



Building a Small-Scale Innovation Ecosystem in Higher Education Based on Social Entrepreneurship in Rural Communities

Sara Blanc^(✉) , María del Rosario Perelló , Lorena Bort , and José Luis Poza

Universitat Politècnica de València, Camí de Vera S/N, 46022 Valencia, Spain
sablac1a@upv.es

Abstract. The NEWSTEP project represents an international collaboration providing European support to local rural communities in Nepal. This collaboration focuses on developing new educational models that address the problems identified in these rural communities. After analyzing needs and opportunities, social entrepreneurship emerges as the cornerstone for of educational institutions. This article presents an adaptation of the classic Isenberg model to small-scale educational organizations. The model is based on an Income Generation program (IGP). The article analyses how the IGP, led by an academic organization, addresses the different key aspects of the Isenberg model, considering its advantages and disadvantages.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship · Higher Education · Rural Communities

1 Introduction

The NEWSTEP project represents a collaborative effort to develop new capabilities in Higher Education Colleges in Nepal rural areas. It represents an effort because it involves building new educational, academic, and organizational strategies, and it is also collaborative because it engages different agents in both the design and the development of this framework. The result is an innovation ecosystem based on an entrepreneurship model scaled to a level that these colleges can sustain, but which also allows them to grow and progress in the future.

Nepal has several universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Notable institutions include Kathmandu University, Pokhara University, and Purbanchal University. Tribhuvan University, the largest university in the country, has more than one thousand affiliated colleges that cover a variety of disciplines, including arts, sciences, engineering, medicine, and business. However, many of these HEIs struggle with limited funding to deploy initiatives to attract and retain talent. Apart from limited resources, students' engagement is one of the primary observed threats. High dropout rates and low retention are very common, as well as a need for promoting activities to incentivize student participation and interest in both curricular and non-curricular activities, with further partnerships and collaborations with the labor market and stakeholders. Students

need to perceive that there is a connection between their studies and the labor market, while also feeling integrated into an ecosystem that allows them to discover their interests under current labor market demands, to develop new skills to fully and quickly integrate upon completion of their studies. Therefore, these institutions need small-scale adaptations of modern university ecosystems that bring innovation and quality but with a special sensitivity to the local social environment.

The university ecosystem transforms the way faculty and students understand their institution by integrating studies with other opportunities, for example, learning through collaboration with the local community, promoting internationalization, or with a more practical perspective on the needs of the labor market. Such collaborations with the local community are also an innovation resource strongly linked to the culture of entrepreneurship, which is viewed as a powerful mechanism to develop flexible and modern Higher Education Institutions (HEI) [1]. Furthermore, social entrepreneurship is a concept based on exploring critical social challenges and with a sustainable approach through market-based mechanisms [2–4]. This is a promising approach to share value between communities and nations, facilitating the kind of multidimensional value creation capable of harmonizing social progress with financial sustainability [5].

Bagmati Province is one of the seventy-seven districts of Nepal, a landlocked country located in South Asia. The district, with Sindhulimadhi Kamalamai as its headquarters, covers an area of 2,491 km² with a population of around 300,000 inhabitants. This study is focused on Kamalamai municipality, with a consortium of three institutions covering studies in engineering, veterinary, social sciences, and vocational studies. The consortium participates in a capacity-building project funded by the European Commission, together with two European universities. In 2023, the consortium carried out a local audit analysis to better understand the relevant aspects that play a role in fostering a quality mindset within the HEI under study. Each institution's portfolio includes an assessment of the collaborations between the institution and local, national, or international stakeholders, highlighting the benefits for the institution, faculty, and students according to the size and maturity of the organization. The portfolio also includes academic aspects related to the students' profiles, learning achievements, and autonomy, or technological knowledge and soft skills outcomes, as well as environmental insights such as pre-university development, geographical and economic handicaps, or workforce expectations and trends.

