



International Labour Organization

iTrack Evaluation

ILO EVALUATION

- Evaluation Title: **BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services**
- ILO TC/SYMBOL: **EGY/17/03/EUR**
- Type of Evaluation : **Independent Final Evaluation**
- Country(ies) : **Egypt**
- P&B outcome(s): **P&B 2018 – 2019: Outcome 4 (Promoting sustainable enterprises) and Outcome 5 (decent work in the rural economy).**
- SDG(s): **Several SDG Goals, most prominently SDG 8.**
- Date of the evaluation: **April 2021**
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- ILO Administrative Office: **ILO Office Cairo**
- ILO Technical Backstopping Office: **ENTERPRISES, ILO, Geneva**
- Other agencies involved in joint evaluation: **Not applicable**
- Date project ends: **31 January 2021**
- Donor: country and budget US\$ **EU / Project budget: €1,002,644 (US\$ 1,187,966.825); EC contribution: €899,924 (US\$ 1,066,260.66).**
- Evaluation Manager: **Mr. Egidio Simbine, based at the ILO Maputo Office**
- Evaluation Budget: **USD 17,910**
- Key Words: **MSMEs, Business Development Services (BDS) in Manufacturing and Traded Services, Market Systems Approach, Capacity Building, Agrifood and Tourism sectors in Egypt.**

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
List of Abbreviations	v
Executive Summary	vii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background and Objectives of the Project.....	1
1.2 Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Final Independent Evaluation	2
2 Methodology of the Evaluation	4
2.1 Conceptual Framework.....	4
2.2 Methodology, Work Plan and Key Deliverables.....	4
3 Overall Findings	7
3.1 Relevance and Strategic Fit.....	7
3.2 Validity of the project design.....	10
3.3 Project effectiveness.....	14
3.4 Efficiency of resource use.....	25
3.5 Impact orientation and Sustainability of project outcomes	27
3.6 Cross-cutting issues.....	29
4 Conclusions and Recommendations	30
4.1 Conclusions	30
4.2 Recommendations	33
5 Lessons Learned and Good Practices	35

List of Annexes

Annex 1	Terms of Reference (TOR).....	37
Annex 2	List of Persons Interviewed	52
Annex 3	List of Key Project Beneficiaries	53
Annex 4	Data Collection Worksheet	56
Annex 5	Project Beneficiaries Interviewed during Fieldwork.....	60
Annex 6	List of Guiding Questions for in-depth Interviews	61
Annex 7	Evaluation Work Plan	64
Annex 8	Objectives, Outputs and Activities of the LogFrame	65
Annex 9	Overview of Status Report on MSMEDA BDS Market strategy	66
Annex 10	Activities undertaken under each Objective, Output and Planned Activity.....	68
Annex 11	Lessons Learned (LL) and Good practices (GP).....	70
Annex 12	List of Documents Consulted.....	75

List of Tables

Tables:

1	Main project activities and numbers of Beneficiaries.	14
2	Summary of Status Report on the progress of the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy.	15
3	Actual approximate expenditures (as of 11 February 2021)	26

List of Abbreviations

ACT/EMP	(ILO) Bureau on Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	(ILO) Bureau on Workers' Activities
AfDB	AfDB African Development Bank
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BDS	Business Development Services
BDS4GROWTH	Business Development Services For Growth
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics
CBE	Central Bank of Egypt
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEVINVEST	Development and Investment Branch
DJEP	Decent Jobs for Egypt's Young People
DWT	ILO Decent Work Team
EC	European Commission
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EMPLOYMENT	Employment Policy Department
ENTERPRISES	Enterprises Department
EO	Employers' Organisation
ETUF	Egyptian Trade Union Federation
EU	European Union
FEI	Federation of Egyptian Industries
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPRW	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
GED/ILOAIDS	Gender, Equality and Diversity & ILOAIDS Branch
GENDER	Refer to: GED/ILOAIDS
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IEGP	Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILMS	International Labour Migration Statistics
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ILOSTAT	ILO database of labour statistics
ILS	International Labour Standard
IMC	Industrial Modernisation Centre (MTI)
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ITC/ILO	ILO International Training Centre (in Turin)
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIC	Middle-Income Country
MFI	Micro Finance Institute
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSA	Market System Analysis
MSMEDA	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NAAD	North Africa for Agribusiness Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOA/NOB	National Officer (Grade A / Grade B)
NPC	National Project Coordinator
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
OVI	Objectively verifiable indicators
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PARDEV	Partnerships and Field Support
PRODOC	Project Document
PMT	Project Management Team
PSC	Project Steering Committee
ROAF	Regional Office for Africa
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFD	Social Fund for Development
SKILLS	Skills and Employability Branch
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TPR	Technical Progress Report
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPDF	United Nation Partnership Development Framework
UNTFHS	United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCD	Value Chain Development
WORKQUALITY	Conditions of Work and Equality Department

Executive Summary

Background and project description

The present evaluation report is mandated by the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Independent Evaluation of the project Business Development Services (BDS) for Growth (BDS4GROWTH) in Egypt (Annex 1). The rationale of the project is that the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are considered as one of the solutions to solve some of the problems related to job creation in the country. In trying to address such problems the ILO's partnership with the MSME Development Agency (MSMEDA) is implementing this project. It is funded by the European Union (EU) for a period of two years. The **overall objective** of the project is to enable high quality BDS provision to MSMEs in the agri-food and tourism sectors in Egypt to boost their contribution towards economic growth and employment. The two specific objectives relate to enhancing the capacity of **MSMEDA** and to enable **MSMEs in target sectors** to access BDS to increase their competitiveness and productivity (see Annex 8).

Objective, Scope and Methodology of the Evaluation

The main *objective* of this final evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the achievements to date, through an analysis of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, orientation to impact and effects of the project, as well as of ILO's cross-cutting themes. The *scope* of the Evaluation includes the entire implementation period of the project from August 2018 to January 2021. The primary *clients* for this evaluation are MSMEDA, BDS Providers and partners, the development partner (EU) and the ILO (see Annex 2). The *methodology* includes a desk study, primary data collection through in-depth interviews and discussions which were all conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data analysis and reporting. Key deliverables are the inception report, the draft report, the final report taking into consideration the feedback on the draft report, a Matrix including comments and explanations why comments were or were not incorporated into the report, and a stand-alone evaluation summary using the ILO standard template.

Findings

The conclusions of this evaluation are categorized in the below according to the six evaluation criteria used throughout this report. The **Relevance and Strategic Fit** of the intervention was high. For the beneficiaries and country involved the relevance is high because it addresses the main problems of MSMEs, and it supports the newly set role for MSMEDA as a service facilitator. It is aligned with the Priorities of the Government of Egypt laid down in its Vision 2030. Most of the stakeholders interviewed confirmed that the relevance is high for the country. The project also aligns to the UN Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF; 2018-2022) with Egypt and to the global SDGs. The intervention further contributes to the ILO Programme & Budget (P&B) 2018-19. Within the ILO Cairo office the intervention aligns to the Enterprise Development and Entrepreneurship cluster and its related projects. There are quite a few projects implemented jointly between ILO and other UN agencies, but no systematic cooperation exists between BDS4GROWTH and several other similar projects also partnering with MSMEDA. The project was firmly aligned to ILO structures and the project was piloting approaches developed by ENTERPRISE in Geneva intending to replicate good practices. In terms of ILO's Tripartism, it has to be said that the employers' and workers' organisations were not much involved in the project. The selection of MSMEDA as main government partner for the project was found to be appropriate to achieve the project outcomes and impact especially in view of its experience

operating in the area of financial and non-financial services to MSMEs. At national and local levels there were not many BDS providers, but the project managed to identify appropriate partners.

Validity of the project design: The project was designed following the guidelines of an **EU Request for Proposals (RfP)**, and the PRODOC was written by ILO ENTERPRISES. It requested for a period 24 months and a budget of EUR 899,924. The proposal also adhered very closely to the guidelines on the sectors/themes eligible for funding. Since the RfP involved a competitive procedure to acquire the funding the LogFrame and the activities proposed had to be very comprehensive. The analysis in the PRODOC on facilitating BDS market development is comprehensive, integrates external factors and is based on earlier ILO experiences. The *LogFrame* is clearly defined at the logical level with the Overall Objective, two Specific Objectives, five Outputs and 14 Activities (see Annex 8). However, the indicators for the different levels are simply repeated and not adjusted to the relevant levels of abstraction. The project design was somewhat ambitious as it is not easy to change a large organisation like MSMEDA while it turned out that certain outputs could not be implemented in the end (e.g. Output 2.2 on access to financial services). The objectives on knowledge generation were realistic since the pilot nature of the action guaranteed the acquisition of new knowledge on the Market Systems Analysis (MSA) and Value Chain Development (VCD) approaches, but a communication strategy to share such acquired knowledge was not developed.

Project effectiveness: The project accomplished a large number of quite diverging concrete project activities as is demonstrated in Table 1 reaching an impressive total number of beneficiaries through trainings, exhibitions, Market System Analysis studies and an exposure visit to ILOITC in Turin. With respect to **Specific Objective 1** it was found that the capacity of MSMEDA to play a *facilitative* role in enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to provide quality BDS has certainly been enhanced through such project activities as mentioned above. The MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy was developed jointly by MSMEDA and the project in September 2019 but the implementation remains quite mixed: a few important achievements (the platform, the trainings and the exhibitions), but many programmes are still in a preparatory phase (Table 2). The training beneficiaries interviewed were satisfied with the content and the trainers, but at the same time underscored the delay in certification and the lack of a follow-up. Furthermore, two studies were done on the market systems of two targeted sectors: Agribusiness in Minia and Tourism in Luxor. In addition, 42 BDS providers were involved (see Annex 10).

The activities under **Specific Objective 2** were much more affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This objective focused on enabling MSMEs in target sectors to access BDS, and this was attempted through interventions designed on the basis of the two market systems analyses discussed above. Therefore, in Minia two intervention models were implemented (Greenhouses and Dairy products), while in Luxor due to various circumstances a different approach was introduced, namely the support of and involvement in cultural festivals. The project team indicated that until 31 January 2021 a total of 311 jobs (25% for women) were improved and/or created as a result of technical as well as business management trainings under interventions in the selected sectors (cf. Annex 10). Also, some of the individuals interviewed by the evaluation indicated that the training has a value added for them in terms of new skills. However, this can only be systematically assessed through solid tracer studies of how the beneficiaries trained are using the new knowledge in their current or new jobs, beyond the limits of this evaluation. The Food Africa exhibition in December 2019 was important for awareness raising among MSMEs. The final Output (2.2) in the LogFrame on access to financial support for MSMEs was not implemented

because the project focused primarily on activities contributing to Specific Objective 1 and to Output 2.1 (cf. Annex 10); in the end the various delays (due to the delayed recruitment of the CTA, the change in the MSMEDA affiliation at ministerial level, and the COVID-19 pandemic) the activities under Output 2.2 could not be implemented.

The management and governance structure put in place worked strategically only partly. The project team was based in Cairo in the ILO Country Office, and the Director of the ILO Country Office and the Enterprise Specialist in the DWT team were the responsible ILO officials for the project in country. The planned Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was not initiated because of the problems in MSMEDA related to the ministerial affiliation changes. At times there were delays in the responses from MSMEDA due to their internal processes to get the necessary official approvals for project activities. In terms of project monitoring and accounting systems, the project has followed ILO's established procedures, and technical and financial reporting was also properly undertaken. The knowledge generated through the project activities could have been shared and communicated much more widely as, for example, the website has not been updated since the start in 2018. On the other hand, the platform in MSMEDA is now an important means for communication, and the project also reached a wider audience through the exhibitions. The project put a great deal of efforts in the communication with MSMEDA which was indeed crucial for getting activities endorsed. However, the communication with the EU was not considered ideal and the EU Visibility requirements were not always adhered to. In general, communication between projects left much to be desired. In April 2020 an internal Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) was conducted which made five recommendations most of which were followed up. Overall, the project management should be commended for having been very flexible and adaptive in the face of a relatively large number of potentially disrupting challenges, among which the structural changes between ministries in Egypt and in the MSMEDA affiliation, the lack of active BDS providers in the two target governorates, and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Efficiency of resource use: The actual expenditures by year are quite equally divided over 2019 and 2020. The project budget as approved along with the Grant Application included an International Project Manager as well as a National Project Coordinator. The actual percentage of staff costs for the Project Team is 38.8% (Table 3). The actual project activities concern the categories 'Subcontracts' and 'Seminars' and together they take up a substantial 40.1% of the total expenditures. For a project this size it is surprising to note a substantial balance of 10% of the project budget, mainly due to under-implementation triggered by the delays incurred due to the disruptive challenges faced described in the previous paragraph. All in all, it can be concluded that the efficiency of resource use has been good in this project. No specific resources were leveraged to promote gender equality, non-discrimination or the inclusion of people with disability.

Impact orientation and Sustainability of project outcomes: The business management training and support services for MSMEs in the agrifood and tourism sectors had some positive impact on employment, as we saw in the above. At the beneficiaries' level, positive changes can also be observed in the working procedures, such as adding new products. In terms of impact on policies, the project has made an important contribution through the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy, including the Platform. Through its various activities the project provided the necessary support to MSMEDA in strengthening their institutional and organisational capacities. It has also been found during the interviews that MSMEDA has built up a certain degree of 'ownership' of the project. Ownership of the project outcomes was also built with some of the partner

organisations, while no ownership was built among the social partners of the ILO. The evaluation further found that there is clear potential for replication of tools and good practices at the national and at the international level. Financial sustainability of the intervention was less clear due to time limitations. The intervention did contribute substantially to the knowledge base including the MSA and VCD, the two MSA's, and the training materials created or adapted. It is too soon to tell whether the relatively modest intervention made a contribution to the SDGs and this would depend in particular on the question in how far MSMEDA will take forward its BDS Market Strategy and moves ahead with its facilitation role after the project has been completed. In terms of follow-up, the project was a one-off grant, but the ILO is in the process of developing another project proposal in order to build on the achievements of the BDS4GROWTH project.

Cross-cutting issues, including Gender equality and non-discrimination: The achievements related to gender equality and women's empowerment were quite modest; while a few of the BDS providers and a minority of the training beneficiaries were female, no sustained efforts were undertaken to enhance their number, and no resources were allocated to women's empowerment activities. On the other hand, the M&E data and the LogFrame are clearly dedicating systematic attention to gender equality in that all statistics and most of the outputs and activities are gender-disaggregated. The project has paid much less attention to other vulnerable groups and to the other three cross-cutting issues.

Recommendations

The recommendations will be presented in this section according to the six Evaluation Criteria distinguished in this report including the cross-cutting issues.

Relevance and strategic fit

- ILO projects which support MSMEDA should be clearly integrated with other donors and UN agencies interventions in order to provide strategic and coordinated support to this institution.** This could be done for example through establishing a Local Consultative Donor Group on MSME Development (incl. e.g. EU, UNIDO, AFD, GIZ, and others).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, UN Organisations and other Development Partners/Donors	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions

- Involve more pro-actively the employers' and workers' organisations (EO/WO) in projects dealing with similar subjects** in the design and include in the LogFrame specific activities directed exclusively at these organisations in order to enhance their knowledge and capacities as well as their involvement and sense of ownership.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, EO/WO, ILO workers' and employers' specialists (ACTRAV and ACT/EMP), ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions

Validity of design

- Be consistent in the design of the LogFrame with ILO's Results Based Management approach (RBM),** in particular adjust the specificity of the indicators to the different results chain levels (Overall Objective, Specific Objectives and Outputs), and **assure that there is an inception phase** in projects to adjust the LogFrame components including the indicators to assure that projects implement a RBM approach including a proper M&E system.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Project effectiveness

- 4) **In similar projects organize a more systematic and inclusive management structure whereby the organization of a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) that includes ILO's Constituents, the Development Partner(s), the ILO and selected other key stakeholders is crucial**, and make sure that the first PAC meeting is conducted *within* the first half year of the effective start of a project. This is the more important in view of the crucial role the PAC can play in ownership, learning from each other and in particular also in communication vis-à-vis the main stakeholders including the donor.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, ILO's three Constituents, Development partners, Other Main Stakeholders	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

- 5) **Make sure that the knowledge acquired is also sufficiently shared with stakeholders and beneficiaries**, and as a minimum update the ILO project website regularly and if possible, a Project team should also develop a regular newsletter during the project lifetime for target groups and use social media widely.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Project Team, ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, Main Stakeholders	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Efficiency of resource use

- 6) **Make conscious attempts to avoid having a substantial balance in the project budget** (of in this case 10%) by undertaking more effective pro-active planning and monitoring of activities.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Project Team, ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Impact orientation and sustainability

- 7) **Prepare well ahead of the project closure an 'Exit Strategy' including a Closing Event** which involves a high-level workshop whereby sustainability issues can be discussed and agreed upon.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Project Team, ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, ILO's three Constituents, Development partners, Other Main Stakeholders	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

- 8) **Continue to explore ways to build on the achievements of the BS4GROWTH project to design a follow-up project proposal jointly with MSMEDA in order to sustain the momentum created and the knowledge produced by the present project.** ILO can liaise with MSMEDA and donors/development partners (e.g. EU and UNIDO) to explore the available options in the coming months.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, Development partners, ILO's Constituents, Other Main Stakeholders, UN Organisations and other Development Partners/Donors	Very High	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Cross-cutting issues

- 9) **Include an explicit and comprehensive Gender Equality Strategy in the PRODOC** for similar projects, and in particular make sure that all stakeholders pay specific attention to the inclusion of women in each and every project activity, output and outcome and that dedicated resources are allocated to this strategy.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Lessons Learned and Good Practices

Finally, from the experience gained by evaluating the present project two Lessons Learned (LL) and two Good Practices (GP) have been identified in this report as follows:

Lessons Learned (LL)

LL1: *The evaluation policies of the donor and the ILO should be addressed as much as possible together for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness.*

Next to the present final independent evaluation, the EU itself will conduct an evaluation of all projects under the Request for Proposals (RfP) entitled "Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt; EU Facility of Inclusive Growth and Job Creation". Following ILO's own Evaluation Policy, each project with a budget of over US\$1 million must undergo a mid-term and a final evaluation, one of which must be an independent evaluation. At the same time resources could be saved and it could work counterproductive if stakeholders are repeatedly requested for their cooperation.

LL2: *The Lesson Learned is that a large number of different activities should not go at the expense of a solid follow-up of each of those activities.*

In the BDS4GROWTH project many different types of trainings at national and governorate level have taken place, as well as activities related to three exhibitions, two Market System Analysis studies and one exposure visit to ILOITC in Turin for senior MSMEDA management staff. It might have been better to focus the large number of different activities (cf. Table 1 and Annex 10) on a smaller number of activities and trainings in order to be able to pay more attention to the follow-up and impact. Many of the training and other beneficiaries were quite satisfied with the quality of the trainings but considered the lack of follow-up an important drawback.

Good Practices (GP)

GP1: *The capacity-building mission to ITC Turin of senior MSMEDA staff has enhanced the sense of ownership of the main counterpart and co-applicant, MSMEDA.*

The MSMEDA staff interviewed spoke highly of the capacity building mission to Turin where the ITC provided highly technical trainings and put the Market Systems Analysis (MSA) and Value Chain development (VCD) approaches in the right context and related it to the shift MSMEDA is undergoing itself from service provider to a facilitative role in BDS provision.

GP2: *The introduction of ILO's tools on BDS and SIYB and in particular on the VCD Facilitators certified course, which were new to the Egyptian context, was a Good Practice to implement*

the Market System Approach (MSA) ensuring synergy and the spreading of knowledge along the different stakeholders.

The use made of ILO's existing courses, curricula and manuals on BDS, VCD and SIYB, as well as the adaptations to the local context, is a Good Practice that has proven to be very useful in the specific context of this project. It was also important to introduce these tools to different levels in society including the government/MSMEDA (Macro level), private sector stakeholders (meso level) and BDS consultants (micro level). Some of the training beneficiaries have indicated great appreciation, for example, for the VCD Facilitator's course and the practical work included, although the Certification must be better organized. In particular, the establishment of the VCA Facilitators course as a certified course has now led to its adoption as a course that will be regularly given at the International Training Centre (ITC) of the ILO in Turin which enhances the sustainability of the intervention being integrated in longer term training programmes.

1 Introduction

The present Evaluation Report is mandated by the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the *Independent Final Evaluation* of the project “**BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services**” in Egypt (see Annex 1). The present chapter firstly summarizes the background and the objectives of this project, followed by the purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation. In Chapter 2 the methodology of the evaluation is explained. The actual evaluation exercise consists of the analysis of the evaluation criteria and evaluation questions in Chapter 3. The findings are summarized in the Concluding Section 4.1, while the Recommendations are the subject of Section 4.2. The final Chapter 5 presents several Lessons Learned and Good Practices.

1.1 Background and Objectives of the Project

Egypt has been one of the most dynamic economies in Africa, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 5.3% in 2018, and, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was expected to grow at a similar pace in 2019-2023. Despite such economic growth, the employment/job creation capacity of the country has shown signs of *stagnation* which has lots of implications in particular for youth and women. According to ILO,¹ the employment rates are flat and remain quite low as compared to the average of Middle-Income Countries (MIC). Only about 40% of working age Egyptians are employed; this is to a large extent due to a very low female employment rate, which is continuing to decrease since 2014. The Unemployment rates pursue the decline initiated in 2014 on the wake of the global economic recovery and the post-revolution rebound. The decline is however slow, and unemployment remains above 2010 levels and youth unemployment above 25%.

The micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are considered as one of the solutions to solve some of the problems related to job creation in the country as they are actually employing more than 45% of the Egyptian population. In trying to address some of the problems and growing needs of MSMEs in the Egyptian market and further contribute to more inclusive and decent job opportunities, the ILO's partnership with the MSME Development Agency (MSMEDA) is implementing the project Business Development Services (BDS) for Growth (BDS4GROWTH). This project is funded by the European Union (EU) for a period of two years (1/09/2018 - 31/08/2020) with a no-cost extension until 31/01/2021.

