



## **Working Package 4**

**Establishing Regional Development Centres in each Albanian university**

**Deliverable 4.2**

# **Designing a plan of 3M activities**

**Agricultural University of Tirana**

**Final Report**

**May 2014**

**U3M-AL PROJECT - DEVELOPING THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES IN ALBANIAN UNIVERSITIES**

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## **1 GENERAL ISSUES**

### **1.1 Objective**

To present a comprehensive plan for developing 3M activities to be implemented by the Regional Development Centre.

### **1.2 Description**

After one year of training locally and internationally, and after finalising local studies on demand, Albanian universities will be ready for presenting a comprehensive plan for developing 3M activities. This plan, conceived to some extent as a business plan, will consider objectives, methodology, needs of support structures and needs of resources (financial, human and others). EU universities will advise Albanian universities with this plan.

## **2 PLAN OF 3M ACTIVITIES OF THE AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA**

### **2.1 Mission Statement**

The Agricultural University of Tirana has set its sights on becoming the most important centre of education, including both under-graduate and graduate studies, research and training in professionally turning out specialists in the fields of agriculture, food and environment.

Considering that today's developments are multidimensional, challenges facing public and private actors are quite complex. RDC as part of AUT structures is foreseen to be an active unit, focused exclusively in 3M activities.

The mission of the RDC is to create an interactive network between AUT and other stakeholders, facing and changing their interests and improving mutual benefits from collaboration. RDC will promote and maintains continuous and long-term partnership to provide exchanges between AUT, the academic community and employers, institution and organizations within and across the borders.

The University is engaged in a constant effort to enhance the range of activities in its areas of activity (education, research and knowledge transfer). In this point of view the RDC shall be a powerful tool to achieve tangible results. The senate of Agricultural University has undertaken several steps to include this centre as an integral unit, adapting internal regulations and statute of Agricultural University.

Core measures for realizing this mission:

- The RDC will be the lead unit for engaging all university structures and capacities aiming improving 3M activities.
- The RDC will implement in the upcoming future an integrated web based platform to make possible continuous interaction through all stakeholders as well as staff and students of university.

## 2.2 The University (the inside environment)

AUT is the unique centre in the country, providing under-graduate and graduate education (60 study programs) as well as scientific research in fields of agriculture and food sector.

The creation of RDC is preceded from a phase of university current resources identification as well as the situation and expectations of its inside environment. We believe that this phase was the most important one. The success of this phase is determined also by the experience in training visits to homologous universities, part of this project.

The University Strengths and Weaknesses identified.

<b>SWOT (first part)</b>	
<b>Strengths</b> (resources)	<b>Weaknesses</b> (resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consolidated image of the institution.</li> <li>▪ The most of AUT diplomas are unique within the country.</li> <li>▪ AUT is considered as a leader in the field of research covering agriculture, food, livestock, forestry, agricultural economics, environment and veterinary.</li> <li>▪ Flexibility of study programs.</li> <li>▪ Providing three cycles of study</li> <li>▪ A contemporary curriculum in accordance with the market requirements.</li> <li>▪ AUT has a high number of student enrollments.</li> <li>▪ University has incorporated some important centers and services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insufficient and in some parts amortized infrastructure due to lack of investments.</li> <li>▪ Lack of an efficient financial autonomy in compliance with AUT's perspective development.</li> <li>▪ Poor collaboration with surrounding actors especially businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b> (human capacities)	<b>Weaknesses</b> (human capacities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Well qualified academic staff.</li> <li>▪ Increasing number of staff educated and trained in western universities.</li> <li>▪ Being actively part of different project, international mobility programs and collaboration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of balance between teaching and research activities due to overload in teaching process.</li> <li>▪ Small number of research members compared to the number of the teaching staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b> (lab & facilities)	<b>Weaknesses</b> (lab & facilities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Existence of several scientific laboratories:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintenance problems.</li> </ul>