In the second step, several interviews with faculty were organized to understand the qualitative factors that affect emotions, motivation, and shared leadership. These factors also show current weaknesses, but the growth potential is relative to the environment and subject to the country's global conditions. This step aims at a holistic reflection to define realistic short- and medium-term objectives for our HEIs.

As result of the audit, plans delve into students' growth expectations, faculty and staff career development and recognition, a motivating training offering, new opportunities for collaboration with industry, research initiatives and networks, expansion of the institution with new programs and rates toward academic excellence, and resilience to change. Therefore, outcomes point to the design and deployment of an ecosystem of innovation based on entrepreneurship with a strong tendency towards social entrepreneurship. Institutions could empower students to explore innovative ideas, develop essential business

skills, and create opportunities for economic growth and local societal impact. Encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset and providing the necessary support and resources would promote students' predisposition to change mentality towards self-employment and intra-entrepreneurship.

2 Methodology

D. Isenberg defined an entrepreneurial ecosystem as a six-domain model: Policy, Finance, Culture, Supports, Human Capital, and Markets. This model can be abstracted to a small-scale university college environment [7, 8]. Therefore, studies are part of the ecosystem, but many other factors affect emotions, motivation, and promote leadership skills such as critical thinking, self-efficacy, teamworking, or autonomy.

In this study, Isenberg model domains were adapted according to their actors [8]: policy makers and public leaders, corporations, educators and staff, institution's managers, students, and support. Figure 1 summarizes 4 key performance improvement objectives reachable under a HEI context. The entrepreneurship ecosystem is structured in four top-down levels: institutional leadership, strategy, people, and resources.

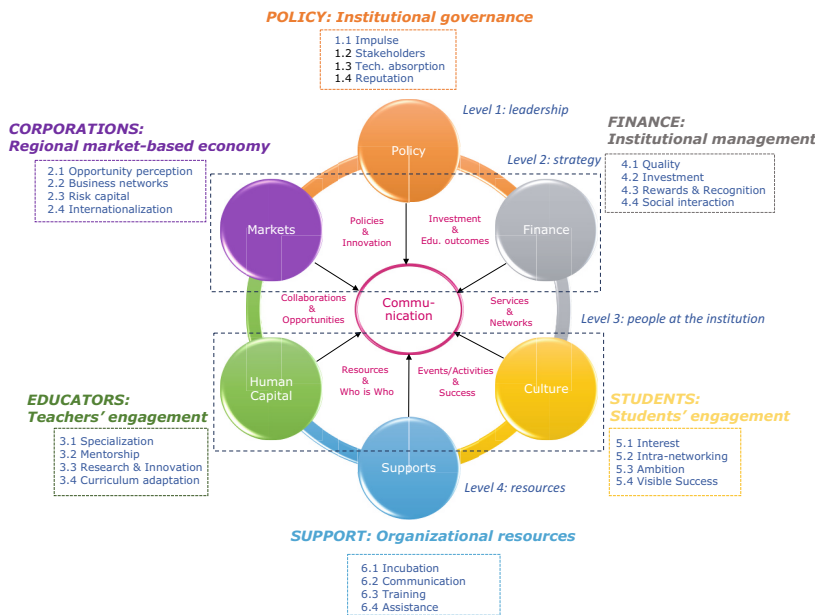


Fig. 1. Isenberg's entrepreneurship model adapted to small-scale educational centers.

Policymakers and public leaders who promote entrepreneurship at institutional programs such as curricular improvement, transversal actions, relationships with government, national centers, business, or society organizations. Institutions need to develop a strategy to dynamize entrepreneurship ecosystems, absorb current technology and trends,

as well as raise national business opportunities, making the institution more attractive and reliable to society.

Impulse. The institution must define strategic lines according to a long-term general objective and short-term specific objectives. In fact, the word “entrepreneurship” denotes a high cognitive skill that cannot be reached without developing other basic skills such as creativity, critical thinking, effective communication, collaborative work, decision-making, etc. Entrepreneurship strategy shouldn’t be isolated from an integral curricular and non-curricular program to promote and develop these skills in students from the “first day” in our institution. For example, HEI could promote initiatives to improve active learning methodologies or could provide a strategic plan for the development of such skills in extra-curricular actions or activities.

