



**Vice-Rectorship for Development  
and Quality**



**General Secretariat for Strategic Plan  
Follow-up**

## **Report on the Implementation Risks of NU Strategic Plan Third Stage Projects 1433/1438 AH**

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Najran University, in collaboration with all the University's academic and administrative units as well all the concerned parties from inside and outside the University, prepared its first strategic plan which extends to five years from 1433 until 1438 AH.

As a result of the many developments which have occurred recently, the developmental projects have to be updated for achieving NU strategic objectives and mission. Therefore, the number of projects dropped to 88 developmental projects that would achieve the twelve strategic objectives of the University as completed by the team of updating NU mission, goals and strategic objectives. It aimed to meet the requirements of the National Commission for Academic Assessment and Accreditation (NCAAA), so that the university can apply for the institutional and program accreditation.

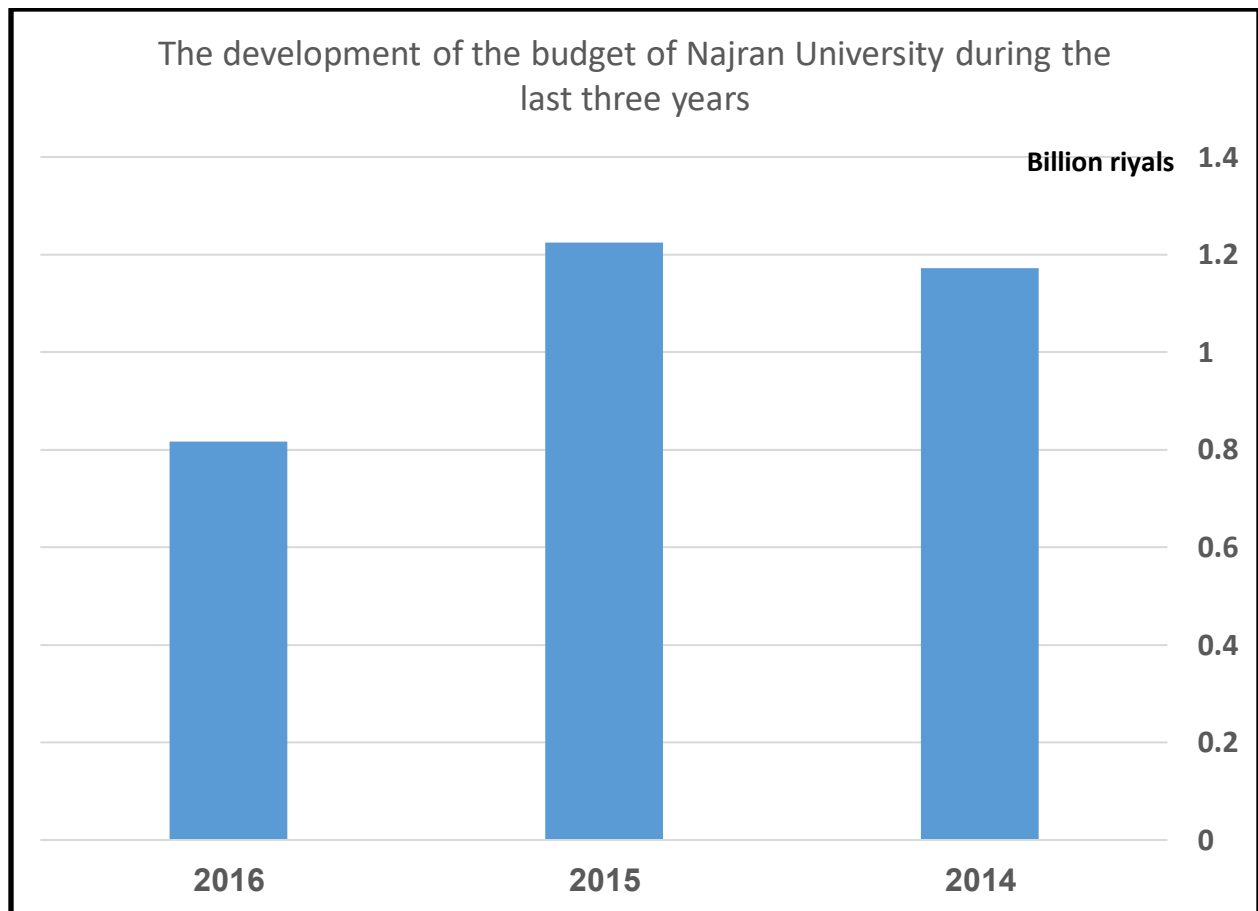
The strategic plan third phase projects started on 8/7/1436 H corresponding to 27/4/2015, with 30 projects divided into 14 new projects and 16 projects extending from the first & second phases.

