



Lessons from EYE's Industrial Board Promotion with Universities in Kosovo

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Executive Summary

The Enhancing Youth Employment (EYE) is a Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) project working to foster a more dynamic, adaptable workforce in the Republic of Kosovo. It is managed in consortium by Helvetas and Management Development Associates. EYE began its first four-year phase in 2013, focusing on improved public-private interaction at universities, among other topics, to build mechanisms for improved coordination and updated education and training to meet the needs of Kosovo's private sector employers. EYE's main vehicle for promoting interaction was the Industrial Board (IB), a body of representatives from academia and employers, specific to a given faculty and focused on ensuring that academic education keeps pace with advancements in the workplace.

During Phase 1, EYE supported eight faculties across two universities to develop IBs, then saw autonomous copying of the IB format by four more faculties, plus two additional universities that were not partners. By the end of its first phase, EYE considered the IB effort to be quite successful. Shortly after the second phase began, in 2017, the SDC asked EYE to cease support for all higher education institutions, including IBs, and focus instead on vocational education and training at the secondary level.

More recently, in an effort to explore the long-term impact of the IBs, EYE performed an outcome harvest (OH) of its IB work. OH is a qualitative assessment technique that uses a structured process to collect anecdotes about changes in the environment, then investigates these stories to evaluate their link to a given activity. In this case, the EYE team researched changes that may have resulted from the experience of the IBs.

The research team has also found out that most of the IBs have not been as active as it was anticipated by the EYE project once the support from the project is over. Almost all of the autonomous copiers had also stopped meeting while three IBs had a noticeable impact on curricula. The team used the OH methodology to dive into the reasons behind the failure of the IB to continue operating. Ultimately, it identified **IB leadership as a critical factor** in the continuation of these bodies which, lacking strong oversight from university administration, mostly relied on voluntarism to be effective over time. Additionally, lack of enforcement of KAA's requirement is also considered as a critical factor for failure. These factors lead to the study's overall finding: if no authority requires university faculty to take consultative bodies like IBs seriously, IBs cannot be expected to provide useful (and used) input to curricula. In other words, **the uptake of IBs requires enforcement to be sustainable**.

Another key learning (and confirmation) for EYE lies in capturing and describing changes. While the critiques of the model took time to develop, the OH exercise enabled EYE to detect several unexpected (positive and negative) changes. Not everything about the IB work had been effective and this was not identified/recognized and documented before. Changes do not happen in a linear way. This is the one of the downsides of existing "impact logic" thinking in most projects, including those that apply a market systems development approach in the region and beyond. For EYE and other similar projects, it is therefore crucial to have a critical follow-up and avoid one-sided reporting. Looking back, the project could have validated results through interviews with private sector IB members, as well.

We hope that this report will provide useful guidance for all other actors seeking to influence improved public-private interactions at universities.

Introduction

The Republic of Kosovo is a young nation that struggles with low economic growth, political isolation, poor governance and the institutional hangover of years of Yugoslav mismanagement combined with the historic marginalization of the region's majority Albanian population. Its workforce is characterized by a stark skills gap that features both high youth

unemployment (more than half of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed) and a private sector that cannot find sufficient skilled candidates for all but the most basic jobs. Kosovo's education system fails to prepare young people for skilled work, partly because educators traditionally do not interact with private sector employers. As a result, employers have few chances to give input into the design of curricula at the secondary or tertiary level, and education modeled on existing curricula is outdated and unable to prepare students for skilled work.

In its first four-year phase, running from January 2013 to December 2016, EYE aimed to address the irrelevance of many university education programs to labor market needs by facilitating formal interactions between academic staff and private sector employers. These mechanisms, called IBs, brought together educators and employers mainly to give employers more input into university curricula. By this means the project expected that students would graduate with more relevant and updated expertise in a variety of fields. This productive interaction would then create a positive feedback loop, building trust between academia and the private sector and spurring more interaction, which would in turn result in more relevant curricula.

The boards, composed of university/faculty Dean and Vice Dean (ex-officio members) and private sector representatives were designed to fulfill several key functions:

- Support academic units to shape their education programs to labor market needs,
- Support academic units to find internship placements for students,
- Implement research programs jointly with academic units, and
- Provide scholarship funding to successful promising students.