Governmental and educational stakeholders. Every business and hence every entrepreneur’s initiative may impel profits not just in economic terms but also by creating value for its stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities, financiers, and suppliers. Therefore, it is important to enhance the relationship between the institution and its students, graduates, employees, public administrators (investors), communities, and other stakeholders who may stake in it. However, at the political level, this indicator focuses on strategies that lead the institutional government to dynamize entrepreneurship ecosystems, while stakeholders such as teachers, students, businesses, or the community are considered at other indicators. For example, HEI actions would be oriented to promote collaborations with other universities, colleges, and local institutions considered as stakeholders, as well as national and local government agents, to reinforce current and future actions.

Technological absorption. Keep students abreast of current technology and trends. HEI should guarantee enough investment in technology to educate students in current technical issues. For example, technology could be integrated into curricula but also favors the general support of the communication channels, visualization of the ecosystem, online training, agile networks, etc.

Reputation. Communicating with society as an institution leading the change towards an education based on raising national business opportunities. The focus should be on both existing national business and international markets. For example, reduce and prevent corruption, track formal statistics on entrepreneurship and its effects on the institution, apply sustainable and inclusive practices, and be transparent in your policies and activities.

Corporations as a source to detect new entrepreneurship tendencies and changes in users’ perspectives. HEI and company alliances should provide new opportunities to apply for business collaborations, pilot studies, informal sources of funding, and international opportunities, among others.

Opportunity perception. The interaction between the institution and the different market sectors could provide ideas for students to develop new products based on a good knowledge of the reality and needs of already existing companies. Therefore, on the one hand, the institution needs a permanent dialog with existing national businesses to detect opportunities. On the other hand, education should also consider global

tendencies and successful cases in global markets or focus on “mirror” countries that serve as an example of potential growth. For example, national and international links and actions should be considered to open students’ minds to new business or new procedures in the current industry.

Business networks. Business networks include institutional horizontal networks to share ideas and procedures for national improvement, as well as vertical networks considering business advisory, governance regulations, and international funding actions, or non-profit organizations to acquire sustainable and society-advantage practices. Therefore, HEI should design an annual plan to connect students and companies, both national and international. For example, introducing training, internships, or students’ contracts in companies, both in curricular or extracurricular credits, or through talks and speakers, offering talent opportunities, etc.

Risk capital. New funds are welcome under network associations in the form of national or international private or public projects, sponsorships, angel investors, etc. For example, to support entrepreneurs with seed funding, and reduce the barriers to providing venture capital and private equity financing.

Internationalization. It refers to the level of internationalization managed by the institution. Entrepreneurship in global markets should look for both importing good practices or success cases and exporting ideas to international digital and physical markets. For example, HEI could promote inter-networking by funding teachers’ participation in conferences, workshops, or similar activities to share innovation and get new contacts, especially if businesses are involved in the activities.

Educators and developers of human capital in small-scale ecosystems are a critical mass to both prepare highly qualified professionals and carry out specialized entrepreneurial mentorship actions. Therefore, faculty is a key piece for the development of new transversal skills, either in curricular courses or extra-curricular events.

Specialization. Business collaboration helps to update syllabus contents and detect a lack of professional skills. Transfer personal collaboration to subject content enriches teaching and learning processes. From the pandemic issue, the world has learned about the potential of online meetings that can be exploited in many ways. Therefore, the institution must take advantage of the knowledge and relationships of its professionals with the company. For example, an observation tool could be used to quantify and qualify new business approaches, new demands, and new requirements.

Mentorship. Expert teachers and staff will lead the ecosystem maintenance and continue improving. The institution needs to trust the value and capacity of its critical mass to reinvent quality strategies and plans until it gets the goals set in the long term. Therefore, the ecosystem needs to include leaders with clear and visible roles and responsibilities that would be annually recognized and rewarded. For example, by compiling all actions and plans identified in this document into an integral institutional plan with objectives annually defined within a scope, people, budget, chronogram, quality observation, and risk prevention.

