



# EXPLOITATION & SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

## I. EXPLOITATION

The verb “to exploit” means to make good use of something, so that it is more productive or beneficial. In the context of the PRO-DPCP project, this involves maximizing the potential of our activities so that our results are used to the best advantage.

Exploitation consists of mainstreaming and multiplication:

- Mainstreaming is the planned process of transferring the successful results of initiatives to appropriate stakeholders and decision-makers at local, regional, and national levels;
- Multiplication is the planned process of convincing individual end-users and immediate stakeholders to adopt and/or apply the results of the project.

## EXPLOITATION PLAN AND STRATEGY

For the exploitation aspect, the objective of valorizing the PRO-DPCP project is to enable its results to become “sustainable”. When the project comes to its end, specific measures will ensure that results are still available for usage by different groups. **A strategy for exploitation of project results after termination is defined as a valorization strategy, aiming to fulfil the goal of sustainability.** Part of the strategy is indeed to sustain the best practices, to enable Egyptian Universities to carry on the activities after the end of the project (November 14, 2023).

### **The objectives of WP7- Exploitation are to:**

- 1) To prepare project exploitation and sustainability plans
- 2) To create a new chance to extend and sustain cooperation among the Consortium partners beyond the project
- 3) To do business and sign agreements and contracts with agriculture enterprise
- 4) To provide paid services for the diagnosis and treatment of plant diseases and pests in the plant clinic
- 5) To set up consultation and training centres to provide advice and solutions to the agriculture sector



- 6) Marketing of the PRO-PDPC program to other HE organizations in Egypt or Arab African countries.

### **Tasks of exploitation and sustainability in WP7:**

7.6. Field days

7.7. Project operational plan of exploitation

7.8. Sustainability Plan

7.9. Workshop to create a new chance (sustainability) among Consortium

7.10. Legal Framework Agreements and Business Contracts

7.11. Laboratory and field analysis paid services

7.12. Set up of Consultation and Training Centers (CTC)

### **Critical factors/criteria for successful exploitation**

For successful exploitation, one should have thought about some key factors, bearing in mind the importance of creating outputs that can survive after the end of the project (e.g. prototypes or innovative services) as witnesses of the project itself.

If you want to “sell” something that was created within a project or to open the door to new courses of action, you need to create concrete objects which can survive after the end of the project!

For this, partners with high levels of expertise should be involved as well as agreeing to collaborate with specialised groups of decision-makers, associations, and institutions of the sector so that results (or a part of them) could be applied to institutional policies.

Furthermore, it is fundamental to create a close relationship with research centres such as universities and public and private agencies. A strong relationship is also a good way to make scientists aware of the importance of adding empirical and experimental work to traditional pure research. Topics where there is an active research activity are often of relevant interest. Research results are often not enough disseminated and exploited since researchers do not pay sufficient attention to dissemination beyond the academic community. The integration with an educational project may be very useful for both fields.

It is essential to be involved in the process (need analysis, research, piloting, feedback, meetings, etc.) with the relevant target groups and stakeholders right from the beginning.



A good way for exploitation could be to let beneficiaries use the results of the project as an instrument for further development so that they could become “new beginners” and involve new beneficiaries. When the project starts to be planned, key managers should also think of a larger target group than the real one which has been already selected for the project. They must include future beneficiaries and stakeholders which could be reached even after the end of the project time. From this point of view, a context analysis is strongly recommended before starting the project planning so that it can be easier to find sources and multiply exploitation effects.

Also central is supplying the final product for the people concerned and the development of new projects/improvements as well. The accreditation of courses is also important and **building/joining networks/associations** (thematic, EU databases, etc.) is advisable, for continuing the valorisation work after the end of the projects.

The **project website** has to be updated and partners should visit **social networks** even after the end of the project. If project money is over, it is much more important to be a “community” so that partners tend to go on because of their affection towards the project itself. All this maintaining the project brand for info/products can be easily recognised and linked with the project.

It is also recommendable for exploitation purposes to do a business plan, taking into consideration the product description, the target groups, the maintenance of the product and the price. In the first stage, there may be a free trial, followed by a second stage of paid version and a third stage of paid product upgrading. This implies the involvement of all partners to set rules for the commercialisation of a product and a general agreement on the terms of who may use which product.

The **partners’ commitment** not only during the project but also towards the project’s results is vital. Desirably a project should create a need in the target group for a follow-up, or an enhancement of the products, this way a possible follow-up project may be done to exploit the results of the current project.

Another interesting point is to learn from other successful exploitations and exploited projects, which comes back to a reasonable catalogue of good practice examples, such as another successful project.