Project Objectives

The **overall objective** of the project is to enable high quality Business Development Services (BDS) provision to MSMEs in the agri-food and tourism sectors in Egypt to boost their contribution towards economic growth and employment. The two specific objectives are:

- 1) Enhance the capacity of **MSMEDA** to play a facilitative role in enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to provide quality BDS; and

¹ ILO DWT/Cairo based on Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS) Labour Force Sample Survey 2018.

- 2) Enable **MSMEs in target sectors** to access BDS to increase their competitiveness, productivity and internationalization.

An overview of the Overall and Specific Objectives, the Outputs and the Activities as specified in the LogFrame is given in Annex 8.

Strategy

The BDS4GROWTH project is using the Market System Development (MSD) approach² to overcome the gaps and constraints discussed above (i.e. stagnating job creation, low female employment rate, and -youth- un/under-employment), addressing those gaps/constraints which prevent MSMEs from solving their problems through *existing* market mechanisms. This process has been done by shifting the BDS paradigm in Egypt, moving from the traditional approach to a market-based approach, **addressing the supply as well as the demand side of BDS** with a focus on value chains development of **two targeted sectors** as well as on the capacity development of MSMEDA, resulting in the following geographical focus:

- ❖ Agrifood– Minya Governorate,
- ❖ Tourism– Luxor Governorate, and
- ❖ MSMEDA– HQ in Cairo Governorate.

Project Management Arrangement

The project is managed by a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), responsible for overall project management based in Cairo, Egypt, and reports to the Director of the ILO Cairo Office. The Project Management Team (PMT) comprises a National Project Coordinator, and a Project Administrative/Finance Assistant.

Budget

The total budget for the project is €1,002,644 (US\$ 1,187,966.825), of which the EC contribution is €899,924 (US\$ 1,066,260.66). The remainder of about US\$ 121,706 is provided by the ILO.

1.2 Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Final Independent Evaluation

Evaluation Background

Evaluations are an integral and important part of the implementation of Development Cooperation projects within the ILO. The present evaluation will be based on ILO Policy Guidelines. As per these guidelines, all projects over US\$1 million must undergo at least one independent evaluation. The BDS4GROWTH project went through an internal mid-term (March-April 2020) and will go through an independent final evaluation. The independent one is managed by an ILO certified evaluation manager and implemented by independent evaluators.

The evaluation in ILO is for the purpose of accountability, learning, planning and building knowledge. The present evaluation will be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches for international development assistance as established by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. This evaluation will follow the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation, and where possible the **new ILO**

² The market systems development (MSD) approach is emerging as an approach that could be particularly well-suited to addressing the underlying constraints that prevent low-income groups from finding work, and especially decent work. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_seed/documents/briefingnote/wcms_568541.pdf

Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation (4th edition) published by EVAL in November 2020.³

The COVID-19 crisis led to some restrictions that affected the evaluation methodology (discussed in Section 2.2). In this regard, the evaluation draws on internal ILO guidance, in particular the document: *Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: An internal guide on adapting to the situation*.⁴

Purpose and Objectives of the Final Independent Evaluation

The **main purpose** of this final independent evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the achievements to date, through an analysis of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, orientation to impact and effects of the project.

Scope of the Evaluation

This final evaluation covers the period **August 2018 - January 2021**. The evaluation covers all the planned outputs and outcomes under this project and unexpected positive and negative results, with particular attention to synergies between the components and contribution to national policies and programmes.

The evaluation discusses, through the evaluation questions, how the project is addressing its main issue (i.e. **growing needs of micro, small and medium enterprises**) and the **ILO cross-cutting themes**, i.e. gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability. The evaluation helps to understand how and why the project has obtained or not the specific results from output to potential impacts.

Clients of the Evaluation

The primary clients for this evaluation are listed in Annex 2, while the list of project beneficiaries is attached as Annex 3.

Limitations and mitigation strategy

The Evaluation assignment is clearly laid out in the ToR (Annex 1) and the list of stakeholders to be interviewed (Annex 2) is comprehensive and is representative of the main stakeholders. The travel restrictions laid out by different countries as a result of the COVID-19 crisis made it impossible for the international consultant to undertake field missions, but within Egypt travel was possible by the national consultant. Also, due to COVID-19, the conducting of Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with project beneficiaries was not possible in view of maintaining safe distance under COVID-19 regulations. Therefore, in-depth interviews with project stakeholders were conducted mainly online or at a safe distance, and in combination with the triangulation of the methods used, the evaluation exercise could be undertaken in a balanced and independent way.

³ https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

⁴ http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_741206.pdf

2 Methodology of the Evaluation

2.1 Conceptual Framework

As defined in the Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) the present evaluation will address the following six **Evaluation Criteria**:

- A. Relevance and strategic fit of the project,
- B. Validity of the project design,
- C. Project effectiveness,
- D. Efficiency of resource use,
- E. Impact orientation and Sustainability of project outcomes,
- F. Cross-cutting issues.

The ILO template for the **Data Collection Worksheet** describes the way that the chosen data collection methods, data sources, sampling and indicators support the evaluation questions. In the Inception Report (30 December 2020) it has been discussed in detail, and for each of the six criteria distinguished in the above, a series of **evaluation questions** (in total 28 questions) have been identified and they are included here in Annex 4. In addition to these six criteria, the present evaluation will assess to what extent the project has or has not addressed the recommendations from the internal **Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)** in April 2020.

2.2 Methodology, Work Plan and Key Deliverables

The evaluation has applied a mix methods approach, engaging with key stakeholders of the project at all levels during the design, field work, validation and reporting stages. To collect the data for analysis, the evaluation made use of the techniques listed below. By using multiple methods to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data, these data were triangulated to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings. The data collection consists of the following three phases:

1) Desk review

A desk review has been conducted of project design and strategy documents, activity documents, communications and research and publications, financial reports, among others (see Annex 12).

2) Key informant interviews

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions on travel,⁵ the international consultant was, as already indicated, not able to travel to Egypt. Therefore, the interviews undertaken by the international consultant were all virtual interviews. Key informant interviews were conducted by the consultants with project staff, relevant ILO specialists, Government of Egypt, civil society organizations, national counterparts and ultimate beneficiaries (men and women), the donor, and other stakeholders and partners in Cairo. The English-speaking stakeholders were interviewed by the international consultant while the national consultant joined those interviews where relevant. The non-English-speaking stakeholders were interviewed by the national consultant in person (or online when not

⁵ For more details about adaptation to the current situation, see: www.ilo.ch/eval/WCMS_744068/lang--en/index.htm

otherwise possible) and he made interview transcripts in English with the key conclusions and recommendations (see Annexes 2 and 5).

The project team had compiled a list of which **20 key stakeholders were interviewed** including seven female stakeholders (see Annex 2). It provides a balanced list representing the main groups of stakeholders mentioned above. Of ILO's three constituents, only the government has been deeply involved in this project, while the employers' organisation, the Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI), was represented by the Head of FEI's SME Unit among the participants of the VCD training course in mid 2019. The third constituent, the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF), has not been involved at all in the project. Overall, the questions asked to the interviewed stakeholders relate to all of the six evaluation criteria, and the Evaluation Questions listed in Annex 4 were used as a checklist for these interviews.

3) *Field visit to selected project sites*

Since the international consultant could not travel to Egypt due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the national consultant undertook the necessary fieldwork visits and the interviews with project partners and beneficiaries there. Another means of data collection were field observations. A field work visit was made by the national consultant to the Minya Governorate. Concerning Luxor Governorate, it was found that no actual activities took place there: apart from the capacity building of chefs, the Taste of Egypt festival was cancelled because of COVID-19 although the preparations had been fully completed. Therefore, there was no real need to travel to Luxor for interviews, but the relevant interviews were undertaken through online/phone call interviews.

The different types of Project Beneficiaries and Partners have been classified in Annex 3 by type of involvement and location. The number of female beneficiaries remains at a very low level (overall only 13%) partly also because almost all beneficiaries in the Greenhouse sector (115 in total) are male. The sampling for the fieldwork in Minia and Luxor has been indicated in the table in Annex 5 and was based on the following considerations. The beneficiary list (Annex 3) provided by the project showed no less than 11 categories of representatives with widely diverging total numbers of beneficiaries. In principle, 10% of each category were randomly selected with a minimum of two representatives in each category, but there are a few exceptions (cf. Annex 5):

- Due to the limited number of female representatives, as many women as possible were included in the sample size.
- Furthermore, in some categories (1 and 5) there was only one beneficiary present who was interviewed.

The final random selection of individuals was made by the evaluators in cooperation with the project team, which included other criteria of selection such as the specific geographical location of end beneficiaries. All in all, Annex 5 shows that 25 beneficiaries were interviewed of which four (16%) were female. The tools used during the different types of interviews, as well as the lists of guiding questions for the in-depth interviews are provided in Annex 6. Following the data collection of the field work phase mostly in Arabic, the national consultant translated and processed the data in written transcripts of the interviews in English.

Deliverables

The main deliverables distinguished are the following:

1. **Inception report** following ILO EVAL Checklist 3: this was approved by the Evaluation Manager on 30 December 2020.

2. **First draft of Evaluation Report** (following ILO-EVAL Checklist 5). The Evaluation Manager holds the responsibility of approving this draft report. This report is shared with all relevant stakeholders for their comments.
3. **Final version of evaluation report** incorporates the comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders on the draft report. The quality of the report will be assessed against the EVAL checklists 5 and 6. Identified lessons learned and good practices were included by means of the standard annex templates as per EVAL guidelines. The report also includes a section on output and outcome level results against indicators and targets of each project and comments on each one (see in particular Annex 10).
4. **A stand-alone Executive summary** in ILO EVAL template.

Management Arrangements

The evaluation was managed by Mr. Egidio Simbine, based at the ILO Maputo Office, who has no prior involvement in the project, and oversight was provided by the Regional Evaluation Officer. The project management team provided logistical and administrative support to the evaluation team throughout the process and assisted in organizing a detailed evaluation mission agenda. Throughout the evaluation process administrative support was provided where necessary by the ILO Country Office in Cairo. The evaluation team was conducted by an external independent, international evaluator/consultant and a national evaluator/consultant, who were responsible for conducting a participatory and inclusive evaluation process.

Evaluation Work Plan and Timeline

In terms of **Work Plan**, the evaluation was conducted between December 2020 and March 2021. The detailed work plan is included in Annex 7.

3 Overall Findings

For the Final Independent Evaluation of the project entitled '*BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Service*' six evaluation criteria have been identified in the previous chapter which will be discussed in depth in the present chapter (Sections 3.1 – 3.6). These criteria have been analysed with the help of the 28 Evaluation Questions (listed in Annex 4).

3.1 Relevance and Strategic Fit

Relevance for the beneficiaries and country involved

The relevance of the intervention is high because it tries to address some of the problems and growing needs of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Egyptian market and contribute to more inclusive and decent job opportunities. The objectives of the intervention are aligned with the Priorities of the Government of Egypt as these are laid down in the Egyptian Sustainable Development Strategy Vision 2030 in which the reduction of the unemployment rate is mentioned in its first pillar on Economic development and sustainable inclusive growth. Economic growth is typically more inclusive if it is steered by labour intensive sectors, and as such agri-food is one sector that merits attention as it plays a key role in job creation and poverty reduction. Acknowledging this potential, the Vision 2030 includes plans for leveraging agri-food and agro-business for accelerating economic growth and development. In particular, this Vision 2030 addresses the provision of decent work and employment in rural areas (including El Minia and Luxor), which the project is targeting as well. In addition, the intervention supports the Egyptian SME strategy and the newly set role for MSMEDA as a partial movement from service provider to service facilitator.

The Egyptian economy is generally characterized by stagnating job creation, low female employment rate, and un/under-employment especially of youth. Due to the limited job opportunities for youth, starting a MSME is an important solution for self-employment for youth. BDS are usually needed for SMEs to grow; however, one of the main problems is the limited number of qualified BDS providers while also the SME owners are lacking the knowledge on BDS and its benefits. Therefore, the BDS4GROWTH project is using the Market System Development approach in order to address those constraints which prevent MSMEs from solving their problems themselves through existing market mechanisms. The MSD approach targets both the supply and the demand side of BDS; it facilitates more effective market provision of BDS and institutionalizes BDS facilitation in core local actors. The project's relevance was thus high for the beneficiaries and for the country involved, and most of the stakeholders interviewed in the present evaluation underlined that the relevance remains valid until today.

Relevance for the outcomes outlined in the UNPDF as well as the SDGs

The project objectives and outcomes also align to the United Nations Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF; 2018-2022) with Egypt, entitled "United for a Sustainable Future". The UN aims "...to support national efforts to adopt inclusive and sustainable development pathways and remain on track to achieve agreed targets for inclusive, sustainable, resilient and job rich economic development by 2022". The project will also contribute to a number of Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030), most prominently SDG Goal 8: "Promote sustained, inclusive

and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. Lastly, the proposed intervention corresponds to the priorities for Egypt of other bilateral and regional agencies (i.e. European union, African Union Agenda 2063, etc.).

Alignment to the ILO Programme and Budget and to other on-going ILO programmes and projects in the country

The intervention contributes to the ILO Programme & Budget (P&B) 2018-19, in particular to Outcome 4 (Promoting sustainable enterprises) through targeting value chains and the quality of BDS provided to MSMEs. By working in rural areas in El Minia and Luxor it also supports the development of Outcome 5 “Decent work in the rural economy”.

Within the ILO Cairo Office, the work is focussed on three clusters of which the largest is dealing with Enterprise Development and Entrepreneurship (the other two clusters are directed at governance and social protection). There are several other recently completed or ongoing ILO projects or programmes in this cluster that are operating in similar sectors or themes as BDS4GROWTH, most importantly the three Egypt Youth Employment (EYE) projects. The first one, “EYE: Working Together in Qalyoubia and Menoufia”, started in December 2016 and was just completed last September; it was funded by the Norwegian Government and implemented jointly with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and had as crucial partners among others MSMEDA and FEI. It implemented **joint activities** with the BDS4GROWTH, in particular the Value Chain Development (VCD) Facilitator’s course.

The second EYE project entitled “EYE: Jobs and Private Sector Development in Rural Egypt” (RAWABET) was also funded by the Norwegian Government and built on the experience of the first one; it is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation and in cooperation with key partners as MTI, MSMEDA and FEI, from January 2018 to December 2021. The third EYE project (December 2018 - December 2020) entitled “Employment for Youth in Egypt (EYE)– Providing a Reason to Stay” highlights the importance of *women participation* in the job market; its implementing partners are ILO (Lead agency), UNIDO and UNDP, and it was funded by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS).

Three other related projects need to be mentioned here. Firstly, an older project, called the Hayat project (June 2013 - September 2017), was mentioned by many beneficiaries in Minia interviewed for the present evaluation as it introduced the greenhouses to the community; it aimed to strengthen economic security in five Upper Egyptian villages (in the districts of Edwa and Maghagha in Minya governorate) through creation of better employment opportunities and increase in employability of the local labour force. Funded also by the UNTFHS, it was implemented by UNIDO (lead agency), ILO, UN Women, UN-Habitat and IOM. Secondly, the “Decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia” was implemented in partnership with the National Council for Women (NCW) and MSMEDA and funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Thirdly, the EU-funded project “Support the Operationalization of the SME Unit in the Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI) was implemented from September 2018 until August 2020.

Lastly, ILO is currently preparing for a joint project multi-year (4 or 5 years) with UNIDO and MSMEDA on VCD using the results of the BDS4GROWTH project.

Links with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners

As we have seen in the above, there were/are quite a few projects implemented jointly between ILO and other UN agencies indicating a good level of cooperation. On the other hand, the MTE (2020: 23) found that there exists no systematic cooperation between BDS4GROWTH and several other similar projects with different approaches (e.g. projects by JICA, USAID, AfDB) despite the fact that these projects are also partnering with MSMEDA on providing job opportunities and improving work conditions.

ILO's comparative advantage

The project interventions were employed to maximize ILO's comparative advantage in the field of enterprise development and BDS facilitation involving in particular the ILO ENTERPRISE Department in Geneva which was deeply involved not only in writing the project document but also in the implementation of the project with part-time HQ staff involvement from the project budget during 2019. ENTERPRISE itself also had a stake in the project in that it was piloting approaches (developed by ENTERPRISE) in Egypt and the intention was to replicate good practices achieved in other projects/countries. The DWT team and the ILO Country Office in Cairo provided technical and administrative support. In addition, ILO knowledge products and curricula/training materials developed in other projects and programmes were used, such as the VCD, BDS and SIYB manuals and experience, as well as the adaptation to the national context of these manuals. Lastly, a study mission by senior MSMEDA staff members was made to ILO's International Training Centre (ITC) in Turin, Italy (further discussed in Section 3.3).

The alignment of the intervention to the priorities of the employers' and workers' organisations was much less clear; apart from the participation by one staff member of the Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI) in one of the training courses, both these constituents of the ILO were quite invisible within the project. Being ILO's constituents, it would have been appropriate to invite them more often for trainings, workshops and other activities.

Selection of the right partners

Since the EU grant application required a national partner as Co-applicant, MSMEDA was selected as main partner for the project. The evaluation found that at the government level this is indeed the appropriate partner to achieve the project outcomes and impact as it has been operating in the area of financial and non-financial services to MSMEs for well over a decade (first as SFD and later as MSMEDA). Nevertheless, not all key stakeholders agreed with this unconditionally and some reservations were explained as follows:

- MSMEDA is a large organisation partnering with many different donors in projects of which some have much larger budgets, and has recently undergone structural changes, firstly from SFD to MSMEDA, and subsequently from MTI to the Prime Minister's office.
- Furthermore, MSMEDA is currently undergoing a major shift from **Service Provider** to **Service Facilitator** and the current project tries to support the agency in this by providing capacity building and new tools and approaches, whereby a question is if this can be done with a relatively small budget for a relatively large organisation as MSMEDA. Partnering with a much smaller organisation (like for example a business association) would, on the one hand, perhaps have been more achievable, but on the other hand the potential for outreach and impact would have been *substantially reduced*.
- MSMEDA is primarily oriented towards financial services, and non-financial services including BDS are given less attention (for example staff of the non-financial departments have many financial tasks among their duties).

- Being such a large government organisation, some stakeholders wondered whether it will have the flexibility and adaptability needed to employ the MSM and VCD approaches and to use and implement the tools involved after the completion of the project.

The overall conclusion therefore was that MSMEDA was in fact *the only really viable option* because it provides the opportunity to scale-up the model to the macro level, as well as to enhance the outreach of the project impact to other governorates and other sub-sectors. This is further supported by the fact that a BDS Market Strategy was developed jointly by the project and MSMEDA, and that an *update of achievements* was made in December 2020 (discussed in detail in Section 3.3).

For the selection of **BDS providers** for the development and the provision of training and for the conducting of the market systems analyses based on the VCD approach, there was actually hardly any choice in the country. At the start of the project there was in particular **Enroot Development**, a BDS Service Provider in Market Research, which was knowledgeable in this area. Later on, one more partner was found to manage the exhibitions and participate in the planning for the Taste of Egypt festival, namely **Konzept**, a BDS Service Provider in Exhibition Management. Therefore, the project has depended to a considerable extent on those two organisations which also were in itself quite dependent on their respective founders. For example, the founder of Enroot was also the one who in an individual capacity developed the BDS Facilitation Guide; he was further involved in the Certification scheme which was also supported by ILO ENTERPRISE in Geneva. A third BDS provider was involved in the provision of the training to the chefs who are working in tourism restaurants in Luxor, notably the **Egyptian Chefs Association**.

At the Governorate level (Minia and Luxor), the project initially struggled to find appropriate BDS providers on the ground but through various venues local agronomists, lead farmers, traders and other providers were identified (see also Annex 5); furthermore, it turned out during the interviews in Minia that the contacts made at the time of the Hayat project were often still maintained which should be mentioned as a sustainability element for that UN agencies project.

3.2 Validity of the project design

The Project Design Process under competitive bidding conditions

The BDS4GROWTH project was designed following an **EU Request for Proposals (RfP)**, and thus the design followed the Guidelines of this RfP, entitled "Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt; EU Facility of Inclusive Growth and Job Creation".⁶ These Guidelines also specified that the budget for Lot 1-proposals was not to exceed EUR 1 million,⁷ and that the duration should be between 12 and 30 months. Through the Project Document (PRODOC, or 'Full Application') ILO actually requested for a 24 months project duration and a budget from the EU of EUR 899,924, whereby ILO would contribute an additional EUR 102,720 from its own funds. The PRODOC (2017) was written by ILO HQ Enterprises department as the lead author and it was designed as a pilot project for a Market systems Approach to be implemented later also in other countries (see Section 3.5).

⁶ EuropeAid/154841/DD/ACT/EG; Guidelines for grant applicants, Corrigendum 1, dated 16 February 2017

⁷ The total for all proposals in Lot 1 was EUR 4,250,000.

The Guidelines further specified the **sectors or themes** eligible for funding under Lot 1. “The main theme of Lot 1 is to support initiatives that create and/or expand the delivery of sustainable enterprise support services in Egypt, provide access to quality Business Development Services (BDS), that enhance the competitiveness, productivity, linkages or internationalisation of new and existing MSMEs, focussed on industry/manufacturing (including Agrofood), traded services including tourism, within which Egypt has the potential for global advantage, thus helping to foster innovative ideas as start-ups toward inclusive economic growth in Egypt.” Furthermore, one of the types of action specified was the “Enhancement of value chains/systems and competitiveness of existing groups of sector specific enterprises within which Egypt has potential for competitive advantage and the promotion of inclusive clusters”. Therefore, one can conclude from the discussion on the project objectives in Chapter 1 that the proposal **adhered indeed very closely to** these themes and sectors of the EU Guidelines, which was of course also acknowledged through the approval itself of the proposal by the EU.

Since the RfP involved a **competitive** procedure to acquire the funding the LogFrame and the activities proposed had to be comprehensive. Furthermore, for the application procedure it was important to have MSMEDA on board as a co-applicant and they also made proposals for activities to be included.