In total EYE supported eight IBs based on the development potential of their respective sectors. These include:

University of Pristina (UP)

- Faculty of Computer and Electrical Engineering
- Faculty of Agriculture
- Faculty of Construction and Architecture
- Faculty of Philology
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Economy

University of Peja – Haxhi Zeka (UHZ)

- Faculty of Agribusiness
- Faculty of Tourism

The intervention as a whole is presented below in phases:

Phase I (September 2013-December 2014): EYE supported UP's Faculty of Computer and Electrical Engineering of University of Prishtina to define the most appropriate communication mechanism model, which would fit the Kosovo context. That faculty was exposed to American and EU IB-like mechanism models. Based on the defined model, the regulation was drafted for that faculty's IB, which later on was adapted to frame regulation by the UP. Parallel to this, EYE promoted the model to other regional Universities. One of the regional Universities, University of Peja (UHZ), adapted the frame regulation to its context.

Phase II (January 2015-December 2015): Academic units were asked by UP and UHZ to establish IBs according to the regulation. Therefore, EYE through technical assistance supported the establishment of IBs at six academic units at UP and two at academic units at UHZ.

Phase III (January 2016-December 2016): During this period without EYE support, three new IBs WERE established at University of Prishtina and one at University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj.

Phase IV (March 2017-December 2017): Based on findings from previous phase, EYE undertook twofold strategy

- I. Revision of regulation and development of the manual for establishment and operation of IBs with involvement of IB members, and
- II. Support Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) to introduce a new standard requirement (compulsory consultation with business sector) for AUs for accreditation of academic programs. At the end of 2017 EYE provided info sessions to new appointed secretaries on the regulation, the manual and their new appointed responsibilities.

Additionally, one new IB was established at UP without project support.

January 2018: EYE stopped supporting IBs at SDC's request and did not follow up on the transition process to the new appointed secretaries. Beginning of 2018, EYE project handed over to both Universities published final regulations as well as the manuals.

EYE considered its work supporting IBs to be quite successful. Twenty-seven private companies, four public companies and 13 business associations participated in the IBs. Five bachelor and five master programs were proposed by IB members of the Computer and Electrical Engineering Faculty at UP, and two master programs were proposed by the IB of the Faculty of Agribusiness at the UHZ. All 10 programs proposed at the Computer and Electrical Engineering Faculty were accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). The number of students enrolled in these programs recommended by IB members reached 1744.

In addition, four faculties at UP – Medicine, Mechanical Engineering, Physical Education, and Law – were observed to have developed IBs on their own, without EYE support, after witnessing the model among other faculties at the university. Lastly, two additional universities, the University of Applied Sciences (UAS) in Ferizaj and the University of Business and Technology (UBT) in Pristina, adopted IBs. EYE initially believed that it had also influenced these outcomes.

Methodology

Outcome harvesting (OH) is a qualitative assessment tool that draws from the research of Wilson-Grau and Britt, published by the Ford Foundation in 2012. In OH, the evaluation user (i.e. program staff) works with the evaluator (i.e. harvester) to define questions about outcomes that can be used to make decisions and take action. Outcomes may relate to behavior, relationships, practices or policies. For each outcome, the harvester uses a variety of data sources to assess the degree to which outcomes have occurred and the contribution of the implementer (change agent) to that outcome. The approach is retrospective in that it first describes outcomes and then seeks plausible explanations of how the outcomes occurred. OH can be used for ongoing monitoring or ex-post impact evaluation, and can be used to examine intended and unintended outcomes.¹

Six steps to outcome harvesting

1. **Design the Outcome Harvest:** Harvest users (i.e. program staff) and harvesters (i.e. the researcher) identify useable questions to guide the harvest. Both users and harvesters agree on what information is to be collected and included in the outcome description as well as on the changes in the social actors and how the change agent influenced them.
2. **Gather data and draft outcome descriptions:** Harvesters glean information about changes that have occurred in social actors and how the change agent (i.e. the program) contributed to these changes. Information about outcomes may be found in documents or collected through interviews, surveys, and other sources. The harvesters write preliminary outcome descriptions with questions for review and clarification by the change agent.
3. **Engage change agents in formulating outcome descriptions:** Harvesters engage directly with change agents to review the draft outcome descriptions, identify and formulate additional outcomes, and classify all outcomes. Change agents often consult with well-informed individuals (inside or outside their organization) who can provide information about outcomes.
4. **Substantiate:** Harvesters obtain the views of independent individuals knowledgeable about the outcome(s) and how they were achieved; this validates and enhances the credibility of the findings.
5. **Analyze and interpret:** Harvesters organize outcome descriptions in order to make sense of them, analyze and interpret the data, and provide evidence-based answers to the useable harvesting questions.
6. **Support use of findings:** Drawing on the evidence-based, actionable answers to the useable questions, harvesters propose points for discussion to harvest users, including how the users might make use of findings. The harvesters also wrap up their contribution by accompanying or facilitating the discussion amongst harvest users.

