



Strategic Plan 2025 – 2030

SIMAD oLearn

SIMAD University, Mogadishu - Somalia

June 2025

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+252 615 259826
+252 615 259826



<http://olearn.simad.edu.so>
olearn@simad.edu.so



Town Campus, Zobe Street,
Mogadishu, Somalia

Acronyms

Abbreviation	Full Form
LMS	Learning Management System
OCMS	Online Campus Management System
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
QA	Quality Assurance
SDG 4	Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education)
KPI / KPIs	Key Performance Indicator(s)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ROI	Return on Investment



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Executive Summary

The SIMAD oLearn Strategic Plan (2025–2030) presents a transformative roadmap to elevate higher education access, quality, and innovation across Somalia through a hybrid digital learning model. Anchored in SIMAD University’s institutional pillars and 25-year legacy of academic excellence, the plan positions oLearn as a national leader in open, flexible, and technology-enhanced education. It responds to the urgent demand for inclusive learning in a post-conflict, digitally evolving Somalia, aligning with national development strategies, regional frameworks, and global education agendas, including SDG 4.

The strategy is structured around six interrelated themes: (1) **Digital Learning Excellence**, (2) **Access and Inclusivity**, (3) **Faculty Development and Innovation**, (4) **Industry-Relevant Curriculum**, (5) **Digitalization and Operational Efficiency**, and (6) **Sustainability and Effectiveness**. Each theme is supported by specific objectives, key performance indicators (KPIs), and an actionable implementation roadmap. Together, they foster a learner-centered, industry-aligned, and resilient digital education ecosystem. The plan outlines a three-phased implementation timeline building foundational infrastructure and policies, expanding programs and institutional capacity, and positioning SIMAD oLearn for regional leadership.

A robust governance structure ensures cross-departmental collaboration and strategic oversight, complemented by a Faculty Development Steering Committee and a Digital Transformation Steering Committee. Faculty capacity building, innovation grants, and a CPD framework ensure ongoing instructional excellence. Learner-centered support systems including a 24/7 help desk, orientation programs, and peer mentoring enhance engagement and retention.

The strategy is reinforced by an integrated Monitoring, Evaluation, and Risk Management framework that enables data-driven decisions, accountability, and adaptive planning. Through this bold and forward-looking plan, SIMAD University is set to transform the higher education landscape in Somalia, bridging geographic, economic, and social divides and empowering a new generation of digitally skilled, globally competitive, and socially responsible graduates.



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Introduction

SIMAD oLearn, the digital learning arm of SIMAD University, represents a bold and timely response to the shifting landscape of higher education in Somalia and beyond. Drawing from the University's 25-year legacy of academic excellence, oLearn has been designed to bridge the gap between traditional learning systems and the growing demand for flexible, technology-enabled education. It seeks to democratize access to quality learning, irrespective of location or background, and ensure that students across the country, especially in remote areas, can engage meaningfully with a rigorous, future-oriented academic experience.

This strategy was developed through an inclusive process, engaging university leadership, academic staff, digital learning experts, and community stakeholders. It recognizes that the future of higher education in Somalia lies in the intersection of pedagogy, digital infrastructure, and learner engagement. Our strategy thus positions SIMAD oLearn as a national and regional model for hybrid education that is student-centered, contextually relevant, and globally connected.

As a strategic extension of the University's overarching institutional vision, SIMAD oLearn embodies the values of innovation, inclusivity, and impact. It is built upon the understanding that education today must adapt to a rapidly changing world one shaped by digital transformation, economic uncertainties, and social disruptions. With the flexibility of online and blended delivery, SIMAD oLearn enables learners from diverse circumstances including working professionals, women, and remote students, to access education that empowers them to participate meaningfully in society and the economy.

