



RESTRUCTURING PAPER  
ON A  
PROPOSED PROJECT RESTRUCTURING  
OF  
TUNISIA TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT  
APPROVED ON FEBRUARY 25, 2016  
TO

MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT, INVESTMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

EDUCATION

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

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**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ANPR	National Agency for the Advancement of Scientific Research ( <i>Agence Nationale de Promotion de la Recherche</i> )
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
DGET	Department of Technological Studies ( <i>Direction Générale des Etudes Technologiques</i> )
EES	University Faculty ( <i>établissement d'enseignement supérieur</i> )
GoT	Government of Tunisia
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IP	Implementation Performance
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
IRI	Intermediate Result Indicator
ISSET	Higher Institute of Technology ( <i>Institut Supérieur d'Etudes Technologiques</i> )
ISR	Implementation Status and Results Report
MoHESR	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAQ	Competitive Fund Scheme for Quality Support Program ( <i>Programme d'Appui à la Qualité</i> )
PAQ 4C	PAQ for Career and Competency Certification Centers
PAQ DGSE	PAQ for Strategic Development of Faculties ( <i>PAQ - Développement de la Gestion Stratégique des Etablissements d'Enseignement Supérieur</i> )
PAQ DGSU	PAQ for Strategic Development of Universities ( <i>PAQ - Développement de la Gestion Stratégique des Universités</i> )
PAQ MOBIDOC	PAQ for Mobility of Doctorates and Post-doctorates Students ( <i>Mobilité des Doctorants</i> )
PAQ PAES	PAQ for Scientific Pre-initiation and Spin-off ( <i>Pré-amorçage et Essaimage Scientifique</i> )
PAQ Post-PFE	PAQ for End of Studies Project ( <i>Projet de Fin d'Etudes</i> )
PAQ PRICE	PAQ Integrated Program of Competency Certification for Employment
PAQ PROOUES	PAQ for the Regional Offices of Student Affairs ( <i>Offices des Oeuvres Universitaires</i> )
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PDO	Project Development Objective
RF	Results Framework
SOP	Strategic and Operational Plan
VUT	Virtual University of Tunis



**BASIC DATA**

**Product Information**

Project ID P151059	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing
Original EA Category Not Required (C)	Current EA Category Not Required (C)
Approval Date 25-Feb-2016	Current Closing Date 31-Dec-2021

**Organizations**

Borrower Ministry of Development, Investment and International Cooperation	Responsible Agency Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, National Agency for the Advancement of Scientific Research
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**Project Development Objective (PDO)**

Original PDO

The objective of the Tertiary Education for Employability Project (TEEP) is to improve the employability of tertiary education graduates and to strengthen the management of higher education.

**Summary Status of Financing**

Ln/Cr/Tf	Approval	Signing	Effectiveness	Closing	Net		
					Commitment	Disbursed	Undisbursed
IBRD-85900	25-Feb-2016	03-Mar-2016	30-Nov-2016	31-Dec-2021	70.00	25.78	44.60

**Policy Waiver(s)**

Does this restructuring trigger the need for any policy waiver(s)?

No



## I. PROJECT STATUS AND RATIONALE FOR RESTRUCTURING

### A. Project Status

#### Project Context

1. **The Tertiary Education for Employability Project's (TEEP) objectives are: (a) to improve the employability of tertiary education graduates and (b) to strengthen the management of higher education.** TEEP follows on two operations: Tunisia Higher Education Reform Support Projects I and II implemented between 1998-2004 and 2008-2014, respectively. The objectives of the Tunisia Higher Education Reform Support Project II were to improve the knowledge, competencies, and skills of graduates so they can contribute to a more knowledge based and diversified economy. In 2017/18 there were 272,261 students enrolled in Higher Education Institutions<sup>1</sup> (HEI) and female students are over-represented with a gender ratio of 63 percent. TEEP builds and expands on key interventions introduced through these previous projects, such as strengthening quality assurance mechanisms and institutional autonomy of universities, and introducing a grant program to improve academic quality and institutional performance of HEIs. TEEP was approved by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors on February 25, 2016 and became effective on November 30, 2016. Approximately 65 percent of the loan amount (equivalent to Euro 44 million) finances activities implemented by universities and faculties<sup>2</sup> (*établissements d'enseignement supérieur* [EES]) through a competitive fund mechanism (*Programme d'appui à la qualité* [PAQ]).<sup>3</sup> Another 20 percent of the loan amount (equivalent to Euro 12.5 million) finances the provision of performance sub-grants for universities (i.e. performance-based financing). The remaining loan amount (about 15 percent of the loan) finances technical assistance (TA) activities (equivalent to Euro 7.6 million) to strengthen the higher education system by enhancing university autonomy, accountability, and innovation. The project consists of two components: (a) improving employability of tertiary education graduates (estimated at Euro 33 million); and (b) strengthening the management of higher education (estimated at Euro 31.3 million) aligned with each of TEEP's main two outcomes objectives.

2. **PAQ competitive funds are the principal mechanism used by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR) to implement TEEP activities and to achieve the project objectives.** PAQs provide incentive measures to support sub-projects that help universities and faculties to better link education with the labor market; improve employability skills of students; measure employment outcomes of graduates; carry out key functions of internal quality assurance (IQA); promote academic excellence, research and innovation; strengthen quality service

<sup>1</sup> In this restructuring paper "higher education institution" (HEI) encompasses public universities, faculties, higher institutes of technology, research centers and/or laboratories.

<sup>2</sup> The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Tunisia distinguishes between universities (13 public universities) and several faculties or institutes within each university (*établissement d'enseignement supérieur* [EES]). There are around 203 EESs usually grouped into universities based on their geographic location. In addition, there are 25 Higher Institutes of Technological Studies (*Institut Supérieur d'Etudes Technologiques*) grouped under the Department of Technological Studies (*Direction Générale des Etudes Technologiques* [DGET]). The DGET is considered as a 14<sup>th</sup> public university and as such is eligible to apply for competitive funds, the same way each ISET can also apply to competitive funds as well. The 25 ISET are located across Tunisia.

<sup>3</sup> Competitive funds or PAQs in the case of Tunisia is a competitive grants scheme. Public universities or a university faculty submit(s) project proposal(s) on specific topics (e.g. improving students' entrepreneurship and graduates' employability) to funding windows in the competitive fund/PAQs. These proposals are then evaluated based on a set of pre-determined criteria by a committee of experts, which may include industry experts, depending on the topic of the call for proposals. If a proposal is approved and funding disbursed, the university/faculty starts implementing the proposal. The proposal implementation period is typically about 1-3 years (some Collaboration grants have a three-year implementation period, once the first payment is disbursed to universities/faculties).



delivery and management capacity; increase institutional efficiency and effectiveness; support applied research with the private sector, as well as instill and maintain a model of innovative university and entrepreneurial culture. The success of TEEP is measured by its support to a large demand for, and implementation of, sub-projects addressing issues of tertiary students' skills training as well as the improvement of management, efficiency, effectiveness and overall quality of services in universities and faculties. The primary beneficiaries of TEEP are students enrolled in tertiary education as well as academic and administrative staff involved in PAQ design and implementation. The preparation and implementation of PAQs involve a range of institutions including universities, faculties, research centers, laboratories and private companies. TEEP also supports HEIs in the collection and publication of information on graduates' employment outcomes (tracer studies), career paths and job qualifications on student web platforms, and guidance of secondary school students on their choice of education programs with better employment prospects.

**3. TEEP's first objective of improving employability of tertiary students - mainly through PAQ competitive funds - is expected to be achieved by supporting supply side measures to better align students' skills and competencies with labor market needs<sup>4</sup>** (see Annex 1: TEEP theory of change). In addition to top-notch academic/technical skills, a comprehensive set of employability skills plays a pivotal role in students' entry into the job market and in keeping a job. A recent global review of survey evidence of employers' perspectives (Cunningham and Villaseñor 2014) revealed that employers view employability skills (reliability, grit, communication, teamwork) as the most important set of skills, followed by cognitive skills (for example problem solving skills). Employability skills are also referred to as socio-emotional, soft or transferable skills. In many cases, employers identified the lack of employability skills as more important than the gap in technical skills. These results are quite robust across different regions, countries, professions, and education levels. The 2014 Tunisia Investment Climate Survey echoed these global findings and noted that for innovative firms, who tend to recruit more university graduates, "lack of qualifications in the labor force is a significant barrier, but more so in soft skills rather than hard technical skills". This is a problem faced by all firms in Tunisia, but it is critically important for innovative firms that compete in global markets. In the Global Competitiveness Index, Tunisia ranks highest among comparable countries in the MENA region in terms of availability of scientists and engineers, ranking 8th out of 142 countries globally [...] followed by Jordan at number 20 then Lebanon at 30. However, jobs at the higher end of the value chain also require good communications and marketing skills. One-on-one interviews with business leaders and entrepreneurs indicated that "the labor force does not suffer from lack of technicians, ICT, engineering and science specialists. The problem lies in the employability skills such as languages, marketing and communications skills."<sup>5</sup>

**4. The above challenges highlight the importance for HEIs in Tunisia to invest in employability of their students by giving them access to opportunities to acquire these employability skills.** Moreover, as part of its recommendations, the Tunisia Investment Climate report emphasizes that "government can put into place incentive mechanisms and national policy to assist enterprises in attracting and developing high-level talent skills, such as linking talent/skills training to performance". In line with this and in addition to the PAQ-competitive funds, TEEP includes the implementation of a first phase of performance-based contract for universities that will serve as a future model for financing universities programs and training based on agreed results to be achieved.

