Performance Report

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The Proposition

COMSTEC Inter Islamic Network on Virtual Universities (CINVU) expands open and online education and fosters innovation in teaching and learning through coordinated systems, projects and alliances, in order to improve access, quality, and cost effectiveness for learners everywhere among OIC member countries.

In so doing, CINVU is an autonomous, non-political, non-profit organization, with international approach, that works under the support of COMSTEC.

The impact of CINVU will be measured by its contributions to:

- reducing the time to learn;
- reducing the overall cost of obtaining a degree;
- meeting workforce and societal needs;
- improved graduate outcomes;
- increasing the degree completion rates;
- increasing the number of online learners;
- enhancing the profile of CINVU as an innovative leader in Open and online teaching and learning.

CINVU is a systemic, meta-level entity that works across OIC’s 57 countries to provide the capacity for system-ness via new networks and alliances among institutions that will:

- foster synergism by sharing services;
- encourage collaborative program development: for instance, in strategic areas such as sustainability; entrepreneurship; economic development; STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math); languages; and qualifying studies;
- create rich and open educational resources with CINVU experts;
- respond nimbly and effectively to national -wide and international workforce needs, and to related funding opportunities;
- provide new revenues to institutions through expanded online endeavors.
Introduction

The feasibility plan of Inter Islamic Network on Virtual Universities (including open, distance and virtual, that are based on technological infrastructures and knowledge engineering and management) was prepared by Payam Noor University (PNU). The proposal was approved according to the 14th General Assembly Meeting of the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technical Cooperation (COMSTECH) under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held on 11th – 13th January 2011, at Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Based on that proposal, the Network is an autonomous, non-political, non-profit organization, with international approach, that works under the support of COMSTECH. It is established with the aim of realization, monitoring and evaluation of its statute objectives. COMSTECH Inter Islamic Network on Virtual Universities (CINVU) was officially opened by the Coordinator General of COMSTECH, on Sunday, 8th January, 2012 at Payam Noor University (PNU) which is the permanent secretariat of the Network.
The Work Done, in brief

The main activities of COMSTEC Inter-Islamic Network on Virtual Universities (CINVU) following the report of October 10, 2012 would include:

1- To give recognition to INVU, we have prepared
   ° CINVU's page on Wikipedia, Arabic
   ° CINVU's page on Wikipedia, French
   ° CINVU's page on Wikipedia, English

2- To cover all the features, information, news and future activities of the Network, the new portal of CINVU is under preparation. The CINVU information Portal, in four languages, was unveiled by H.E. Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman on January 8, 2012 at Payam Noor University (PNU). CINVU's information Portal is in the process of continual development and can be accessed at http://cinvu.net.

3- CINVU encourages and supports the interaction and collaboration between the leading institutions, and practitioners of the Islamic world. Therefore, the Network is working on development of the following two databases to build a compendium of Open, Distance and E-learning professionals in the Islamic world:
   ° Database of higher education institutions in the Islamic world offering undergraduate and graduate level programs, both traditional and/or virtual.
   ° Database of highly qualified practitioners in the Islamic world having expertise in the fields of Open, Distance and E-learning technologies.

4- In its efforts to promote online and open education among OIC Member Countries, CINVU is embarking in developing a report on "Working Models of Online and Open Education for the Islamic Development Bank (IDB)". The report is expected to describe suitable and practical working models for online and open education systems, to help the policy and decision makers in the area of education in the IDB Member Countries to take informed decisions about applying these systems efficiently and effectively. In this regard, I am pleased to share with you the attached draft this report.
CINVU Challenges

Three main challenges that the CINVU faces across the globe and that are also driving innovation in this sector have been identified as:

° pressures from globalization;
° changing supply of and demand for higher education; and
° changes in higher education funding.

These various challenges determine the development and implementation of various innovative practices to address them. The same challenge may trigger the introduction of different innovative practices in different institutional contexts, while the same innovative practice may be simultaneously driven by more than one challenge.
CINVU Resources

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use or re-purposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.

A key dimension of the current global open education movement is the development and sharing of open educational resources and courseware. There are a variety of policies that can enable or hinder the work of CINVU’s open educational resource projects. It is therefore necessary that OIC governments and institutions review and develop policies that foster openness and access. Policies should be adopted that enable or encourage in the creation, sharing and provision of educational resources. The policy issues raised by OER are interlinked with general organizational, cultural and pedagogical issues within an institution. It is generally agreed that OER is primarily an institutional innovation, not a technical one. However, institutions do need to have a well-reasoned ICT strategy and clear e-learning policies in order to adequately deal with the opportunities (and threats) posed by the OER movement. There will be the need for many more institutional innovations in order to promote a culture of sharing and re-using content within the institution. The following areas should be addressed:

- Curriculum development
- Financial support
- Intellectual property
- Culture of sharing
- Assessment and accreditation
- Quality assurance
- Staff development
- Student support
- Technical infrastructure/software
- Institutional model
COMSTEC Inter Islamic Network on Virtual Universities welcomes the opportunity to further the conversation with you. Please contact us to learn more about recent discussions on business models for online and open education.

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