The development of this plan comes at a critical juncture for Somalia. The country is rebuilding and reimagining its institutions, and education is at the heart of that transformation. SIMAD oLearn responds directly to this opportunity and challenge. By leveraging robust academic standards, a scalable digital ecosystem, and a clear strategic vision, SIMAD oLearn aims to nurture a new generation of digitally skilled, socially conscious, and resilient graduates ready to lead Somalia into a more inclusive and prosperous future.



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Vision and Mission

Vision:

To be a leading center for inclusive, flexible, and high-quality hybrid learning in Somalia and beyond.

Mission:

To provide accessible and learner-centered academic and professional programs through technology-driven and pedagogically sound hybrid learning model, empowering individuals and communities with knowledge and skills for sustainable development.

Core Values

- **Innovation:** Embracing creative digital solutions and continuous improvement.
- **Excellence:** Upholding rigorous academic standards and quality assurance.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensuring equitable access for all learners, regardless of geography or background.
- **Collaboration:** Building strong partnerships with industry, academia, and community stakeholders.
- **Sustainability:** Pursuing financial and operational sustainability while maximizing social impact.

Graduate Attributes

Graduates from SIMAD oLearn will be:

- Digitally literate and innovative problem solvers.
- Self-motivated, lifelong learners with an entrepreneurial mindset.
- Globally competitive professionals equipped with critical thinking and practical skills.
- Ethical leaders with a commitment to community and societal development.



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Strategic Themes and Objectives

Drawing inspiration from the overall SIMAD Strategic Plan, SIMAD oLearn's strategy is organized around Six interrelated themes:

Theme 1: Digital Learning Excellence

We aim to build and sustain a robust, student-centered digital learning ecosystem that delivers flexibility, academic rigor, and innovation. Through strategic investments in platforms and pedagogy, we will ensure SIMAD oLearn provides a seamless and engaging educational experience that reflects best practices in hybrid and online learning.

Digital learning is central to the SIMAD oLearn vision. In a context where learners come from diverse backgrounds often balancing education with work or family responsibilities our commitment is to deliver accessible, inclusive, and high-quality digital education that meets the evolving needs of Somalia's higher education landscape.

Therefore, it is our strategic intent to:

Objective 1.1: Develop and implement a best-in-class Learning Management System (LMS) that supports both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

The LMS will serve as the backbone of SIMAD oLearn's hybrid delivery model. It will provide a structured and consistent environment where students can access course materials, participate in live sessions, submit assignments, and engage in collaborative activities. The system will be optimized for low-bandwidth environments and mobile access to accommodate learners across Somalia, including those in remote regions. Core features will include real-time communication tools (e.g., live classes, discussion forums), automated tracking of learner progress, and integration with assessment and feedback mechanisms. The LMS will also enable personalized learning pathways and learner analytics to support student success and early intervention.

Objective 1.2: Continuously upgrade digital content and pedagogical strategies to maintain high-quality course delivery.

Beyond the platform itself, the quality of content and teaching practices will be at the heart of the digital learning experience. SIMAD oLearn will prioritize the development of interactive,



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inclusive, and modular digital content designed to engage students and reflect real-world applications. This includes the use of multimedia, case-based learning, simulations, and collaborative activities. Faculty will be supported through ongoing capacity-building initiatives focused on digital pedagogy, universal design for learning, and culturally relevant instructional practices. Instructional designers and academic teams will work together to ensure course materials are regularly reviewed and updated in line with student feedback, emerging technologies, and evolving academic standards.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Platform uptime and system reliability
- Student satisfaction with digital learning tools and experiences
- Completion and retention rates in online and hybrid courses

These KPIs will be used to evaluate the effectiveness and resilience of our digital learning infrastructure and to inform continual improvements. Through this theme, SIMAD oLearn seeks to establish itself as a national model for digital academic delivery, grounded in excellence and responsive to the realities of its learners.

Theme 2: Access and Inclusivity

We aim to ensure that educational opportunity is not constrained by geography, gender, or circumstance. Through SIMAD oLearn, we are committed to creating inclusive, flexible, and equitable learning pathways that reach all Somali regions and support learners with diverse life contexts and responsibilities.