#### Project Implementation and Proactivity

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<sup>4</sup> OECD (2017), In-Depth Analysis of the Labor Market Relevance and Outcomes of Higher Education Systems: Analytical Framework and Country Practices Report, Enhancing Higher Education System Performance, OECD, Paris

<sup>5</sup> For more see: World Bank, 2014, Tunisia Investment Climate Survey, Washington, D.C; Laura Brewer Skills and Employability Department International Labor Organization, Enhancing youth employability: What? Why? and How? Guide to core work skills, May 2013; A Guiding Framework for Entrepreneurial Universities, EC & OECD, 2012, p.2.



5. **From its inception TEEP experienced effectiveness and implementation delays.** There were four causes: (a) the loan's eight-month parliamentary ratification process pushed back the declaration of effectiveness to January 2017; (b) a change of Minister just as the project became effective, which created a review of sector priorities; (c) a one-year consultation process for a National Forum for the Reform of Higher Education and Scientific Research<sup>6</sup> held in December 2017; and, (d) hurdles to contract adequate staff for the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in the ministry. One must underline that the National Forum played a pivotal role to set out the strategic priorities and interventions for the higher education reform. It also validated the use of TEEP, particularly the competitive fund mechanism<sup>7</sup> to support the reform's implementation. It shifted the attention of HEIs on delivering more and better results linked with priorities aligned for the higher education reform. This strong sector-wide ownership continues to benefit the project

6. **The project has been proactively restructured to accelerate implementation. The first project restructuring<sup>8</sup> in April 2018 simplified procurement arrangements and improved efficiency.** This was achieved by: (a) cancelling some TA activities while merging others into larger single contracts; (b) merging competitive fund windows related to universities and faculties' management capacity into single "mega-PAQs"<sup>9</sup> to reduce administrative processes, and to maximize the coherence and impact of these funds for universities and faculties; and (c) adapting the performance-based contract scheme to provide additional financial incentives linked to a set of agreed indicators. These modifications reduced the burden of procurement and contract management on the PIU while increasing the disbursement rate. The consolidation of competitive funds into fewer, larger PAQs initially required more time to process calls for proposals and award grants (at least 12 months from preparation of the TORs for the new competitive fund window to grant signing) to ensure due technical and fiduciary diligence, but once completed they ensure larger onetime disbursements as well as more scale and scope for activities implemented by universities and faculties (see details about processing and implementation of Mega-PAQs in the next section on project achievements).

7. **To make TEEP implementation more agile, a second restructuring was approved in September 2019 to delegate the implementation of one large, new competitive fund window, the PAQ-MOBIDOC, to the Agency for the Advancement of Scientific Research (*Agence Nationale de Promotion de la Recherche [ANPR]*).** This brought in additional implementation capacity and aligned project implementation with existing national responsibilities. The PAQ-MOBIDOC supports the international mobility of doctoral and post-doctoral students and has an envelope of Euro 2.5 million. Promoting the international mobility of PhD students and post-doc researchers to pursue research and training abroad generates better international networks, improvements in researchers' professional development and academic performance, more and higher quality research outputs, and better career outcomes.<sup>10</sup> Researchers who benefit from international experience bring back increased skills and expertise upon their return to Tunisia, which improves the quality of research and teaching in Tunisia. Further, the second restructuring increased the World Bank

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<sup>6</sup> *Les Assises Nationales de la Réforme de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique.*

<sup>7</sup> Lessons learned from PARES II (Tunisia Higher Education Reform Support Project) indicated that building ownership among key stakeholders from the onset led to successful implementation of the PAQ

<sup>8</sup> This first restructuring approved in April 2018 resulted in decreasing the allocation in Category 3 of the Loan Agreement "Goods, non-consulting services, and consultants' services" from Euro 12,239,250 to Euro 7,639,250 and reallocating funds between Category 1 "Competitive Sub grants for Subprojects under Parts 1.1 and 2.1 of the Project" and Category 2 "Performance Sub grants for Subprojects under Part 2.2".

<sup>9</sup> In the months following the first restructuring, three mega-PAQs were created: (1) PAQ DGSU to finance the strategic development plan of universities estimated at Euro 16 million; (2) the PAQ DGSE to finance the strategic development plan of HEIs estimated at Euro 10 million; and (3) the PAQ PROQUES to finance the modernization of students facilities (rooms and restaurants) including social and cultural services to benefit students estimated at Euro 4 million.

<sup>10</sup> For example, for a literature review on the benefits of international mobility for researchers, see Susan Guthrie, Catherine Lichten, Jennie Corbett and Steven Wooding, 2017, *International Mobility of Researchers – A Review of the Literature*, Rand Corporation Europe, Cambridge, U.K.



financing for competitive sub-grants for sub-projects under components 1.1 and 1.2 from 90 to 100 percent to relieve financial constraints faced by the Borrower, which had had a negative impact on implementation, and thus on disbursement.

### Recent Project Achievements

**8. Despite implementation delays over the last two years, substantial progress towards the achievement of the PDO indicators and the intermediate indicators has been made and the following provides a summary of the highlights.** The proposed updates to the results framework (RF) presented further below indicate that three out of four outcome indicators have been achieved and/or exceeded their target for 2019. Some of these achievement include:

**9. Some recent activities and results achieved at the end of 2019 for each component are summarized below.<sup>11</sup>**

### **Achievements<sup>12</sup> of Component 1: Improving Employability of Graduates**

(a) **4,300 students benefited from career guidance training and employability skills competency certification** through the PAQ 4C (Career and Competency Certification Centers) and PAQ PRICE (Integrated Program of Competency Certification for Employment). For instance, the Higher Institute for Food Industries of Tunis (*Ecole Supérieure des Industries Alimentaires de Tunisie*) currently implements a PAQ PRICE that allows students to learn about job requirements directly from food sector professionals. A web platform published job offers with qualification requirements and allows students to post their Curriculum Vitae. An estimated 1,200 students have been certified in transferable skills through PAQs 4C and PRICE, while several thousands are currently taking classes on employability skills for which they will receive a certification in 2020 and 2021.

(b) **200 students are enrolled in five brand-new education programs co-designed with employers (PAQ co-construction).** Studies among United Kingdom graduates showed that structured work experience and employer involvement in degree course design and delivery have clear positive effects on the ability of graduates to secure employment in 'graduate-level' jobs.<sup>13</sup> With funding from the project, faculties partnered with employers, industry associations and company representatives to develop academic programs<sup>14</sup> to ensure labor market relevance and the quality and employability of graduates. A further, 39 grants<sup>15</sup> have been awarded in 2019 to introduce further employer co-designed programs in the academic year 2020/21. Examples of these employer co-designed programs include video game developer and programmers, R&D for engineering, cyber-security, and on maintenance for heavy machinery.

(c) **71 grants for academia-business applied research projects** have been funded through the following competitive funds: Collabora, PAES (Scientific Pre-initiation and Spin-off [*Pré-amorçage et Essaimage Scientifique*]) and Post PFE (End of Studies Project [*Projet de Fin d'Etudes*]). These develop students' entrepreneurial skills, particularly doctoral candidates, for creating spinoff or startup companies for the most

<sup>11</sup> More details are included in Annex 2

<sup>12</sup> Achievements are presented first by outcomes linked to the PDO and then intermediate results as displayed in the results framework.

<sup>13</sup> Mason Geoff, Williams Gareth, Cranmer Sue, 2019, Employability skills initiatives in higher education: what effects do they have on graduate labor market outcomes?, Education Economics Volume 17, 2009 - Issue 1

<sup>14</sup> It usually means adding courses with direct link to the labor market in an existing degree.