Although the completion rate of the third phase projects reached 75.1%, its implementation faced many risks, namely:

### **First: Financial Risks:**

The provision of the estimated budget for NU strategic plan third stage projects faced many financial difficulties to finance the implementation of these projects, especially those projects that need a high budget. Projects, with lower implementation cost, have been already implemented with self-financing from the colleges implementing these projects. However, funding projects with higher implementation cost is a stumbling block for implementing these projects, and one of the challenges facing the emerging universities, including NU.

Figures indicate that the budget of NU decreased during the last three fiscal years (Figure 1) by 30.3%, as it decreased from SR 1.172.490 in 2014 to SR 1.224.141 in 2015 then to SR 816.758 in 2016. This has directly affected the University's development processes, as well as the implementation of its strategy, especially with respect to the implementation of the Strategic Plan projects.



**Figure (1) the development of the budget of NU during the fiscal years 2014-2016**

In this context, it is necessary to adopt some mechanisms and procedures to overcome this threat, such as:

1. Establishing a unit to develop the University resources.
2. Developing the programs of the Deanship of Community Service, in order to ensure an increase in the University's income.
3. Developing the programs of the Institute of Studies and Advisory Services.
4. Taking advantage of the initiatives afforded the Ministry of Education.
5. Finding funding channels for the University in partnership with the community of Najran.

## **Second: South Border Risks**

As a result of the current events in the state of Yemen, and its border location with the city of Najran, and its proximity to the city of Sa'ada, the stronghold of the Huthis, Saudi Arabia began, with the participation of allied countries at the end of March 2015, the "Decisive Storm" in Yemen against the Huthis and the forces of the former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. It lasted about one month and followed by "Renewal of Hop". However, the tensions on the southern border of the Kingdom have been existing until today. Now and then, the city of Najran exposes to random projectiles fall which may hit the university campus. The borders of the city of Najran are witnessing some attempts of infiltration by militia rebels. Although they all failed, these events significantly affect the performance of teams working in the developmental projects of NU strategic plan.

The kingdom has not announced the cost of its operations in Yemen, but according to a report by the economic Jane's Defence Weekly, Saudi Arabia is the world's biggest importer of weapons in 2015, with imports worth \$ 9.3 billion.

These events have been reflected in the reduction of the Kingdom's budget for the current year to \$ 224 billion, compared to \$ 229 billion in 2015. It is currently reflected in the reduction of the budget of Saudi universities, including NU.

In order to face this danger, some necessary procedures must be taken as follows:

1. Supporting the continuation of the Standing Committee for Crises and Emergencies at the university.
2. Continuing the use of e-learning systems and distance learning.
3. Developing standards for e-learning quality assurance, and measuring its quality through surveys of faculty members and students.
4. Developing three scenarios to deal with this risk (critical scenario/ situation persistence scenario/ post-crisis scenario) by the Standing Committee for Crises and Emergencies.

## **Third: The economic orientations of the Kingdom**

Since the end of last year, Saudi Arabia has taken some austerity economic procedures for two main reasons:

1. **The decline in the price of oil:** the price of the barrel was declined by 61% compared to the highest price recorded in mid-2014 and decreased from \$ 120 to about \$ 48 per barrel at the moment. As the Kingdom, the largest oil producer in the world, produces about 10.605 million barrels per day, the Kingdom's oil income exceeds 85% of its financial revenues.