As Somalia rebuilds its institutions and economy, education must be designed to meet the needs of students traditionally excluded from or underrepresented in higher education especially those in rural areas, women balancing family responsibilities, working professionals, and displaced populations. This theme reflects SIMAD oLearn's commitment to equity and social impact, ensuring no learner is left behind in the digital transformation of education.

Therefore, it is our strategic intent to:

Objective 2.1: Expand outreach to individuals living or working outside Mogadishu, ensuring inclusive access to education across all Somali regions.



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SIMAD oLearn will establish mechanisms to reach learners in underserved provinces, remote towns, and nomadic communities through a combination of digital infrastructure, community-based outreach, and mobile access strategies. Awareness campaigns and targeted recruitment will be conducted in collaboration with local institutions, civil society, and regional education offices. We will ensure that our digital platforms function in low-bandwidth environments and that learners have access to offline or asynchronous options where needed. Dedicated enrollment support, localized communication, and contextualized content will be used to improve engagement and participation across the country.

Objective 2.2: Provide flexible, learner-centered pathways specifically tailored for working professionals, women especially mothers and other non-traditional students balancing education with daily responsibilities.

SIMAD oLearn will design academic programs that acknowledge the time constraints and life obligations of adult learners. This includes evening and weekend classes, part-time study options, and self-paced course structures. Flexible admissions criteria and recognition of prior learning will also be explored. Special attention will be given to empowering women particularly mothers by addressing barriers such as scheduling conflicts, digital literacy gaps, and lack of support systems. In addition, peer networks, mentorship programs, and inclusive learning communities will be developed to enhance the experience and persistence of non-traditional learners.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Overall enrollment growth, especially from outside Mogadishu
- Increased participation rates among working professionals and mothers
- Improved diversity metrics across age, gender, and geographic representation
- Higher retention and program completion rates in flexible and part-time learning tracks

Through this theme, SIMAD oLearn reinforces its mission to be a truly national digital education platform one that offers accessible, life-enhancing learning opportunities to every motivated learner in Somalia, regardless of their location or circumstances.

Theme 3: Faculty Development and Innovation

We aim to build a digitally empowered academic community that embraces innovation, inclusivity, and continuous professional growth. Faculty are at the heart of the SIMAD



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oLearn model, and their capacity to deliver high-quality, student-centered, and technology-enhanced instruction is critical to the success of our digital learning ecosystem.

In a rapidly changing educational environment, teaching excellence depends on the ability of academic staff to adapt, innovate, and engage diverse learners through emerging pedagogies and tools. This theme seeks to institutionalize faculty development as a strategic priority, ensuring that all instructors are equipped, supported, and inspired to lead in digital and hybrid teaching environments.

Therefore, it is our strategic intent to:

Objective 3.1: Equip all faculty members with essential digital teaching competencies to confidently deliver high-quality hybrid instruction using online pedagogies, tools, and platforms.

SIMAD oLearn will implement a structured faculty development framework that includes tiered digital skills training, peer mentoring, and certification pathways aligned with international standards. The training will focus on core competencies such as online course design, digital assessment methods, use of interactive platforms, and inclusive online facilitation. Faculty will be supported through dedicated instructional design teams and professional development workshops. New faculty onboarding will include a digital teaching component to ensure readiness from the outset. The goal is to cultivate confidence and fluency in digital teaching among all instructors across programs.

Objective 3.2: Foster a culture of instructional innovation and inclusivity by empowering faculty to design and implement modular, accessible, and technology-enhanced learning experiences for diverse student groups.

Beyond technical competencies, SIMAD oLearn will promote pedagogical innovation as a core aspect of faculty identity and institutional culture. Faculty will be encouraged and supported to experiment with new approaches to course delivery, content structuring, and learner engagement. This includes the development of modular learning components, use of open educational resources (OERs), integration of culturally relevant examples, and implementation of universal design for learning principles. Innovation grants, recognition schemes, and collaborative learning design studios will be introduced to reward faculty who pioneer new models and contribute to institutional learning.