<sup>15</sup> Some smaller grants are awarded to support HEIs in developing plan and lay-outs for new education program co-designed with employers.



successful projects. Although these sub-projects involve a limited number of doctoral students and academic staff, they are critical for promoting the practical application of research by bringing together universities and the private sector to spur innovation, create value and new products. For instance, the Higher Institute of Biotechnology of Sidi Thabet collaborate with the Laboratory of Physiopathology Food and Biomolecules of Manouba University in Tunisia and the Higher Institute of Applied Biology of Medenine from Gabes University in Tunisia in setting up a pilot unit for the production of fresh cheeses made from milk of different animal species supplemented with aromatic plants. Another example is Sfax University, which together with several private companies have set up a collaborative platform based on artificial intelligence for identifying radicalized profiles on social networks.

(d) **High level of student-beneficiary satisfaction with the competitive fund<sup>16</sup> supported employability activities:** About 82 percent of 1,500 student-respondents in the January 2020 Employability Skills and Satisfaction Survey<sup>17</sup> considered the employability activities<sup>18</sup> they participated in as either “very important” or “important” in facilitating their future entry into the labor market, and 92 percent would recommend the employability activities to their peers. High level of satisfaction with employability training is a key outcome indicator showing that HEIs are delivering relevant activities in support of future graduates’ insertion in the job market. Two follow-up employability surveys are planned: the first follow up survey will take place towards the end of the 2020 calendar year and the second follow up in 2021. Both follow-up surveys will include an additional module to track employment outcomes of recent graduates in addition to employability skills and aim to identify whether the employability skills acquired through participation in PAQ-supported employability activities helped graduates to find a job in their respective fields and/or to maintain their current employment.

(e) **145 universities and faculties organized events/activities for future high school graduates during the last academic year,** such as open-door events, workshops and dissemination of information on websites with the aim to facilitate the orientation of students towards tertiary education. Better information on academic programs and labor market outcomes could also lead to improved students’ motivation and performance.

(f) **Five public universities published information about their academic programs, professional qualifications requirements and career opportunities on a central online platform last year to facilitate secondary school students’ choice of disciplines and career paths.** The objective is for all universities and their faculties to become more transparent and share relevant information, particularly on labor market outcomes of recent graduates. Furthermore, eight public universities participated in a tracer study of employment outcomes<sup>19</sup> for 2016-2017 graduates from engineering faculties, of which the results will be published in June 2020. These results will also help inform employability activities under TEEP.

## Achievements<sup>20</sup> of Component 2: Strengthening the Management of Higher Education

<sup>16</sup> Eight PAQs have for purpose and/or objective to develop students’ employability skills. These eight PAQs are: (i) PAQ PAES; (ii) PAQ Collabora; (iii) PAQ Post PFE; (iv) PAQ MOBIDOC; (v) PAQ Co-construction; (vi) PAQ PRICE for Universities; (vii) PAQ PRICE for Faculties; and (viii) PAQ 4C.

<sup>17</sup> The survey was conducted among 3,000 students participating in competitive fund-PAQ-supported projects focused on improving employability skills. Given the initial project and competitive fund delays, the survey could not take place before January 2020, as the competitive fund supported employability activities had to start implementation first in order to determine satisfaction with the quality of the activities.

<sup>18</sup> The employability activities consisted/consist in training of soft or transferable skills, entrepreneurship; gaining international research experience through scholarships to conduct research abroad; or different types of collaboration with the private sector.

<sup>19</sup> Source: <http://www.tuned.rnu.tn/> Tunisian Network for Employability and Development of graduates' skills

<sup>20</sup> Achievements are presented first by outcomes linked to the PDO and then intermediate results as displayed in the results framework.





(g) **TEEP has already achieved important outcomes for strengthening the management of higher education.** One important outcome is the elaboration and validation of Strategic and Operational Plans (SOP) by eight public universities. The remaining six universities are in the final stages of the plan validation phase. These plans were developed over an 18 months period, with technical assistance from TEEP, following the National Forum for the Reform of Higher Education and Scientific Research in December 2017. SOPs were based on an institutional benchmarking exercise of each university, set the priorities for the next few years, and operationalize these priorities in a work plan.

(h) **Another ongoing achievement is the enhancement of universities' and faculties' own Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) process.** IQA relates to the monitoring of all teaching, learning and assessment activities. They largely center on academic program reviews, based on self-evaluation/benchmarking and peer reviews, as part of a continuous academic improvement process, which also includes the labor-market relevance of programs and their content. IQA is seen as an essential element in improving higher education quality and is systematically used by the top academic institutions,<sup>21</sup> e.g. in Canada, the European Union and many other countries worldwide. These IQA tools may include: (i) mandatory reviews of all new and substantially revised programs by the university governing body, (ii) curriculum evaluations, (iii) periodic self-study reviews, (iv) student satisfaction surveys, (v) employer satisfaction surveys, (vi) graduate tracer studies, and (vii) peer reviews of programs by external disciplinary experts among others. IQA thus can play a pivotal role in supporting academic excellence and employability. All 13 public universities have an IQA unit, but only one regularly publishes a report on activities carried out. The objective is to strengthen all IQA units to become fully operational and report on activities and progress. This goal will be achieved with the financial support from the PAQ DGSU that were approved in early 2020.

(i) **Several mega-PAQs designed following the consolidation of competitive fund windows during the first restructuring in April 2018 to scale up resources available to universities and faculties and the Ministry itself, have been completed and grants awarded.** They are: (a) the PAQ PROOUES (PAQ for the Regional Offices of Student Affairs [*Directions Régionales des Offices des Oeuvres Universitaires*]) to support new investments for student residences/dormitories, student cafeteria/restaurants, recreation centers and social club activities. Three PAQ PROOUES for a total cost estimated at Euro 4 million were approved in December 2019 and have begun implementation; (b) the PAQ DGSU (PAQ for Strategic Development of Universities (*PAQ - Développement de la Gestion Stratégique des Universités*)). Ten universities were awarded a PAQ DGSU (estimated value is Euro 1.2 million per PAQ) in May 2020 and four universities will complete the process in the next few weeks. The implementation of PAQ DGSU is starting now; and (c) the PAQ DGSE with 132 proposals currently evaluated that will strengthen the management capacity of faculties in the areas of IQA; institutional autonomy; academic excellence in relation with employment; innovation and student services. PAQ DGSE is complementary to the PAC DGSU and each project is estimated on average at Euro 150,000. PAQ DGSE is the largest competitive fund window financed by TEEP.

(j) **A roadmap for a performance-based financing pilot was developed for selected public universities in the fiscal year 2021.**<sup>22</sup> It is planned to implement and evaluate the pilot in FY21, with a potential scale up later on.

#### Project Implementation Progress and Disbursement Projections

<sup>21</sup> For example, see Canada: <https://www.univcan.ca/universities/quality-assurance/the-role-of-universities-in-quality-assurance/>

<sup>22</sup> It is unclear if the pilot will be able to proceed as planned considering the COVID-19 related university and other closures.



10. **The above key successes and progress towards PDO and intermediate indicator achievement have been driven by the acceleration in the implementation as witnessed by the number of prepared and awarded competitive subgrants and the disbursement ratio.** Moreover, several recently completed competitive subgrants have delivered significant outputs<sup>23</sup> in terms of students' certifications, new co-designed academic programs implemented, applied research collaborations with firms and research centers. The strong ownership of MoHESR, HEIs and the PIU have ensured that the TEEP has achieved important results and implementation progress in the last 18 months. As of May 2020, a total of 454 competitive fund sub-projects have been approved and are currently under implementation. Another 132 grant-proposals for the PAQ DGSE (PAQ for Strategic Development of Faculties [PAQ - *Développement de la Gestion Stratégique des Etablissements d'Enseignement Supérieur*]) are currently being evaluated and will be approved by June 2020. The number of PAQs approved in the last 6 to 9 months has more than doubled. This is to be compared with 50 PAQs approved in 2018 and around 115 PAQs in the first 9 months of 2019, respectively. An important contribution to this rapid increase was the approval in December 2019 of 177 PAQs (scholarships) for doctoral and post-doctoral students financed by the PAQ MOBIDOC, which was made possible by the second restructuring.