Source: Wilson-Grau and Britt, "Outcome Harvesting," Ford Foundation, 2012.

OH exercises begin with the identification of a central question the harvest is intended to answer. At the same time, the assessment team must identify the informant population, the intended users of the outcome harvest, and the intended uses. EYE's questions, informant population, users and uses are detailed in the text box below.

EYE's outcome harvesting question: *To what extent has the IB mechanism increased communication between university and private sector actors, and what have been the additional effects of that increased communication?*

The informant population: Members of IBs – both university faculty and employers

Users: EYE, university staff, other projects seeking to promote cooperation between educators and employers

Uses: Impact assessment of EYE's IB work, guidance for future efforts to achieve similar objectives

¹ Sparkman, "Testing Tools for Assessing Systemic Change: Outcome Harvesting," USAID/LEO and DFID/BEAM, 2016.

The process for conducting the OH started with harvest design, when the EYE team set the OH question and developed a set of purposefully broad questions. The team then selected five directly supported IBs (UP Agriculture, Construction and Architecture, and Education; UHZ Agribusiness and Tourism) and three IBs that were started without EYE support (UP Medicine, Mechanical Engineering, and Law), intending to capture a wide range of outcomes.

Next, the team conducted a set of interviews with faculty and business representatives from those IBs, where available and willing to meet for an interview. Following those interviews, the researchers reviewed the data and categorized a set of outcomes that emerged from the information, using them to formulate a set of eight outcome descriptions.

These **outcome descriptions** are listed below:

1. Industrial Boards stopped meeting
2. Industrial Boards did not influence changes in curricula
3. Industrial Boards influenced changes in curricula
4. Industrial Boards continued without project support
5. Industrial Boards were copied independently
6. Industrial Boards created skills development opportunities for students outside of universities
7. Industrial Board interaction increased trust between the university and private sector employers
8. Industrial Board interaction decreased trust between the university and private sector employers

After setting the outcome descriptions, the team then developed a strategy for substantiating these observations through additional data collection. This step, which was conducted in several waves of substantiating interviews, allowed the team to dig further into surprising and unexpected responses, particularly the factors that contributed to the lack of sustainability of IB meetings. During this step the team also interviewed representatives from UP's Computer and Electrical Engineering Faculty, as members of the only directly supported IB that was found to continue. The OH methodology does not necessarily call for repeat trips back to sources to gather more information, but in this case it proved to be an invaluable step, adding greater detail to our view of the challenges of IB establishment, and helping dispel rose-colored views of outcomes that could have led us to under-report those challenges.

As a last step, the team compiled the data for analysis and interpretation. The next section details our findings under each outcome description.

Findings per Outcome Description

Outcome 1: Industrial Boards stopped meeting

The first finding is that, out of the eight IBs supported directly by EYE, only one (Computer and Electrical Engineering at UP) continues to operate. The others had a wide variety of reasons for stopping:

- UP Agriculture Faculty – met “three or four times,” according to the dean, but did not continue. One frustrated private sector member expressed “total disappointment with the university” and did not see space for further cooperation, after his experience of attending two IB meetings.
- UP Education Faculty – a faculty member said the university got no benefit from IB establishment, due to lack of follow up by any members. She tried to get private sector and faculty IB members to give input into new programs, but no one responded to her emails. The problem she sees is that “the activity is left [up to] free will... Overall, the motivation from the private sector is missing and also incentive from the university.” A kindergarten teacher sitting on the IB said the arrangement lacks “a sustainable mechanism... that would make the IBs functional and each member responsible for being a member of the group.”
- UP Civil Engineering and Architecture – meetings stopped in 2015, according to the new dean who didn’t follow-up. A private sector IB member said there was only one meeting. Another member said two meetings were held, but stopped because of “no continuity and initiative.” Nevertheless, the faculty claimed to have accredited nine new academic programs (four bachelors and five masters-level programs) with the contribution of industrial board members. We were not able to verify that claim.
- UHZ Tourism Faculty – this IB held a few meetings “every four months” with around 18 participants. It made recommendations but the university never picked them up. One informant cited a “lack of incentive from the university” for continued involvement.
- UHZ Agribusiness Faculty – stopped because dynamic leadership was not replaced after he left. Initially, respondents said there was a lot of enthusiasm, and “very good ideas that were brought to the IBs to organize exchange visits with partner universities, guest speakers but unfortunately there were no actions taken.”