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Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Increased number of digitally certified faculty
- Faculty participation in structured continuous professional development programs
- Growth in faculty-led digital course innovations and hybrid content
- Broader adoption of inclusive, modular, and technology-enhanced teaching practices across faculties

By investing in faculty development and fostering an ethos of experimentation and excellence, SIMAD oLearn will ensure that its academic staff are well-positioned to drive digital transformation and deliver impactful learning experiences in every discipline.

Theme 4: Industry-Relevant Curriculum

We aim to ensure that SIMAD oLearn graduates are not only academically prepared but also professionally equipped to contribute meaningfully in high-growth sectors and rapidly evolving industries. By aligning our curricula with market demands and integrating real-world tools and practices, we will strengthen the employability and impact of our learners across Somalia and beyond.

The world of work is changing rapidly driven by digital transformation, automation, and global competition. Our programs must reflect this reality. This theme emphasizes SIMAD oLearn's commitment to preparing graduates who can succeed in the job market, adapt to industry trends, and lead innovation in their respective fields.

Therefore, it is our strategic intent to:

Objective 4.1: Align all academic programs and course offerings with current market demands and industry priorities, with a strong focus on high-growth sectors such as technology, business, and health.

SIMAD oLearn will establish systematic processes for curriculum review and industry consultation to ensure that all programs reflect current labor market trends, local economic priorities, and global opportunities. We will engage employers, industry bodies, and professional associations in program design and revision. Emerging sectors including ICT, entrepreneurship, digital health, and finance will be prioritized for content development and specialization tracks. Employer needs will be mapped against graduate outcomes, and adjustments will be made regularly to maintain relevance and responsiveness.



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Objective 4.2: Integrate practical, industry-informed content and professional tools into courses to ensure graduates are career-ready and competitive in the job market.

To bridge the gap between classroom learning and professional practice, courses will include hands-on components such as industry projects, case studies, simulations, and real-time problem-solving. Students will be introduced to relevant software, standards, and workplace technologies commonly used in their fields. Career-readiness skills such as communication, collaboration, digital literacy, and ethics will be embedded into the curriculum. SIMAD oLearn will also promote guest lectures, industry-led workshops, and mentorship programs to connect students directly with the world of work.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Growth in the number and depth of industry-academic partnerships
- Increased rates of internship placements and graduate employment
- Improved alignment between graduate competencies and employer expectations

Through this theme, SIMAD oLearn will establish a dynamic, demand-driven academic model that enables students not only to acquire knowledge, but to apply it meaningfully in real-world contexts and contribute to national development and innovation.

Theme 5: Digitalization and Operational Efficiency

We aim to modernize institutional operations through end-to-end digital transformation, ensuring that both academic and administrative systems are efficient, responsive, and capable of supporting the demands of a 21st-century hybrid learning environment.

Operational agility is a critical enabler of digital education. As SIMAD oLearn scales its programs and services, the digitalization of internal processes will be essential to achieving excellence, ensuring transparency, and optimizing resource use. This theme reflects our commitment to streamlining workflows, reducing redundancies, and leveraging data to drive continuous institutional improvement.

Therefore, it is our strategic intent to:

Objective 5.1: Fully digitize administrative and academic processes to support a seamless online learning experience.



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+252 615 259826



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All key processes including admissions, registration, grading, financial transactions, student services, and academic scheduling will be transitioned to secure digital platforms. This will reduce manual workload, minimize delays, and enable learners and faculty to engage with the institution from anywhere. SIMAD oLearn will integrate systems such as the Online Campus Management System (OCMS) with the Learning Management System (LMS) to create a unified experience across academic and operational services. We will also implement user support systems such as ticketing platforms and 24/7 help desks to improve responsiveness and service quality.

Objective 5.2: Leverage data analytics for real-time decision-making and continuous improvement.