<p>Food Inspection of Animal Origin at FMV, Infectious Disease Laboratory at FMV, Animal Biotechnology Lab. at FAE, Mycology Lab. at FAE, Genetics lab at FAE, Laboratories of the Fruit and Vegetable Oil at FBF, Lab dairy products at FBF, Silviculture lab at FFS, Mountain Systems lab at FFS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of facilities for organizing activities, as: conferences, seminars, workshops, training courses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous need for basic materials.</li> <li>Insufficient cooperation with public institutions for using capacities.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b> (publications & research activities)	<b>Weaknesses</b> (publications & research activities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The AUT currently is publishing the Albanian Journal of Agricultural Science as well as the journal of Economy and Agrobusiness</li> <li>Doctorate studies can be found in the University Library as well as electronically at the university web page.</li> <li>TEEAL (electronic library with full access in about 199 scientific journals until year 2009)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of financial resources for updating programs.</li> <li>Deficiencies in the activity of the administrative service.</li> <li>Lack of motivation due to financial conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b> (social interaction)	<b>Weaknesses</b> (social interaction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internship is part of academic year structure.</li> <li>Continuous participation in training and qualification of academic staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of financial resources for updating programs.</li> <li>Insufficient collaboration with stakeholders regarding social activities.</li> </ul>

### 2.3 The University Business Environment

Environmental development dynamics are an important factor in the success of the center. The RDC will establish partnership with different actors and in this point of view identification of conditions, stakeholder interests and needs as well as all problems affecting this interaction remain very important.

<b>SWOT (second part)</b>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement of Agriculture, Environmental Policy and Food Production role and importance in the country.</li> <li>Increased labor market demand</li> <li>Favorable National Policy regarding to Higher Education</li> <li>Favorable geographical position (situated in the capital city: Tirana).</li> <li>Higher percentage of young generation willing to attend university education.</li> <li>Teaching program attractiveness on national and regional level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constant reduction of the government funds destined for education and research.</li> <li>The current economic and social context reduces labour market absorption of graduates.</li> <li>Lack of effective university autonomy.</li> <li>Evident differences as to wages between private and public universities.</li> <li>Lack of interest by a part of business stakeholders sector for contractual research.</li> <li>Student contingents with low aptitude</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Increase of business awareness for institutional cooperation, research and knowledge transfer</li><li>▪ Accessing new funds via European programs for institutional research and development.</li><li>▪ There is no legal limitation for collaboration with companies.</li></ul>	<p>coming from high education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Low study fees for all study levels.</li><li>▪ Lack of database for collecting and divulgating employment information about AUT graduates.</li></ul>
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## 2.4 The University Products and Services

Agricultural University of Tirana has constantly adapted its strategy of development based on the environment dynamics as well as using all internal capacities enhancing in this way the quality and quantity of its services and products.

Creation of the RDC is not only a project result but it is meantime outcome of wider efforts of all university structures and answering stakeholders' needs.

The main pillars of RDC activity are described below:

- creation of a sustainable and proactive cooperation with business and institutions
- enabling the development and enhancing the quality of professional practice
- increasing employment opportunities for young professionals who graduate in university
- gathering information, recognizing innovative practices of business
- offering to the stakeholders the latest technologies in fields covered by AUT

### Who the RDC is targeting its products and services to?

#### RDC serves to Academic Staff and Researchers:

- It builds and maintains databases as well as continuous contacts with businesses and institutions.
- It offers to young researchers' gathering better and accurate information from businesses helping them in research and case studies.

- Researchers through this centre will be up to date with technologies, innovation and business practices followed and implemented by businesses.

**RDC serves to Studens:**

- It helps students identifying, planning and achieving career goals for job search
- It provides valuable information for the labor market and employment opportunities
- It provides to students knowledge through exchanging adequate information with stakeholders involved
- It builds and maintains databases as well as continuous contacts in the process of graduating students and alumni at least for three years.