The broad picture painted by these responses indicates that IBs, if they fail to continue, tend to die a quiet death. After a handful of meetings, and despite some cases of enthusiastic input, they simply stop happening. Even the UP Law Faculty, which had autonomously adopted the IB format without EYE support, stopped after one meeting when “information for programs was shared with private sector IB members, but no one responded.”

Three other factors emerge: leadership, enforcement and resource allocation. When an IB has a strong leader capable of setting an agenda, encouraging participation and carrying discussions forward, it tends to continue while that leader continues. UHZ’s Agribusiness Faculty, which ceased following the departure of a business representative who chaired the IB but who then left disappointed, exemplifies this point.

A second factor is a lack of enforcement for the KAA’s requirement that faculties review their programs with the help of private sector actors. The IB was intended to support this requirement, providing a forum for stakeholders to discuss updated program standards. However, without serious follow-up by university administration as a consequence of lack of enforcement by KAA, IB members could not be relied on to take the meetings forward on their own. In other words, universities, themselves, lacked sufficient oversight to ensure the continuation of IB meetings. This lack of incentive is related to changes in management and dedicated resources (the third factor) to administer the meetings.

Possibly, the lack of incentive can also be due to an insular university culture, wherein tenured professors are protected from pressure to make sure that their classes are providing students with updated skills that are relevant for modern employment.

Outcome 2: Industrial Boards did not influence changes in curricula

In the majority of cases, the IBs did not manage to have any influence on curricula. The consistent finding in each of these cases was that a lack of response to emails requesting input inhibited collaboration to adapt curricula. Private sector IB representatives complained that university faculty did not respond because “there is no priority for the university to push the IBs and make them fully functional.” Meanwhile, university members complained that private sector representatives never responded to requests to give input into the program accreditation process.

However, a lack of response to emails for input cannot, in itself, be an underlying cause for failed collaboration, unless there was little effort to follow emails with phone calls and other attempts at communication. In other words, “no one responded” is a half-hearted and convenient excuse for letting the collaboration die. The fact that none of the members of these IBs was willing to take responsibility for following-up to ensure collaboration reveals a deeper apathy toward the goal of collaboration, in the first place.

In some cases, the IBs did make recommendations to universities but those recommendations were not taken into consideration, or not instituted, and no feedback was given to IB members about why the recommendations were not considered, such as with the agribusiness IB at UHZ.

Outcome 3: Industrial Boards influenced changes in curricula

In three cases, IB members reported that they were able to influence significant changes in curricula. However, only two of these claims are verifiable.

UHZ’s Agribusiness IB worked to develop two new KAA accredited programs – Bio-production Technology, and Agro-environment and Agro-ecology. UP’s Computer and Electrical Engineering IB, which was the only IB still meeting at the time of this evaluation, (see Outcome 4) reported that it had developed 10 new programs, all of which were accredited by the KAA. The research team was able to confirm that the IBs played a key role in developing these 12 programs, bringing together educational faculty and employer representatives to modernize student training.

A representative of UP’s Civil Engineering and Architecture Faculty said that the IB played a key role in updating nine of its programs, all of which had yet to be accredited by the KAA. However, we were unable to confirm that the IB actually informed the revision of these programs since a new Dean was appointed in the meantime. Given that the IB seems to have met only once, it is difficult to see how this result could have been realistically achieved.

Outcome 4: Industrial Boards continued without project support

The only IB that seems to still meet is attached to UP’s Computer and Electrical Engineering Faculty. This faculty was the first faculty to introduce the Industrial Board back in 2009, while it was officially announced as a formal body in 2013. The meetings are organized formally and hosted by the dean at the faculty premises. Usually around 15-20 members attend these meetings.

Curricula are updated every three to five years, depending how they get accredited. The last accreditation happened in 2014 when five bachelor and five master programs were accredited. Some changes to curricula can be made if it is needed in the period after accreditation.

Otherwise, any considerable changes have to be reviewed and accredited. Before the last accreditation, there was an input from the private sector through IB. The next accreditation will happen in 2020.