Theory of Change and LogFrame

The PRODOC does not mention as such any ‘Theory of Change’, but it has an extensive section on methodology solidly based in the Market Systems and Value Chain Development Approaches with detailed diagrams on Facilitating BDS Market Development, The Market System, and Market mechanisms (PRODOC 2017: Figures 1-3). As such the analysis is comprehensive, integrates external factors and is based on systemic analysis and earlier ILO experiences clearly laid out in the PRODOC.

The PRODOC further includes a **LogFrame** which is clearly defined at the logical level with the Overall Objective, the two Specific Objectives/Outcomes, the five Outputs and the 14 Activities (see Annex 8), whereby the outputs are causally linked to outcomes, which in turn contribute to the broader development objective of the project. The project supports the Egyptian Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) strategy and the newly set role for MSMEDA as a partial shift from service provider to service facilitator. It has a clear focus on introducing the concept of Value Chain Development and Business Development Facilitation for MSMEs into the Egyptian business market. By proper chain development and facilitation and business services, micro and small business will improve their businesses and provide job opportunities.

However, at the levels of the **indicators** and **assumptions**, the project design does not meet the key elements of the LogFrame design criteria for Results-Based Management. As the MTE (2020: 25-26) found “The indicators were not consistent with output and outcome levels and do not measure what needs to be achieved. One of the issues, concerning the indicators, is its simple repetition on the three levels” notably at the overall objective, outcome and output level, while an indicator has to be *specific* to the level that it measures. At each of these three different levels the following four indicators were simply repeated:

- 10 Agency staff successfully complete training in facilitation skills (at least 40% are women),
- 20 Agency and non-Agency staff (at least 40% are women) are trained in VCD,

- At least 30 partner organisations will be reached and will pilot business services to MSMEs, and
- At least 300 new and improved jobs created (40% for women) through improved operations of at least 300 businesses in the agrifood and tourism sector.

Four other indicators are included in the LogFrame which are formulated in a much less specific way as the above-mentioned four indicators, and some do not really adhere to the criteria for a clear (SMART) indicator:

- Establishment of intervention models to address the sector constraints (Specific Objective 1),
- Market systems analysis conducted for the two targeted sectors (Output 1.2),
- Intervention designed (Output 1.2), and
- Facilitative role of the Agency enhanced (Output 1.3).

Moreover, the MTE already questioned (2020: 24) in how far the project activities are capable to support the achievement of Output 2.2: At least 30% of the 300 businesses (MSMEs) reached have access to financial services. The timeframe of the project limits a proper implementation of finance related activities. In fact, one of the MTE's recommendations was to remove this output but this was not allowed according to the EU rules for such a competitive proposal as we will discuss further in Section 3.3. Lastly, the indicators and the targets included in the LogFrame in different columns are exactly the same, and thus one is superfluous.

The assumptions were already discussed in detail in the MTE (2020: 26-27) which concluded that "...several assumptions are really prerequisites or set at the wrong level. The 'change' level assumptions and risks seem more to be a list of challenges/pre-requisites that may face the project." And, for example, the assumptions at the Overall Objective level are in fact those belonging to a lower level.

Major causes of MSME growth, unemployment and underemployment in Egypt

In the above under relevance, it has been shown that the project addressed indeed the major causes of MSME growth, unemployment and underemployment in Egypt. Stagnating job creation, low female employment rate, and un/under-employment especially of youth are addressed, as are issues related to labour-intensive sectors (agri-food, agro-business) and to decent work and employment in rural areas.

Consideration of the private sector BDS supply in the project design

The private sector BDS supply side is taken into consideration by the project design as a crucial component. Not only is Output 1.3 directed at selecting and capacitating partner organisations to address the needs of the MSMEs, but the focus of another output (2.1) is also at BDS supply: Enterprises in the agrifood and tourism sector have access to business advisory and training services (see Annex 8).

Degree to which the project design is realistic

The project design was somewhat ambitious. A large organisation like MSMEDA is not easy to change and a shift from service provision to service facilitation requires substantial staff training as well as institutional adaptations (at the least) which are difficult to achieve in just 24 months with a budget of about US\$ 1 million. In addition, Output 2.2 on access to finance for MSMEs was recommended by the MTE to be removed as it was assessed as impossible to be achieved within

the then current project timeframe (see further below where the MTE Recommendations are discussed). The M&E system is realistic in the sense that it is a straightforward system using Excel Sheets (see further section 3.3).

In terms of **Knowledge Generation and Sharing**, the action was expected to provide rich information regarding approach, results, outcomes - both intended and not intended - and impact in target areas and groups. Knowledge generation was expected to comprise both a specific assessment of sectors, skills-related constraints and opportunities in MSME development, as well as training materials created for capacity development (PRODOC 2017: 23). This was in itself realistic as the outputs in the LogFrame were geared towards such a goal and the pilot nature of the action guaranteed the acquisition of new knowledge on the MSA and VCD approaches (intended or unintended).

A **Communication Strategy** as such for the entire project was not developed at the design stage. Only the marketing strategy of Activity 2.1.1 has an element of communication as was indicated in the PRODOC (2017: 12): "...include a review of media channels and communication options to reach out to the target clientele and development of a communication strategy. The marketing and communication strategy will make a conscious effort to ensure that both women and men have equal chances of getting the information in the different geographic locations." Considering the small number of women involved in the project (cf. Annexes 2 and 3), and the limited geographic locations reached by the project this seems less realistic.

The PRODOC did not include a specific 'exit strategy', but there was an extensive section on sustainability distinguishing institutional, financial, policy and environmental sustainability (PRODOC 2017: 23-24). These will be discussed further in section 3.5.

Degree of integration of ILO cross cutting themes in the project design

The PRODOC (2017: 15; *emphasis added*) clearly looked into gender issues and environmental concerns: "Through all the activities proposed, gender responsiveness, green opportunities and environmental sustainability will be key concerns, and will **shape the selection** of training providers and end-beneficiaries as well as the contents and areas of the interventions (e.g. training design). For instance, in relation to gender, it is expected that specific interventions to further gender equality might be needed - for instance, targeted training for service providers that could address skills gaps between women and men, or awareness raising for male trainers on gender equality in communities where women face attitudinal barriers to starting and running a business. The action will regularly review its activities to ensure that gender-equality related work is reaching targets set in the LogFrame." Such a strategy of the regular monitoring of the achievement of targets in terms of gender equality is realistic as it was anticipated that the numbers of men participating in the various activities would tend to be much larger than those of women.

In terms of environmental safeguards, the PRODOC (2017: 24) has also made a conscious effort to include it in the design by taking "...into account the risks of land degradation, aggravating deforestation or other environmental factors when intervening in the pilot economic sectors. The participatory, capacity-building approach of the programme allows environmental sustainability to be kept in focus. The SIYB and VCD training materials presents the advantage of having undergone a revision from a "green" perspective, which will ensure that all training interventions are environmentally responsive."

Concerning the two other ILO cross-cutting issues, i.e. social dialogue/tripartism and international labour standards (ILS), the PRODOC did not discuss them as they were not considered as major elements of the BDS4GROWTH approach.

The identification of the differential impact on men and women and on other vulnerable groups

While the differential impact on men and women was identified by the PRODOC as discussed in the previous paragraphs, this was not the case for other vulnerable groups who are mainly absent in the PRODOC. Although it is maintained that "...the action will not ignore priority groups (the poor, women, disabled and marginalised) who might need public support." (2017: 5), disability is otherwise only mentioned as one of many general criteria for the selection of MSME clients to receive business support services (PRODOC 2017: 13). No other vulnerable groups or minorities are included in the analysis as the project was more focused on the Market System Approach and the way BDS could be provided to MSME.

3.3 Project effectiveness

Achievement of objectives

The project accomplished a large number of quite diverging concrete project activities as is demonstrated in Table 1 below reaching an impressive total number of beneficiaries. It concerns in particular different types of trainings, but also activities related to three exhibitions, two Market System Analysis studies and one exposure visit to ILOITC in Turin for senior MSMEDA management staff. This is indeed a very commendable achievement in particular realising that a large part of these activities took place during adverse circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020. The quality and impact of these activities will be further discussed in the following paragraphs.

Table 1: Main project activities and numbers of Beneficiaries.

Main Project Activities: Trainings, Exposure Visit and Exhibitions	Beneficiaries
1) Value Chain Development (VCD) Facilitation Training 1 - 4 July 2019	28
2) BDS Market Facilitation Training 8 - 12 Dec 2019	15
3) Food Africa exhibition 9 - 11 Dec 2019	8
4) BDS Market Facilitation Exposure visit/training for MSMEDA senior management ILOITC, Turin, Italy 17 - 21 Feb 2020	6
5) Two Market System Analysis studies in Luxor and Minya	--
6) Technical trainings in the Greenhouses Value Chain	115
7) Tourism Group for interventions in Luxor: Taste of Egypt Exhibition	8
8) Animal Production Training	3
9) Capacity Building Program\ Training for Luxor Chefs	12
10) Green Houses\Extension officers -Technical Programs	10
11) Marketing Sessions at the Torathna Handicraft Exhibition Oct/Nov 2020 – About 200 exhibitors/MSMSs	200
12) SIYB Business Management training & access to financial services	129
13) Second round training of Luxor Chefs: Local restaurants & hospitality subsector	32
TOTAL	566

Source: Compiled by the evaluation based on two progress reports and the updated information received in writing and through phone calls from the project team. A comprehensive overview is provided in Annex 10.

Whether these activities have in the end contributed to **achieving the objectives** needs to be analysed through the specific contributions to the two Special Objectives and the five Outputs as

given in the LogFrame (Annex 8). A table with the actual activities undertaken under each Objective, Output and Planned Activity of the LogFrame is provided in Annex 10.

Specific Objective 1:

The capacity of MSMEDA to play a *facilitative* role in enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to provide quality BDS has certainly been enhanced through the project activities. This applies in particular to the BDS Market Facilitation Training including five MSMEDA focal points, the BDS market facilitation exposure visit of a MSMEDA senior management delegation, the VCD training, and the support to MSMEDA in organizing the Torathna Handicraft Exhibition. The proof of the pudding, however, is in the development and in the implementation of the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy. This 30-page document was developed jointly by MSMEDA and BDS4GROWTH in September 2019 and distinguishes **four strategic themes** each logically contributing to MSMEDA’s facilitation role:

- 1) MSME development coordination
- 2) BDS Market Analysis
- 3) Build the Capacity of BDS Providers
- 4) Increase the use of BDS by MSMEs

Each of these themes consists of several programmes, and the latest Status Report of progress made is dated 21 December 2020. It is summarized in Table 2 while the full details are given in Annex 9. All in all, it can be concluded from Table 2 that during the implementation period of 1 year and three months since September 2019 some good progress is made in a few programmes of that strategy, but that many programmes are still in a preparatory phase and still a lot remains to be done. The main achievements are in particular the establishment of the Platform (website), the BDS4GROWTH trainings, the work on implementing the SME Law, and such awareness raising activities as the Torathna exhibition and the entrepreneurship competition. Especially the Platform which is open for BDS providers to register can be considered as a **major milestone** enhancing networking and the outreach to all corners of the country.

Table 2: Summary of Status Report on the progress of the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy.

Strategic Theme	Programme	Status Update as of 21 December 2020
1) MSME development coordination	1.1: National MSME BDS Platform (website)	MSMEDA created a national MSMEs platform www.msmeda.org.eg to share information and create a more coordinated and targeted approach to BDS delivery.
	1.2: National MSME Observatory	MSMEDA has signed a protocol with CAPMAS in October 2019 (to conduct field surveys and to provide T.A.).
	1.3: Public-Private Dialogue	Discussions have started with the private and public sector on the drafting of the executive regulations for the new SME Law 152 in July 2020.
2) BDS Market Analysis		MSMEDA is engaging with Agence France Development (AFD) on a new project “Economic empowerment of women” including market research.
	2.1: BDS Market Assessment	MSMEDA organized a special booth at its annual Exhibition Center Torathna last October 2020 for BDS services.
3) Build Capacity of BDS Providers		A database of service providers created, and a training program through BDS4GROWTH to develop service providers in Minya & Luxor.
	3.1: BDS Provider Training Programme	MSMEDA has acquired the funds needed for a specialized professional Product Photography Unit at the Agency.
	3.2: Improve Access to and Use of Services	Within the framework of the SME Law 152, some services were added for MSMEs to the one stop shop.
4) Increase use of BDS by MSMEs	4.1: Awareness Raising for BDS	Preparations for a campaign to be launched in the first half of 2021.
	4.2: New BDS Products and Services	MSMEDA jointly with the private sector held a national competition for entrepreneurship from March-December 2020 called “Start-up Power”.

	4.3: BDS Certification	No progress: MSMEDA will need technical support to establish a system for accreditation of BDS providers based on international best practices.
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Source: Compiled by the evaluation based on the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy Status Update of 21 December 2020. The full details of this Status Update are provided in Annex 9.

Both **Outputs 1.1 and 1.2** of the LogFrame (cf. Annex 8) contributed to Specific objective 1 through the BDS Facilitation training and the VCD training respectively. The MSMEDA respondents were very satisfied with the content, with the trainers, and with the cooperation between the project and MSMEDA, and the MTE came to a similar conclusion:

Concerning the BDS & VCD training, participants were highly satisfied with the training approach. MSMEDA participants expressed that both trainings are for them a shift in their work approach. However, they still feel that MSMEDA top management needs to push it further and down to the field. During the interviews held with selected participants, they showed acceptance for the new approach. In a discussion with MSMEDA staff, they expressed that they are now able to better support the beneficiaries and started to conduct a Value Chain Analysis for selected sectors, unfortunately they could not finalize it now to the COVID-19 lockdown (MTE 2020: 6-7).

There were also challenges and in particular the delay in the distribution of the VCD training certification, as well as a lack of communication caused some disappointment among the participants. However, the main drawback mentioned by the respondents was the lack of a follow-up of the training programme for which apparently expectations were raised among the trainees; this included the further implementation of the practical work done, and/or a second round of training with higher technical levels.

Under **Output 1.2** there is not only the VCD training already mentioned, but also the two market systems analyses conducted by the consulting firm ENROOT Development for two targeted sectors: Agribusiness in Minia and Tourism in Luxor. These studies identified six impactful Value Chains and for each of them an intervention was designed: three for the Agribusiness sector i.e. Dairy, Greenhouses and Garlic, and three for the tourism sector, i.e. Guesthouse accommodation, Alabaster handicraft as well as entertainment (Felucca, Hantours and local restaurants). However, due to circumstances in particular the COVID-19 pandemic) in the end only 3 intervention models were in fact implemented in the target sectors (see under Activity 2.1.2 below). Nevertheless, these two studies greatly expanded the knowledge base with respect to the kind of challenges the actors face, and the intervention models designed to overcome these challenges can serve as reference models for future interventions applying the Market System Development approach.

Output 1.3 refers to 'Partner organisations' who are to be selected and capacitated to address the needs of the MSMEs, but the majority of the 42 BDS providers actually reached were *individual* suppliers (farmers, agronomists, agricultural extension officers, etc.); in fact, this number included only three organisations, i.e. the two BDS providers in Cairo (Enroot and Konzept), and Meristem in Minya (cf. Annex 10). The second activity under this output is to *consolidate* the facilitation role of MSMEDA; this is quite a comprehensive target which cannot be reached alone through the project's support to the organisation of the Torathna Exhibition although important in itself for its awareness raising ability.

Specific Objective 2:

Enabling MSMEs in target sectors to access BDS has been achieved for the targeted MSMEs in the greenhouses, dairy and tourism sectors and as we will see below the jobs of 311 beneficiaries have been improved/created through their involvement in the BDS4GROWTH interventions

(training, coaching, exhibitions, etc.). However, the second part of this objective, “to increase their competitiveness, productivity and internationalisation” has only been very partially achieved. As we will see in the following paragraphs for some MSMEs there is already some proof that their competitiveness and productivity might have increased according to the interviews conducted by the evaluation and a few examples are discussed in the below analysis (although that needs further tracer studies to assess in detail which is beyond the scope of this evaluation); However, with respect to internationalisation there has been little if any progress among these MSMEs in Minia and Luxor.

SO2 was especially directed at enabling MSMEs in target sectors to access BDS, and this was attempted through six interventions that were designed on the basis of the two market systems analyses in Minia and in Luxor (undertaken under Output 1.2). However, in **Minia** only two (out of three) intervention models have been successfully implemented, one related to the Greenhouses value chain and the other to the dairy products value chain. Due to the specificities of the agribusiness season the Garlic intervention could not be implemented on time. With respect to the three intervention models developed for **Luxor**, these could not be implemented as planned for reasons concerning legal, beneficiary mistrust and the current, tourism business model, despite initial participation of the governorate officials in the initial preparation in Luxor. Therefore, the implementation strategy in Luxor needed to be adjusted and a different approach was introduced, namely the support of and/or involvement in cultural festivals; this also met with challenges, for example, the Taste of Egypt Festival was fully prepared and organized jointly with Konzept but in the end it had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the reasons why the second specific objective was less successful than the first one, is related to COVID-19: During the first year of the project (2019) the focus was on activities contributing to Specific Objective 1 which was also logical as these were in part required to be completed before the activities of Specific Objective 2 (SO2) could be undertaken. Therefore, it is no surprise that the activities of SO2 were much more affected by the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in delays and cancelations of (sub-) activities.

Greenhouses in Minia Governorate

The project contracted several private technical consulting firms/consultants to provide BDS to MSMEs; however, one of the initial problems when the project started was that there were only few experts in the area of BDS and VCD, let alone fully qualified ones. With the development of different projects in particular the Hayat project discussed in the above this has since a few years been developing. At the governorate and district levels, there were no local partners (NGOs or CBOs) identified and therefore the private consultants lacked direct access to the MSMEs and faced difficulties in outreach. It could have been useful if these consultants would have received training (ToT) from ILO in the areas of BDS advisory and/or Value Chain development so that such problems could have been identified in an earlier stage.

Some beneficiaries attended two to three sessions on the extension service unit at the Ministry of Agricultural and Land Reclamation (MALR) premises in Edwa district. Others participated in an online training. The inputs of the project were mainly focused on technical issues and not related to the greenhouse business planning and management or the usage of new technology. Farmers who have established a working relationship with an agronomist who provides advice in case of technical bottlenecks (paid service), are very much appreciating the know-how of technical assistance provided and they witnessed a small increase in their production and/or direct quick

reaction to the problems they are facing. Farmers who do not have this type of relationship, were less satisfied with the training session but saw it as good opportunity to acquire general knowledge. The training topics are not specifically tailored to their needs and didn't help them to overcome the daily problems they are facing. Some of their more urgent problems include for example support in marketing for better prices, introducing new crops that have more value added and better selling prices in the market, and the quality of pesticides. One greenhouse farmer recommended to establish a Centre or a technical office (in Edwa District) for greenhouse farmers which could offer all inputs needed for them. Farmers can pay to this new office in case the prices of technical assistance are less than what is common now in the market.⁸

Greenhouse farmers/MSME Business Owners benefited from their participation in BDS4GROWTH especially in acquiring new information and knowledge, and in overcoming different problems through the linkages with other greenhouse farmers and the official cooperation with the agronomist. The challenges mentioned are as follows: Firstly, the project duration was limited while changing farmers' attitudes requires much more time through intensive interventions and due to COVID-19 the ability to reach out to other stakeholders related to the greenhouse value chain was reduced. Secondly, the training period occurred during the harvest session limiting the direct implementation of any knowledge gained through the training sessions. Thirdly, some of the training sessions were too theoretical and lacked in real support on the ground; for example, the Hayat project used to provide direct assistance in the field (and not in a classroom).

Dairy/Milk Production in Minia Governorate

In the case of *Dairy products*, the project's focus was on new product development, and not on the need for other BDS services such as financial planning and marketing. Some respondents had the chance to develop new products which affected their sales volume and profitability positively. Some drawbacks also came to the fore during the interviews in Minya. Firstly, in the dairy value chain, the project subsidized the costs of technical assistance which is, of course, not sustainable after the project ends. Secondly, while several BDS providers in milk production have long established contacts with MSMEDA (and its predecessor, the SFD) which always invites them for workshops and training events, the linkages were lacking along the supply chain with milk producers (small holder farmers and animal nutrition). Thirdly, the project did not support the milk producers with a plan for a market strategy to ensure their linkages with the targeted market.

Respondents also emphasized the benefits they received from the project. For example, one of the Agribusiness Experts/Consultants providing the technical assistance for the milk production value chain is satisfied with the project results especially in the area related to dairy production: the value of the interventions and the direct impact on dairy producers can clearly be seen. At the same time, he thinks that the market has a huge potential to develop and grow, but a lack of knowledge and the absence of qualified service providers prevent the smallholder farmers from doubling the production of milk. Another respondent, a dairy producer, benefited from the project in that one of the project's technical consultants taught him how to produce Mozzarella cheese. Some respondents recommended that a follow-up would be desirable dealing with practical training, support in exporting products and managerial training.

⁸ He mentioned that the average agronomist TA visit is about EGP 200; he believes that this price is too high for farmers to pay especially those who are just starting the greenhouse businesses.

The *Animal Production* intervention could not be completed, and the project stopped after the technical training for three people was finalised due to the pandemic conditions. Therefore, the knowledge was not passed on to the beneficiaries' level, and a plan of action is lacking to encourage the new BDS providers to support farmers in areas related to animal nutrition. Consultants hired by the project to study the current problems facing smallholder farmers, faced difficulties to find a community leader to facilitate access to small holder farmers. Also due to the COVID-19 pandemic the implementation was not ideal with training being conducted on-line (not always an effective way of communication), and not the entire training curricula could be delivered always. This contrasts with another respondent, namely the only female BDS provider in animal production (and branch manager at a local association) who is supporting MSMEs through this association, for example, by teaching MSME owners how to conduct a feasibility study and how to undertake basic bookkeeping. She appreciated the online training because it was very interactive and full of practical experiences which was totally new to her; one of the best elements was the accessibility of the trainers even after the completion of the training to request advice through her cell phone. Although the information and knowledge were very useful, she found that a plan to implement the knowledge gained was lacking.