**RDC serves to stakeholders (mainly businesses but not only):**

- RDC organizes activities constantly in close collaboration with other university units such as business fairs, workshops, training activities.
- RDC create conditions to employers to have current information about university activity and new professionals profile
- It facilitates the recruiting process
- It provides data, offer information as well as keeps continuous contacts with businesses and institutions.
- It creates an interaction with mutual benefits between two sides

**2.5 Marketing Plan**

We consider the marketing plan a complementary step aiming in determining actions to meet objectives. Based on SWOT analyse, experience gathered from participation in the project as well as steps followed until now, the RDC has a clear picture of its future activity. In the table below we synthetically describe our marketing plan based on typical templates.

<b>Product</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>	<b>Price/Cost</b>
Communication with businesses and constant	AUT, Businesses, institutions	Direct communication, using	RDC Staff members. There are two



inventory requirements and their needs (Statistical data, needs assessment, improvement of curricula).		different ways of gathering information	Academic Staff members involved with part time and five specialists (one from each faculty) full time engaged.
Creation of student's database and profile as well as alumni network.	AUT/RDC Incorporated in AUT platform	Inside AUT structures and in Faculty level	RDC Staff members and ZKS offices.
Annual career fair with business operating in fields covered from university, students and institutions.	AUT and participation of businesses	Invitations, leaflets, direct communication for stakeholders targeted.	RDC members
Portal Design & Implementation (real interaction between two sides).	AUT/RDC	Contacting with all stakeholders for financial support	Web platform (market price)
Training business managers and employees	AUT/Lab, Rooms.	AUT web portal and direct contacts with stakeholders involved	Participation fee. Object of institutional discussion.
Professional practice of students	Institutions, businesses	Through agreement and direct communication	N/A
Guest speakers (VIP business representatives)	AUT/RDC	Annual planning in academic structure, contact with businesses	In framework of collaboration
Joint roundtable for exchanging ideas and planning the future collaborative steps.	Academic staff, Business representatives /RDC	Twice a year	N/A

## 2.6 Operations and financial planning

RDC will develop its activity in two levels:

University level, RDC is a unit part of central structure of our institution (rectorate) engaging 2 staff members.

Faculty level; each faculty (five all) has its office ZKS with a specialist working there.

All staff members of RDC will work according the annual action plan of the center in close collaboration with all university and non university person involved in the process (See action plan in annexes). Communication between RDC, academia in one side and outside university stakeholders will be a challenge for the future activities.

We believe that a physical place (office), assigning responsible persons (staff) as well as supplying with the necessary infrastructure and equipment are very good preconditions for success.

## **2.7 Schedule and monitoring**

University through RDC info will monitor in permanent way results of work done through different indicators of measurement such as:

- Number of active student profiles on database
- Number of business profiles on database
- Participation in annual activities (career fair, workshops, roundtables) of academic staff, students, businesses, institutions.
- Number of agreements with stakeholders.
- Number of young professionals employed every year.
- Feedback from business representatives.

As we mentioned above this unit is a part of university structure and monitoring as well as reporting will be a common process leading us to provide sustainability of RDC activity.

## ANNEX 1: RDC ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA															
ANNUAL ACTION PLAN															
N0.	Activities Foreseen	Responsible	Duration (months)	Month											
				September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	
1	Communication with students Alumni (email, surveys, questionnaires). Gathering information, data registration & processing	RDC	3	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX									
2	Daily administrative activities	RDC	11	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	
3	Communication with businesses and inventory requirements and their needs	RDC	4		XXXX		XXXX	XXXX					XXXX		
4	Organization and development of the Career Fair	RDC-ZKS	2						XXXX	XXXX					
5	Contacts with businesses to develop students' professional practices	RDC-ZKS	1								XXXX				
6	Database improvement (current courses)	RDC-ZKS	2								XXXX	XXXX			
7	Gathering feedback from stakeholders involved. Gathering business assesment for students internishps.	RDC	1										XXXX		
8	Restructuring the database and preparing for the next academic year	RDC	2										XXXX	XXXX	
9	The annual activity report	RDC	1		>>>										