Interestingly, official meetings have not happened recently because it was not necessary, according to IB informants, since the accreditation occurs every five years. This does not mean that the cooperation of the faculty with the PS is interrupted, as an internship program developed as a result of IB interactions is now obligatory for the faculty's students. An informant from the IB indicated that the faculty has "very good cooperation with the private sector," as a result of interaction via the IB.

What lies behind the difference between this IB's experience and that of all the others? For one, the dean at the Computer and Electrical Engineering Faculty seems to take the process seriously, expecting a significant volume of interaction between employers and faculty members when it comes to updating curricula. For another, the rapid pace of change within computer engineering, and especially software development, requires steady interaction with private companies in order for UP to keep its training remotely updated.

Nonetheless, from EYE's other interactions with software development firms in Pristina the research team observed that students leaving UP with computer engineering degrees are widely considered to be unprepared for work in the private sector. Software development firms complain that they often need to train new graduates for an additional 6 to 12 months before they can be trusted to operate without close supervision. For this reason, EYE worked with non-formal trainers to develop bootcamp-style intensive trainings, designed and conducted in partnership with employers, to address the skill gap between university training and professional requirements.

Thus, while the Computer and Electrical Engineering IB has been more successful than the others in its continued operation, the quality of training at that faculty still requires improvement.

Outcome 5: Industrial Boards were copied independently

Prior to the close of EYE's first phase at the end of 2016, the project noted that three faculties at UP had adopted IBs without direct EYE support. By end of 2017 another IB at UP was established, making it total of four faculties. These were the faculties of Medicine, Mechanical Engineering, Physical Education, and Law. The research team confirmed that these four IBs were developed on the basis of the influence of EYE-supported IBs – in other words, the project was able to induce a degree of crowding in, with new actors adopting a behavior (the IB) without project assistance. However, all of these IBs have since stopped meeting. One member of the Mechanical Engineering IB claims that the group is now meeting informally, but another member remarked that the IB only had one meeting.

Thus, while crowding in is certainly an achievement, these new IBs had the same fate of most of the other IBs – a quiet death brought on by a lack of leadership, enforcement of KAA requirement and follow-up.

New IBs at two other universities are continuing, however. At the UAS in Ferizaj, the school's energetic administrator was inspired by IBs he witnessed on a trip to the University of Salzburg and decided to implement them at his school. While this is not a result of EYE's influence, he did use EYE's guidelines on developing and conducting IBs to establish them at his school.

Meanwhile, similarly energetic leadership at UBT led that school's administrator to do the same thing. In the case of UBT, the research team was able to confirm that the example of the IBs supported by EYE inspired their establishment at UBT.

Outcome 6: Industrial Boards created skills development opportunities for students outside of universities

It was difficult to determine the degree to which IBs influenced the availability of skills development opportunities, such as internships, outside of universities. There were internship opportunities before the start of the IBs, but the involvement of certain businesses in IBs has in some cases led to more internship opportunities.

During the interviews, majority of faculty and employer representatives said that internship opportunities were welcomed and positively accepted from both parties, in addition to students. In this regard, IBs seem to have been used as a mechanism to improve the internship opportunities for the students. This cooperation was emphasized most in UHZ's Agribusiness work, UF, and by the university representative for the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in UP.

In UHZ, owner of Magra confirmed that he has few students in internship. In University of Ferizaj, based on the information that the project has and according to the observation from the field, the internship program is continuing. According to the feedback from companies that had participated in the Mechanical Engineering IB at UP, students continue working in internships at IB-member companies. Additionally, other businesses occasionally engage students for internships.

Outcome 7: Industrial Board interaction increased trust between the university and private sector employers

The underlying logic of the IB design is that frequent, productive interaction will spark improved communication, leading to greater trust among all parties over time. However, the only case in which we noted that IB participation increased trust between university and private sector representatives was among members of an IB at UAS in Ferizaj. The UAS administrator's approach to developing and managing the IB seems to have been sincere and beneficial for both PS and academia.

Outcome 8: Industrial Board interaction decreased trust between the university and private sector employers

As opposed to building trust, we found several examples in which the frustration of participating in a non-performing IB damaged trust between university faculty members and employers. In these cases, it would have been better not to have participated at all, than to have been given the chance for input only to see that input ignored. One member of the UP Mechanical Engineering IB said he could not see "any motive to work with academia." His firm "has always been very open to university but [does] not receive anything in return." Opinions of faculty members significantly worsened, with several employer representatives saying academic staff were either incompetent or guided solely by personal interest. Academic staff, for their part, said private sector representatives on IBs brought unrealistic expectations regarding the degree to which they could influence curriculum changes.