2. **The Yemen War:** In addition to the regional risks represented by Iran, Iraq and Syria, the Kingdom has led to greater hedging in its domestic expenses, as it has been already indicated.

#### **Fourth: Updates of the Kingdom 2030 vision**

The Kingdom has outlined a broad plan for economic reform and development under the title "Saudi Vision 2030" to promote the economy of the Kingdom and its liberation from dependence on oil, the most prominent features are:

1. **Freedom from oil dependency:** "Living without oil" by 2020, where the plan aims to increase non-oil revenues by six times from about \$ 43.5 billion to \$ 267 billion annually, and to increase the share of non-oil exports from 16% to 50% of the current GDP.
2. **Aramco's IPO on the stock exchange**
3. **Increasing the number of pilgrims:** from eight million per year to thirty million by 2030.
4. **Employment and the private sector:** The plan aims to increase the participation of women in the labor market from 22% to 30% and reduce the unemployment rate among Saudis from 11.6% to 7%. The Kingdom seeks to increase the contribution of the private sector to GDP from 3.8% to 5.7%.

According to the Kingdom 2030 vision, the developmental projects of NU strategic plan have been updated to meet the requirements of the stage.

Based on the foregoing, the previous risks facing the implementation of NU strategic plan projects have had negative effects on the implementation of NU strategic plan third phase projects representing a real threat and danger on the progress of the implementation of the strategic plan projects. The main negative impacts of the previous risks are:

#### **First: Affecting NU Mission and Strategic Objectives**

Despite achieving 60% of the University's mission after the completion of third phase projects, a deviation of 17% from the target caused by the aforementioned risks. They have led to the stumbling of some projects, especially in regards to the financial aspect, and thus negatively affecting the achievement of the 12 strategic objectives of the University as well as its institutional and program accreditation and the consequent influence on its reputation in the academic arena.

## **Second: Affecting the project work teams**

The aforementioned risks reflected negatively on the work teams of the third phase projects through the following:

- Increase the time period of completing the third phase projects
- The low morale of the work teams of the projects in each college due to the non-payment of rewards in these projects.
- The dispersion of the workers' thought as a result of the fall of projectiles now and then, the closure of schools in the city and the different dates of study, thus the dispersion of the family which negatively reflected on the work teams.
- The staff is unprepared to work on the project in a timely manner.
- Lack of expertise and skillful working group (experts) when needed.
- University acceptance of the resignation of some members of the work team during the implementation of the project and terminating their contract.

## **Third: Affecting the provision of technical and technological requirements for the project**

The economic austerity of the Kingdom led to a decrease in the University's budget in general, which its effects have emerged through the following:

- Failure to provide the necessary equipment for the project in a timely manner, and the difficulty of its maintenance in case of sudden breakdowns.
- Inability to purchase all the project needs, and therefore there may be a limited use of technology which affects the quality of the project outputs.
- The technological components of the project may not be integrated, thus harming the project due to financial shortfalls.

## **Fourth: Affecting the quality of the project outputs**

The quality of project outputs is affected by the availability of self-financing resources. College outputs which can afford appropriate financial support are much better than those with difficulty in providing such support. Projects need technical and human settings, equipment and conducting questionnaires, all of which are provided only through financial support.

#### **Fifth: Affecting the project timeline and faltering implementation**

- Delays in the various phases of projects implementation and their failure to comply with the planned timetable, as a natural result of the delay in the provision of project budget on the one hand, and the security conditions in the region on the other hand.
- Failure to deliver the final reports of some projects on time, including projects of Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy Colleges.
- Faltering implementation of some projects during the strategic plan third phase, including the projects implemented by deanships and departments of the Vice-Rectorship for Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research, namely:
  - 9/6 Developing a mechanism for the marketing of applied research.
  - 10/8 Establishing effective communication channels with internal and external Scholarship students.
  - 12/6 Continuous assessment of the efficiency of existing and innovative partnerships and cooperation programs.

In order to overcome this challenge, it is recommended to develop the follow-up of the implementation of NU strategic plan projects through the provision of an advanced electronic program at the secretariat of the Standing Committee for the Implementation and Follow-Up of the Strategic Plan.

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