11. **All of the 11 competitive funds windows have been launched and several fund windows<sup>24</sup> already carried out two or three calls for proposals.** Annex 2 includes a table listing all fund windows and activities by component. More importantly, some fund windows that initially received only a few proposals of uneven quality in the first year of TEEP implementation are now receiving large numbers of good proposals with an approval ratio above 70 percent. All 14 public universities, more than a hundred faculties and a dozen research centers have successfully applied to several fund windows ensuring an equitable regional participation and distribution of HEIs nationally in the competitive fund mechanism (the percentage of young universities<sup>25</sup> for which a PAQ is awarded is an important indicator of TEEP achievement). The rapid increase in the number of PAQs and the high level of participation of many stakeholders in the process have been remarkable achievements for the TEEP. One key TEEP objective included in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) is to scale up and expand the use of competitive funds<sup>26</sup> to other sectors, such as research, innovation and student services (extra-curricular activities and community life). This objective has been successfully achieved and demonstrates ownership in the competitive fund mechanism adopted by many HEIs. For many HEIs, competitive funds are an opportunity to access resources and technical expertise to increase their value, innovation and competitiveness.

12. **Funding for TA to support TEEP implementation has been used parsimoniously.** TA has been used mostly for the organization of workshops and supporting HEIs for the preparation of competitive funds. Funding for TA was reduced by Euro 4.6 million in the loan proceeds following the first restructuring. Many TA activities planned in TEEP, such as support for university observatories, tracer studies to measure graduates labor market outcomes, IQA and management quality systems for public research centers affiliated with public universities have been included in various competitive fund windows: PAQ DGSU, PAQ DGSE and PAQ CR2S for instance. However, some TA activities are planned for the next 18 months with the aim of strengthening the central units of the MoHESR.

<sup>23</sup> As more competitive subgrants are completed new results will emerge from the activities implemented that will be disseminated to showcase the added value produced by the competitive fund mechanism.

<sup>24</sup> Since late 2017, three calls for proposals have been carried out for the following competitive fund windows: PAQ 4C, PRICE, PFE, PAES, Collabora and Co-construction and two calls for proposals have been carried out for the competitive fund window PAQ CR2S.

<sup>25</sup> Young universities are: Gabès, Kairouan, Jendouba and Gafsa and represent about 17 percent of the student population in 2015. They were established in the early 2000s' with a view to ensure a more equitable access to higher education in more disadvantaged regions.

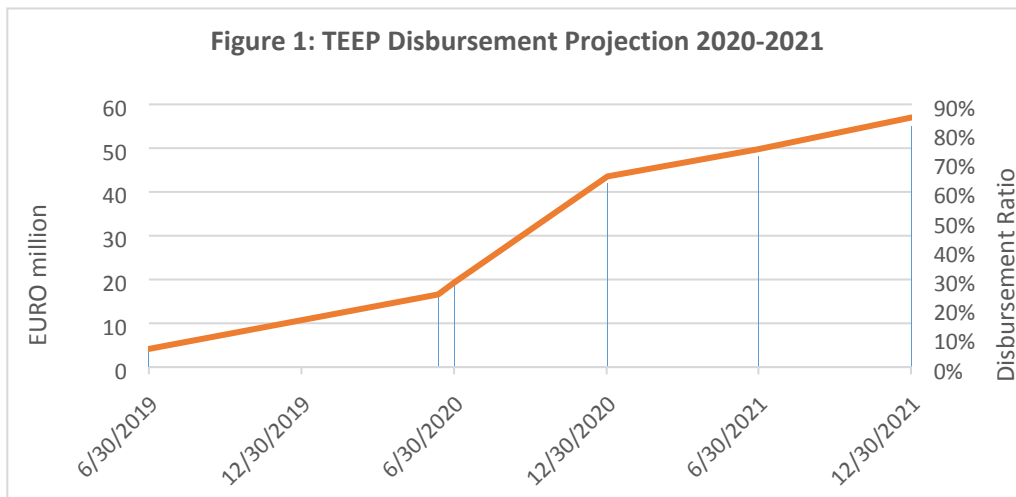
<sup>26</sup> World Bank PAD, Report No. 1445 – February 3, 2016



13. The project’s disbursement ratio has increased by 150 percent in the last 15 months from 12 percent to 31 percent and continues to steadily improve now that the majority of competitive funds windows are operational and most grants have started implementation. Total disbursement was equivalent to Euro 19.5 million on June 1, 2020 (total loan proceeds is Euro 64.3 million). The disbursement ratio for the fiscal year 2020 was equal to 16 percent of the loan. Another disbursement of Euro 3 million is processed and could still be accounted in the fiscal year. The TEEP disbursement ratio compares favorably with the Tunisia average at 7 percent on May 11, 2020 for the fiscal year 2020.<sup>27</sup>

14. In the current scenario, TEEP is expected to be almost fully disbursed by the closing date of December 31, 2021. Projections for the last semesters of 2020 and 2021 based on current disbursement trends show that TEEP will achieve a disbursement ratio of 68 percent by the end of calendar year 2020 and 85 percent at the end of calendar year 2021 (disbursing Euro 21.4 million in the second semester of 2020 and Euro 10,9 million in 2021), respectively on competitive funds only. Annex 3 presents a detailed forecast of disbursement based on the competitive funds

windows per semester until the expected the closing date. This does not account for spending related to activities financed under disbursement category 2 (Performance sub-grants for Sub-projects under Part 2.2 of the project) and disbursement category 3 (Goods, works, non-consulting services and consultants’ services for the project), which currently account for 30 percent of the loan proceeds.



15. The Project does not have any outstanding audits or overdue financial reports.

Impact of COVID-19<sup>28</sup> on Tertiary Education and TEEP Support to COVID-19 Response

16. In an effort to slow down the spread of COVID-19 infections, Tunisia closed all schools and universities on March 11, 2020 until further notice. About 272,261 university students are affected, as well as about 37,401 teaching and research staff. The academic year, which runs from September to July with the final exams, has been severely disrupted, as classes had to be moved online (which is challenging especially in many Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, STEM, disciplines). Examinations have been postponed (or cancelled), international exchange programs discontinued and students returned to their families. Tunisia has the Virtual University of Tunis (VUT) which offers courses via distance learning and an online content platform.

<sup>27</sup> Source: World Bank - Maghreb portfolio report May 23, 2020.

<sup>28</sup> IMF 2020 - PR20/144: “The Covid-19 outbreak aggravates Tunisia’s already elevated macroeconomic imbalances. The crisis is expected to reduce growth to an unprecedented -4.3 percent. It will also give rise to urgent fiscal and BOP financing needs of 2.6 and 4.7 percent of GDP in 2020, respectively



**17. TEEP supports and benefits from the resilience of the tertiary education sector to maintain its activities despite the reduced working activity at the MoHESR and closure of universities and faculties.** The system of competitive grant is particularly adapted to quickly transfer monetary resources to universities and faculties. TEEP also launched a MOODLE learning platform to carry out the proposal evaluation and selection process for the competitive funds, to mitigate the impact of the lockdown. Since March 19, 2020 based on a decree issued by the MoHESR, VUT made its platform, content and IT and training capacity available to other universities. As of mid-March, an estimated 110,000 tertiary education students already signed up on the VUT online learning platform to take classes. Similarly, 18,000 professors are involved in online teaching activities. Several other universities and faculties have set up their own web learning platforms. Despite COVID-19 many HEIs' administration have continued to operate providing online learning and preparing exams during the summer months. A second wave of COVID-19 would have limited impact on the project implementation as most subgrants have been approved. The strong focus on employability training and partnership with the private sector through competitive funds will serve students who will face heightened difficulty to enter the job market in a period of general economic recession on the post COVID-19 context. Unfortunately, an additional challenge for HEIs in this period is that the anticipated effects of COVID-19 on demands for high-level skills is not known. Therefore, the tracer surveys to be carried out in the next few months will be important to measure the impact of COVID-19 on labor market outcomes of tertiary education graduates.

**18. Major immediate COVID-19 related challenges persist across HEIs, including:** (i) determining a fair completion process for this academic year, particularly in identifying means of administering end-of-year exams and end-of-studies exams and other types of assessments; (ii) determining an appropriate and fair university admissions process for new students for the next academic year; and (iii) implementing appropriate modalities for teaching and learning in the next academic year in the fall, depending on the public health situation. Medium to longer term impacts may consist of changes in university enrolment patterns, decrease in international mobility of students and of teaching and research staff, reduced funding government and household funding of higher education due to income constraints, possible closure of some universities or programs, staffing cuts and thus shortages and subsequently decline in quality.

**19. The COVID-19 related economic recession will likely negatively impact employment of university graduates, which makes TEEP's strong and continued employability activities such as entrepreneurship training etc. even more important.** A full assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on higher education will be carried out in the next few months and the World Bank team prepared a set of technical assistance activities that will be donor-financed to support the MoHESR's efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The focus of the assessment will be on young universities located in more disadvantaged areas and with a higher share of students at-risk of dropping out.