Overall work in the Minia Governorate

Even though these two subsectors were so different, as was shown in the above, there are also similarities. An important drawback in both subsectors was the lack of a *business plan* in particular to make the link between supply and demand of the BDS. You can either build the capacity of private BDS providers and ask them to develop a business plan that includes market research to understand the demand and choose a market segment with clear marketing tools and affordable pricing techniques, or, alternatively, you can build the awareness of MSME business owners regarding the benefits that could be gained by having access to BDS and linking them with the BDS providers. The project did not train the BDS providers sufficiently to go for the first option, and there was not enough time for sufficient awareness raising activities or campaigns among MSEs in large part also due to the pandemic. Furthermore, it can be considered a missed opportunity for both subsectors that the local MSMEDA office in Minia was not engaged at any point during the project implementation. Although the local Non-financial officer participated in the VCD and BDS facilitator trainings in Cairo, he was missing the practical tools needed to downscale the programmes of the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy to the governorate level.

Tourism Sector in Luxor Governorate

For the beneficiaries in Luxor Governorate two activities were designed. Firstly, a capacity building program or training for Luxor Chefs, which was received with much appreciation. One chef from Luxor indicated that he is very grateful for the opportunity to participate in this training event; for the first time he acquired new knowledge in subjects he did not know about such as costing and specific ways for food presentation. He is currently applying what he learned, and his new techniques also pleases the owner. On the other hand, the new knowledge does not support any increase in salary or income. Another respondent, a Luxor Lady Chef, worked as a Chef during the training but currently she is self-employed and cooks at home for those who have parties (wedding, birthday). Due to COVID 19 she had to leave her job as a Chef because it has affected the tourism industry in Luxor negatively. Thanks to the training she could start her own home business with better understanding for technicalities and costing as well. Most Chefs also indicated that the training was really needed and that there were concrete results of the training. The trainees and trainers are currently maintaining contacts through a WhatsApp Group. The Egyptian Chefs Association (ECA) was the main training provider in this case, but they did not

participate in any of the trainings provided by the project in Cairo (VCD, BDS Facilitation) which were by the time of their involvement in the project already mainly completed.

Secondly, the *preparations* for the 'Taste of Egypt' festival were finalized by the project jointly with Konzept and the festival was about to be actually conducted when in the end it was postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic. Eight stakeholders were participating in these preparations for the "Taste of Egypt" initiative: Enroot Development, Konzept, two Hotel and Chefs associations, and four hotels/restaurants. A missed opportunity was that representatives from the government, in particular MSMEDA, and from the broader local business community were lacking, which would have contributed to its sustainability, in particular to implement the event once the pandemic conditions allow that.

For both Minia and Luxor, the evaluation further found that the project lacked a real partnership at the Governorate level which affected outreach and follow-up negatively. On the whole, it can be concluded that there was more systematic attention of the project on greenhouses than on any of the other subsectors, and this seems to have been mainly a result of the work schedule and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Another element of **Output 2.1** is the target to reach a total of at least **300 new and improved jobs** of which 40% should be for women (Activity 2.1.2). The MTE (2020: 7) was quite optimistic about this, and maintained as follows; "Overall, the intervention implemented showed that there is a high potential in providing job opportunities (the diary production sample -3 production units- showed a potential increase from currently around 20 to potential 25-27 persons). Concerning the greenhouses initiative, farmers mentioned that on average, greenhouses need 50% more seasonal workers than conventional agriculture." The project team indicated that until 31 January 2021 a total of **311 jobs** (25% for women) were **improved and/or created** as a result of technical as well as business management trainings under interventions in the selected sectors (cf. Annex 10). However, trainings itself do not improve or create jobs, but the implementation of new knowledge is more likely to do so, although we have just seen in the above that it not always leads, for example, to a salary increase. This issue is multi-faceted and in fact this can only be scientifically assessed through solid tracer studies of how the beneficiaries trained are using the new knowledge in their current or new jobs in order to arrive at concrete conclusions on this specific output.

The last element of **Output 2.1** concerns partner organisations delivering follow up services (Activity 2.1.3). This includes in particular the '**Food Africa International Trade Exhibition**', which was organised with Konzept in December 2019 and included an ILO-MSMEDA-EU 'Minia Product Catalogue: BDS for Growth'. The participation of different MSMEs in this exhibition showcased to other MSMEs the possible export opportunities, examples of quality improvement, ways to get cheaper input supplies and diversify their product selection.

Some of the respondents interviewed in Minia also participated in 'Food Africa' and they valued it as a learning opportunity, for example, in order to know what type of change they have to make with their current packaging, but it was not considered as an opportunity to expand marketing channels, while one milk producer elaborated that the exhibition was good for networking and gave the opportunity to meet other suppliers and learn more about exports.

The final **Output (2.2)** in the LogFrame deals with **access to financial support** for MSMEs. It was expected to undertake an identification of the needs in terms of financial support (Activity 2.2.1), but this was not undertaken because of certain delays (explained further below). The final Activity (2.2.2) was planned to make sure that MSMEs were supported with financial products. The MTE recommended already in April 2020 to remove this output as it would require much more time to implement than the limited time left at that time in the project. The project did not really focus on how to achieve these Outputs 2.1 and 2.2. The reason for this was that the project focused during the first year of the project (from February 2019) on activities contributing to Specific Objective 1 which was also logical as these were in part required to be completed before the activities of Specific Objective 2 could be undertaken. Subsequently the focus shifted to Specific Objective 2, in particular Output 2.1 (see Annex 10). As a result of the various delays (such as the recruitment of the CTA, the change in the MSMEDA affiliation at ministerial level, and the COVID-19 pandemic) the activities under Output 2.2 were not implemented.

Management and Governance structure

The management and governance structure put in place worked strategically only with selected stakeholders and partners in Egypt. Originally (cf. PRODOC 2017), a project team comprising the following staff for daily operation and overall management of the project activities was scheduled to be recruited: one full time international CTA for 16 months to manage the project during the initial work-intensive period; one full-time national project coordinator; one administrative and finance assistant. This was mainly implemented as such even during the no-cost extension period from 1 September 2020 until 31 January 2021 except for the CTA whose contract ran until November 2020. The PRODOC (2017) also planned for the recruitment of *local coordination assistants* in Minya and Luxor to provide technical guidance to local implementing agencies and monitor their activities under this action, but these assistants were not recruited because it was agreed with MSMEDA to use the services of the two MSMEDA non-financial officers in the two governorates instead. The intention was to involve these two MSMEDA officers directly into the project and thereby also and to capacitate them. An added advantage was that they were already aware of the project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The project team was based in Cairo in the ILO Country Office for Egypt, Eritrea and Sudan, which is also the Office of the Decent Work Support Team for North Africa. The Director of the ILO Country Office in Cairo and the Enterprise Specialist in the DWT team were the responsible ILO officials for the project in country. The project team has further worked with the technical support of the SME Unit in the Enterprises Department of the ILO Headquarters in Geneva. Additionally, the PRODOC (2017) planned for a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to be established, however, this was never implemented partly because at the start of the project MSMEDA had some affiliation changes as discussed in the above. Instead, the project had established a small working group from the ILO along with some focal points from MSMEDA to take necessary decisions, while the project was in constant contact with the senior management of MSMEDA. These were more informal ad hoc contacts and no formal meetings with written minutes were organized.

The co-applicant MSMEDA has been involved in the majority of the activities but less so in the market system analyses and their follow-up in Minia and in Luxor. Although MSMEDA indicated that they would have preferred to be more involved in those specific activities as well, sometimes there were delays in the responses from MSMEDA due to their internal processes and the at

times lengthy processes to get the necessary official approvals for project activities, and/or their other activities with international development partners.

In terms of project monitoring and financial disbursement and accounting systems, the project has properly followed ILO's established procedures. Technical and financial reporting was also properly undertaken with two yearly progress reports (September 2018-October 2019 and September 2020-August 2020) which will be followed by the final report after the end of the project on 31 January 2020.

Knowledge sharing and Communication strategy

The knowledge generated through the project activities could have been shared and communicated much more widely. For example, the production of three technical manuals (greenhouse, animal production and dairy products) as a new knowledge produced by the project was not followed up by a strategy to scale-up or communicate the technical messages to others. Although all the knowledge generated was reported to the main stakeholders (MSMEDA, EU, ILO HQ) through the progress reports, but, for example, the website has not been updated since the start in 2018 and no newsletter was produced for the target groups. On the other hand, the platform in MSMEDA is now an important means for communication. The project also reached a wider audience through the organization of the different exhibitions.

The project put a great deal of efforts in the communication with MSMEDA which was indeed crucial for getting activities endorsed through their internal approval processes and to move ahead with project implementation. Communication with the two BDS providers, Enroot and Konzept was also very good. However, the communication with the EU was not considered ideal in that the EU would have preferred to be informed earlier and more comprehensively of the major challenges encountered and the main modifications made than only at the time of the submission of the progress reports. Of course, this is a bit of a grey area because (as we have seen in section 3.2) the project was part of a Request for Proposals with very specific Guidelines and the project followed indeed the official reporting requirements. On the other hand, the EU Visibility requirements were not always adhered to fully (a case in point concerns the latest video produced under the project in which the EU is lacking). In addition, the EU had proposed on enhancing the communication with other projects, EU-funded or otherwise, and for example there was never any communication with the EU-team of experts working directly with MSMEDA despite the fact that the EU had insisted a few times on that. The MTE found a similar lack of coordination as was discussed in section 3.1. This is not only due to the project as several stakeholders underlined a general lack of coordination between development partners, and in particular more coordination would be useful among those donors and international partners who cooperate with MSMEDA.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system

Concerning the M&E system, the MTE (2020: 30-31) concluded rightly that the data for this system are collected by the project team in Cairo, "... and there the data is stored in the available Excel sheets. It is considered a simple M&E system, which is enough for this project. The data received from the field concerning the trainings and beneficiaries is disaggregated by sex."

In addition to the two progress reports and the final report, the above-mentioned internal Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) was conducted in April 2020, which was rather late, considering that the project started in February 2019 and was (originally) to be concluded by August 2020. The MTE's

Recommendations were fivefold, and in the following it will be investigated in how far the project did address these recommendations.

MTE Recommendation 1: Review Project LogFrame.

It is highly recommended that the Project Advisory Committee, and relevant project' partners, reviews the Project outputs, indicators and assumptions. Especially, Output 2.2, concerning financial services, needs to be revised and if possible removed. It is out of the scope of the VCD & BDS project scope in the current set up and too ambitious to be achieved within the current project timeframe. Indicators have to be level oriented and realistically achievable (300 new jobs created and 100 business have access to financial services is too ambitious). This is needed to shape for the remaining period of the project and take into account to request a potential no-cost extension. In addition, individuals trained on Value Chain Analysis expressed, further need for mentorship and coaching. The project should add coaching/mentorship activities to further shape the skills of the individuals trained, be able to develop high quality studies value chain analysis.

The LogFrame was designed for the Grant Application, and as such was the main reason to approve the application. Therefore, it cannot be changed at all, because, for example, without Output 2.2 the grant might not have been approved in the first place. What needs to be done is to indicate which activities and outputs were achieved to the full, and which ones were not indicating explicitly the reasons why they were not achieved. The latter was to some extent missing according to the EU.

The sub-recommendation of adding coaching/mentorship activities seems quite useful but have not been taken up partly because of the COVID-19 pandemic and time limitations.

MTE Recommendation 2: Develop No-Cost extension proposal.

As the initial project was planned for 24 months and started with a 6 month delay in February 2019, and with an expenditure rate of 53% of the total budget (within 12 month to date), it is highly recommended that the ILO project team develops a No-Cost extension Plan for 4-6 month. This extension will help the project to cover the activities missed during the COVID-19 lockdown, as well as covering the next agribusiness (till Mar 2021) and possible implementation of the Garlic intervention. In addition, the no-cost extension will allow supporting the beneficiaries in the participation in Food Africa 2020 and developing and implementing the culture festival in Luxor.

Delays in recruitment of the project team were due to administrative as well as unforeseen circumstances. For example, the originally selected CTA did not take the position at the very end of the recruitment process, and therefore a quick solution had to be found to remedy this situation; since the actually employed CTA was very familiar with the institutional environment in Egypt properly and was in a position to start quickly, she was selected. Such delays resulted in the late start of the project originally foreseen in September 2018 with the CTA joining only in February 2019, heralding the actual start of the project, and the National Project Officer even a few months later. The no-cost extension was indeed developed, submitted along with the 2019-2020 progress report, discussed with the EU, and ultimately approved in late 2020 (see further section 3.4). The closure date of the project was then set at 31 January 2021.

MTE Recommendation 3: ICT utilization in remote consultancy

The implementation of online training and consultation (using online meeting tools) during the COVID-19 lockdown, in the greenhouse sector, received positive feedback from the participants, especially the local agriculture consultants. This pilot implementation need

to be studied in depth and assessed whether it is a potential tool to maximize benefits and implemented as a low-cost support to local consultants after the project, especially that the participants interviewed expressed readiness to participate in some of the costs.

The pilot implementation of *online* training and consultation was done out of necessity because of the pandemic related travel and contact restrictions. Generally, the present evaluation found among stakeholders from Minia and Luxor that the online training was, under the circumstances, good and important, but that many of them prefer direct contacts during training.

MTE Recommendation 4: Cost contribution from beneficiaries

Several beneficiaries expressed their willingness to make a financial contribution in case the project is extended until the end of the agriculture winter season 2020/2021 (concerning greenhouses and dairy). This is a positive sign from the beneficiaries that they value the service provided and it is also a step towards the full cost coverage by beneficiary during the season 2021/2022. Therefore, it is recommended that the beneficiaries participate in cost/benefit calculation and cost sharing, for example their participation in “Food Africa” exhibition, trainings and technical support.

There was not enough time left after the recommendation was made to undertake such activities.

MTE Recommendation 5: Develop BDS implementation action plan

It is highly recommended that MSMEDA develop the BDS Facilitation action plan; this will show how MSMEDA will utilize the knowledge gained by presenting an implementation plan, according to their strategy.

The MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy was indeed developed and the Status Report of December 2020 clearly indicated the progress made; this was discussed extensively in the above (see in particular Table 2).

The EU Delegation in Cairo underlined that for them the MTE was quite informative since communication had not been ideal. Next to the present final independent evaluation, the EU itself will conduct an evaluation of all projects under the Request for Proposals (RfP) entitled “Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt; EU Facility of Inclusive Growth and Job Creation”. In future, it might be good to address the donor and the ILO evaluation policies together when possible for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness.

With respect to reporting to the EU, as part of overall support to the different projects (including the BDS4GROWTH) under the EU Request for Proposals (RfP) entitled “Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt (IEGP); EU Facility of Inclusive Growth and Job Creation”, the EU provided, in the second half of the project life, support on how to fill in the ‘General Matrix’ of the broader programme to show how the different projects are feeding into this matrix. To that effect, an expert position was funded under this MISMESIS project (which was an integral part of the same broader IEGP programme) who provided support to all the different IEGP projects.

Management of contextual and institutional risks and of external positive circumstances

The project management should be commended for having been **very flexible and adaptive** in the face of a relatively large number of potentially very disrupting contextual and institutional risks, and the main ones include the following:

- 1) Structural changes between ministries in Egypt and in the MSMEDA affiliation.**

The BDS4GROWTH project had been discussed and approved when the co-applicant, MSMEDA, was still affiliated to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). However, once the project grant was approved by the EU and the project was initiated, the Decree moving MSMEDA from the MTI to become an independent agency that reports directly to the Prime Minister, had already been passed. As a result, it was no longer possible for the ILO to sign a project implementation protocol/MOU with MSMEDA/MTI. This resulted partly in the delays mentioned in getting the necessary official approvals for project activities.

2) The lack of active BDS providers in the two target governorates.

There did exist a number of NGOs that were operating in a supply driven manner, but they were not providing any proper support services. The project in response to this supported the creation of a number of local *individual* service providers.

3) The Market System Analyses (MSA) took longer than anticipated/planned.

These delays especially in the fieldwork in the two governorates were due to several factors, including the heavy bureaucracy in obtaining approvals for field visits and data collection. In addition, the research team needed more time than planned in order to follow strictly the ILO methodology of the Market System/Value Chain Approach and in order to ensure the required quality of the two studies.

4) The COVID-19 Pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic halted operations (temporarily) and generally hindered the implementation of activities on the ground for almost six months. In particular it included the cancellation of the international food festival “Taste of Egypt” that was planned to take place in June 2020, as well as the closing event at the end of the implementation period (although with proper sustained preparations it could have been held virtually). The project introduced online trainings in the face of the restrictions on gatherings, contacts and travel and tried to ensure as much as possible the continuity of activities.

Next to all these challenges, the evaluators could not identify any external *positive* circumstances.

3.4 Efficiency of resource use

Allocation of resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.)

The starting point here should be the budget as it was included in the Grant Application, and as an integral component of that application this budget was approved along with the grant. This budget in particular included an International Project Manager (P3) as well as a National Project Coordinator, respectively for 16 and for 24 months. This is important because the key stakeholders were divided on this issue; some indicated that the project was overstaffed for a US\$ 1 million project, while others indicated that the complexity of the project would actually have required more sustained staff inputs. While the positions of both international manager and national coordinator were approved, the remaining question is for how long each should have been employed, and this again led to differences in opinions, this time for example concerning the approval of the no-cost extension submitted in September 2020 along with the 2019-2020 Progress Report. At that time the original number of months for the CTA of 16 had already expired a few months earlier (February 2019- May 2020), and the ILO requested an extension until the end of the project in January 2021 in an effort to make up for lost time following the delays incurred as a result of the exceptionally adverse circumstances discussed in the above (end of Section

3.3.). However, the contract extension of the CTA was ultimately approved by the donor only until November 2020.

The actual expenditures by year turn out to be quite equally divided with 45.3% in 2019 and 40.6% in 2020, although a relatively large part was spent in January 2021: 14.2%.

The actual percentage of staff costs for the Project Team is 38.8% (see Table 3); in fact, this is somewhat lower than the percentage for many other ILO projects of a similar size and magnitude.⁹ One could argue that part of the contributions by the international consultants (4.8%) could be added to that, but their inputs are divided among backstopping from ILO HQ, and expert inputs in the project trainings (in fact part of the budget category ‘Seminars’). The actual project activities concern the categories ‘Subcontracts’ and ‘Seminars’ and together they take up a substantial 40.1% of the total expenditures. For a project this size it is surprising to note a substantial balance of 10% of the project budget; this is mainly due to under-implementation triggered according to the stakeholders and beneficiaries interviewed by the delays incurred due to the four disruptive challenges faced described in the previous section.

All in all, it can be concluded that the resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) have been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and outcomes, and, therefore, the Efficiency of resource use has overall been good in this project.

Table 3: Actual approximate expenditures (as of 11 February 2021).

Budget Category	Total Expenditures	Percentage
Project Team	366,233	38.8%
International Consultants	45,590	4.8%
Subcontracts/Nat. Consultants	165,463	17.5%
Seminars	213,925	22.6%
Vehicle/Office/Travel	71,937	7.6%
Evaluation	22,849	2.4%
Program Support Costs	58,610	6.2%
Total Expenditures	944,606	100.0%
Balance	104,975	10.0%
Received from EU	1,049,582	
Delivery rate		90.0%

Source: Adapted from the information provided by the Project team (11 February 2021).

Resources to promote gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of people with disability

No specific resources were leveraged to promote gender equality, non-discrimination or the inclusion of people with disability. There was also no explicit gender strategy. During implementation there was, however, generic attention for gender equality through the sex-disaggregated statistics, the participation of women in meetings and committees, the gender perspectives raised during all the trainings, and the selection of the specific sectors for the market analysis (e.g. dairy and tourism are sectors with a significant presence of women among the actors/employees). Nevertheless, the numbers of women among the beneficiaries and among those whom the present evaluation could interview were rather small (see Annexes 2, 3 and 5).

⁹ For example, in a recent ILO Evaluation (June 2020) in Myanmar of the “Improving labour relations for decent work and sustainable development in the Myanmar garment industry” (ILO-GIP), it was found that 40% of the total project expenditures was spent on the project team (of a budget of US\$ 2.4 million).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the project did make some efforts to include gender equality, while non-discrimination and inclusion of people with disability were mainly left out.

3.5 Impact orientation and Sustainability of project outcomes

Influence of the project on the development of employment and other areas on policies and practices in Egypt

The influence on the development of employment of the project needs to be considered in the context of the business management training and support services for MSMEs in the agrifood and tourism sector. As indicated, 42 partner organisations/agricultural extension officers were capacitated and/or supported through technical as well as BDS trainings. These trainings and services resulted in improved business operations and led to the creation or the improvement of 311 jobs (25% for women). The MTE also already concluded (2020: 8/32) that at the beneficiaries' level, positive changes can be observed in the working procedures, especially in the dairy production unit, such as adding new products. Owners highlighted that the training provided will generate job opportunities, reduce production costs, diversify the product selection and ultimately could increase their income and possibly their profit.

In terms of influence on policies and practices, one needs to look in particular at the influence on MSMEDA, and the project has made an important contribution through the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy which is intended to support MSMEDA to change its operations from service provider towards its newly mandated facilitation role and a concrete result of that is the national MSMEs Platform/Website which is open for BDS providers to register enhancing networking and the outreach to all corners of the country. The activities undertaken in this project will directly feed into MSMEDA's capacity to develop a national programme for the development and upgrading of MSMEs.

Institutionalization of project tools and potential for replication

With the development of the BDS Manual, MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy, and the BDS, VCD and SIYB trainings, the project provided the necessary support to MSMEDA in strengthening their institutional and organisational capacities thereby embedding the training interventions undertaken within the Agency so that it can function as a BDS facilitator given its institutional mandate.