We will establish a culture of evidence-based management by embedding analytics tools within our digital infrastructure. Administrative dashboards and academic performance tracking tools will be used to monitor key indicators such as student engagement, course completion, dropout risk, and service delivery efficiency. These insights will inform both day-to-day operations and strategic planning. Faculty and administrative staff will be trained in using data to make timely decisions and implement proactive interventions. Periodic reviews will be conducted using data to evaluate program effectiveness, resource allocation, and institutional performance.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Percentage of administrative and academic workflows digitized
- Uptake and application of data in decision-making processes
- Operational cost savings and resource efficiency gains from digital transformation

Through this theme, SIMAD oLearn commits to building a digitally mature institution where processes are intelligent, adaptive, and aligned with the expectations of modern learners, and where data serves as a foundation for excellence and accountability.

Theme 6: Sustainability and Effectiveness

We aim to establish SIMAD oLearn as a resilient, efficient, and future-ready digital education platform through sustainable financing, strong institutional systems, and continuous performance improvement.

Long-term success in digital learning depends not only on technological capability and academic quality, but also on operational effectiveness and financial viability. This theme



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+252 615 259826



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addresses the institutional backbone of SIMAD oLearn, ensuring it remains adaptive, results-driven, and responsive to the needs of its learners and stakeholders over time.

Therefore, it is our strategic intent to:

Objective 6.1: Ensure financial and operational sustainability through strategic budgeting and diversified revenue streams.

SIMAD oLearn will adopt a proactive financial strategy that balances affordability for learners with the need for stable and scalable operations. This includes developing a cost-recovery model aligned with tuition pricing, expanding access to donor and grant funding, exploring public-private partnerships, and identifying additional income-generating initiatives such as continuing education programs, certification courses, and research services. Strategic resource planning and transparent budgeting practices will be enforced to ensure that financial decisions align with institutional priorities and long-term growth.

Objective 6.2: Monitor and evaluate performance via an integrated online campus management system (OCMS) and LMS aligned with strategic KPIs.

An institutional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework will be fully embedded in SIMAD oLearn operations through the OCMS and LMS. These systems will collect, analyze, and report performance data across all functions, including learner progress, faculty engagement, system usage, satisfaction levels, and operational metrics. Dashboards will be accessible to relevant units for real-time insights and decision-making. Regular review cycles will assess whether outcomes are aligned with strategic objectives and guide adaptive improvements. Stakeholder feedback mechanisms including students, faculty, and external partners will be institutionalized to ensure accountability and inclusive evaluation.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Annual budget surpluses and sustainability of financial operations
- Return on investment (ROI) for digital infrastructure and systems
- Comprehensive satisfaction scores from students, faculty, and institutional stakeholders

Through this final theme, SIMAD oLearn commits to building an institution that is not only effective and high performing, but also financially sound and strategically governed ensuring its continued impact on education access and quality in Somalia for years to come.



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+252 615 259826



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Alignment Matrix: SIMAD oLearn and SIMAD University

As shown in the table below, the alignment matrix clearly illustrates how SIMAD oLearn's six strategic themes are interwoven with the five core strategic pillars of SIMAD University, demonstrating a cohesive and institutionally grounded approach to digital education. Each strategic theme ranging from Digital Learning Excellence to Sustainability and Effectiveness directly supports the broader goals of Entrepreneurial Education, Research & Innovation, Digital Transformation, People & Partnerships, and Institutional Effectiveness. For instance, the integration of entrepreneurial simulations into the Learning Management System (LMS) and the digitization of entrepreneurship-related processes highlight oLearn's contribution to fostering entrepreneurial mindsets. Similarly, faculty development efforts, curriculum enhancements, and expanded access models all contribute to strengthening institutional research, innovation, and inclusion.