Research and innovation. Formal research and innovation driven by national or international research programs (Master’s and Ph.D.), or projects could also focus on improving mentoring and quality plans. Moreover, collaboration among universities

or vocational centers through teacher-focused actions will lead to the maintenance and upgrade of education standards. Therefore, the institution must provide expert resources (human and digital tools) to observe and apply for new opportunities. For example, international collaboration projects are a highly valuable inter-institutional networking tool. Moreover, the observation could be extended to recover talent that escaped to other countries, but that can return to the country to be integrated into the entrepreneurial institutional ecosystem.

Curriculum adaptation. It supports future educational process innovation by bringing specialization into subjects' curriculum, both in content and in methodologies to promote good practice, favoring creativity, critical thinking, innovation, etc. For example, new technologies and educational quality practices could be measured in specific fields, as well as STEAM practices, SDG alignment, etc.

Institutional financial strategies look for a sustainable framework to maintain open entrepreneurship policies, considering quality-specific actions, services, and resources according to policy objectives and community needs. HEI must find opportunities or direct funding to make entrepreneurship policies sustainable and implement these actions, services, and resources, as well as to reward and recognize the efforts done by the people involved in them.

Quality. To be transparent and explicit in the implementation of policies to support entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is a piece within education quality strategies. Thus, institutional annual budgets and management plans must consider specific actions, services, and resources according to policy objectives to enhance entrepreneurship activities. Therefore, the institution should provide actions considering both the entrepreneurship policy objectives, maximizing its strengths, and the threats already detected. For example, HEI should plan annual updates and upgrade impulse policies to observe high standards in education.

Investment. To find opportunities or direct funding to make policies sustainable. Tangible and non-tangible resources are both positive. Risk acceptance is needed (low or high risk should be evaluated by the institution). For example, observing current weaknesses but prospective opportunities, HEI could fix as three three-year objectives an investment X in new services, but a return on investment due to an increase in students and participation in national and international projects.

Rewards and recognition. As part of quality success, staff efforts should be recognized at different levels or by various mechanisms such as internal and external recognition, salary, promotion, etc. Moreover, students should also be encouraged to help other students, maintain certain consistency, or obtain high achievement in their activities. Therefore, the institution should avoid punctual or temporal efforts done by staff and students, but a constant effort, repeatable and perdurable over time. For example, if your institution can organize an incubation space or extra-curricular activities, but your students or teachers are not receptive to applying for extracurricular activities or to investing time at your institution working on extra tasks such as those promoted by the incubation space. Thus, HEI should promote these activities with additional rewards to ensure the interest of students.

Social interaction. The interaction between the institution and society could provide insights the students to develop new products based on a good knowledge of national reality, needs, and global tendencies. Moreover, innovative policies lead to an innovative institution that is more attractive to potential students (pre-university students). Talent attraction means higher students' entrepreneurial success, and graduates' success means more potential students. Therefore, the institution should design an annual plan to connect students and society (student networks, non-profit organizations, high schools, governmental and international organizations, social networks, etc.). For example, developing projects to provide solutions to specific requests given by local users or communities (Service Learning). Besides, develop strategic plans to inform pre-university students about entrepreneurship policies.

Culture influencers refer to every person involved in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. However, we especially focus on students as humans who work on entrepreneurship, live surrounded by the reality of the country, and therefore, live surrounded by entrepreneurship opportunities. Students' motivation is the driving motive of this domain that deals with the satisfaction and usefulness of the investment (interest) and the promotion of initiatives to connect multidisciplinary entrepreneurs. Moreover, the institution must propose actions to motivate students to reach further in their ambition to be entrepreneurs and make visible their achieved success. Any feedback from graduate students could be highly relevant to understanding and assessing our progress as institution leaders in training.