## **B. Rationale for Restructuring**

**20. The proposed restructuring seeks to:** (a) adjust the PDO to make it more measurable and realistically achievable during the project duration and better attributable to the project activities; (b) update the RF to link it closely with the adjusted PDO and with the actual funding allocation across sub-projects while maintaining the level of ambition in terms of results expected; and (c) lay out a clearer description and re-organization of activities among components. This restructuring builds on and complements the previous two restructurings, notably the creation of Mega-PAQs to achieve larger intermediate results.

**21. The rational for the three changes are:**



- (a) **PDO – graduates-> students.** The PDO change from a focus on graduates to students is a minor one. The delay in effectiveness and lengthy reform consultations implies that only one cohort of supported students will enter the labor market prior to project closure, as measured by the PDO 1 (Share of higher education graduates from co-constructed programs that were employed 6 months after graduating). Progress towards achievement of the PDO can, therefore, not be tracked during implementation, and (ii) the job insertion of tertiary education graduates is not an outcome directly attributable to TEEP activities. The education sector can only influence labor supply while demand for labor is outside of the scope of the project. In particular, the onset of the COVID-19 induced recession has already significantly reduced labor demand. Therefore, graduates in 2020 and probably also in 2021 will experience lower insertion rates irrespectively of the employability of the graduates and performance of TEEP.
- (b) **The RF will be updated to ensure that the current achievements of outcomes and their measurement are directly attributable and linked to TEEP activities.** To improve the alignment with the PDO, revised outcomes indicators will assess the number of students enrolled (i.e.: access outcome of employability training) and satisfied with employability training (i.e.: quality and relevance outcome of employability training). These revised outcome indicators provide more evidence to explain plausible causal relationship between the competitive funds and the improvement of employability outcome. Furthermore, revised IRIs are introduced to improve the connection between activities carried out and their measurement. As a result, outputs achieved through the competitive funds will be fully captured in the RF. The measurement of graduates' employment outcomes - a priority for all HEIs - will also be monitored in the revised RF. All the data to update the revised RF are available and will be included in the next ISR, demonstrating TEEP's progress and achievements thus far.
- (c) **The project description will be updated to more clearly and accurately reflect the project activities,** particularly those carried out through the competitive funds, in line with the original design.

**22. The project objective of improved employability of students and effective management of HEIs remains highly relevant and achievable.** TEEP's activities provide reasonable evidence and sufficient information to show the alignment of the PDO with the Country Partnership Framework<sup>29</sup> (CPF) and the Performance and Learning Review.<sup>30</sup> These changes will contribute to clarifying the description of outcomes, so that achievement of outcomes can be measured after the closing of the project. The COVID-19 challenges of increased unemployment and GoT and household funding constraints for higher education TEEP funding has become even more relevant for the GoT.

**23. The proposed restructuring is aligned with the strategic priorities of the GoT for the tertiary education sector.** Before and after the COVID-19 crisis, the GoT has confirmed that TEEP should continue with its current objectives and strategic alignment. The GoT has maintained that no reallocation or partial cancellation of the loan is envisioned despite acute budget constraints due to the financing of urgent COVID-19's mitigation measures. This sends a strong signal that resources from TEEP are needed to support the development of academic excellence and innovation within HEIs.

**24. A revised, simplified RF more closely in line with project activities and design was developed and agreed with the Borrower.** The necessity of these changes has become apparent for several months and was highlighted in the aide-memoire of mid-term review mission of May 2019, and reflected in Implementation Status and Results (ISR)

<sup>29</sup> Report No. 104123-TN. Discussed by the Board of Executive Directors on May 17, 2016

<sup>30</sup> Report No. 123957-TN. Discussed by the Board of Executive Directors on May 22, 2018



Report #8 dated July 22, 2019. Similarly, the ISR #9 dated January 8, 2020, outlined that despite recent achievements, the PDO and IP still remained moderately unsatisfactory and several important problems persisted, namely the inadequacy of the RF, which did not accurately capture results and the high level of loan proceeds still unspent. For the last six months as implementation has picked up, more emphasis has been placed on monitoring and evaluation. The PIU has worked tirelessly to collect data to measure all the outcome and intermediate indicators. The proposed revised and additional IRIs capture the progress in implementation. Most TEEP activities have reached some critical milestones (with some exception for technical assistance). The trend is positive and would not be reversed drastically with the COVID-19.

**25. The skills gap remains a high priority for the GoT. The MoHESR is very committed to TEEP and places a high priority on achieving a satisfactory performance.** The proposed restructuring contributes to demonstrating that TEEP is delivering significant outcomes for the tertiary education sector and notably for tertiary students and HEIs. TEEP now has overcome its initial setbacks and operational bottlenecks. Most importantly, all critical stakeholders of the tertiary education sector are involved in TEEP implementation and are fully committed to its success. The number of competitive funds and the increase of disbursements attest to these changes.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGES

**26. Based on the GoT's request letter dated November 21, 2019, the proposal for the restructuring seeks to:** (a) revise the formulation of the first part of the PDO to better capture the main impacts of the project; (b) introduce new and revise existing PDO outcome indicators and IRIs to better reflect the key project interventions; (c) adjust indicator targets to what can be realistically achieved in the remaining implementation timeframe; and (d) refine the description of project activities within the original project scope to more clearly and accurately reflect the activities.

**27. The next sections describe in more detail the above revisions.**

### Change in the PDO

Replace the term "graduates" with "students" in the PDO, to read as follows: "The objective of the Tertiary Education for Employability project (TEEP) is to improve the employability of tertiary education *students* and to strengthen the management of higher education".

### Changes in the Results Framework

Simplify and align the project RF to improve the measurement of project activities and expected outcomes.

a) **Revisions to PDO indicators:** The current number of three PDO indicators will be increased to four PDO indicators to better capture PDO achievements. One original PDO indicator will be dropped, two new PDO indicators will replace it and one existing PDO indicator will be revised. More specifically, the detailed refinements of the PDO indicators are as follows:

- **PDO indicator 1:** "*Share of higher education graduates from co-constructed programs (out of which share of female) that were employed 6 months after graduating, relative to appropriate comparison*" **is dropped** because this PDO indicator is only measurable after the project closing and only captures a relatively small contribution of the project to the PDO (the PAQ-Co-construction represents a minor share of the project activities, funding and beneficiaries (200 beneficiaries) and represents a minor share of project financing (6% of total value of competitive funds to be disbursed). The PDO indicator 1 is now replaced by the new PDO indicator 4 and PDO indicator 5.



- PDO indicator 2 (PDO indicator 1 in the restructured RF): “Number of tertiary education students who completed PAQ supported employability programs” **is revised** to read as follows: “Number of tertiary education students who benefited from PAQ supported projects aimed at improving employability skills” to measure all tertiary education students participating in activities aimed at enhancing their employability skills delivered by public universities and faculties financed by the PAQs. Hence, this revised PDO indicator 2 captures more broadly the impact of the project on improving employability skills of tertiary education students. This revised PDO indicator 2 is complementary to the new PDO indicator 4 that will measure the level of satisfaction of tertiary education students participating in employability skills training programs.
  - PDO indicator 4 (PDO indicator 2 in the restructured RF): “Share of tertiary education students who benefited from PAQ supported projects aimed at improving employability skills and reported being satisfied with their skills level (disaggregated by gender)” is a new KPI **added** to measure the impact of the project related to the perception by tertiary education students in the improvement of their employability skills through training program delivered by PAQs in which they have participated. Measuring the perception will allow the project and faculties to continuously improve the effectiveness of employability training programs.
  - PDO indicator 5 (PDO indicator 4 in the restructured RF): “Number of universities that have a functioning internal quality assurance unit” **is added** to enhance the measurement of the second part of the PDO on “strengthening of the management of higher education”. This new PDO indicator 5 is an upgrade of the IRI 11 and measures the number instead of percentage of universities, as each university aims to have one fully operational IQA unit.
- b) **Revisions to intermediate result indicators:** Two IRIs are upgraded to KPI; two IRIs are dropped; six IRIs are revised and six IRIs are added. The changes in the IRIs are to simplify monitoring implementation progress and to accurately reflect the activities financed and outputs delivered. The revised intermediate indicators are as follows:

Component 1: Improving employability of graduates

- IRI 1: “Number of co-constructed programs that have been established under the project” **is revised** to read as follows: “Number of PAQs that support activities aimed at improving employability skills” to measure the project outputs related to competitive funds (PAQs) contributing to increasing student access to employability skills training programs. This revised IRI 1 captures more broadly the outputs of PAQ grants for enhancing students’ employability skills.
- IRI2: “Share of graduates from co-constructed programs that report being satisfied with their level of employable skills” **is deleted and elevated to** PDO indicator 4 to measure the level of satisfaction of students who have participated in employability training activities delivered by the relevant competitive fund windows (PAQs).
- IRI 3: “Number of newly introduced programs under PAQ with at least one module on entrepreneurship” **is dropped and replaced** by IRI 1. Most PAQs approved so far include activities geared towards build cross-cutting skills (21<sup>st</sup> century skills) in areas such as entrepreneurship, leadership, IT and languages. These skills are developed in an integrated manner through the revised programs, and not necessarily through individual modules narrowly focused on entrepreneurship.