It has also been found during the interviews that MSMEDA has built up a certain degree of ownership; although we could not speak to all the key staff members, the ones we spoke to were insisting that MSMEDA had been involved in most activities, and in fact should have been involved in the remaining ones as well; the trainings were also considered very useful for their present jobs as well as the capacity building mission of senior staff to ILOITC in Turin. The proof of the pudding was of course in the endorsement of the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy and the conducting of some of the key activities specified in this strategy, such as the launching of the Platform. Ownership of the project outcomes was also built with most of the partner organisations, and was of course most explicit with the two BDS Service Providers deeply involved in the project, i.e. Enroot and Konzept. No ownership was built among the social partners of the ILO, the employers' and workers' organisations.

In terms of the potential for replication of tools and good practices, the MTE (2020: 7/32) found that there is a clear intention for implementation on a wider scale by different local stakeholders,

i.e. the Nile University and the Central Bank of Egypt, who approached the ILO to develop a certification model for Value Chain Analyst to train primary Banking staff, but also make it available to other sectors; in addition, two BDS providers started to implement a VCD analysis in Cairo and Alexandria on the Tanning and Leather Industry as well as the Plastic and recyclable Plastic industry.

Furthermore, the project itself was firmly embedded in the thinking at the ILO-ENTERPRISE Department in Geneva who were deeply involved in the design of this project and who are going to replicate the good practices in other projects/countries, such as in Cameroun funded by KOICA and in Sierra Leone funded by the EU. It will also be used in a new ILO project in Iraq where it will be implemented by the founder of Enroot Development, who was also already involved in the EU-funded PROSPECTS project in Egypt.

In terms of financial sustainability of the intervention, the PRODOC indicated that this is based on a sound market-based and demand-driven delivery of training and advisory services to MSMEs, whereby eventually training beneficiaries will be expected to pay for a major part of the training costs through mixed funding models. The project's MSD approach was new for the target groups, and hence some incentives had to be introduced to ensure the buy-in of the beneficiaries and encourage them to contribute to the different activities. This was done by them in terms of in-kind contributions (reflected for example in raw materials, training place, and their time). Towards the very end of the project's lifetime, the project managed to secure a cost-shared training for one of the beneficiaries under the dairy value chains. In addition, there was a big demand to expand this with other beneficiaries, but the time did not allow for this.

All in all, there are different pathways, of which some are quite solid, in which the outcomes and outputs of the intervention are likely to be used and implemented in the near future.

Contributions of the project to expand the knowledge base

The intervention contributed substantially to the knowledge base. Knowledge generation comprised the overall experiences with the MSA and VCD approaches, but also more specifically knowledge was generated, such as the two MSA's of Minia and Luxor, the experiences and challenges with the procedure to get the proper certification of BDS providers, the assessment of sectors, opportunities in MSME development, as well as the training materials created and/or adapted for capacity development.

Contribution to the SDG and relevant targets

With respect to the possible contribution of the intervention to the SDGs a word of caution is required: One has to be acutely conscious of the fact that the present project provided a modest contribution and with a budget of US\$ 1 million it was among the smaller projects in which MSMEDA was and is involved. That being said, there might be an indirect contribution if MSMEDA will take forward its BDS Market Strategy and moves ahead with its facilitation role after the project has been completed. In the same vein, there can be an indirect contribution by the BDS providers and partner organisations if they are going to be able to implement the knowledge, the BDS service provision and training experiences generated also after the closure of the project.

In terms of follow-up, the project was a response to an EU Request for Proposals and as such it is not eligible for a second phase under the same general conditions. However, the ILO is in the process of developing another project proposal in order to build squarely on the achievements of

the BDS4GROWTH project and based on the experiences with the Market System Approach (MSA) and Value Chain Development (VCD) in Egypt.

3.6 Cross-cutting issues

The key achievements of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment

The project was mainly focussed on piloting the MSA and VCD approaches and jointly with the substantial challenges encountered (including the COVID-9 pandemic) that left little room to include sustained efforts directed towards gender equality. Some measures were taken (see in particular Section 3.4), but generally it was difficult to get sufficient women beneficiaries among the trainees and among the agricultural extension officers, in particular among certain sectors (greenhouses for example). Therefore, the achievements in this area were modest, but did indeed include the fact that some of the BDS providers were actually women, and that in most of the trainings a substantial minority of women was present.

As we have seen in Section 3.4, no specific resources were allotted to women's empowerment activities, and considering the low percentages of women in the various activities (Annex 3) this might have better been considered in the design stage of the project.

The support of the M&E data to project decision-making related to gender

The M&E data and the LogFrame are clearly dedicating systematic attention to gender equality in that all statistics and most of the outputs and activities are gender-disaggregated. To give one example raised in Section 3.4, in the selection of sectors to study through market systems analyses one of the criteria was the presence of women in that sector.

The addressing of other vulnerable groups

As the project was more focused on the Market System Approach and the way BDS could be provided to MSMEs, it has not specifically addressed activities/outputs related to vulnerable groups other than those that might be among the primary target group of this project, i.e. the MSMEs of which many are operating in the informal economy.

Social dialogue and tripartism

Social dialogue and tripartism were not as such explicitly included in the LogFrame, and the social partners, employers' and workers' organisations, were hardly involved in the project. According to the stakeholders interviewed the latter was partly because they are not so involved at this level (Market System Development approach), and partly because of the fear to overload the capacities of these organisations.

international labour standards

International labour standards (ILS) were not as such addressed in the LogFrame project because there was no direct relation with the project according to a main stakeholder interviewed. The ILS are of course an integral element of the ILO courses on SIYB, BDS, VCD, etc., and in this way its importance was transferred to the trainees, although it was not a major part of the courses.

Just transition to environmental sustainability

The last cross-cutting issue is 'just transition to environmental sustainability' and this was included explicitly in the BDS, VCD and SIYB trainings and in the market system analysis through the attention for the risks of land degradation, aggravating deforestation or other environmental factors when intervening in the pilot economic sectors, and for green jobs.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The conclusions of the present final independent evaluation are below categorized according to the six evaluation criteria used throughout this report. The *Relevance and Strategic Fit* of the intervention was high. For the beneficiaries and country involved the relevance is high because it addresses the main problems of MSMEs, and it supports the newly set role for MSMEDA as a service facilitator. It is aligned with the Priorities of the Government of Egypt laid down in its Vision 2030. Most of the stakeholders interviewed confirmed that the relevance is high for the country. The project also aligns to the UN Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF; 2018-2022) with Egypt and to the global SDGs. The intervention further contributes to the ILO Programme & Budget (P&B) 2018-19. Within the ILO Cairo office the intervention aligns to the Enterprise Development and Entrepreneurship cluster and its related projects. There are quite a few projects implemented jointly between ILO and other UN agencies, but no systematic cooperation exists between BDS4GROWTH and several other similar projects also partnering with MSMEDA. The project was firmly aligned to ILO structures and the project was piloting approaches developed by ENTERPRISE in Geneva intending to replicate good practices. In terms of ILO's Tripartism, it has to be said that the employers' and workers' organisations were not much involved in the project. The selection of MSMEDA as main government partner for the project was found to be appropriate to achieve the project outcomes and impact especially in view of its experience operating in the area of financial and non-financial services to MSMEs. At national and local levels there were not many BDS providers, but the project managed to identify appropriate partners.

The *Validity of the project design* was satisfactory but the LogFrame left much to be desired. The project was designed following the guidelines of an *EU Request for Proposals (RfP)*, and the PRODOC was written by ILO ENTERPRISES. It requested for a period 24 months and a budget of EUR 899,924. The proposal adhered very closely to the guidelines on the sectors/themes eligible for funding. Since the RfP involved a competitive procedure to acquire the funding the LogFrame and the activities proposed had to be very comprehensive. The analysis in the PRODOC on facilitating BDS market development is comprehensive, integrates external factors and is based on earlier ILO experiences. The *LogFrame* is clearly defined at the logical level with the Overall Objective, two Specific Objectives, five Outputs and 14 Activities (see Annex 8). However, at the levels of the indicators and assumptions, the project design does not meet the key elements of the LogFrame design criteria for Results-Based Management; for example, the indicators for the different levels are simply repeated and, significantly, not adjusted to the relevant levels of abstraction. The project design was somewhat ambitious as it is not easy to change a large organisation like MSMEDA while it turned out that certain outputs could not be implemented in the end (e.g. Output 2.2 on access to financial services). The objectives on knowledge generation were realistic since the pilot nature of the action guaranteed the acquisition of new knowledge on the Market Systems Analysis (MSA) and Value Chain Development (VCD) approaches, but a communication strategy to share such acquired knowledge was not developed.

The *Project effectiveness* was generally more than satisfactory especially considering the relatively large number of substantial challenges encountered. The project accomplished a large number of quite diverging concrete project activities as is clearly demonstrated in Table 1 reaching an impressive total number of beneficiaries through trainings, exhibitions, Market System Analysis

studies and an exposure visit to ILOITC in Turin. With respect to **Specific Objective 1** it was found that the capacity of MSMEDA to play a *facilitative* role in enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to provide quality BDS has certainly been enhanced through such project activities as mentioned above. The MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy was developed jointly by MSMEDA and the project in September 2019 but the implementation remains quite mixed: a few important achievements (the platform, the trainings and the exhibitions), but many programmes are still in a preparatory phase (Table 2). The training beneficiaries interviewed were satisfied with the content and the trainers, but at the same time underscored the delay in certification and the lack of a follow-up. Furthermore, two studies were done on the market systems of two targeted sectors: Agribusiness in Minia and Tourism in Luxor. In addition, 42 BDS providers were involved (see Annex 10).

The activities under **Specific Objective 2** were much more affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This objective focused on enabling MSMEs in target sectors to access BDS, and this was attempted through interventions designed on the basis of the two market systems analyses discussed above. Therefore, in Minia two intervention models were implemented (Greenhouses and Dairy products), while in Luxor due to various circumstances a different approach was introduced, namely the support of and involvement in cultural festivals. The project team indicated that until 31 January 2021 a total of 311 jobs (25% for women) were improved and/or created as a result of technical as well as business management trainings under interventions in the selected sectors (cf. Annex 10). However, this can only be scientifically assessed through solid tracer studies of how the beneficiaries trained are using the new knowledge in their current or new jobs. The Food Africa exhibition in December 2019 was important for awareness raising among MSMEs. The final Output (2.2) in the LogFrame on access to financial support for MSMEs was not implemented because the project focused primarily on activities contributing to Specific Objective 1 and to Output 2.1 (cf. Annex 10); in the end the various delays (due to the delayed recruitment of the CTA, the change in the MSMEDA affiliation at ministerial level, and the COVID-19 pandemic) the activities under Output 2.2 could not be implemented.

The management and governance structure put in place worked strategically only partly. The project team was based in Cairo in the ILO Country Office, and the Director of the ILO Country Office and the Enterprise Specialist in the DWT team were the responsible ILO officials for the project in country. The planned Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was not initiated because of the problems in MSMEDA related to the ministerial affiliation changes. At times there were delays in the responses from MSMEDA due to their internal processes to get the necessary official approvals for project activities. In terms of project monitoring and accounting systems, the project has followed ILO's established procedures, and technical and financial reporting was also properly undertaken. The knowledge generated through the project activities could have been shared and communicated much more widely as, for example, the website has not been updated since the start in 2018. On the other hand, the platform in MSMEDA is now an important means for communication, and the project also reached a wider audience through the exhibitions. The project put a great deal of efforts in the communication with MSMEDA which was indeed crucial for getting activities endorsed. However, the communication with the EU was not considered ideal and the EU Visibility requirements were not always adhered to. In general, communication between projects left much to be desired. In April 2020 an internal Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) was conducted which made five recommendations most of which were followed up. Overall, the project management should be commended for having been very flexible and adaptive in the face of a relatively large number of potentially disrupting challenges, among which the structural

changes between ministries in Egypt and in the MSMEDA affiliation, the lack of active BDS providers in the two target governorates, and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The *Efficiency of resource use* was good in this project. The actual expenditures by year are quite equally divided over 2019 and 2020. The project budget as approved along with the Grant Application included an International Project Manager as well as a National Project Coordinator. The actual percentage of staff costs for the Project Team is 38.8% (Table 3). The actual project activities concern the categories 'Subcontracts' and 'Seminars' and together they take up a substantial 40.1% of the total expenditures. For a project this size it is surprising to note a substantial balance of 10% of the project budget, mainly due to under-implementation triggered by the delays incurred due to the disruptive challenges faced described in the previous paragraph. No specific resources were leveraged to promote gender equality, non-discrimination or the inclusion of people with disability.

With respect to *Impact orientation and Sustainability of project outcomes* the conclusion is satisfactory, but mixed with, for example, good prospects for replicability but less so for financial sustainability. The business management training and support services for MSMEs in the agrifood and tourism sectors had some positive impact on employment, as we saw in the above. At the beneficiaries' level, positive changes can also be observed in the working procedures, such as adding new products. In terms of impact on policies, the project has made an important contribution through the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy, including the Platform. Through its various activities the project provided the necessary support to MSMEDA in strengthening their institutional and organisational capacities. It has also been found during the interviews that MSMEDA has built up a certain degree of 'ownership' of the project. Ownership of the project outcomes was also built with some of the partner organisations, while no ownership was built among the social partners of the ILO. The evaluation further found that there is clear potential for replication of tools and good practices at the national and at the international level. Financial sustainability of the intervention was less clear due to time limitations. The intervention did contribute substantially to the knowledge base including the MSA and VCD, the two MSA's, and the training materials created or adapted. It is too soon to tell whether the relatively modest intervention made a contribution to the SDGs and this would depend in particular on the question in how far MSMEDA will take forward its BDS Market Strategy and moves ahead with its facilitation role after the project has been completed. In terms of follow-up, the project was a one-off grant, but the ILO is in the process of developing another project proposal in order to build on the achievements of the BDS4GROWTH project.

Cross-cutting issues, including Gender equality and non-discrimination: The achievements related to gender equality and women's empowerment were quite modest; while a few of the BDS providers and a minority of the training beneficiaries were female, no sustained efforts were undertaken to enhance their number, and no resources were allocated to women's empowerment activities. On the other hand, the M&E data and the LogFrame are clearly dedicating systematic attention to gender equality in that all statistics and most of the outputs and activities are gender-disaggregated. The project has paid much less attention to other vulnerable groups and to the other three cross-cutting issues.

4.2 Recommendations

The recommendations will be presented in this section according to the six Evaluation Criteria distinguished in this report including the cross-cutting issues.

Relevance and strategic fit

- 1) **ILO projects which support MSMEDA should be clearly integrated with other donors and UN agencies interventions in order to provide strategic and coordinated support to this institution.** This could be done for example through establishing a Local Consultative Donor Group on MSME Development (incl. e.g. EU, UNIDO, AFD, GIZ, and others).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, UN Organisations and other Development Partners/Donors	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions

- 2) **Involve more pro-actively the employers' and workers' organisations (EO/WO) in projects dealing with similar subjects** in the design and include in the LogFrame specific activities directed exclusively at these organisations in order to enhance their knowledge and capacities as well as their involvement and sense of ownership.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, EO/WO, ILO workers' and employers' specialists (ACTRAV and ACT/EMP), ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions

Validity of design

- 3) **Be consistent in the design of the LogFrame with ILO's Results Based Management approach (RBM)**, in particular adjust the specificity of the indicators to the different results chain levels (Overall Objective, Specific Objectives and Outputs), and **assure that there is an inception phase** in projects to adjust the LogFrame components including the indicators to assure that projects implement a RBM approach including a proper M&E system.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Project effectiveness

- 4) **In similar projects organize a more systematic and inclusive management structure whereby the organization of a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) that includes ILO's Constituents, the Development Partner(s), the ILO and selected other key stakeholders is crucial**, and make sure that the first PAC meeting is conducted *within* the first half year of the effective start of a project. This is the more important in view of the crucial role the PAC can play in ownership, learning from each other and in particular also in communication vis-à-vis the main stakeholders including the donor.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, ILO's three Constituents, Development partners, Other Main Stakeholders	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

- 5) **Make sure that the knowledge acquired is also sufficiently shared with stakeholders and beneficiaries**, and as a minimum update the ILO project website regularly and if possible, a Project team should also develop a regular newsletter during the project lifetime for target groups and use social media widely.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Project Team, ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, Main Stakeholders	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Efficiency of resource use

- 6) **Make conscious attempts to avoid having a substantial balance in the project budget** (of in this case 10%) by undertaking more effective pro-active planning and monitoring of activities.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Project Team, ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Impact orientation and sustainability

- 7) **Prepare well ahead of the project closure an ‘Exit Strategy’ including a Closing Event** which involves a high-level workshop whereby sustainability issues can be discussed and agreed upon.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Project Team, ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, ILO’s three Constituents, Development partners, Other Main Stakeholders	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

- 8) **Continue to explore ways to build on the achievements of the BS4GROWTH project to design a follow-up project proposal jointly with MSMEDA in order to sustain the momentum created and the knowledge produced by the present project.** ILO can liaise with MSMEDA and donors/development partners (e.g. EU and UNIDO) to explore the available options in the coming months.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ, Development partners, ILO’s Constituents, Other Main Stakeholders, UN Organisations and other Development Partners/Donors	Very High	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

Cross-cutting issues

- 9) **Include an explicit and comprehensive Gender Equality Strategy in the PRODOC** for similar projects, and in particular make sure that all stakeholders pay specific attention to the inclusion of women in each and every project activity, output and outcome and that dedicated resources are allocated to this strategy.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ	Medium	Design of new projects	Part of new interventions.

5 Lessons Learned and Good Practices

This chapter identifies two lessons learned (LL) and two good practices (GP) from the experience gained by the evaluation in the present report.

Lessons Learned

One of the purposes of evaluations in the ILO is to improve project or programme performance and promote organizational learning. Evaluations are expected to generate lessons that can be applied elsewhere to improve programme or project performance, outcome, or impact. The two identified Lessons Learned (LL) are briefly introduced below and the full ILO/EVAL Templates are included in Annex 11.

LL1: The evaluation policies of the donor and the ILO should be addressed as much as possible together for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness.

Next to the present final independent evaluation, the EU itself will conduct an evaluation of all projects under the Request for Proposals (RfP) entitled “Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt; EU Facility of Inclusive Growth and Job Creation”. Following ILO’s own Evaluation Policy, each project with a budget of over US\$1 million must undergo a mid-term and a final evaluation, one of which must be an independent evaluation. At the same time resources could be saved and it could work counterproductive if stakeholders are repeatedly requested for their cooperation.

LL2: The Lesson Learned is that a large number of different activities should not go at the expense of a solid follow-up of each of those activities.

In the BDS4GROWTH project many different types of trainings at national and governorate level have taken place, as well as activities related to three exhibitions, two Market System Analysis studies and one exposure visit to ILOITC in Turin for senior MSMEDA management staff. It might have been better to focus the large number of different activities (cf. Table 1 and Annex 10) on a smaller number of activities and trainings in order to be able to pay more attention to the follow-up and impact. Many of the training and other beneficiaries were quite satisfied with the quality of the trainings but considered the lack of follow-up an important drawback.

Good Practices

ILO evaluation sees lessons learned and emerging good practices as part of a continuum, beginning with the objective of assessing what has been learned, and then identifying successful practices from those lessons which are worthy of replication. The two identified Good Practices (GP) are briefly introduced below and the full ILO/EVAL Templates are included in Annex 11.

GP1: The capacity building mission to ITC Turin of senior MSMEDA staff has enhanced the sense of ownership of the main counterpart and co-applicant, MSMEDA.

The MSMEDA staff interviewed spoke highly of the capacity building mission to Turin where the ITC provided highly technical trainings and put the Market Systems Analysis (MSA) and Value Chain development (VCD) approaches in the right context and related it to the shift MSMEDA is undergoing itself from service provider to a facilitative role in BDS provision.

GP2: The introduction of ILO's tools on BDS and SIYB and in particular on the VCD Facilitators certified course which were new to the Egyptian context, was a Good Practice to implement the Market System Approach (MSA) ensuring synergy and the spreading of knowledge along the different stakeholders.

The use made of ILO's existing courses, curricula and manuals on BDS, VCD and SIYB, as well as the adaptations to the local context, is a Good Practice that has proven to be very useful in the specific context of this project. It was also important to introduce these tools to different levels in society including the government/MSMEDA (Macro level), private sector stakeholders and (meso level) and BDS consultants (micro level). Some of the training beneficiaries have indicated great appreciation, for example, for the VCD Facilitator's course and the practical work included, although the Certification must be better organized. In particular, the establishment of the VCA Facilitators course as a certified course has now led to its adoption as a course that will be regularly given at the International Training Centre (ITC) of the ILO in Turin which enhances the sustainability of the intervention being integrated in longer term training programmes.

Templates in Annex 11

The ILO/EVAL Templates for developing these Lessons Learned and Good Practices are provided in Annex 11.

Annex 1 Terms of Reference (TOR)



International Labour Organization

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR):

INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION OF BDS4GROWTH - SUPPORT THE MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND AFFILIATES BY DEVELOPING THEIR CAPACITY TO ANALYSE AND ADDRESS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES NEEDS OF MSMES IN MANUFACTURING AND TRADED SERVICES PROJECT

Project Title:	BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing Their Capacity to Analyse and Address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services
Project Code	EGY/17/03/EUR
Administrative Unit	CO-Cairo
Donor	European Union
Implementation period	1/09/2018-31/01/2021
Project budget	€1,002,644 (US\$ 1,187,966.825) - EC contribution €899,924 (US\$ 1,066,260.66).
ILO Technical Units	EMPLOYMENT; ENTERPRISES, SKILLS, DEVINVEST, ITC-LO; WORKQUALITY, ACT/RAV, ACT/EMP, GENDER
Type of evaluation	Independent Final Evaluation
Date of evaluation	December 2020 - February 2021

16/10/20

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background of the project

Egypt has been one of the most dynamic economies in Africa. In the last 5 years, the country has seen an annual growth of approximately 2% a year. The IMF, noted the GDP growth from 4.2% in 2017 to 5.3% in 2018, and is expected to grow at a similar pace in 2019-2023.