Conclusions

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that EYE's effort to facilitate constructive interaction between university faculty members and private sector employers failed almost completely. Only one of the eight directly supported IBs continues to meet. Two faculties that had not participated successfully continue with IBs, but the four IBs that started autonomously at UP also failed to continue. In addition to offering good learning, a result like this calls for hard questions. Two hard questions arise:

1. What could EYE have done differently to promote the sustainability of IBs?
2. Why did EYE not notice this negative outcome before the OH exercise?

What could have been done differently?

There are influential cultural issues – from academia's ivory tower attitude to the private sector's impatience for process – that make it difficult to establish new patterns of productive interaction between these two groups. There is little, if anything, EYE could have done to change those cultures prior to IB formation (in fact, the IB should be a vehicle for changing those cultures over time). It is more feasible to focus on other issues identified in the analysis – **a crucial lack of IB leadership** in particular.

Any actor seeking to build an IB-like body needs to include a process for identifying leadership that is engaged enough to carry this process forward. In all cases where there has been tangible progress, a strong leader has helped make sure that the IB's resulted in substantive changes. Where that leadership was absent, the IBs flickered out of existence – dying with a whimper and leaving a sense of mutual disgust among both academics and employers.

The research team is not able to recommend a process for identifying fit IB leadership, but at the least we can argue that any new IB effort should include an open discussion of the degree to which leadership is pivotal to IB success. That way, when IB members notice that leadership is lacking they can immediately point out that this key ingredient is missing.

We also considered the possibility that **EYE should have continued supporting IBs** for a longer period of time. It was a new concept introduced to academia; the project's further support could have been essential until the IBs assumed ownership of the process. However, lacking strong leadership from the outset, it is difficult to see how extended support would be helpful. Indeed, **a lack of immediate ownership of the IB could have allowed the leadership vacuum to go un-noticed**, in the first place.

Additionally, if KAA would have enforced accreditation criteria by verifying functionality of IBs in faculties and their recommendations for the content of the academic programs, it would have a positive impact on engagement of academic staff. Without any records from the IB meetings, KAA would not accredit newly proposed academic programs. This situation would influence management of the faculty to engage more with private sector.

Lastly, a few respondents noted that **academic faculties often failed to allocate resources**, such as dedicated a staff person in charge of keeping minutes and following up to ensure continued participation, that would have supported IB continuation. As a result, **all participation by all parties was strictly voluntary** – a recipe for poor sustainability, if ever there was one.

The abovementioned issue occurred due to gaps in the first regulation, which then was addressed with the revision. According to the second regulation the academic units agreed to appoint their juridical secretaries to keep minutes and to store documentation. However, due to disruptions at the KAA and the SDC's request that EYE cease support to IBs, the KAA never enforced the new regulation.

Why did it take us so long to understand what was not working?

Lastly, on a self-reflective note, the EYE team thought that most of the IBs were still meeting until a thorough assessment was conducted. In fact, the belief in IB's functionality was one of

the reasons we decided to conduct an OH of the work. As is the case in OH exercises, unexpected – and sometimes surprising, negative results – are found. EYE was not an exception. We were surprised to find out that most of the IBs were relatively inactive. In some cases, company representatives reported worse views of university collaboration after the failed effort than before. How could we have missed these results?

For one, it is difficult to see clearly the activities of public institutions (including universities). As one EYE staff member stated, “It takes time for them to even reply to a single e-mail and even longer to provide a thorough report.” In retrospect, the project should have relied more heavily on getting information from private sector IB members, who were left out of the reporting process, than to rely on academic faculty to report their own progress. It is also possible that a lack of resources affected the accountability and transparency of academic staff.

In the end, however, the project must take responsibility for failing to adequately follow-up to assess IB progress after it ceased support. The negative outcomes discussed above – particularly the discontinuation of IBs and decreased trust between IB members – took time to surface. Any monitoring and results measurement system should also be equipped with tools to enable projects to continually learn and detect positive and negative results. EYE should have had a closer follow-up to know what worked and what did not. A more thorough and diversely sourced check on the progress of all project-supported IBs could have caught the negative outcomes sooner.