Interest. Students' interest in the policies and procedures defined by the institution's leaders in entrepreneurship needs to be high to balance any economic and human efforts. Therefore, interest is the measure of satisfaction with the investment, but it's also threatened by the risks, such as a useless perception of students over current markets, tendencies, or opportunities. For example, HEI could analyze the use and usefulness of mentorship, incubation centers, and training options.

Intra-networking. Students' entrepreneurship is a non-isolated task. Students are more likely to succeed in a collaborative environment. Moreover, multidisciplinary is essential in many entrepreneurship initiatives. Therefore, the institution must promote initiatives to connect undergraduate students of different disciplines, as well as graduate students with different market experiences. For example, HEI could assess the viability of a physical inter-center/inter-degrees incubation space in the same area or a virtual supported space to connect students of isolated areas.

Ambition. To set personal objectives and demonstrate progress towards entrepreneurship. Therefore, the institution must promote a variety of events to reward students' efforts in demonstrating personal achievements. For example, HEI could plan annual challenges led by companies, inter-center summer camps, internships, international grants, hackathons, or other dynamic actions to maintain students' interest in growing towards self-autonomy and innovation.

Visible success. Celebrate the success of students and show their achievements to society as a form of reward and lure for new initiatives. Therefore, the institution should provide public access to students' initiatives, clarifying their contribution, effort, and potential for current and future markets. For example, HEI could plan a

dissemination plan with balanced actions to the different potential markets, especially promoting tendencies linked with the curricular studies.

Policies need resources to succeed. Apart from human capital, resources refer to spaces, materials, tools, training, specialized entrepreneurship assistance or advisory, and gained know-how. On the one hand, resources should be flexible enough to adapt to educational changes by observing mentorship success and students' behaviour, and needs. Eventually, support also drives the communication strategy (ecosystem platform).

Incubation. Physical or virtual spaces facilitate multidisciplinary and teachers-students comfortable working. It gives time to share, to reflect, to train, and to work on new ideas and products. Therefore, the institution must design and provide such a space, maintain it suitable, promote it among students and teachers as well as observe and control it to get feedback.

Communication. It represents specific resources such as ICT resources, materials, training virtual courses, special communication channels to notice events or opportunities, etc.

Training. An annual effort is made by the institution in training-focused activities or courses about entrepreneurship for both teachers/staff and students.

Assistance. Actions to promote student/staff-companies collaboration, specialized advisory on legal aspects, support to the communication strategy, or administrative issues.

Moreover, domains pair into communication-oriented objectives. Communication is a transversal key to attract new stakeholders, talent, and financial resources. Attractive innovation policies require a combined effort between HEIs and businesses. A combination that seeks shared leadership in innovation, whose successes will increase investment capital in research and improve the institution's educational quality. On the other hand, when we talk about a small-scale institution, we're talking about the staff, especially the specialists who are the true links with companies and businesses. On the other hand, a student who feels the HEI is their own continues to be part of it once they complete their studies. New synergies can be created between graduates and undergraduates, as well as examples of good practice and a deeper understanding of the challenges of job placement. Furthermore, the student body itself is a very important tool in proposing new events and activities, such as competitions, hackathons, and sports and cultural activities, in addition to being the best experts on generational culture. With institutional support, the collaborative network between students and faculty will be sustainable over time, manageable, and will progress with the institutional size and scope.

3 Results

The model adapted across the 3 HEIs in Sindhuli Valley is strongly focused on institutional governance and management (Keys 1 and 4) as well as HEI culture (Key 5), also considering some sub-keys related to corporations (Keys 2.1 and 2.2), educators (Keys 3.2 and 3.4), and support (Key 6.3).