- IRI 5: “Set up of an online platform for the dissemination of tracer studies” **is revised and combined** with IRI 6 below.
- IRI 6 (IRI 3 in the restructured RF): “Percentage of university observatories that systematically publish the results of period tracer studies on their web site” **is revised** to read as follows: “Number of public higher education institutions for which employment outcomes are publicly available online”. This change in the unit of measurement from percentage to number will make it easier to capture the annual publication of employment outcomes by universities and faculties. The word “systematically” is also dropped, because it is difficult to define and because the practice of tracking employment outcomes is still being adopted by universities and faculties. Moreover, it takes time to implement on a regular basis and with a large scope.
- IRI 7: “Share of students (in their final year) that have been informed about higher education opportunities and subsequent labor market outcomes with information generated by tracer studies” **is dropped and is replaced** by IRI 6, IRI 14 and IRI 15, which monitor activities organized by universities aimed at informing secondary education students on academic programs and employment outcomes.
- IRI 10 (IRI 2 in the restructured RF): “Number of certifications for students in courses focusing on transferrable skills” **is revised** to read as follows: “Number of students certified in courses focusing on transferrable skills”. This revised IRI 10 counts the number of beneficiaries (students, teachers and administrative staff) receiving a certification through PAQ grants.
- IRI 11: “Percentage of universities that have a functioning internal quality assurance unit” **is upgraded** as PDO-KPI 5.
- IRI 14 (IRI 4 in the restructured RF): “Number of public higher education institutions that organize open houses for secondary education students” **is added** to replace the IRI 7. This new IRI 14 will measure the communication and awareness campaigns carried out by universities and faculties directed at secondary school students. The IRI 14 will report on the type of events and participants to assess the engagement of universities and faculties to provide better information to future tertiary education students to orient their choice of courses of studies/disciplines.
- IRI 15 (IRI 5 in the restructured RF): “Number of public higher education institutions that publish information about their academic programs, professional qualifications requirements and career opportunities at least once a year on a central online platform” **is added** to replace IRIs 5 and 7. This new IRI 15 tracks information public universities collect on their program and other related information, particularly on career prospects to guide tertiary education students in their job search.

#### Component 2: Strengthening the management of higher education

- IRI 12 (IRI 10 in the restructured RF): “Establishment of a model, pilot and roadmap towards performance-based financing in higher education” **is revised** to “Number of universities, regional offices of student affairs and research centers that have signed a performance-based contract with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research”. The revised IRI 12 will enable the project to go beyond designing a model towards pilot-based implementation of performance-based financing.





- IRI 16 (IRI 7 in the restructured RF): “Number of universities that receive a PAQ DGSU grant for strengthening higher education management capacity” is **added** to monitor the number of public universities that have successfully applied to the new PAQ DGSU and are implementing activities for strengthening university management and capacity. This new IRI 16 tracks an important output with a significant financial allocation related to the second part of the PDO.
- IRI 17 (IRI 8 in the restructured RF): “Number of faculties that receive a PAQ DGSE grant for strengthening higher education management capacity” is **added** to measure the number of faculties that have successfully applied to the new PAQ DGSE and are implementing activities for strengthening faculties management and capacity. This new IRI 17 tracks an important output with a significant financial allocation related to the second part of the PDO.
- IRI 18 (IRI 9 in the restructured RF): “Number of universities that produce an annual report that summarize and analyze all the activities related to internal quality assurance” is **added** to track outputs related to IQA activities of universities and faculties. This new IRI 18 is linked to PDO indicator 5.
- IRI 19 (IRI 12 in the restructured RF): “Percentage of beneficiaries who report being satisfied with PAQ implementation activities (citizen engagement indicator)” is **added** to measure citizen engagement.

**Following is the re-organization and revision of the project description to better reflect the substance and relative importance of activities.**

- (a) Component 1: Improving employability of graduates, the following reorganization within the component is introduced:
- The title of Component 1 is revised to: “*Improving employability skills of tertiary education students*” to be aligned with the slight revision of the first part of the PDO.
  - Sub-component 1.1 Activity 3: “*Improvement of student services for better employability*” is eliminated as a single activity in the project description. This activity is included in sub-component 2.1 and financed by the competitive fund.
  - Sub-component 1.2: “*Systemic measures to improve employability*”: as several of the technical assistance activities originally under this sub-component are financed through the competitive funds under sub-components 1.1 and 2.1., they will be eliminated from the sub-component description: (a) strengthen university observatories to support end-of-secondary and tertiary education students; (b) support innovative and entrepreneurial universities *inter alia*, through innovative pedagogy and programs for a better insertion; (c) the implementation of a national qualification framework; (d) the certification and training activities for the improvement of competences; (e) student services; and (f) more labor market relevant doctoral program.
- (b) Component 2: Strengthening the management of higher education, the following reorganization within the component is introduced:



- Sub-component 2.1: “Incentive measures to improve management and governance”, the following changes to activities are introduced: (a) eliminating from the project description the wording “support for young universities” as there are no competitive funds under this sub-component targeting specifically young universities; (b) clarifying in the description that eligible entities for these competitive sub-grants to improve governance, management, QA are public universities, public research institutions and regional directorates of student affairs.
- Sub-component 2.2.1: “Systemic measures to improve management and governance”, the following technical assistance activity “external quality assurance” is eliminated: from the description, because the universities will focus on the strengthening of internal quality assurance first.

**Table 2: Reorganization in Components**

<b>Original project description</b>	<b>Revised project description</b>
<u>Component 1</u> : Improving employability of tertiary education graduates	<u>Component 1</u> : Improving employability skills of tertiary education students
Sub-component 1.1: Incentive measures to improve employability	Sub-component 1.1: Incentive measures to improve employability
Activity 1.1.1: PAQ for better link higher education institutions with the labor market	Activity 1.1.1: PAQ for better link higher education institutions with the labor market
Activity 1.1.2: PAQ support entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives in higher education and research institutions	Activity 1.1.2: PAQ support entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives in higher education and research institutions
Activity 1.1.3: PAQ improve student services for better employability	
Sub-component 1.2: Systemic measures and cross-cutting activities including tracer studies of higher education graduates, the creation of a centrally managed publicly accessible online platform, the promotion of entrepreneurial and innovative universities, and strengthening of university observatories: (i) to support end-of-secondary and tertiary education students to make more informed higher education study choices and identify internship and job opportunities; (ii) to support higher education institutions to make more informed choices about, in particular, which fields of study to offer and which programs to improve; (iii) to improve student services; and (iv) to support national policies related to graduate employability.	Sub-component 1.2: Systemic measures and cross-cutting activities including the creation of a centrally managed publicly accessible online platform.
	Sub-component 1.3: Performance-based contracts for universities, research institutions and regional directorates of student affairs
<u>Component 2</u> : Strengthening the management of higher education	<u>Component 2</u> : Strengthening the management of higher education



Sub-component 2.1. Provision of Competitive Sub-grants to improve governance, management, quality assurance, and support for young universities	Sub-component 2.1. Provision of Competitive Sub-grants to improve governance, management, quality assurance of universities, research institutions and regional directorates of student affairs
Sub-component 2.2: Systemic measures to improve management and governance	Sub-component 2.2: Systemic measures to improve management and governance
Activity 2.2.1. Implementation of: (i) a set of measures to support the areas of governance and management, quality assurance and performance-based financing including	Activity 2.2.1. Implementation of: (i) a set of measures to support the areas of governance and management, quality assurance and performance-based financing (External quality assurance is eliminated from the project appraisal document)
Activity 2.2.2: Implementation of a pilot scheme for the provision of Performance Sub-grants	
Sub-component 2.3: Supporting effective project management, including through the provision of project-related workshops, training and technical assistance	Sub-component 2.3: Supporting effective project management, including through the provision of project-related workshops, training and technical assistance

**III. SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

	Changed	Not Changed
Project's Development Objectives	✓	
Results Framework	✓	
Disbursement Estimates	✓	
Implementing Agency		✓
DDO Status		✓
PBCs		✓
Components and Cost		✓
Loan Closing Date(s)		✓
Cancellations Proposed		✓
Reallocation between Disbursement Categories		✓
Disbursements Arrangements		✓
Overall Risk Rating		✓
Safeguard Policies Triggered		✓
EA category		✓



Legal Covenants		✓
Institutional Arrangements		✓
Financial Management		✓
Procurement		✓
Implementation Schedule		✓
Other Change(s)		✓
Economic and Financial Analysis		✓
Technical Analysis		✓
Social Analysis		✓
Environmental Analysis		✓

**IV. DETAILED CHANGE(S)****PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE****Current PDO**

The objective of the Tertiary Education for Employability Project (TEEP) is to improve the employability of tertiary education graduates and to strengthen the management of higher education.