The usage of the diploma and plant clinic services is also important. If you try to convince everybody else to use your product, you first need to start with yourself/your organisation and use the product!



Project exploitation activities have the key objective of maximizing the impact of project results by optimizing their value, strengthening their impact, transferring them to different contexts, sustainably integrating them and using them actively in systems and practices at local, regional, national and European levels. For the PRO-DPCP project, exploitation means making more institutions to share the success, experiences and lessons learned during the project life, and make more people access plant clinic diploma education. For multiplication and mainstreaming, an exploitation strategy is outlined. After a deep analysis of the project's transferability, a strategy has been drafted and will be constantly discussed among partners to adjust the exploitation activities to the project's progress.

### **Mechanisms for exploitation.**

According to the EU, “the results of a project can bring about real change at both micro level – in the lives of individuals and groups – and at macro level by influencing systems and policy. But such change is only possible if the results are adopted. The means of exploiting results so that they are taken up are varied and differ in complexity, tending to be simpler at end-user level and more complicated at policy level”.

There are no best tools for exploitation per se! The success depends on selecting those tools that are appropriate to the type of result and the end users envisaged. Where the project produces a new method or a new product, for example, then transfer, commercialisation and sustainability could be adequate tools. If the project involves less tangible results as, for example, experience gained through mobility, then accreditation, recognition and certification of the competencies, are more suitable.

### **Transfer and follow-up PRO DPCP project**

Transfer enhances good practice by spreading results. The transfer can take place at all levels and the results can be used in new contexts or other organisations can customise the results to suit their conditions. Thus, for example, a project that takes place in a university context in one country could yield results that would benefit a rural community in another.

Follow-up projects – After the project is finalised its results would be best sustained if the partnership finds a way to build upon the results and expand the scope of what has already been achieved. Possibilities for doing this would be transfers of innovation or another form of continuation of completed projects.



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## **Transfer and follow-up PRO DPCP project**

### **Commercialization**

After the end of the project, the consortium may consider either the free availability or the commercialisation of the products. The best choice depends strongly on the intentions of the project consortium as well as the product results itself and the main target groups' characteristics.

For commercialisation purposes, a marketing plan should be developed. Usually, it is agreed that each partner is responsible for commercialisation in their own countries and the neighbouring countries.

Commercialisation is especially appropriate to tangible products and is suitable for the end users. Project managers will need to persuade manufacturers, publishers or other commercial concerns to take up the product. But beware! There can be complications for results that involve complex intellectual property rights or where a lack of clarity in product ownership exists.

### **Accreditation and formal recognition**

The experience people gain through mobility is often the result of informal learning and can be difficult to quantify. Accreditation of such experience is increasingly being incorporated into programmes – notably Grundtvig (adult education), Leonardo da Vinci (vocational education and training), and Erasmus (higher education) – using tools such as **Europass** (for the transparency of qualifications), the **European Credits Transfer System** and the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

Also, some courses produced at European EU-funded projects are submitted for approval by national or European responsible organisations so that they can integrate a certified offer in their respective countries.

On another hand, some projects' networks at the end of the project are formally registered and start having legal status. They continued operating and became frequently non-profit associations.

### **Networking / Lobbying**

Influencing high-level change in policy and systems is a real possibility if project managers learn how to cooperate effectively and at the right levels. This is essentially a process of networking with all relevant stakeholders, so building contacts and attending



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meetings is vital – which is hard work but the only way. The European Commission, European and National Agencies, National Committees and Programme Committees organize events to facilitate such cooperation.

Attending events, such as conferences, seminars and debates, provides an ideal opportunity to showcase your results and also leads to fruitful contacts to enhance networking & lobbying.

Some projects choose to hold some kind of European dedicated events (seminar, conference, workshop...), preferably in central EU venues, and with the involvement of relevant decision-makers, stakeholders and funding entities. The events aim to convince the participants to introduce/take into account the products and approach of the project, which might be considered in policy formulation.

### **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)**

An IPR agreement aims to establish a multilateral agreement by all partners on intellectual property clarifying the rights of use of the products originating from the project and covering any commercial utilisation of products after the end of the project.

It needs to define what each partner gets out of the project and how products may be used after the project ends. This should be written down in a consortium agreement, where the rights and duties are defined clearly. These agreements are frequently the first step towards possible and constructive exploitation of both the project and the project's results.

For clarification, IPR shall include all patents, designs, copyrights and any other category of Intellectual Property Rights capable of protection under a specific law.

The IPR agreement can be the basis for establishing a business plan, taking into consideration: 1) product description, 2) target groups; 3) maintenance of product and 4) price and to be accomplished in stages, for example:

First Stage – free trial (during the lifetime of the project); Second Stage – paid version and Third Stage – paid product upgrading (second and third stages after the end of the project).