The strategy is based on an Income Generating Program (IGP). The main concept of this entrepreneurship model is to learn, earn, and pay, i.e., earn money while learning by marketing their products. IGP has been experimenting with different rural communities in the past, and it is focused on generating income for vulnerable communities. These programs can vary in scope and focus but generally seek to improve people's economic autonomy through productive [9–14]. Income-generating projects encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in small communities. However, some of the problems detected in IGP in rural communities are the lack of skills of the young participants, both technical and soft skills, and the incompatibility of working and training at the same time [13]. Moreover, the lack of business management capacity is also considered a risk to success [10], as well as the low purchasing by the local community [15]. Therefore, it could be assumed that developing these projects within a mature educational community, under experienced leadership, could positively resolve some of these issues. There are examples of income generation projects in educational centers, especially secondary centers. However, there still exist certain difficulties that must be considered. For example, [9] explains that a continued overexertion of staff members could be a risk both due to the lack of guarantee in the continuity of the staff and the excessive time invested in the project. Authors also point to the need for capital investment at the start of projects so that projects can be launched properly. Moreover, [11] observed as essential to enhance community participation in the development of schools and income-generating projects in rural areas, while internal management should demonstrate transparency and accountability, effective communication, honesty, and effective management benefits.

Therefore, IGP may be a valid strategy for rural HEIs, but it requires adaptation to create a comprehensive and sustainable educational model. Regarding the key entrepreneurship strategies, the adaptation implemented at Sindhuli HEI is as follows:

Key 1.1. Entrepreneurship impulse:

HEIs consider integrating practical and hands-on experiences within the curriculum, providing students with real-world challenges and opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios. Projects would be partially done in class, but students could dedicate additional extracurricular time to HEI spaces with educators' mentorship. Challenges are linked to IGP. New projects may emerge each year in the fields of engineering, veterinary medicine, and social sciences. However, the preparation of each project needs training for both students and teachers, i.e., HEIs invested resources in an online library with a short course catalogue adapted to the HEI community's needs.

Key 1.2. Governmental and Educational Stakeholders:

Fostering collaboration with governmental bodies and educational stakeholders is highly relevant by developing channels for effective communication, engagement, and mutual support, adding visibility to the organization using multimedia resources, newsletters, and annual events open to business and governmental bodies (i.e., municipality).

Key 1.3. Technological Absorption:

To extend visibility and impact, ICT could be a highly valuable resource. A non-expensive integration includes open-source resources to support teaching-learning dynamic interactions apart from specific-subject digital tools. Therefore, HEI invested

resources and rewards to persuade teachers to use open software and advance in emotional intelligence to become effective facilitators for a change in the educational approach.

Key 1.4. Reputation:

HEIs concentrate on transparent communication, such as transparent budget auditing and annual financial reports. IGP return is directly in 75% of students' income and 25% in HEI resources improvement and material. Therefore, successful projects need self-sustainability mechanisms and certain continuity. For example, poultry was the first IGP project for several reasons. First, because of its connection to veterinary studies, it is a highly suitable case study for community service learning. Second, there is an ongoing local need that guarantees sustainable sales over time with transparency in prices and sales.

Furthermore, it is necessary to demonstrate the reliability of the HEI to the local community. Therefore, the IGP was designed as part of a community service plan, which includes annual campaigns such as free dog vaccination or an ICT tool (app) to facilitate blood donations to the municipal hospital.

Key 2.1. Opportunity perception:

New opportunities are based on social entrepreneurship focused on the municipality. Expansion through digital media presents challenges such as a lack of devices, stable communication networks, and expertise. Therefore, opportunities arise through knowledge and recognition of the unique needs of primary sectors, such as agriculture and farming, poultry, healthcare, construction, or management of small and medium-sized businesses. There are also opportunities in sectors such as hospitality, tourism, and culture, which have shown some growth in recent years.

Key 2.2. Business networks:

It has a weak but not insignificant impact. The initiatives focus on company visits and talks by local or national external experts through online media.

Key 3.2. Mentorship:

Strongly based on teacher-student and student-student mentoring. The farm and laboratory environment at the HEI facilities allows for peer support under faculty supervision.