**Proposed New PDO**

The objective of the Tertiary Education for Employability Project (TEEP) is to improve the employability of tertiary education students and to strengthen the management of higher education.

**DISBURSEMENT ESTIMATES**

Change in Disbursement Estimates

Yes

Year	Current	Proposed
2016	0.00	0.00
2017	4,251,400.00	4,251,400.00
2018	948,595.00	340,443.00
2019	15,200,000.00	3,727,328.00
2020	20,000,000.00	16,605,619.00
2021	24,600,000.00	30,000,000.00



# The World Bank

Tunisia Tertiary Education for Employability project (P151059)

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2022	5,000,005.00	15,075,210.00
2023	0.00	0.00

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**Results framework**

COUNTRY: Tunisia

**Tunisia Tertiary Education for Employability Project**

**Project Development Objectives(s)**

The objective of the Tertiary Education for Employability Project (TEEP) is to improve the employability of tertiary education graduates and to strengthen the management of higher education.

**Project Development Objective Indicators by Objectives/ Outcomes**

Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target	
			1	2	3	4	5		
<b>Improve the employability of tertiary education graduates</b>									
Share of higher education graduates from co-constructed programs (out of which share of female) that were employed 6 months after graduating, relative to appropriate comparison (Percentage)		0.00			0.00			20.00	20.00
<i>Action: This indicator has been Marked for Deletion</i>									
Tertiary education students who benefited from PAQ supported projects aimed at improving employability skills (Number)		0.00	0.00	1,000.00	5,000.00	10,000.00			14,000.00



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target
			1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Tertiary education students who benefited from PAQ supported projects aimed at improving employability skills and reported being satisfied with their skills level (Text)		N/A	N/A	N/A	Maintain and/or exceed 65%	Maintain and/or exceed 65%		Maintain and/or exceed 65%
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								
By gender (Percentage)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								
<b>Strengthen the management of higher education</b>								
Public universities that have strategic plans. (Percentage)		0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	90.00		90.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Public universities that have a functional internal quality assurance unit (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	4.00		8.00
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								



**Intermediate Results Indicators by Components**

Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target
			1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Improving employability of tertiary education graduates</b>								
PAQs that support activities aimed at improving employability skills (Number)		0.00	0.00	50.00	100.00	450.00		450.00
<i>Action: This indicator has been Revised</i>								
Share of graduates from co-constructed programs that report being satisfied with their level of employable skills (Percentage)		0.00			0.00	0.00	25.00	25.00
<i>Action: This indicator has been Marked for Deletion</i>								
Number of newly introduced programs under PAQ with at least one module on entrepreneurship (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	25.00	50.00	75.00	75.00
<i>Action: This indicator has been Marked for Deletion</i>								
PAQ benefiting young universities (Text)		N/A	N/A	24% achieved	Maintain and/or exceed 20% PAQs benefiting young	Maintain and/or exceed 20% PAQs benefiting young		Maintain and/or exceed 20% PAQs





Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target
			1	2	3	4	5	
					universities	universities		benefiting young universities
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Public higher education institutions that organize open houses for secondary education students (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	300.00		450.00
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								
Set up of an online information platform for the dissemination of tracer studies (Text)		No platform	Concept	Feasibility/Pilot	Implementation	Functioning	Functioning	Platform functioning
<b>Action: This indicator has been Marked for Deletion</b>								
Public HEIs that publish information about their academic programs, professional qualifications requirements and career opportunities at least once a year on a central online platform (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	8.00		13.00
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target
			1	2	3	4	5	
Number of public Higher Education Institutions for which graduates employment outcomes are publicly available online (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00		15.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Share of secondary students (in their final year) that have been informed about higher education opportunities and subsequent labor market outcomes with information generated by tracer studies (Percentage)		0.00			0.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Marked for Deletion</b>								
Students certified in courses focusing on transferrable skills (Number)		0.00	0.00	131.00	1,000.00	1,800.00		2,400.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
<b>Strengthening the management of higher education</b>								



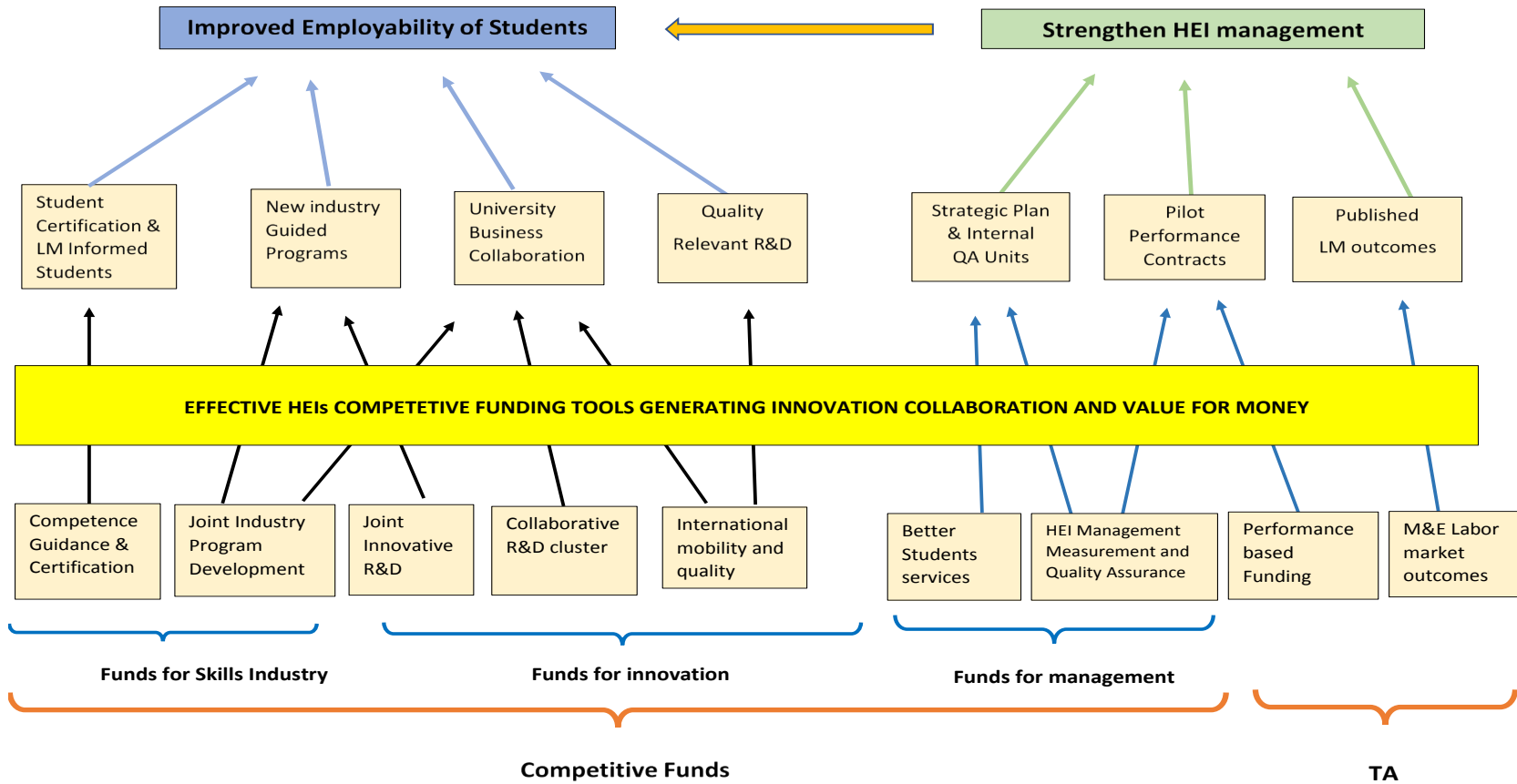
Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target
			1	2	3	4	5	
Public universities that receive a PAQ DGSU grant for strengthening higher education management capacity (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	13.00		13.00
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								
Public universities that produce an annual report that summarize and analyze all the activities related to internal quality assurance (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00		6.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Universities, regional offices of student affairs and research centers that have signed a performance-based contract with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		10.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Beneficiaries who report being satisfied with PAQ implementation activities		N/A	N/A	N/A	Maintain and/or exceed 70%	Maintain and/or exceed 70%		Maintain and/or exceed 70%