Despite the visible growth, economic and population wise, this employment/job creation capacity of the country has shown signs of stagnation which has lots of implications for youth and women. According to ILO¹⁰, the employment rates are flat and remain quite low as compared to the MICs average. Only about 40% of working age Egyptians are employed; this is due to a large extent to a very low female employment rate, which is continuing to decrease since 2014. The Unemployment rates pursue the decline initiated in 2014 on the wake of the global economic recovery and the post-revolution rebound. The decline is however slow, and unemployment remains above 2010 levels and Youth unemployment remains above 25%.

The micro, small and medium enterprises are seen one of the solutions to solve some of the problems related to job creation in the country as they actually employ more than 45% of the Egyptian population.

In trying to address some of the problems and growing needs of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Egyptian market and further contribute to more inclusive and decent job opportunities, the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s partnership with the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA) are implementing the project Business Development Services for Growth (BDS4GROWTH). This project is funded by the European Union (EU) for a period of three years (1/08/2018-31/08/2021).

Project Objectives

The overall objective of the project is to enable high quality business development services (BDS) provision to MSMEs in the agrifood and tourism sectors in Egypt to boost their contribution towards economic growth and employment.

Specific objectives

1. Enhance the capacity of MSMEDA to play a facilitative role in enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to provide quality BDS.
2. Enable MSMEs in target sectors to access BDS to increase their competitiveness, productivity and internationalization.

¹⁰ ILO DWT/Cairo from CAPMAS Labour Force Sample Surveys

Strategy

The BDS4GROWTH is using Market System Development approach¹¹ to overcome these gaps & constraints to facilitate more effective market provision of BDS and institutionalizing the facilitation of such BDS in core local actors such as MSM and therefore, addressing the gaps & constraints, which prevent MSMEs from solving their problems through existing market mechanisms.

This process has been done by shifting the business development services (BDS) paradigm in Egypt, moving from the traditional approach to market based approach, addressing the supply as well as the demand side of business development services with a focus on value chains development of two targeted sectors, namely MSMEDA– HQ in Cairo governorate; agrifood in Minya governorate as well as tourism in Luxor governorate.

Target sectors & geographical focus

- Agrifood– Minya Governorate;
- Tourism– Luxor Governorate;
- MSMEDA– HQ in Cairo Governorate.

Achieved major results by September 2020 (as reported by the project) include the following:

1. MSMEDA’s role as a facilitator of quality BDS is developed and consolidated through:
 - ✓ MSMEDA becomes a BDS market facilitator, working to ensure that all MSMEs across the country have access to good-quality, relevant and sustainable BDS services.
 - ✓ A BDS Market Facilitation Manual developed.
 - ✓ 5 MSMEDA focal points trained as a critical mass of MSMEDA personnel on BDS facilitation.
 - ✓ BDS market facilitation exposure visit and training of MSMEDA senior management delegation to ensure comprehensive support for facilitation.
 - ✓ 500+ exhibitors of authentic hand-crafted items from governorates across Egypt with marketing opportunities in a week-long Torathna Handicraft Exhibition organized by MSMEDA

¹¹ The market systems development (MSD) approach is emerging as an approach that could be particularly well-suited to addressing the underlying constraints that prevent low-income groups from finding work, and especially decent work. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_seed/documents/briefingnote/wcms_568541.pdf

2. Twenty-eight participants from MSMEDA and other entities have completed the training, and were coached and mentored to conduct a Value Chain Development research assignment prior to certification as Value Chain Analysts.
3. Two Market System Analysis studies in Luxor and Menya, which identified six impactful Value Chains and greatly expanded the knowledge base about the challenges they face as well as designing intervention models to overcome these challenges serve as reference models for future interventions applying the Market System Development approach.
4. Two intervention models have been successfully implemented in Menya, under green houses and dairy products value chains.
5. Twenty BDS organisations as well as individual providers have been supported and capacitated throughout a number of initiatives and piloted services to MSMEs.

Project alignment with the ILO Programme and Budget and SDGs

This project contributed to the ILO Programme & Budget (P&B) 2018-19,¹² Outcome 4 (Promoting sustainable enterprises), Outcome 5 (decent work in the rural economy), as well as the cross-cutting issues of social dialogue and gender equality.

This project will also contribute to a number of Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030), most prominently SDG 8.

The proposed interventions correspond with the priorities for Egypt of other bilateral and regional agencies (i.e. EU, SDS 2030 AU Agenda 2063 etc.).

Project Management Arrangement

The project is managed by a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), responsible for overall project management based in Cairo, Egypt, and reports to the Director of the ILO Cairo Office. The Project Management Team comprises a National Project Coordinator, and a Project Admin Finance Assistant.

Evaluation Background

ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. This project went through an internal mid-term and will go through

¹² The ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) of the Organization sets out the strategic objectives and expected outcomes for the Organization's work and is approved every two years by the International Labour Conference. The P & B specifies the strategies the ILO will implement to achieve results over the biennium, alongside the capacities and the resources required to deliver those results. The ILO's biennial programme of work is delivered in member States mainly through Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) and through Development Cooperation programmes

an independent final evaluation. The independent one is managed by an ILO certified evaluation manager and implemented by an independent evaluators.

The evaluation in ILO is for the purpose of accountability, learning, planning and building knowledge. It should be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches for international development assistance as established by: the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard; and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

This evaluation will follow the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation; and especially the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist 3 “Preparing the inception report”; Checklist 4 “Validating methodologies”; and Checklist 5 “Preparing the evaluation report”. For all practical purposes, this ToR and ILO Evaluation policies and guidelines define the overall scope of this evaluation. Recommendations, emerging from the evaluation, should be strongly linked to the findings of the evaluation and should provide clear guidance to stakeholders on how they can address them.

2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Purpose and objectives of the final independent evaluation

The main purpose of this final independent evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the achievements to date, through an analysis of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, orientation to impact and effects of the project.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are the following:

1. Assess the achievement of project objectives and unexpected positive and negative results at outcome and impact level.
2. Analyse the implementation strategies of the project with regard to their effectiveness in achieving the project outcomes and impacts; including unexpected results.
3. Review the institutional set-up, capacity for project implementation, coordination mechanisms and the use and usefulness of management tools including the project monitoring tools and work plans;
4. Review the implementation efficiency of the project.
5. Review the level of sustainability and orientation to impact achieved towards ownership by the national stakeholders.
6. Identify the contributions of the project to, the SDGs, Egypt’s UNPDF the ILO objectives and CPOs and its synergy with other projects and programs in the country.
7. Identify lessons and good practices for the key stakeholders.
8. Provide strategic recommendations for the different key stakeholders to be used in new and existing projects by ILO and national stakeholders.

Scope of the evaluation

The final evaluation will cover the period August 2018-January 2021. The evaluation will cover all the planned outputs and outcomes under the project and unexpected positive and negative results, with particular attention to synergies between the components and contribution to national policies and programmes.

The evaluation will discuss, throughout the evaluation questions, how the project is addressing its main issue (i.e. growing needs of micro, small and medium enterprises) and the ILO cross-cutting themes including gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability.

The evaluation should help to understand how and why the project has obtained or not the specific results from output to potential impacts.

3. REVIEW CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

a) Review criteria

The evaluation should address the overall ILO evaluation concerns such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, 2017:

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/--eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf

The review will address the following ILO evaluation concerns;

- Relevance and strategic fit of the project;
- Validity of the project design;
- Project effectiveness;
- Efficiency of resource use;
- Sustainability of project outcomes;
- Impact orientation;
- Gender equality and non-discrimination

And crosscutting all of them social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability

b) Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluator shall examine the following key issues:

a) Relevance and strategic fit:

- Is the project coherent with the Government objectives, National Development Frameworks, beneficiaries' needs, and does it support the outcomes outlined in the UNPDF/UNSDCF as well as the SDGs?
- How does the project complement and fit with other on-going ILO programmes and projects in the country?
- What links have been established with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners operating in the Country in the areas of employment, market development and women's empowerment?
- Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, and ILO Decent Work Team.)?
- Have the project selected the right partners to achieve the project outcomes and impact?

b) Validity of intervention design:

- Does the project address the major causes of MSME growth, unemployment and underemployment in Egypt?
- How does the project take into consideration the private sector BDS supply?
- Is the project realistic (in terms of expected outputs, outcome and impact) given the time and resources that were available, including performance and its M&E system, knowledge sharing and communication strategy?
- To what extent has the project integrated ILO cross cutting themes in the design?
- To what extent did the problem analysis identify its differential impact on men and women and on other vulnerable groups (like people with disabilities and others as relevant)?
- Are the indicators of the achievements clearly defined, describing the changes to be brought about? Were the indicators designed and used in a manner that they enabled reporting on progress under specific SDG targets and indicators?
- Is the project Theory of change comprehensive, integrate external factors and is based on systemic analysis?

Effectiveness:

- How far has the project been towards achieving the overall project objectives/outcomes?
- Has the management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with all key stakeholders and partners in Egypt, ILO and the donor to achieve project goals and objectives?

- Has the knowledge sharing and communication strategy been effective in raising the profile of the project within the country and among the cooperating partners?
- Has the monitoring and evaluation system results-based and facilitate a project adaptive management?
- Assess how contextual and institutional risks and positive external to the project factors have been managed by the project management?
- To what extent has the COVID-19 Pandemic influenced project results and effectiveness and how the project have addressed this influence to adapt to changes?
- Does the (adapted) intervention models used in the project suggest an intervention model for similar crisis response?

c) Efficiency of resource use:

- Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and specially outcomes?
- To what extent did the project leverage resources to promote gender equality and nondiscrimination; and inclusion of people with disability

d) Impact orientation and sustainability:

- What level of influence has the project had on the development of employment and other areas on policies and practices at national and subnational levels?
- Which project-supported tools have been institutionalized, or have the potential to, by partners and/or replicated or external organizations?
- Is the project contributing to expand the knowledge base and build evidence regarding the project outcomes and impacts?
- To what extent the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDG and relevant targets? (explicitly or implicitly)
- How has the sustainability approach of the project been affected by the Covid19 situation in context of the national responses and how has the project and stakeholders responded in moving forward the project results appropriation?

e) Gender equality and non-discrimination:

- What are so far the key achievements of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment?

- Has the use of resources on women's empowerment activities been sufficient to achieve the expected results?
- To what extent is the M&E data supporting project decision making related to gender?
- Has the project addressed other vulnerable groups, which ones?

f) Others

- Asses to what extent the project has or not addressed the recommendations from the MTE?

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The independent final evaluation will comply with evaluation norms and standards and follow ethical safeguards, all as specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The evaluation is an independent evaluation and the final methodology and evaluation questions will be determined by the consultant in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

The evaluation will apply a mix methods approach, engaging with key stakeholders of the project at all levels during the design, field work, validation and reporting stages. To collect the data for analysis, the evaluation will make use of the techniques listed below (but not limit to). The data from these sources will be triangulated to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings.

Desk review of project design and strategy documents, activity documents, communications and research and publications, financial reports, among others

Key informant interviews with project staff, relevant ILO specialists, Government of Egypt, civil society organizations, national counterparts and ultimate beneficiaries (men and women), the donor, and other stakeholders and partners in Cairo and field visit to selected project sites.

The project intervenes in 3 Governorates in Egypt: Cairo Governenate, Minya Governorate, and Luxor Governorate. The consultant team is expected to visit a purposive selection of communities in addition to interviews in Cairo.

The evaluation tam leader must indicate the criteria selection for communities and individuals to interview.

The selection of the field visits locations should be based on criteria to be defined by the evaluation team. Some criteria to consider may include:

- Locations with successful and less or unsuccessful results (from the perception of key stakeholders and the progress reports). The rationale is that extreme cases, at some extent, are more helpful than averages for understanding how process worked and results have been obtained;
- Locations that have been identified as providing particular good practices or bringing out particular key issues as identified by the desk review and initial discussions;
- Locations next to and not so close to main roads (accessibility).

Presentation of the preliminary findings before the key stakeholders in a workshop

At the end of the field work it is expected that the evaluation team present preliminary findings to the project key stakeholders in a workshop to discuss and refine the findings and fill information gaps.

The evaluation methodology should include examining the interventions' Theory of Change, specifically in the light of logical connect between levels of results, its coherence with external factors, and their alignment with the ILO's strategic objectives, SDGs and related targets, national and ILO country level outcomes.

The data and information should be collected, presented and analyzed with appropriate gender disaggregation even if project design did not take gender into account. Multiple methods will be applied to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data with triangulation of sources and techniques as key methods. A more detailed methodology for the assignment will be elaborated by the evaluation team on the basis of this TOR, in consultation with the ILO Evaluation Manager and key stakeholders in the Inception report.

Due to the current COVID-19 situation (that can change at the time of the evaluation), the evaluation manager may propose alternative methodologies to address the data collection that will be reflected in the inception phase of the evaluation developed by the evaluation team¹³. These will be discussed and require detail development in the Inception report and then must be approved from the evaluation manager.

Project key stakeholders:

- The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA)

¹³ For more details on this issue see the ILO/EVAL document developed https://www.ilo.org/eval/WCMS_744068/lang-en/index.htm

- Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Industrial Modernisation Centre
- Representatives of the donor (European Union) in Egypt
- Private sector BDS providers
- Project teams, ILO CO-Cairo, DWT/CO-Cairo
- ILO technical units at HQ

5. MAIN DELIVERABLES

- a) An inception report (not more than 20 pages excluding the annexes) - upon the review of available documents and an initial discussion with the project management (EVAL Guidelines –Checklist 3). The inception report will:
- Elaborate the methodology proposed in the TOR with changes as required;
 - Set out in some detail the data required to answer the evaluation questions, data sources by specific evaluation questions, (emphasizing triangulation as much as possible) data collection methods, and sampling
 - Selection criteria for locations to be visit ;
 - Selection criteria for individuals for interviews (as much as possible should include men and women);
 - Detail the work plan for the evaluation, indicating the phases in the evaluation, their key deliverables and milestones;
 - Set out the list of key stakeholders to be interviewed and the tools to be used for interviews and discussions;
 - Set out the agenda for the stakeholders workshop;
 - Set out outline for the final evaluation report;
 - Interview and focus group guides.

The Inception report should be approved by the Evaluation manger before proceeding with the field work.

- b) Preliminary Findings to be shared with the key stakeholders (i.e. the Advisory Committee and the donor) at the end of field work phase. The ILO will organize a half day meeting to discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation after data collection is completed. The evaluator will set the agenda for the half-day meeting. The presentation should provide a brief review of key results for each evaluation criteria. The workshop will be technically organized by the evaluation team leader with the logistic support of the project.
- c) First draft of Evaluation Report (Checklist 5 to be provided to the Consultant) -to be improved by the methodological review by the Evaluation manager. The Evaluation Manger holds the responsibility of approving this draft. The draft review report will be shared with all relevant stakeholders and a request for comments will be asked within a specified time (not more than 14 working days).
- d) Final version of evaluation report incorporating comments received of ILO and other key stakeholders. The report should be no longer than 30 pages excluding

annexes with executive summary (as per ILO standard format for evaluation summary). The quality of the report will be assessed against the EVAL checklist 5 and 6 to be provided to Consultant). Any identified lessons learnt and good practices will also need to have standard annex templates as per EVAL guidelines. The report should also include a section on output and outcome level results against indicators and targets of each project and comments on each one.

The final version is subjected to final approval by EVAL (after initial approval by the Evaluation manager and the Regional evaluation officer)

- e) Executive summary in ILO EVAL template

The draft and final versions of the evaluation report in English (maximum 30 pages plus annexes) will be developed under the following structure (EVAL Check list 5):

1. Cover page with key project data (project title, project number, donor, project start and completion dates, budget, technical area, managing ILO unit, geographical coverage); and evaluation data (type of evaluation, managing ILO unit, start and completion dates of the evaluation mission, name(s) of evaluator(s), date of submission of evaluation report).
2. Table of contents
3. Acronyms
4. Executive Summary
5. Background of the project and its intervention logic
6. Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
7. Methodology and limitations (including mitigation measures to address the limitations)
8. Presentation of findings (by criteria or by outcome)
9. Conclusions and Recommendations (including to whom they are addressed, resources required, priority and timing)
10. Lessons Learnt and potential good practices
11. Annexes (TOR, table with the status achieved of project indicators targets and a brief comment per indicator, list of people interviewed, Schedule of the field work overview of meetings, list of Documents reviewed, Lessons and Good practices templates per each one, other relevant information).

The deliverables will be circulated to stakeholders by the evaluation manager and technical clearance for the deliverables will come from the evaluation manager. The evaluation report will be in English with executive summary in Arabic.

6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK PLAN

Evaluation Manager

The evaluation will be managed by Mr. EGIDIO SIMBINE, based at the ILO Maputo Office who has not prior involvement in the project, with technical support, trained as ILO evaluation manger, and oversight provided by the Regional Evaluation Officer.

The evaluation manager is responsible for completing the following specific tasks:

- Draft and finalize the evaluation TOR with inputs from key stakeholders;
- Develop the Call for expression of interest and select the independent evaluator in coordination with EVAL;
- Brief the evaluator on ILO evaluation policies and procedures;
- Initial coordination with the project team on the development of the field mission schedule and the preliminary results workshop;
- Circulate the first draft of the evaluation report for comments by key stakeholders;
- Ensure the final version of the evaluation report address stakeholders' comments (or an explanation why any has not been addressed) and meets ILO requirements.

Evaluation team

The team leader evaluator is responsible for:

- Conducting the evaluation.
- Coordinate with evaluation manager, project team and stakeholders to conduct the entire evaluation process.
- Proceed to a desk review of all relevant documents and conduct a field mission to meet main stakeholders.
- Elaborate the inception report (incl. methodological elaborations), the first version and final report in deadlines and in conformity with ILO and international standards.
- Conduct the field work and stakeholders' workshop at the end of the mission.
- Develop the evaluation draft and final version of the report.

Qualifications

Team Leader (principal evaluator)

- Advanced University Degree with minimum 7 years of experience in project /program evaluation.
- Previous proven skills and experience in undertaking evaluations of similar projects preferably in North African;
- Experience in using the Theory of change approach on evaluation.
- Strong background in local economic and enterprise development as well as Human Rights Based Approach programming and Results Based Management;
- Knowledge of Market Systems Development
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies;

- Experience in direct and participatory community-based observation, and experience in participative evaluation techniques would be an asset;
- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable;
- Experience in EU projects will be an asset.
- Excellent analytical skills and communication skills;
- Demonstrated excellent oral and written English. Arabic is not mandatory but it will be an asset.

National Consultant

- University Degree with minimum of 7 years of experience in project /programme evaluation.
- Proven skills and experience in undertaking evaluations of similar projects as evaluation team member ;
- Strong background in development issues;
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies;
- Experience in direct and participatory community-based observation, and experience in participative evaluation techniques would be an asset;
- Excellent analytical skills and communication skills;
- Demonstrated excellent report writing skills in English and Arabic.

Stakeholders' role:

Key stakeholders namely the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA), Social Partners, the representatives of the donor (European Union) in Egypt, including the project teams, ILO CO-Cairo, DWT/CO-Cairo, ILO technical unit at HQ will be consulted and will have opportunities to provide inputs to the TOR and draft final evaluation report and in principle will be interviewed.

The tasks of the Project:

The project management team will provide logistical support to the evaluation team and will assist in organizing a detailed evaluation mission agenda. The project will also ensure that all relevant documentations are up to date and easily accessible (in electronic form in a space such as Dropbox) by the evaluator from the first day of the contract (desk review phase).

Evaluation Timetable and Schedule

The Final Evaluation will be conducted between December 2020 and February 2021.