The business plan establishes the conditions for the sustainability of the project results and approaches after the project's lifetime. It will include the definition of the licensing scheme, the conditions (fees, if any, for instance) for the use and replication of contents, the time that is expected that the project environment will be active, the role of the partners from the end of the project on, etc.



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## **Success factors and challenges for internal exploitation strategies**

The PRO-DPCP consortium will combine expertise from a range of organisations (research institutes, universities and commercial stakeholders), and across multiple disciplines, including agriculture, food technology and crop protection.

During the project, the consortium will exploit their combined expertise to deliver the project aims, and seek opportunities to disseminate their contributions. Following project completion, knowledge gained and new technologies developed will be exploited in creating stronger links between universities and agri-businesses as an important part of improving agriculture economic performance in partner country institutes while maintaining excellence in higher education.

Post-project sustainability is guaranteed by the commitment of PC HEIs to develop and sustain their respective program. Each partner university has an ICT unit/administration that is responsible for managing the institution's servers and network devices. Policies will be implemented at each PC HEI so that the Plant Clinic program will be integrated with the ICT infrastructure, and will be fully embedded in the institution's strategy for special distinguished educational programs recognized internationally.

- Commercial training opportunities and consultancy will be offered by the trained staff at PC HEIs to train staff at ministries, public institutions and industries as part of lifelong learning initiatives. This will provide income to sustain the updating of training materials over time.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Just because a project is completed does not mean its results disappear. It is important to keep them visible and available, especially through websites, so that target audiences can access them, learn from them, adapt them to their own needs and even build on them and take them to the next level. And of course, both transfer and commercialisation aid sustainability.

### **The project sustainability Plan depends on:**

All project partners are going to be deeply involved in the dissemination and sustainability process. The main sustainability objective is to widely spread the project's



assumptions and results and to reach a variety of target groups according to the project's scope.

**Assumption** = The project corresponds to the specific needs and constraints of the partner countries and especially of the target groups and is innovative enough to remain attractive in the future.

**# Risks** = Weak spirit and enthusiasm among partners or stockholders due to national or international cooperation may stop at the end of the project without endangering its sustainability.

### **Risk management**

The following table indicates some possible risks that we might face during the project's duration, as well as the relevant mitigation actions to reduce these risks.

*Table x: Risk management*

<i>Possible Risks</i>	<i>Mitigation Actions</i>
<b>Possible deliverable delays</b>	Each partner will be asked to deliver input at least 2-3 weeks before the final submission day of the deliverables. Partners will be notified by reminders sent on the internal collaboration platform (project Admin) about the work pending. Deadlines will be set by the WP7 leader.
<b>Lack of communication and coordination among tasks and partners</b>	All partners will communicate via regular Skype calls, Zoom emails and via Admin platform. Each one of the WP7 partners will define a main contact point for dissemination issues and a press focal point for dissemination of press releases and other issues related to press coverage. PRO-DPCP will always work in close collaboration with the partners, will supervise the implementation of tasks, will ask for partners' reporting on dissemination activities and will communicate with the project coordinator for any difficulties in communication with partners.





<p><b>Limited interest in the use of PRODPCP services</b></p>	<p>WP7 will collaborate closer with WP1, WP6 and WP8 to prepare press releases and dissemination materials targeting each stakeholder group to inform them about the project and its services. Activities will be planned by partners and strategies will be restructured.</p>
<p><b>Failure to mobilize partners in communication and dissemination activities</b></p>	<p>WP7 leader will highlight to partners &amp; sensitize them to the importance of taking part in awareness-raising activities at European, national and local levels. WP5 will provide them with an events list to invite them to attend important events; will ask them to circulate press releases to their media lists; and will ask them to report on dissemination activities according to the deliverables.</p>
<p><b>Dissemination plans fail to reach the identified target groups</b></p>	<p>The Consortium will identify possible new dissemination routes and will review the planned dissemination activities.</p>
<p><b>The dissemination of project results is not satisfactory</b></p>	<p>As mentioned in the detailed project description, the timetable provides for results to be disseminated throughout the project. MU as well as EU partners have a longstanding experience in dissemination activities.</p>

### **Cross-border sustainability**

- Exploitation of results gained by all partners in the East, North, Middle and South of Egypt. All project members will receive project deliverables, be invited to WP6 workshops and be regularly updated on progress.
- The materials produced (studies, teacher education modules) will be offered on HES Insight knowledge base, where legacy materials from projects are held in a structured and easily accessible format.