Indicator Name	PBC	Baseline	Intermediate Targets					End Target
			1	2	3	4	5	
(citizen engagement indicator) (Text)								
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								
Direct project beneficiaries (Number)		0.00	0.00	1,049.00	5,000.00	10,000.00		16,000.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Female beneficiaries (Number)		0.00	0.00	600.00	3,500.00	8,000.00		10,000.00
<b>Action: This indicator has been Revised</b>								
Higher Education Institutions that receive a PAQ DGSE grant for strengthening higher education management capacity (Number)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00		100.00
<b>Action: This indicator is New</b>								



### THEORY OF CHANGE - TEEP





**Annex 2: List of Competitive Fund Windows under Implementation – TEEP**

Competitive Funds	Definition and Objectives	Number of PAQ approved	Number of beneficiaries <sup>31</sup>
<b>Component 1: Improving employability of tertiary education students</b>			
<u>Outcome:</u> Tertiary students acquire skills relevant for the labor market			
PAQ 4C / PAQ PRICE (Universities and Faculties)	These PAQs finance Career and Competency Certification Centers (4C) in universities and faculties. 4Cs are used to organize and deliver training for students and academic personnel on labor market relevant skills. 4Cs also organize activities with the private sector, such as job fair, internships to familiarize students with the job market. An important responsibility of 4Cs is to enable students to take classes in languages and ICT (transferable skills) to obtain certifications.	137	3887
PAQ Co-construction	Faculties partner with the professional organizations and/or firms directly to develop curricula and a pedagogy better aligned with labor market needs. It usually concerns master's degree for some courses (specializations). It usually involves a long process of habilitation before the co-constructed could be introduced. Some grants only finance the phase of development and habilitation of the new curricula	44	188
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>181</b>	<b>4075</b>
<u>Outcome:</u> Students <sup>32</sup> with faculties are involved in applied research with the private sector (spin-off) and technopoles to support innovation and practical application into economic activities and jobs. Students build labor market relevant skills			
PAQ Collabora	Students with their faculties are involved in research and innovation activities in relation with national priorities of scientific research, in particular those related to the digital transition (artificial intelligence...) and the blue economy. This PAQ supports partnership between faculties, research centers and technopoles.	28	28
PAQ PAES	This PAQ aims at promoting the valorization and application of innovative research results and the creation of spin-offs by allowing students to work collaboratively with professionals in the private sector. This provides a first professional experience for students to develop their research and innovation. It supports the creation of qualified jobs.	20	20
PAQ Post-PFE	The PAQ aims at supporting activities to enhance the value/quality of dissertations and end-of-study projects to facilitate mobility towards companies and collaborative work between students and the professional world.	23	23
PAQ MOBIDOC	This PAQ finance one and two-year grants for doctoral and post-doctoral students (DOC) to carry out applied research in the socio-economic environment.	177	177
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>248</b>	<b>248</b>

<sup>31</sup> Numbers of beneficiaries presented here are tertiary students registered in PAQ activities. Academic and administrative personnel participating in some activities are not included, particularly for training provided through PAQ 4C and PRICE. The numbers presented in the table are only estimations and they cover around 20% of PAQs approved so far. Many PAQs approved during the last year have not yet reported number of beneficiaries. The total number of beneficiaries is only known when the grant activities are completed. Moreover, for some activities like job fairs organized by 4Cs with the faculties and private companies the number of participants is possible to estimate and is not included in the table. The total number of beneficiaries is only known when the grant activities are completed.

<sup>32</sup> For the following PAQ Collabora, PAES, Post PFE and MOBIDOC we usually count one student per grant, but for Collabora and PAES we have sometimes more than one students participating in applied research project.



<b>Total Component 1</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>4323</b>
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<b>Component 2: Strengthening the management of higher education</b>			
<b>Outcomes:</b> Management capacity of universities, faculties research centers and regional directorates of student affairs is strengthened to improve service delivery and carry out essential functions related to internal quality assurance, monitoring and tracking of students and training & qualification of personnel.			
PAQ DGSU	This PAQ for universities aimed at building and strengthening the management capacity to facilitate and accelerate the migration of public universities towards greater institutional autonomy, accountability and performance. It seeks also improve internal quality assurance and finance tracer studies to monitor employment outcomes of future graduates.	13	All students, academic and administrative personnel
PAQ DGSE	This PAQ for faculties aimed at strengthening the pedagogical, administrative and financial management functions. It includes four areas: a) training and employability; b/governance and management; c) student services; and d/research and innovation. The activities financed are complementary to those of the PAQ DGSU at university level	132 grant proposals submitted (ongoing evaluation)	
PAQ PROOUES	This PAQ finances services for students' residence, restaurants and social services, including cultural and sporting activities and psychological and health assistance. It also includes capacity- building for improved management of the three regional directorates responsible for students affairs.	3	All student enrolled in residences, restaurants
PAQ CR2S	This PAQ aims at implementing quality management systems in research centers. It seeks to strengthen managerial processes for greater result-orientation, to modernize management capacity and harmonize of managerial practices with international standards.	10	All personnel in the research centers and affiliated researchers
PAQ COVID 19	This PAQ aims at addressing multiple areas : (a) administration / student services (student mental health etc.); (b) academic / teaching and learning – especially with a focus on helping disadvantaged students (with no laptops etc.) and needs for connectivity and developing digital learning platforms ; and (c) research (any COVID-19 related research, which could not only be medical/biology/chemistry, also be innovations for digital teaching/learning/exams/ IT systems etc.)	To be launched	All students, academic and administrative personnel
<b>Total Component 2</b>		<b>158</b>	<b>N.A</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>587</b>	



**Annex 3: Disbursement Projections on Competitive Funds**

	Disbursed (in Euro)	Committed (in Euro)	Total (in Euro)	Cumulative Disbursement by June 30, 2020 (in Euro)	Cumulative Disbursement 2nd semestre of 2020 (in Euro)	Cumulative Disbursement 1st semestre of 2021 (in Euro)	Cumulative Disbursement 2nd semestre of 2021 (in Euro)
PAQ 4C & PRICE	4,380,429	2,051,080	6,431,509	4,915,849	5,645,729	6,235,087	6,431,509
PAQ Co-Constructed	669,347	2,256,942	2,926,289	779,152	2,309,408	2,380,601	2,926,289
<b>Competitive Funds for Skills Train</b>	<b>5,049,777</b>	<b>4,308,021</b>	<b>9,357,798</b>	<b>5,695,002</b>	<b>7,955,137</b>	<b>8,615,688</b>	<b>9,357,798</b>
PAQ PAES+Collabora+PFE	1,944,101	1,311,198	3,255,299	2,268,235	2,865,207	3,027,501	3,255,299
PAQ Mobidoc	1,660,867	711,800	2,372,667	1,660,867	2,372,667	2,372,667	2,372,667
<b>Competitive Funds for Innovation</b>	<b>3,604,968</b>	<b>2,022,998</b>	<b>5,627,966</b>	<b>3,929,102</b>	<b>5,237,874</b>	<b>5,400,168</b>	<b>5,627,966</b>
PAQ CR2S	180,100	696,205	876,305	417,589	639,057	781,442	876,305
PAQ PROQUES	3,322,366	1,422,967	4,745,334	3,322,366	4,745,333	4,745,333	4,745,334
PAQ DGSU	2,197,567	13,398,763	15,596,330	4,840,263	11,040,832	13,698,165	15,596,330
PAQ DGSE	-	14,236,001	14,236,001	-	9,965,138	9,965,138	14,236,001
<b>Competitive Funds for Management</b>	<b>5,700,034</b>	<b>29,753,936</b>	<b>35,453,970</b>	<b>8,580,218</b>	<b>26,390,360</b>	<b>29,190,078</b>	<b>35,453,970</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,354,778</b>	<b>36,084,956</b>	<b>50,439,734</b>	<b>18,204,321</b>	<b>39,583,371</b>	<b>43,205,934</b>	<b>50,439,734</b>