ANNEX I

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

ILO Policy Guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 3rd ed.
http://www.ilo.ch/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

Code of conduct form (To be signed by the evaluators)

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206205/lang--en/index.htm

Checklist No. 3: Writing the inception report

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165972/lang--en/index.htm

Checklist 5: preparing the evaluation report

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165967/lang--en/index.htm

Checklist 6: rating the quality of evaluation report

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165968/lang--en/index.htm

Template for lessons learnt and Emerging Good Practices

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206158/lang--en/index.htm

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_206159/lang--en/index.htm

Guidance note 7: Stakeholders participation in the ILO evaluation

https://www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_165982/lang--en/index.htm

Guidance note 4: Integrating gender equality in the monitoring and evaluation of projects

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165986/lang--en/index.htm

Template for evaluation title page

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm

Template for evaluation summary

<http://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/edmas/eval/template-summary-en.doc>

UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/548>

Guidance on the evaluation requirements for ILO interventions under the COVID 19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund

<https://intranet.ilo.org/collaborate/evalksp/Documents/Guidance%20on%20evaluation%20requirements%20for%20MPTF%20COVID-19%20interventions.pdf>

Annex 2 List of Stakeholders Interviewed

Nr.	Name	Organization	Title/position	Female
1	Eric Ochslin	ILO Cairo Office	Director	
2	Yasmine El-Essawy	ILO	Project Manager - BDS4GROWTH	1
3	Nael Mohamed	ILO	National Project Coordinator - BDS4GROWTH	
4	Mertin Sievers	ILO HQ, Enterprises Department	Global Coordinator	
5	Daniela Martinez	ILO HQ, Enterprises Department	Technical Specialist	1
6	Miguel Solana	ILO Cairo Office	Enterprise Development Specialist	
7	Sarah Sabri	ILO Cairo Office	Head of ILO Cairo office Programming Unit	1
8	Nashwa Belal	Egypt Youth Employment EYE project - ILO Cairo office	Project Manager	1
9	Concepcion Perez Camaras	The EU Delegation to Egypt	Programme Manager - Attache	1
10	Ahmed El-Kinany	MSMEDA	Manager, Non-financial sector - Industrial Projects and Technology support Department	
11	Shaymaa Freig	MSMEDA	Deputy Manager, Non-financial sector - Industrial Department	1
12	Hatem EL-Ashry	MSMEDA	Head of Public Relations - Exhibitions and Conferences Execution Sector	
13	Alaa Fahmy	Enroot Development Market Research (Founder), Value Chain Development (VCD) & Tourism Expert	Service Provider / Consultant	
14	Rania Abdelaziz El Nady	Head of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Unit	Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI)	1
15	Bahaa Mohamed	Agribusiness Expert	Consultant	
16	Khaled Hassanien	Agribusiness and Greenhouse Expert	Consultant	
17	Walid Shedeed	Dairy/cheese products expert	Consultant	
18	Aly El-buckly	Animal/milk production expert	Consultant	
19	Egidio Simbine	ILO - Maputo	Evaluation Manager	
20	Ricardo Furman Wolf	ILO – Pretoria	Regional Evaluation Officer	

Annex 3 List of Key Project Beneficiaries

List of Project Beneficiaries			
Value Chain Development (VCD) Facilitation Training 1 - 4 July 2019			
#	Name	Organization	Title/position
1	Aly Abdel Monsef	Chamber of Chemical Industries	Technical Affairs Section
2	Ahmed Farouk Mosleh Gabr	NilePreneurs/ Nile University	Project Manager of Value Chain & Export Centers
3	Alshaimaa Ali	Ministry of Trade and Industry	Head of Strategy and Development Projects Department
4	Heba Gamea	Egyptian Global Gate - EG GATE	Business Development Manager
5	Mohamed Abd AlMaboud	ZirconWorld	Managing Director - Mining Projects Entrepreneur
6	Mohamed Kholief	Integrated Knowledge Dynamics (IKD)	Principal Consultant
7	Mohammad Abdelsamie	Ministry of Trade and Industry	Quality Manager
8	Mohammed Amin Amin	Ministry of Trade and Industry - Industrial Council for Technology and Innovation	Engineer & Deputy manager of Leather Tanning Technology Center
9	Omar Osama Mohamed Noureldin	The Central Bank of Egypt	Specialist
10	Rania Abdelaziz El Nady	Federation of Egyptian Industries	Head of Small and Medium Enterprises Unit
11	Wael Refaat	North Africa for Agribusiness Development	CEO
12	Abdelrahman Elsehsah	FEI	Regional Representative-FEI Aswan Office
13	Shereen Mosbah salman	MSMEDA	Manager
14	Waheed Galal	MSMEDA	Deputy Manager
15	Reham Mohamed mostafa korat	MSMEDA	
16	GIHAN ABDEL NABI ABDO	MSMEDA	Deputy Manager
17	Hend Moustafa	Enroot Development	Lead Expert in the consultancy assignment
18	Logine Ahmed	Enroot Development	Programme Associate
19	Radwa Said Ahmad	Enroot Development	Program Officer
20	Reem Abughattas	Enroot Development	Program Specialist
21	Heba Belawey	North Africa for Agribusiness Development	Co-founder
22	Alaa Fahmy	Enroot Development	CEO
23	Mohamed Amr	Nile University	Project Manager
Business Development Services (BDS) market Facilitation Training 8 - 12 Dec 2019			
#	Name	Organization	Title/position
24	Ahmed sobhy El knany	MSMEDA	NFCS, Industrial Dept
25	Ahmed shiha	MSMEDA	NFCS, Service Dept.
26	Mohamed Abbas	MSMEDA	NFCS, Marketing Dept.
27	Neamaa Hamdy	MSMEDA	International cooperation Sector
28	Ahmed Afifi	MSMEDA	Credit Sector
29	Mahmoud zen el abedin	MSMEDA	NFCS, Interpreter ship Dept.
30	Rafaat Goerge	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer-Fawoum Office
31	Ahmed Ibrahim Baiumy	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer-Dakahlita Office
32	Mohamed Abass	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer-Sharqiya office
33	Nagwa Ibrahim ahmed Nouh	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer-Suez Office
MSMEDA Staff who attended both the BDS & VCD trainings			
#	Name	Organization	Title/position
34	Haytham Ahmad Samir	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer -Minya Office
35	Arafa Elramaly	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer- Luxor Office
36	Tarek Mohammed	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer-North Sinai Office
37	Hadia Talaat Mohamed	MSMEDA	Non Financial Officer-Alexandria Office
38	Shaymaa Freig	MSMEDA	NFCS, Industrial Dept
Food Africa 9 - 11 Dec 2019			
#	Name	Organization	Title/position
39	Mrs. Wafaa Abdelhamid Mohamed	Minya Business Women Association	Chairman
40	Mr Essam Abdo	El-Amal for Dairy processing	General Manager
41	Mr Bassem Nady Hakim	El- Amir for Dairy products	Owner
42	Mr Ashraf Wahib Yani	Horus for Dairy products	Owner
43	Mahmoud Abuel Azaim	El- Bahyoo For Agricultural Community Development	Chairman
44	Mr Omar khairy	El-Rowad plantation	Owner
45	Eng. Hamada Barkat	Roots for Agriculture Services	Owner
46	Mr Shady	Life vision for Development	Marketing specialist
BDS Market Facilitation Exposure visit and training for MSMEDA senior management 17 - 21 Feb 2020			
#	Name	Organization	Title/position
47	Dr Rafaat Abbas	Head of the central sector for Non-financial Services	MSMEDA
48	Mrs Neiven Badr el Deen	Head of the central sector for Microfinance	MSMEDA
49	Mr Hany Emad	Head of the central sector for Small Business finance	MSMEDA
50	Eng. Yasser Helmy	Head of the information system sector	MSMEDA
51	Mr Mohamed Abdel el Malk	Vice head of the central sector for regional offices	MSMEDA
52	Mrs Sally Seada	Head of the technical office	MSMEDA

Technical trainings in the Greenhouses Value Chain			
Name	Profession\Organization	Age	
53	Khamees Saleh Mohamed	Greenhouses Construction	45
54	Mahmoud Aly Khaleefa	Farmer	41
55	Khaled Rabe' Abdul Aziz	Farmer	28
56	Ibrahim Gayed Saleh Hussein	Farmer	36
57	Mustafa Al Hasad	Farmer	32
58	Mahmoud Mohamed Mofteh	Greenhouses Construction	48
59	Ragab Mansour Mohamed	Farmer	40
60	Rabe' Ahmed Aly	Farmer	52
61	Ossama Ibrahim Hussein	Lawyer	43
62	Mohamed Goma'a Khaleel	Farmer	27
63	Mohamed Hassan Ibrahim	Trader	26
64	Khamees Mana' Hassan	Trader	40
65	Hussein Salah Hussein Al Alfy	Farmer	54
66	Alaa, Hussein Eid Abdul Ghany	Agronomist	44
67	Sayed Sa'ed Sayed	Trader	32
68	Gamal Ramadan Mustafa	Farmer	40
69	Gamal Mohamed Aly Fadloun	Agronomist	55
70	Gerges Atta Sadek	Agronomist	47
71	Fayez Mohamed Hemed	Agronomist	56
72	Wageeh Sedky Hamad	Farmer	33
73	Khaled Ahmed Bakry	Farmer	44
74	Mohamed Hatem Mohamed	Farmer	32
75	Ahmed Gamal Abdul Wahab Aly	Agronomist	29
76	Mohamed Gaber Mohamed Ibrahim	Farm Labor	36
77	Mamdouh Mahmoud Marzouq Abdul Raheem	Farmer	57
78	Hussein Al Fouly Hassan Ahmed	Farmer	36
79	Dawood Mohamed Sharaf Al Deen	Farmer	54
80	Mohamed Mohamed Yehia Ahmed	Farmer	42
81	Suliman Ashour Abdul Lateef	Farmer	36
82	Arafa Ahmed Aly Azzam	Farmer	55
83	Hadeer Samir Ahmed	Agronomist	23
84	Omar Ghaleb Sebak	Farmer	46
85	Eid Mohamed Khaleefa	Irrigation Channels Construction	41
86	Zein Salah Mohamed	Farmer	47
87	Abdul Rahman Atteya Al Rouby	Farmer	26
88	Hany Mohamed Hafez Al Khashab	Farmer	33
89	Ayman Al Sayed Mohamed Ahmed	Trader	50
90	Mohamed Aly Serry Fouad	Lawyer	35
91	Sameh Diab Shleel	Farmer	35
92	Mahmoud Abbouda Suliman	Farmer	32
93	Youssif Ahmed Abdul Aziz	Farmer	60
94	Ragab Thabet Zaky	Farmer	28
95	Al Sayed Sedky Abdullah	Farmer	52
96	Hamdy Abdul Azeem Mohamed	Farmer	53
97	Galal Al Deen Abdul Razik Mohamed	Agronomist	52
98	Abdul Wahab Badawy Abdul Wahab	Farmer	34
99	Abdul Lateef Rashad Abdul Lateef	Nursery Operator	48
100	Abdul Wahab Mohamed Mohamed Al Sayed	Agronomist	60
101	Sherif Atef Awad	Farmer	39
102	Ibrahim khalaf Youssif	Agronomist	30
103	Karim Reda	Farmer	18
104	Ragab Abdul Lateef	Farmer	26
105	Sa'ed Al Sayed Abdul Lateef	Farmer	47
106	Khaled Kamal Hamad	Farmer	23
107	Reda Mohamed Madany	Farmer	43
108	Mustafa Ibrahim Ahmed	Trader	45
109	Mohamed Ahmed Abdullah Mohamed	Farmer	32
110	Rabe' Mahmoud Hammad	Farmer	32
111	Ashraf Mohey Saleh	Farmer	42
112	Alaa' Fouad	Farmer	25
113	Khairy Al Taweel Abdul Gawwad	Farmer	38
114	Wael Sedky Hammad Ahmed	Lawyer	35
115	Mahmoud Gamal Hammad Ahmed	Driver	26
116	Waleed Abdu Gabal Tawfeek	Farmer	35
117	Abdul Ghany Ahmed Bakry	Farmer	28
118	Mohamed Yehia Ahmed	Farmer	49
119	Mehanna Ammar Mehanna Ouraby	Farmer	59
120	Gamal Hassan Mohamed	Farmer	31
121	Rady Ahmed Ahmed	Farmer	24
122	Abdul Lateef Sayed	Farmer	34
123	Alaa Abdul Naby Ammar	Farmer	31
124	Safwat Mehanna Ammar	Farmer	35
125	Omar Ibrahim	Farmer	29
126	Ahmed Gamal Hafez	Farmer	43
127	Adel Anwar Abdul Lateef	Farmer	52
128	Hosny Abdul Naby Ammar	Farmer	30
129	Abdul Lateef Atteya Abdullah	Farmer	38
130	Attallah Atteva	Farmer	31

Tourism Group for interventions in Luxor (Taste of Egypt)			
Name	Organization	Title/position	
168	Dalia Qabeel	Konzept For Trade Fairs	Co-founder/Operations Manager
169	Nada AbdelGhany	Enroot Development	Program Specialist, Development
170	Osman Mohamed Osman	El-Marasem Hotel	Owner
171	Soha El Torgoman	Hilton International	General Manager
172	Ashraf Gamal	Egyptian Chefs Association	Head of Operations
173	Mostafa Refaie	Zooba	Excutive Chief & Co-founder
174	Maged Antoine Riad	Egyptian Hotel Association	Board Member - Chairman Upper Egypt Branch
175	Amani El Torgoman	Travco Group	Former General Manager and Director of Operations
Animal Production Training			
Name	Organization	Title/position	
176	Heba Eisa Ahmed Osman	n/a	Student
177	Hadeer Mohamed	n/a	student
178	Mertha Zaki	n/a	Lead farmer
Capacity Building Program\ Training for Luxor Chefs			
Name	Restaurant Name	Position	
179	Nancy Ibrahim	Miss Burger	Chef
180	Ahmed Badawy	Bukharest	Chef
181	Mahmoud Sayed	Saltea Burger	Chef
182	Ahmed Sabry	Fel Konafa	Chef
183	Ayman Saaed	Grandy	Chef
184	Taha Kamal	Etfadlus	Chef
185	Ahmed Mohamed Solimnan	El Balady Yukal	Chef
186	Moataz Mohamed Ibrahim	Blindet	Chef
187	Ahmed Mahsoub	El kersh	Chef
188	Ahmed Fathi	Sun Rise	Chef
189	Mohamed Abu El Seoud	Castello	Chef
190	Yasmin Haggag	Grand	Chef
Green Houses\Extension officers -Technical Pograms			
Name	Position\Title	Age	
191	Mohamed Abdul Azeem Ahmed Mohamed	Farmer	33
192	Abdul Gawad Farouk Mohamed	Farmer	45
193	Ebeed Deef Ebeed	Agronomist	24
194	Aly Mahmoud Hassan	Agronomist	29
195	Sha'ban Ahmed Mahmoud	Agronomist	55
196	Yasser Badry Abdul Razik	Agronomist	29
197	Tarek Mohamed Al Barghouthy	Farmer	25
198	Hamada Mohamed Brakat	Agronomist	40
199	Gamal Saad	Agronomist	
200	Hany Emad Abdul Lateef	Farmer	46

Annex 4 Data Collection Worksheet

Below is the Data Collection Worksheet specifying the Evaluation Criteria and Questions, as well as the sources of data, stakeholder interviews and specific methods used in the present final independent evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Sources of Data	Stakeholder Interviews	Specific Methods
A. Relevance and strategic fit			
1) Is the project coherent with the Government objectives, National Development Frameworks, beneficiaries' needs, and does it support the outcomes outlined in the UNPDF/UNSDCF as well as the SDGs?	Egypt Vision 2030, Policy of Government & Social Partners, EU Grant Contract, PRODOC, Annual Progress Reports, ILO/EU Clarification Note, UNPDF, SDG	Project Team, ILO Cairo Office, MSMEDA, MTI, Social Partners, EU, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
2) How does the project complement and fit with other on-going ILO programmes and projects in the country?	ILO P&B 2018-19 & 2020-21, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
3) What links have been established with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners operating in the Country in the areas of employment, market development and women's empowerment?	UNPDF, PRODOC, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, ILO Cairo Office, UN Country Team, EU	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
4) Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards & ILO DWT)?	PRODOC, ILO P&B 2018-19 & 2020-21, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, ILO Cairo Office/DWT, UN Country Team	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
5) Has the project selected the right partners to achieve the project outcomes and impact?	PRODOC, EU Grant Contract, Annual Progress Reports, ILO/EU Clarification Note	MSMEDA, MTI, EU, Project Team, ILO Cairo Office, UN Country Team, Social Partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
B. Validity of the project design			
6) Does the project address the major causes of MSME growth, unemployment and underemployment in Egypt?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Egypt Vision 2030, EU Grant Contract, Annual Progress Reports	MSMEDA, MTI, EU, Project Team, Social Partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
7) How does the project take into consideration the private sector BDS supply?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, selected BDS suppliers	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews

8) Is the project realistic (in terms of expected outputs, outcome and impact) given the time and resources that were available, including performance and its M&E system, knowledge sharing and communication strategy?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
9) To what extent has the project integrated ILO cross cutting themes in the design?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
10) To what extent did the problem analysis identify its differential impact on men and women and on other vulnerable groups (like people with disabilities and others as relevant)?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
11) Are the indicators of the achievements clearly defined, describing the changes to be brought about? Were the indicators designed and used in a manner that they enabled reporting on progress under specific SDG targets and indicators?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
12) Is the project Theory of change comprehensive, integrate external factors and is based on systemic analysis?	PRODOC, LogFrame and Work Plans, Annual Progress Reports	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
C. Project Effectiveness			
13) How far has the project been effective towards achieving the overall project objectives/outcomes?	Annual Progress Reports PRODOC, Work Plans, Reports produced	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
14) Has the management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with all key stakeholders and partners in Egypt, ILO and the donor to achieve project goals and objectives?	Annual Progress Reports, PRODOC, Work Plans, Reports produced	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
15) Has the knowledge sharing and communication strategy been effective in raising the profile of the project within the country and among the cooperating partners?	Annual Progress Reports, PRODOC, Reports produced, Project Website, Communication materials	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
16) Has the monitoring and evaluation system been results-based and facilitated a project adaptive management?	LogFrame, M&E plans, Annual Progress Reports, PRODOC, Work	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews

	Plans, Reports produced		
17) Assess how contextual and institutional risks and positive <i>circumstances</i> , external to the project factors, have been managed by the project management?	Annual Progress Reports, PRODOC, Work Plans, LogFrame, M&E plans	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
D. Efficiency of resource use			
18) Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and specially outcomes?	PRODOC, Annual and Financial Progress Reports, ILO/EU Clarification Note,	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Review of Financial Reports; Stakeholder Interviews
19) To what extent did the project leverage resources to promote gender equality and non-discrimination; and inclusion of people with disability?	PRODOC, Annual and Financial Progress Reports, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Work Plans, Reports produced	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Review of Financial Reports; Stakeholder Interviews
E. Impact orientation and Sustainability of project outcomes			
20) What level of influence has the project had on the development of employment and other areas on policies and practices at national and subnational levels?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note,	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
21) Which project-supported tools have been institutionalized, or have the potential to, by partners and/or replicated or external organizations?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note,	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
22) Is the project contributing to expand the knowledge base and build evidence regarding the project outcomes and impacts?	Annual Progress Reports, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Project Website, Communication materials	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
23) To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDG and relevant targets? (explicitly or implicitly)	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews

F. Cross-cutting issues, including Gender equality and non-discrimination			
24) What are so far the key achievements of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Project Website	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
25) Has the use of resources on women's empowerment activities been sufficient to achieve the expected results?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Project Website	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, UN Country Team, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
26) To what extent is the M&E data supporting project decision making related to gender?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Project Website	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
27) Has the project addressed other vulnerable groups, which ones?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Project Website	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits
28) In how far, were the other cross-cutting issues, i.e. social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability, included in the project?	Annual Progress Reports, Work Plans, Reports produced, ILO/EU Clarification Note, Project Website	Project Team, MSMEDA, EU, ILO Cairo Office, ENTERPRISES, selected BDS providers, UN Country Team, Beneficiaries	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews & Field Visits

Annex 5 Project Beneficiaries Interviewed during Fieldwork

The List of Project Beneficiaries based in Minia and Luxor Governorates interviewed by gender and sample is given in the table below.

List of Project Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries (as of 31 August 2020)		Sample Interviews		Actual interviews	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Minya Governorate (field visit)						
1. MSMEDA Non-Financial Officer- Minya Office	1	0	1	0	1	
2. Dairy/Milk Production: Food Africa 9 - 11 Dec 2019 in Cairo	8	1	2	1	2	
3. Technical trainings in the Greenhouses Value Chain, and Green Houses\Extension officers -Technical Programs	125	1	14	1	13	
o <i>Farmers (end beneficiaries)</i>	91	0	9	0	8	
o <i>Agronomist</i>	19	1	3	1	3	
o <i>Others (traders, driver, constrictors)</i>	15	0	2	0	2	
4. Animal Production Training	3	2	2	1	2	2
Luxor Governorate (online interviews)						
5. MSMEDA Non-Financial Officer- Luxor Office	1	0	1	0	1	
6. Tourism Group, Luxor: The preparations were completed, but the festival (<i>Taste of Egypt</i>) was postponed due to COVID-19	8	4	2	1	3	1
7. Capacity Building Program\ Training for Luxor Chefs	12	2	3	1	3	1
Total	158	10 (6.3%)	25	5 (20%)	25	4 (16%)

Annex 6 List of Guiding Questions for in-depth Interviews

List of Guiding Questions for in-depth Interviews with Project Beneficiaries and Partners:

TOOL FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH TRAINEES GUIDING QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, my name is _____ .

I am a member of an independent evaluation team contracted by ILO to conduct an end-of-project performance evaluation of BDS4GROWTH project.

The findings of the evaluation will assist ILO in informing decisions regarding 1) the effectiveness of the identified technical assistance approaches adopted by the project in selected areas of interventions, 2) the most effective/sustainable approaches regarding the promotion of BDS in Egypt in general and increasing the incomes and employment of SMEs; and 3) the potential areas of future technical assistance based on the lessons learned from this project.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, but your participation is important to the results of this study. The responses are *confidential*, and the results will be anonymized (no personally identifiable information) and shared only with key project stakeholders.

Basic Data - FiLL IN Blocks (Per Tool administration):

Governorate:	Date: (dd/mm/yy)	Location:
Gender: Male () Female ()		
Type of interview phone call () direct () other () specify-----		
Interviewee Name: Organization Name:	Type: (TOT participant, Trainee, BDS provider, MSME business owner, Farmer) other-----	
Position:	How long have you been in this position:	
Type of training :		
Type of TA		

- What type of services do you used to deliver for SMEs business owners?
- How did you know about the project?
- What type of training and/or Technical Assistant (TA) did you receive from the project?
- How do you see the importance and relevance of the trainings conducted?
- How was the training implemented? Any feedback?
- What did you benefit?
- How do you see the implementation of the knowledge gained on your day-to-day work?

- Can you give examples of success and failure in providing BD Services to your target groups/clients?
- What is your future plans to apply the knowledge gained during your participation in the project activities?
- What do you need to make sure you are capable of implementing the knowledge gained?
- What are the main barriers and opportunities to expand the BDS to MSMEs?
- What are the next steps and your recommendations?

TOOL FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH PROJECT BENEFICIARIES GUIDING QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, my name is _____ .

I am a member of an independent evaluation team contracted by ILO to conduct an end-of-project performance evaluation of BDS4GROWTH project.

The findings of the evaluation will assist ILO in informing decisions regarding 1) the effectiveness of the identified technical assistance approaches adopted by the project in selected areas of interventions, 2) the most effective/sustainable approaches regarding the promotion of BDS in Egypt in general and increasing the incomes and employment of SMEs; and 3) the potential areas of future technical assistance based on the lessons learned from this project.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, but your participation is important to the results of this study. The responses are *confidential*, and the results will be anonymized (no personally identifiable information) and shared only with key project stakeholders.