Key 3.4. Curriculum adaptation:

Improvements in teaching methodologies focus on the introduction of challenge-based learning, problem-based learning, and community service. This type of methodology allows for the incorporation of personal and professional skills such as critical thinking and teamwork. Through the IGP, the skills of responsibility, time management, and collaborative management are also developed, as the management of IGP projects falls to the students, minimizing the role of the faculty in supervision, communication with the municipality, and resolution of critical cases.

Key 4.1. Quality:

The institution demonstrates its commitment with an annual budget forecast, the formation of a multidisciplinary team that coordinates the municipality's three HEIs, and the design of consultation tools to assess stakeholder satisfaction.

Key 4.2. Investment:

There are public and private investments. On the one hand, the municipality provides space and materials for IGP projects, especially in the first year. From the second year onward, projects must be sustainable and present continuity, with a return on investment of 25% for maintenance.

Key 4.3. Rewards and recognition:

It is primarily based on promoting talent and raising the profile of activities. Similar to the microcredit concept that is rapidly being implemented in Europe, official recognition will enhance the CVs of students and staff.

Key 4.4. Social interaction:

The social component is integrated into the observation, feedback, and continuous adaptation of the results of IGP projects.

Key 5.1. Interest:

Although the primary reason for interest may be economic motivation, the design and management activities of IGP projects are integrated into curricular subjects, thus generating a second reason focused on learning.

Key 5.2. Intra-networking:

This is achieved through multidisciplinary collaboration between municipal centers, other organizations, and institutions in other regions to exchange ideas, identify needs, and collaborate in project design and management.

Key 5.3. Ambition:

It is still too early to see whether the new model reduces the dropout rate and increases the number of new jobs and local businesses.

Key 5.4. Visible success:

IGP projects require a promotional campaign that enhances the institutions' image as promoters of innovation and local development.

Key 6.3. Training:

Through international collaboration projects and with local companies, both classroom and virtual training in non-curricular subjects are of great importance to ensure the sustainability of the projects.

4 Conclusions

The NEWSTEP project represents an international collaboration providing European support to local rural communities in Nepal. This collaboration focuses on developing new educational models that address the problems identified in these rural communities. After analyzing needs and opportunities, social entrepreneurship emerges as the cornerstone for the modernization of educational institutions. This article presents an adaptation of the classic Isenberg model to small-scale educational organizations. The model is based on an Income Generation program (IGP). The article analyses how the IGP, led by an educational organization, addresses the different key aspects of the Isenberg model, considering its advantages and disadvantages.

On the one hand, a significant increase in motivation has been observed among students who perceive a sense of ownership towards the institution, satisfaction from the economic return, and closeness to the local community. If the main objective of rural

HEIs was to curb school dropout rates and promote institutional renewal by fostering the development of personal and work-related skills, the IGP is a high-impact mechanism. However, in terms of fostering personal entrepreneurship in students, we can say that this is a medium-level model in terms of entrepreneurship efforts, considering that innovation is strongly controlled by the institution and focuses on collaborative work and improving teaching quality. To increase the level of entrepreneurship, the institution should strengthen mechanisms to facilitate the shift from social entrepreneurship supervised by the institution to entrepreneurship entirely dependent on student interests. However, the chosen model is sustainable within the context of our HEIs and can progress over time.

The implementation of the model has considered several essential keys to success. For example, institutional involvement and efforts to promote networking with the municipality, financial institutions, and local businesses are truly crucial for the project's sustainability, allowing for the continuous discovery of challenges. Moreover, it is of great importance to link the development of personal and professional skills in students to the supervision and assessment by faculty. These skills promote essential entrepreneurial skills such as responsibility, decision-making, critical thinking, and time and resource management. Third, faculty involvement is projected at a high level. They are freed from the more demanding daily tasks which will be carried out by students. Therefore, their essential role is mentoring, always linked to curricular courses, including the development of online resources useful in the classroom or as supplementary material. Finally, and no less important, the model has a strong connection with the local reality based on social entrepreneurship. This connection is supported both by the reciprocity of economic return by service, as well as by voluntary service to the community through campaigns and events that will promote a new image of HEIs, with transparency, participation, and educational quality.

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