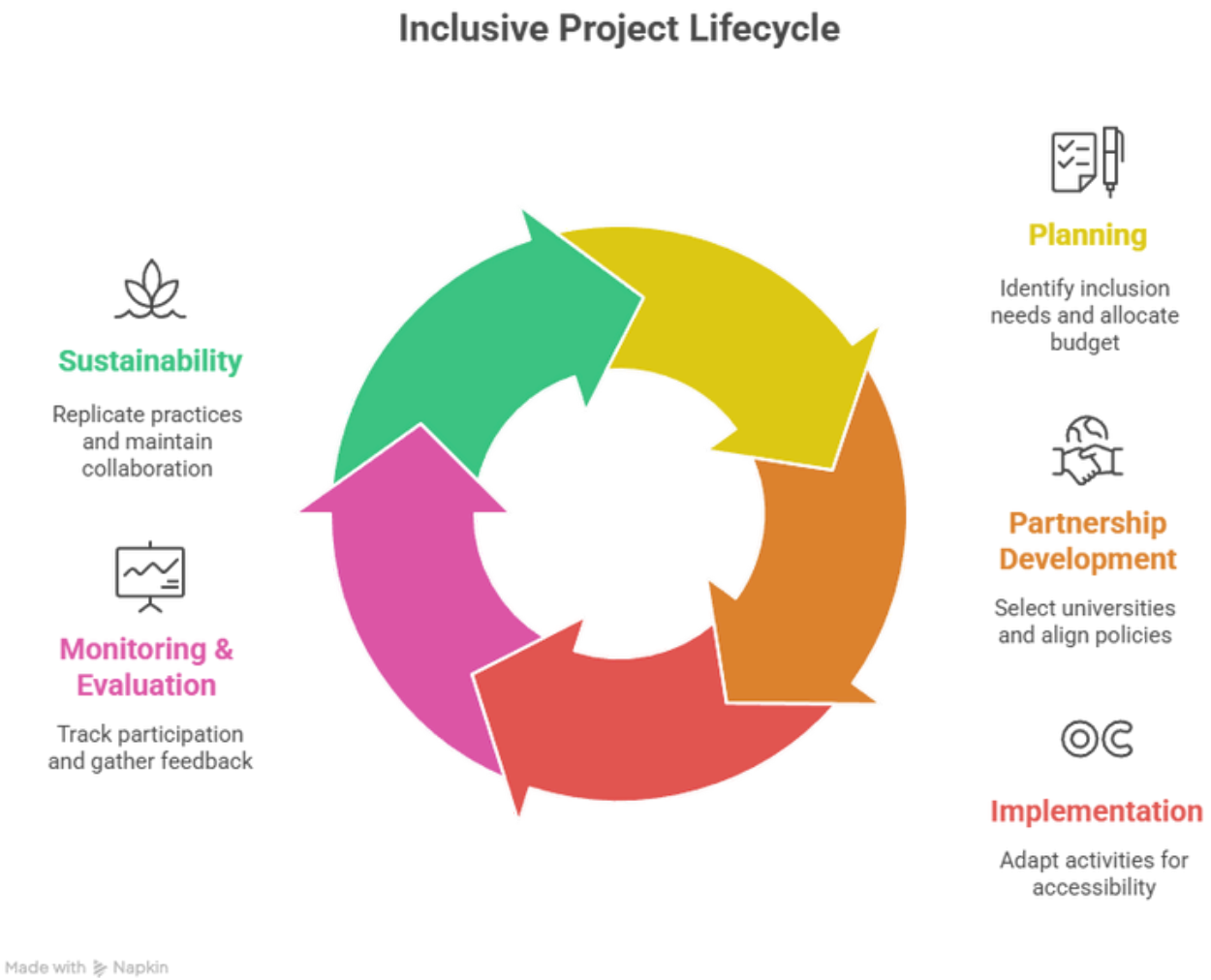
Closing Remarks



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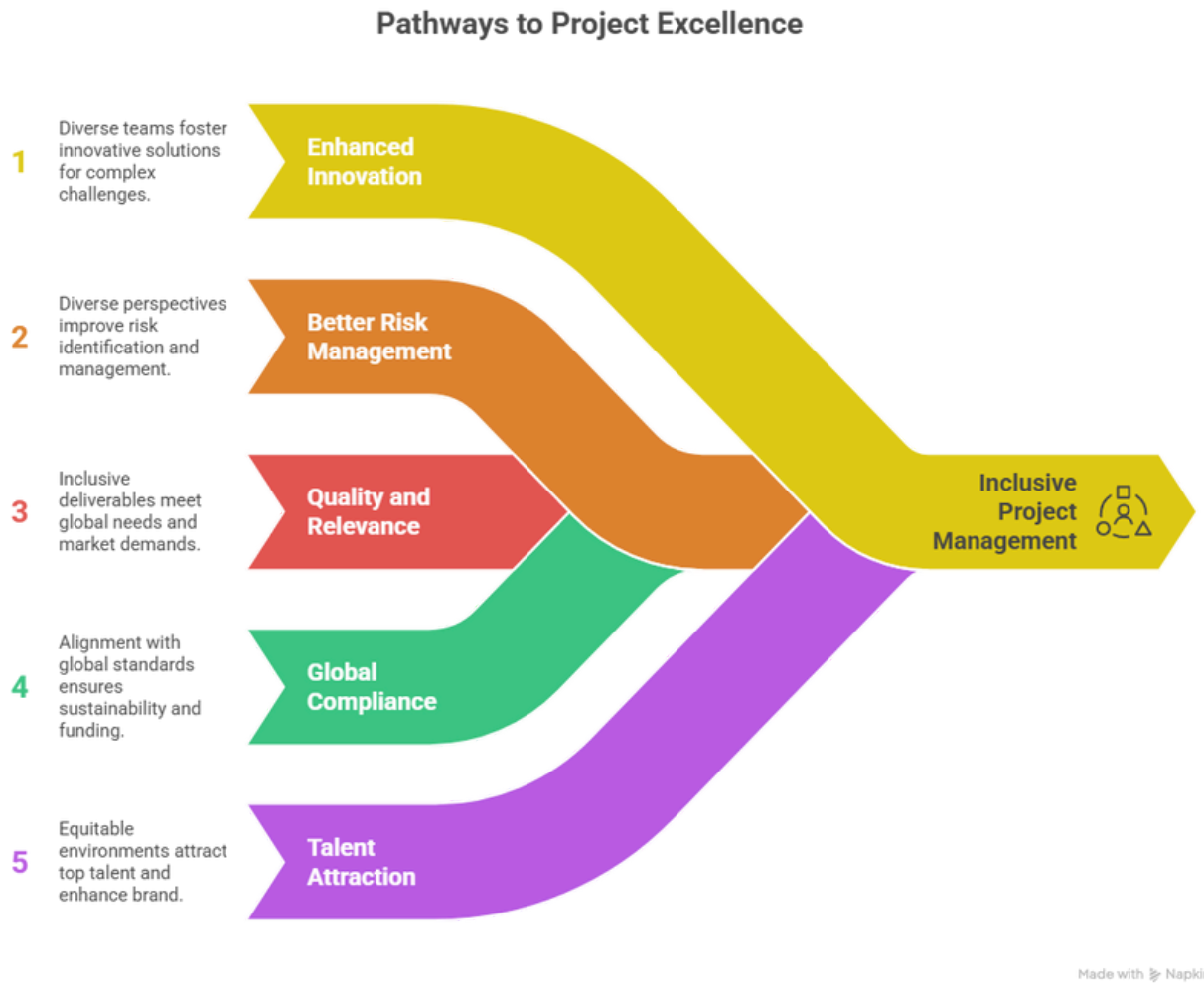
Closing Remarks



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Closing Remarks

As international cooperation and partnerships continue to evolve, the role of non-academic staff will only become more critical. Institutions that embrace a collaborative approach, leverage digital tools, and empower their staff will be best positioned to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities presented by a rapidly changing global landscape.

The journey to becoming a world-leading institution starts with each of you. By taking the steps outlined in this booklet, you can help your institution thrive in an interconnected world, fostering a culture of international collaboration and innovation that will last for generations.

- **Empowerment Through Training and Development:** Continuing to invest in professional development for non-academic staff is key. Encourage attendance at relevant workshops, webinars, and training programs that support internationalization efforts.
- **Create Collaborative Environments:** Foster a culture of collaboration within your institution by actively engaging in international projects and partnerships. Promote communication between departments, international offices, and external partners to streamline processes and maximize impact.
- **Leverage Digital Tools:** Integrate digital solutions that enhance efficiency in managing international mobility, projects, and partnerships. These tools are critical in a post-pandemic world where virtual collaboration is more prevalent than ever.
- **Continuous Evaluation and Feedback:** Measure the success of your internationalization strategies through ongoing evaluation and feedback. This will allow you to refine processes, address challenges, and celebrate successes to maintain momentum.