Basic Data - FiLL IN Blocks (Per Tool administration):

Governorate:	Date: (dd/mm/yy)	Location:
Gender: Male (<input type="checkbox"/>) Female (<input type="checkbox"/>)		
Type of interview phone call (<input type="checkbox"/>) direct (<input type="checkbox"/>) other (<input type="checkbox"/>) specify-----		
Interviewee Name:	Type:	
Organization Name:	(TOT participant, Trainee, BDS provider, MSME business owner, Farmer) other -----	
Position:	How long have you been in this position:	

- For how long have you been involved/working in this field?
- How do you normally act when you face technical problems in your business? (financial, managerial, marketing and sales, technical...)
- How do you usually fulfil your need of TA?
- What type of technical assistant did you receive before? From whom? Was it easy to access? How do you evaluate its quality?

- How did you know about the project?
- What activities did you participate in?
- Did you participate in any other project targeting to support SMEs? If yes; what type of technical assistant did you receive?

- What was your benefit from your participation with BDS4GROWTH?
- How do you assess the project activities and its implementation?
- How does this training approach differ from other trainings and/or TA you attended?
- Would you further participate in similar activities after the project end and are you ready to cover the participation cost?
- How will these trainings/TA influence your business (input cost, production line, jobs, profit and working conditions)?
- What is your recommendations for other project that would be implemented in the same domain?

Annex 7 Evaluation Work Plan

Tasks	Days International Consultant	Days National Consultant	Proposed timeline
Briefing session, Desk review, and Writing/Submission of the draft Inception Report	4.5	2	21 Dec – 28 Dec 2020
Review, Commenting, Revising and Approval of Inception Report	0.5		28-31 December
Field visit to Minya: Interviews with Beneficiaries and BDS providers		3	20 - 31 January 2021
Online interviews with Beneficiaries and BDS providers in Cairo and Luxor		2	20 - 31 January 2021
Online Interviews with Main Stakeholders	9	3	In two parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 – 31 December • 1 – 18 February
Analysis of information /data collected and preparation of the Draft Report	5	1.5	19 February – 10 March
Review of the Draft evaluation report ILO by Evaluation Manager and key stakeholders			10 – 20 March 2021
Revision and Submission of Final Report	1		20---21 March
TOTAL	21	12	

Annex 8 Objectives, Outputs and Activities of the LogFrame

Overall Objective: To enable high quality business development services (BDS) provision to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the agrifood and tourism sectors in Egypt to boost their contribution towards economic growth and employment.
Specific objective 1: Enhance the capacity of the Agency to play a facilitative role in enabling governmental and non-governmental institutions to provide quality BDS.
Output 1.1: Agency staff trained to facilitate BDS provision in Egypt
Activity 1.1.1: Select key staff from the Agency to be capacitated in BDS facilitation, assess their capacity development needs, and design a BDS Facilitator's Course for selected Agency staff
Activity 1.1.2: Develop training materials for the BDS Facilitator's Course and implement training.
Output 1.2: Using the VCD approach, key strategic entry points to unlock market bottlenecks are identified and an intervention model is developed to address key constraints
Activity 1.2.1: Select participants to be trained in the VCD approach
Activity 1.2.2: Conduct VCD Facilitator's Course
Activity 1.2.3: Conduct a market systems analysis for the <i>agrifood</i> sector in Minya highlighting the strengths and constraints faced by the sector
Activity 1.2.4: Conduct a market systems analysis for the <i>tourism</i> sector in Luxor highlighting the strengths and constraints faced by the sector
Activity 1.2.5: Develop models for interventions that address the identified constraints and that can be rolled out with the Agency and relevant value chain stakeholders based on existing incentives.
Output 1.3: Partner organisations are selected and capacitated to address the needs of the MSMEs
Activity 1.3.1: Select key market players identified in the market systems analysis of the agrifood and tourism sectors for partnership and capacitated in the provision of BDS
Activity 1.3.2: Consolidate the facilitation role of the Agency
Mid-term evaluation
Specific objective 2: Enable MSMEs in target sectors to access BDS to increase their competitiveness, productivity and internationalisation
Output 2.1: Enterprises in the agrifood and tourism sector have access to business advisory and training services
Activity 2.1.1: Market business support services to attract paying clients
Activity 2.1.2: Partner organisations roll out tailor made business management training and other support services to MSME clients
Activity 2.1.3: Partner organisations deliver follow up services
Output 2.2: MSMEs in target sectors have access to matching financial support
Activity 2.2.1: Identify needs in terms of financial support
Activity 2.2.2: With the Agency support, MFIs/banks support MSMEs with financial products.
Final Evaluation

Annex 9 Overview of Status Report on MSMEDA BDS Market strategy

The Status Report on MSMEDA BDS Market strategy is dated 21 December 2020 and in the below table the evaluators have made a schematic overview of the progress reported by MSMEDA on the strategic themes and their respective programmes. The entire text of MSMEDA is included but organized in table format for quick reference.

Strategic Theme	Programme	Status Update
1) MSME development coordination	1.1: National MSME BDS Platform	MSMEDA created a national MSMEs platform www.msme.eg (PPT Arabic presentation attached) to share information and create a more coordinated and targeted approach to BDS delivery. - MSMEDA and its partners from Egyptian Government (108 Agencies), Universities, Chambers of Commerce, Private Sector, and Technology Centers, and Non-Government Organizations all participated in establishing Egypt's 1st Electronic BDS platform to provide more than 32 interactive services through 6 main sections on the platform for convenience and easy user friendly accessibility. Services include but are not limited to: Training and securing employment opportunities, Projects Establishments, Promoting Entrepreneurship, Technical Support, and Marketing
	1.2: National MSME Observatory: MSMEDA will establish a mechanism to monitor MSME trends and dynamics and share this with BDS providers to improve the relevance of business services.	MSMEDA has signed with Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics - CAPMAS Egypt a protocol on October 14, 2019, to conduct necessary field surveys needed and for CAPMAS to provide necessary technical assistance, and manuals for the State Administration Divisions related to the Codes Databases managed by CAPMAS.
	1.3: Public-Private Dialogue: MSMEDA will work with other government MDAs and a wide range of MSME representative organizations to organise and facilitate regular public – private dialogue (PPD) on Business development issues.	Discussions have already started with the private and public sector, especially when drafting the executive regulations for the new MSMEs Law. Meetings have started when the issuance of Small Enterprises Law No. 152 in July 2020, with about 40 meetings including 45 representatives of ministries and agencies and Unions
2) BDS Market Analysis:		MSMEDA currently is very active and engaging with Agence France Development AFD in a new project titled "Economic empowerment of women" included market research component to "develop market research guidelines for product development and delivery" included "market research to identify the financial and non-financial needed of the SMEs and their alignment with current services offering by MSMEDA and others"
	2.1: BDS Market Assessment: MSMEDA will conduct regular BDS market assessments to analyse supply and demand-side constraints of service provision. These assessments will	MSMEDA organized a special booth at its annual Exhibition Center "Toraythina" last October 2020 for BDS services (attached Performance Report on Toraythina Exhibition). This display was for the businesses at the Exhibition to become more acquainted with MSMEDA BDS services and accessibility. This was very beneficial to businesses specialized in Handicrafts products as these

	determine the reasons for market failures in order to design programme interventions that address them	businesses got familiar with the MSMEDA National Platform.
3) Build the Capacity of BDS Providers		A database list of service providers created to develop businesses in each governorate separately, and through the project, a training program was initiated to develop service providers in the governorates targeted by the project (Minya - Luxor) and its planned to expand to other governorates
	3.1: BDS Provider Training Programme: MSMEDA will improve the capability and capacity of BDS providers to design and deliver quality services to MSME clients in a commercially oriented, business-like manner.	MSMEDA has engaged in establishing a specialized professional Product Photography Unit. MSMEDA also has successfully managed to acquire the funds needed for the unit to be established. The location of the unit will be centralized at MSMEDA and will pilot in two governorates (Qalubiya – Monofiya).
	3.2: Improve Access to and Use of Services: MSMEDA will intervene when required to improve the access MSMEs and entrepreneurs have to business and government services. This will include the development of one-stop-shops.	Within the framework of activating the Small Enterprise Law 152, some services were added for the one stop shop, additional services to the MSMEs in agreement with the related authorities, for example: (Issuing import cards for projects.- Registration in the suppliers register for government procurement of projects. - Providing legal and procedural advice.....)
4) Increase the use of BDS by MSMEs	4.1: Awareness Raising for BDS: Creating awareness among the MSME sector of the importance of BDS for improving competitiveness and productivity.	Preparations are underway for a campaign on the importance of business development services BDS. MSMEDA is working with its national and international partners for this campaign to be launched early 2021. Unfortunately, due to the Covid -19 pandemic, this program was abruptly delayed but it is expected and planned to be launched in the 1st or 2nd QTR of 2021. Several online meetings have taken place with Government Agencies and national stakeholders to ensure the campaign effectiveness nationwide.
	4.2: New BDS Products and Services: Drawing on the results of its market assessments, MSMEDA will introduce and pilot new business services to test new market opportunities.	MSMEDA has been working closely with the private sector for this programme and recently a national competition for entrepreneurship was held during the period of March thru December 2020 called "Startup Power" http://ahmedabouhashima.com/startuppower/ Also, with the creation and launching of the national platform, the new Products Photography Unit, and the launching of the Awareness campaign early 2021, and as the COVID – 19 threat subsides returning the business life back to normal, MSMEDA will conduct these new business services to test new market opportunities planned in 2021.
	4.3: BDS Certification: MSMEDA will create a national standard for business services and will certify providers according to their demonstrated capability and performance.	- MSMEDA still need technical support from the project to establish a system for accreditation of business development service providers based on international best practices - MSMEDA looks forward and is keen, through a new phase of the project, to find a mechanism for accreditation of business development service providers based on international best practices

Annex 10 Activities undertaken under each Objective, Output and Planned Activity

Objectives, Outputs & Planned Activities	Actual Activities undertaken until 31 January 2021
Specific objective 1: MSMEDA and Intermediaries	
Output 1.1: Agency staff trained to facilitate BDS provision in Egypt	
Activity 1.1.1: Select key staff from the Agency to be capacitated in BDS facilitation, assess their capacity development needs, and design a BDS Facilitator's Course for selected Agency staff	Total 21 staff: 15 in the BDS training, and 6 senior staff undertook visit to ILOITC, Turin. 28% female.
Activity 1.1.2: Develop training materials for the BDS Facilitator's Course and implement training.	Online version of SIYB-tool (jointly with other projects), and - 44 trainers trained.
Output 1.2: Using the VCD approach, key strategic entry points to unlock market bottlenecks are identified and an intervention model is developed to address key constraints	
Activity 1.2.1: Select participants to be trained in the VCD approach	28 trainees, incl. 46% female.
Activity 1.2.2: Conduct VCD Facilitator's Course	A 2-month practical phase with 23 trainees from MSMEDA, MTI, FEI, CBE, Nilepreneurs & Independent Consultants. Out of 23 there were 17 trainees who completed the practical work and were eventually Certified.
Activity 1.2.3: Conduct a market systems analysis for the agrifood sector in Minya highlighting the strengths and constraints faced by the sector	Minia Report by Enroot Development.
Activity 1.2.4: Conduct a market systems analysis for the tourism sector in Luxor highlighting the strengths and constraints faced by the sector	Luxor Report by Enroot Development.
Activity 1.2.5: Develop models for interventions that address the identified constraints and that can be rolled out with the Agency and relevant value chain stakeholders based on existing incentives.	6 intervention models were designed by Enroot Development: 3 in agribusiness (Garlic, Greenhouse & Dairy) and 3 in the tourism sector (Guesthouse accommodation, Alabaster handicraft, and Entertainment). However, only 3 intervention models were in the end implemented in the target sectors (see under Activity 2.1.2).
Output 1.3: Partner organisations are selected and capacitated to address the needs of the MSMEs	
Activity 1.3.1: Select key market players identified in the market systems analysis of the agrifood and tourism sectors for partnership and capacitated in the provision of BDS (Target was 30 partner organisations),	In total 42 partner organisations were capacitated: 1) 3 consulting firms: Enroot and Konzept in Cairo and Meristem in Minya, 2) 10 Greenhouse individual providers (Farmers & Agronomists), 3) 3 providers on milk production (1 farmer and 2 graduates/junior agronomists), and 4) 26 partner organisations/extension agriculture officers are identified and reached and capacitated and/or supported through technical as well as BDS trainings.

Activity 1.3.2: Consolidate the facilitation role of the Agency	The organization and Implementation of the Business Development Unit (BDU) in Torathna 2020 in coordination with MSMEDA (where more than 200 exhibitors from different governorates across Egypt were supported by the provision of branding related services); it was held during the period of 10 - 17 October 2020.
Mid-term evaluation	April 2020
Specific objective 2: MSMEs	
Output 2.1: Enterprises in the agrifood and tourism sector have access to business advisory and training services	
Activity 2.1.1: Market business support services to attract paying clients	Showcasing the value addition of different technical trainings (cf. the MSD approach); examples are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the technical on-the-job training to produce new products in the dairy products value chain of Minya governorate (the first round of the training was fully funded by the project while the second round was cost-shared with one of the beneficiaries), and the technical and BDS trainings in the greenhouses value chain to allow extension officers to provide better services for their farmer clients while having a fee-based model in the provision of their services after the end of the project. <p>The aim is to scale up the use of such BDS services in the future.</p>
Activity 2.1.2: Partner organisations roll out tailor made business management training and other support services to MSME clients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target: At least 300 businesses will be supported and their business operations improved, which will lead to at least 300 new and improved jobs (40% for women). 	Beneficiaries trained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 115 under the greenhouses' intervention. 30 under the dairy products intervention, 5 under 'Food Africa', 129 under the business management trainings (SIYB), 32 under the intervention for the Luxor tourism, i.e. local restaurants and hospitality sub-sector. <p>Thus, in total 311 beneficiaries trained, or as the project claims 311 jobs were improved or created (of which 25% are women).</p> <p>Lastly, the Taste of Egypt Festival was fully prepared and organized but cancelled in the end due to COVID-19.</p>
Activity 2.1.3: Partner organisations deliver follow up services	Food Africa International Trade Exhibition with Konzept in December 2019 (including a 'Minia Product Catalogue: BDS for Growth').
	Also taking an MSD approach, the project worked on availing the services in the targeted sectors' instead of directly providing it. Therefore, the project provided the technical trainings and created, and/or developed BDS providers/extension officers to deliver the follow up services beyond the project's resources. In addition to supporting national BDS providers to reach new markets in upper Egypt and provide tailored support services accordingly
Output 2.2: MSMEs in target sectors have access to matching financial support	
Activity 2.2.1: Identify needs in terms of financial support	The market systems analyses done for the agri-food and tourism sectors (see activity 1.2.3 and 1.2.4) included financial support issues.
Activity 2.2.2: With the Agency support, MFIs/banks support MSMEs with financial products.	No activities as such, but through the project's Business Management training, the project provided 129 beneficiaries awareness sessions on how to access financial services (see Activity 2.1.2).
Final Evaluation	December 2020 - March 2021.

Annex 11 Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP)

LL1: The evaluation policies of the donor and the ILO should be addressed as much as possible together for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services

Project TC/SYMBOL: EGY/17/03/EUR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop and Bassem Adly

Date: 12 April 2021

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	<i>The evaluation policies of the donor and the ILO should be addressed as much as possible together for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness.</i>
Context and any related preconditions	<i>Next to the present final independent evaluation, the EU itself will conduct an evaluation of all projects under the Request for Proposals (RfP) entitled "Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth in Egypt; EU Facility of Inclusive Growth and Job Creation". Following ILO's own Evaluation Policy, each project with a budget of over US\$1 million must undergo a mid-term and a final evaluation, one of which must be an independent evaluation.</i>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	<i>Donor, ILO EVAL, ILO Country Office, DWT, and ILO HQ Geneva.</i>
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<i>For reasons of efficiency and effectiveness it is not recommended to have two separate final evaluations of one project. It could work counterproductive if stakeholders are repeatedly requested for their cooperation in similar evaluations.</i>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<i>Resources could be saved by coordinating the implementation of these evaluations.</i>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<i>None.</i>

LL2: The Lesson Learned is that a large number of different activities should not go at the expense of a solid follow-up of each of those activities.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services

Project TC/SYMBOL: EGY/17/03/EUR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop and Bassem Adly

Date: 12 April 2021

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	<i>This Lesson Learned is that a large number of different activities should not go at the expense of a solid follow-up of each of those activities.</i>
Context and any related preconditions	<i>In the BDS4GROWTH project many different types of trainings at national and governorate level have taken place, as well as activities related to three exhibitions, two Market System Analysis studies and one exposure visit to ILOITC in Turin for senior MSMEDA management staff.</i>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	<i>ILO Country Office, DWT Cairo, ILO HQ Geneva, ILO's three Constituents, and Development Partner/Donor.</i>
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<i>It might have been better to focus the large number of different activities (cf. Table 1 and Annex 10) on a smaller number of activities and trainings in order to be able to pay more attention to the follow-up and impact.</i>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<i>Many of the training and other beneficiaries were quite satisfied with the quality of the trainings but considered the lack of follow-up an important drawback.</i>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<i>None.</i>

GP1: The capacity building mission to ITC Turin of senior MSMEDA staff has enhanced the sense of ownership of the main counterpart and co-applicant, MSMEDA.

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services

Project TC/SYMBOL: EGY/17/03/EUR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop and Bassem Adly

Date: 12 April 2021

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<i>The capacity building mission to ITC Turin of senior MSMEDA staff has enhanced the sense of ownership of the main counterpart and co-applicant, MSMEDA.</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<i>The MSMEDA staff interviewed spoke highly of the capacity building mission to Turin where the ITC provided highly technical trainings and put the Market Systems Analysis (MSA) and Value Chain development (VCD) approaches in the right context and related it to the shift MSMEDA is undergoing itself from service provider to a facilitative role in BDS provision.</i>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<i>The interviews with MSMEDA staff indicated the importance of this capacity building mission for its training element and for the enhanced level of ownership.</i>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<i>MSMEDA senior staff members.</i>
Potential for replication and by whom	<i>This Good Practice can be replicated in similar types of interventions with an innovative character where the respective counterpart (in this case MSMEDA) is to acquire the new knowledge, but it can also be implemented on a broader scale.</i>
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Program Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Program Framework)	<i>Programme and Budget (P&B) 2018-2019 Outcome 4 (Promoting sustainable enterprises) and Outcome 5 (decent work in the rural economy).</i>
Other documents or relevant comments	<i>N.a.</i>

GP2: The introduction of ILO's tools on BDS and SIYB and in particular on the VCD Facilitators certified course, which were new to the Egyptian context, was a Good Practice to implement the Market System Approach (MSA) ensuring synergy and the spreading of knowledge along the different stakeholders.

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services

Project TC/SYMBOL: EGY/17/03/EUR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop and Bassem Adly

Date: 12 April 2021

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<i>The introduction of ILO's tools on BDS and SIYB and in particular on the VCD Facilitators certified course, which were new to the Egyptian context, was a Good Practice to implement the Market System Approach (MSA) ensuring synergy and the spreading of knowledge along the different stakeholders. In particular, the establishment of the VCA Facilitators course as a certified course has now led to its adoption as a course that will be regularly given at the International Training Centre (ITC) of the ILO in Turin which enhances the sustainability of the intervention being integrated in longer term training programmes.</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<i>The use made of ILO's existing courses, curricula and manuals on BDS, VCD and SIYB, as well as the adaptations to the local context, is a Good Practice that has proven to be very useful in the specific context of this project. It was also important to introduce these tools to different levels in society including the government/MSMEDA (Macro level), private sector stakeholders and (meso level) and BDS consultants (micro level).</i>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<i>See above.</i>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<i>Some of the training beneficiaries have indicated great appreciation, for example, for the VCD Facilitator's course and the practical work included, although the Certification must be better organized. The course itself has been highlighted as a good practice by the "Donor Committee for Enterprise Development" (DCED) Market Systems working group as an example of how to practically apply the MSD competency framework (which was used to establish the competencies to be certified).</i>
Potential for replication and by whom	<i>This Good Practice can be replicated in similar types of interventions focusing on Market Systems Analyses (MSA) and Value chain Development (VCD) approaches. As also elaborated by ILO in "THE LAB - Market systems development for decent work" (see website below). The integration of the VCD Facilitator's course in ITC's multi-year training programme enhances sustainability and replication.</i>

Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Program Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Program Framework)	<i>Programme and Budget (P&B) 2018-2019 Outcome 4 (Promoting sustainable enterprises) and Outcome 5 (decent work in the rural economy).</i>
Other documents or relevant comments	<p><i>ILO's The LAB: Market systems development for decent work:</i> https://www.ilo.org/empent/Projects/the-lab/lang--en/index.htm</p> <p><i>The latest announcement of this year's VCD course by ITC in Turin can be found on this website:</i> https://www.itcilo.org/courses/certification-programme-value-chain-development-vcd-moving-analysis-action</p>

Annex 12 List of Documents Consulted

- Terms of Reference (ToR) for the present Final Independent Evaluation dated 16 October 2020 (see Annex 1).
- Project Document (PRODOC 2017), including Logframe, budget, work plan, etc.
- EU-ILO Contract.
- 1st Annual Progress Report.
- Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) Report (April 2020).
- 2nd Annual Progress Report.
- MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy (September 2019).
- Status Report on the MSMEDA BDS Market Strategy (21 December 2020)
- ILO/EU Clarification Note concerning the 2nd Annual Progress Report (December 2020).
- Relevant ILO's P&B's, and Centenary Initiatives.
- ILO EVAL: Evaluation Policy Guidelines, including ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations 3rd edition 2017.
- UNPDF 2018-2022.
- Research and studies conducted by the Project
- Missions reports
- Financial information
- Websites, including those of the project.
- EVAL (2020): Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: An internal guide on adapting to the situation. Geneva:
 - http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_741206.pdf and
 - www.ilo.ch/eval/WCMS_744068/lang--en/index.htm
- OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2019): Better Criteria for Better Evaluation; Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use. December 2019.
- Other documents/materials/publications that were produced through the project or by relevant stakeholders.