This alignment ensures that SIMAD oLearn is not functioning in isolation, but rather as a strategic extension of the university's overarching mission. By linking digital initiatives with university-wide priorities such as improving graduate employability, enabling evidence-based decision-making through analytics, and building strong partnerships SIMAD oLearn reinforces the University's vision for a digitally enabled, inclusive, and performance-driven institution. The matrix also serves as a roadmap for implementation, ensuring accountability through measurable outcomes and facilitating ongoing integration of technology, pedagogy, and institutional strategy.

Strategic Themes	Entrepreneurial Education	Research & Innovation	Digital Transformation	People & Partnerships	Institutional Effectiveness
Digital Learning Excellence	Use LMS for entrepreneurial simulations and real-world learning modules.	Pilot LMS and pedagogy innovations; document impacts.	LMS and content upgrades driving tech-enabled learning.	Partner with digital learning providers and experts.	Track course quality and platform stability through KPIs.
Access and Inclusivity	Expand entrepreneurial access to underserved learners including women and youth.	Study regional access models; publish findings on digital equity.	Mobile-first, asynchronous access expanding reach.	Community outreach to expand regional learning hubs.	Improve diversity and retention through targeted analytics.
Faculty Development and Innovation	Train faculty to deliver entrepreneurial and inclusive content using digital tools.	Support faculty innovation grants in inclusive digital teaching.	Faculty trained in digital pedagogy and course design.	Engage external trainers, alumni, and peer networks.	Increase faculty engagement and teaching performance.



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Industry-Relevant Curriculum	Embed entrepreneurial skills and case studies in market-driven programs.	Collaborate on research into skills alignment with industry needs.	Virtual labs and industry tools integrated into curricula.	Industry co-design of curricula and mentorship programs.	Align graduate output with workforce metrics.
Digitalization and Operational Efficiency	Digitize processes for entrepreneurship program access and tracking.	Use analytics to optimize operational workflows and publish results.	Fully digitized admin and academic services.	IT vendors and academic support units collaborating.	Enhance efficiency and evidence-based management.
Sustainability and Effectiveness	Develop sustainable business models for entrepreneurship programs.	Evaluate ROI of digital investments and strategic resource allocation.	OCMS and LMS used for KPI monitoring and reporting.	Stakeholder consultations for sustainable planning.	Annual budget performance, satisfaction, and digital ROI tracked.

Examples of Flagship Projects

Digital Learning Excellence

A structured initiative to deploy and continuously enhance the SIMAD oLearn Learning Management System (LMS) to support hybrid delivery and real-time learning analytics.

Digital Course Studio

A centralized support service for co-designing high-quality, modular, and multimedia-rich digital learning content in collaboration with faculty.

Access and Inclusivity

A targeted access initiative to expand outreach to underserved regions through localized campaigns, mobile support centers, and bilingual content.

Flexible Futures

Development of learner-centered pathways for working professionals, women, and non-traditional learners, including part-time, evening, and self-paced offerings.

Faculty Development and Innovation

A three-tier digital teaching certification pathway for faculty, including foundational, intermediate, and advanced levels of digital pedagogy and online course delivery.



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oLearn Showcase

A semester wise showcase and community of practice session for faculty to present, share, and receive feedback on innovative teaching strategies and tools.

Industry-Relevant Curriculum

A continuous curriculum review and alignment project with industry partners in tech, business, and health to embed market-responsive skills in course design.

Work Ready Modules

Embedding professional tools, simulations, and career-prep components across programs to boost job-readiness and placement outcomes.

Digitalization and Operational Efficiency

The full integration of OCMS and LMS to digitize academic and administrative workflows, enhancing efficiency, transparency, and service delivery.

Analytics for Action (A4A)

A performance dashboard system enabling data-driven planning and decision-making across learning, student support, and institutional operations.

Sustainability and Effectiveness

A multi-year financial sustainability strategy for SIMAD oLearn focusing on diversified income, digital program revenue, and cost optimization.

M&E+ Dashboard

Deployment of real-time monitoring and evaluation tools aligned with strategic KPIs to measure impact and support continuous institutional improvement.



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