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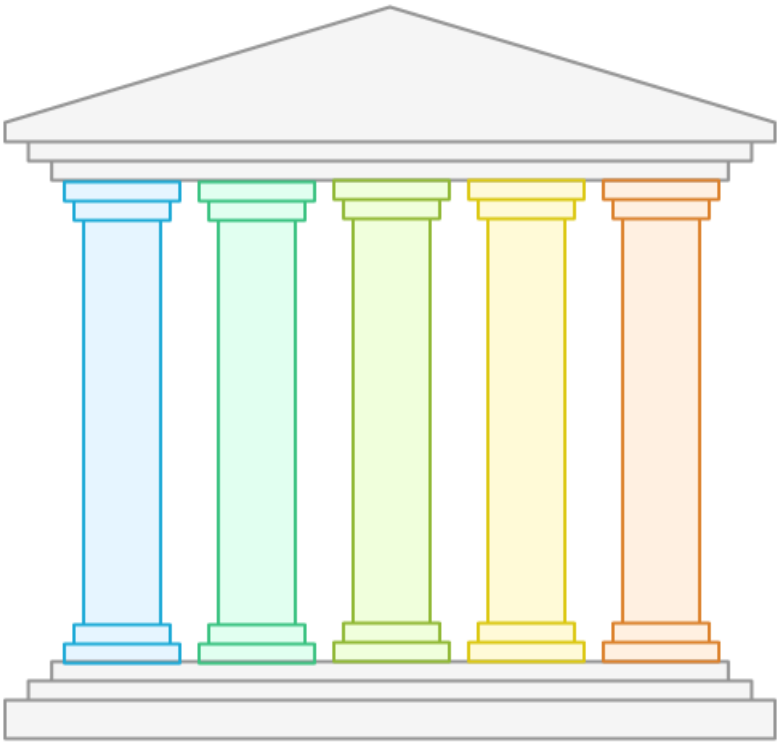
Closing Remarks

UNICATION's Strategic Framework



Policy Dialogue

Fostering discussions between ministries and universities to align strategies with EHEA principles.

Joint Curricula & Staff Development

Embedding European best practices in curricula and staff training.

EU-ASEAN Collaboration

Adapting European models of governance and quality assurance to the Asian context.

Institutional Leadership & Management

Strengthening universities' capacity to manage projects aligned with Erasmus+ standards.

Regional Cooperation

Encouraging collaboration within Southeast Asia using European frameworks.

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FURTHER READING

Key Publications & Guidelines

European Commission – Erasmus+ Inclusion & Diversity Strategy (2021–2027)Defines inclusion as a transversal priority in all Erasmus+ actions. It emphasizes removing barriers to participation, supporting institutions in developing inclusive strategies, and ensuring that diversity enhances innovation.
https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu

OECD – Enhancing Higher Education Internationalization (2023)Provides a policy framework for promoting equity in global engagement, underlining that inclusion and innovation are mutually reinforcing drivers of quality.
https://www.oecd.org/education/internationalization-higher-education.htm

European University Association (EUA) – Internationalization Strategies for HEIs (2022)Offers practical recommendations for building sustainable and ethical global partnerships, emphasizing leadership, governance, and social responsibility.
https://www.eua.eu/issues/24:internationalisation.html

UNESCO – Higher Education Policy and Internationalization (2021)Presents a global vision for inclusive and equitable education, aligning higher education with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Futures of Education agenda.
https://www.unesco.org/en/higher-education

Key Reference: "Equity and inclusion are not peripheral aims of higher education — they are the defining conditions for its legitimacy in the 21st century."— UNESCO, Futures of Education Report (2021)

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FURTHER READING

Best Practices & Cooperation Tools

International Association of Universities (IAU) - Global Perspectives on HE Internationalization
https://www.iau-aiu.net/Internationalization

European Commission - Guide to Building Higher Education Partnerships
https://education.ec.europa.eu

British Council - The Shape of Global HE Internationalization
https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/higher-education

EURAXESS - Funding & Mobility Opportunities for HE Staff
https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu

Materials Behind This Booklet

Online Training Module 1: How to Build an Inclusive Project – ULisboa, IST
July 9 and 10, 2024

Presential Training Module 1: Building Bridges – Practical Approaches to Inclusivity and Global Collaboration – ULisboa, IST
25 nov, 2024
27 nov, 2024

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Natacha Moniz is Portuguese and an experienced professional in internationalization and project management within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). With a strong background in coordinating international cooperation projects, she has been actively involved in capacity-building initiatives, fostering institutional engagement, and promoting inclusive global partnerships.

She has contributed to several international projects, particularly within EU-funded programs in Africa, Asia and Latin America, focusing on sustainability, quality and knowledge exchange in higher education. Her expertise lies in strategic planning, policy development, and cross-border collaboration, ensuring the successful implementation of global education initiatives.

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EDITORIAL INFO

This booklet was developed in 2025 as part of Deliverable D6.4 – "Recommendations for Exploitation" within the UNICATION Project (Unify Communication by International Projects in Cambodia and Philippines).

This deliverable corresponds to Work Package 6: Dissemination and Exploitation, and this contribute was led by **Natacha Moniz** from the **Instituto Superior Técnico- Universidade de Lisboa**. The Booklet consolidates the main results and lessons learned throughout the UNICATION project- Module 1 Inclusivity in Project Management, serving as a reference document for the Final Conference (M24) and for future replication of inclusive international cooperation practices.

Deliverable Reference: **D6.4 – Recommendations for Exploitation**
Type: Report (R)
Dissemination Level: Public (PU)
Delivery Date: Month 24 (November 2025)
Publication Platform: UNICATION Project Website
Citation suggestion: UNICATION Consortium (2025). Inclusion in International Projects: A Guide for HEIs. Erasmus+ Project UNICATION – Coordinated by Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisbon University.

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