### **National exploitation and sustainability**

Egyptian partners will continue to work in the Plant Clinic program and sustain the activities after the project closes. The University support and the revenue of study fees paid by students. Also, the domestic student mobility to study specific courses at



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Egyptian partners and the cost of travel and stay is affordable by students to other Egyptian partner universities.

The need for cooperation and sharing, for joining technology to help those with Plant Clinic technology for staff training and student education will continue and the partner organisations are committed to meeting these needs. Partners' websites will also integrate materials.

### **Sustainability of the project**

Making project results sustainable is another route for exploitation. Five pillars will secure the sustainability of the PRO-DPCP results over time:

- Geographical coverage and networking. A first mechanism is established at the inception phase of the project: partners act as regional hubs to guarantee geographical coverage of the action and its enlargement. This is one of the dominant criteria of the project. Promoting a clustering strategy will favour the establishment and reinforcement of good relations with existing institutions to progress towards the modernisation of the HE system in the country.
- Early involvement of the target group. The involvement of plant clinic staff, graduates, managers and educators, identified as the main target group, will start at the inception phase of the project through the collection of opinions and/or inputs for the design of the professional diploma.

Making project results accessible and freely available is in the spirit of the project, and will result in a knowledge base which will stay usable to all, even after the project ends. The open availability and usability of project results may also generate feedback from a wider audience than expected, increasing the effective chances of the project having an impact beyond its target groups.

### **The following objectives are set to reach the project's sustainability**

- 1) To create a new chance to extend and sustain cooperation among consortiums beyond the project
- 2) To do business and sign agreements and contracts with agriculture enterprise
- 3) To provide paid services for the diagnosis and treatment of plant diseases and pests in a plant clinic
- 4) To set up consultation centres to provide feasibility, solutions and experience of staff to the agriculture sector



5) Marketing of the PRO-PDPC program to other HE organizations in Egypt or Arab African countries.

Through the following WP7 tasks of exploitation that are planned to be implemented in the second and third phases of the project

<b>7.7.</b>	Project operational plan of exploitation developed
<b>7.8.</b>	Workshop on Future Cooperation among Consortium
<b>7.9.</b>	Legal agreements/business contracts done
<b>7.10.</b>	Laboratory and field analysis paid services

**A set of activities will be implemented in the sustainability work package:**

- Legal framework agreement between partners and farmer’s associations and agric. Private and public sectors in PC countries for marketing and selling the training, license and on-farm services to solve production and export constraints according to Global standards. Such legal agreements will activate the role of higher education universities with the rural society; producers and agricultural retail companies to ensure long-run sustained collaboration.
- Our current and new capacity building of staff and new facilities at partner universities will allow them to participate in the new plant health clinics program it will ensure training opportunities in the future to serve the rural society with paid services.
- Paid services for transferring novel experience gained in new courses and consultation for solving Plant diseases and Pests by bio-control methods for Public and private Agriculture.
- Creating stronger links between universities and agri-businesses is an important part of improving Egypt's agricultural economic performance while maintaining excellence in higher education.
- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development defines innovation as any new knowledge introduced into and used in an economic or social process.



## Annex 1

A summary table of the above communication channels (in the project months):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36			
<b>Newsletter</b>										x									x						x						x							x	
<b>Policy briefs and papers</b>																			x										x										x
<b>Press releases</b>												x													x														x
<b>Media reports</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<b>Social media</b>							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<b>Website</b>							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<b>Project brochures</b>																																							
<b>Academic publications</b>													x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<b>Presentations at partner university</b>				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<b>Project workshops</b>														x					x							x													
<b>Interactive multi-stakeholder closing event</b>																																						x	



**Table xx: PRO-DPCP Communication Plan Monitoring**

<b>Communication tool</b>	<b>Quantification</b>	<b>Target value defined by Consortium (to be reviewed by M20) *</b>	<b>Proof of communication</b>
Newsletter	No. of issues	3	Copies of newsletters
Policy briefs & papers	No. of briefs and papers published	x	List of briefs and papers
Press release	No. of press releases	3	Copies of press releases
Media report	No. of media reports (articles in printed and electronic media, TV and radio interviews, etc.	30	Records of media reports
Social media (Facebook/)	No. of posts	16	Search Metrics
Social media (Twitter)	No. of posts	x	Search Metrics
Website	No. of visitors (hits) and downloads on the project website	xxxx	Search Metrics
Project brochures	No. of project information brochures/flyers	xxx	Copies of project brochures
	No. of General project summary handbook printed in English (xx per partner)	xxx	Copies of project brochures
Project workshops	No. of workshops	3	Report of workshops
	No. of registered participants	xx	Registration sheets and photos
Interactive multi-stakeholder closing event	No. of closing events	1	Report of event
	No. of registered participants	xxx	Registration sheets and photos