Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA)

ILO DC/SYMBOL: [EGY/20/01/NOR]

Type of Evaluation: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Evaluation nature: Independent

Project countries: Egypt

P&B Outcome(s): Outcome 5 (current Outcome 3): Decent work in the rural economy

Outcome 4: Promoting sustainable enterprises

SDG(s): Goal 1, Target 1.2; Goal 2, Target 2.3; Goal 8, Target 8.2

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ILO Administrative Office: DWT/CO Cairo

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Joint evaluation agencies: [N/A]

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Evaluation Office oversight:

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Key Words: Social protection, Social security, Social services

List of Acronyms and abbreviations

CCT	Conditional cash transfers
CPO	Country Programme Outcomes
CSO	Civil society organizations
DWT/CO	Decent Work Team/Country Office
EYE:FORSA	Egypt Youth Employment: Economic Empowerment under the FORSA Programme
EYE: RAWABET	Egypt Youth Employment: Jobs and private sector development in rural Egypt
FEI	Federation of Egyptian Industries
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GWLA	Giving without limits Association
HR	Human Rights
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JSC	Job Search Club
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoL	Ministry of Labour
MoSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
PMT	proxy means-test
ROAF	Regional Office for Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SME	Small and Medium-sized Business
T&K	Takaful and Karama
T4E	Training for Employment
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNPDF	United Nations Partnership Development Framework

Executive Summary

Background of the project and its objectives

Since 2015, the Egyptian government has undertaken substantial economic reforms, including the launch of the Takaful and Karama (T&K) conditional cash transfer programme. In 2017, the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) launched the National 'Forsa' (Opportunity) programme, offering services and incentives designed to foster employment and income generation among the target population.

The overall expected impact of the project is to contribute to "Economic Empowerment and Employment for Vulnerable Communities." This is a project aimed mainly at supporting graduation from the conditional cash transfer schemes of the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, by feeding into the national Forsa programme and its supporting World Bank loan to support wage employment and self-employment. The project has the following outcomes:
Outcome 1: Strengthen CSOs, institutions and private sector partners to initiate and improve wage and self-employment activities for youth.
Outcome 2: Increase access to wage employment.
Outcome 3: Promote self-employment with special focus on females.

The project was implemented between January 2021 and August 2024, including two no-cost extensions. The project was managed by the ILO Cairo office project team, with support from field staff and technical guidance from the Decent Work Team based in Cairo. The project ended officially in June 2024, with two months extension for the completion of the final evaluation.

Purpose, objectives, and scope of the evaluation

Evaluation criteria and questions (including Cross-cutting issues/ issues of special interest to the ILO)

The evaluation covered the following evaluation criteria in line with the DAC criteria, UNEG guidelines and ILO evaluation policy guidelines:

- Relevance
- Coherence
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact orientation
- Sustainability

The evaluation considered key evaluations dimensions including Human rights (HR), the SDGs (relevant SDGs and indicators and the principle of "no one left behind") and ILO cross-cutting themes such the Gender and non-discrimination (i.e., people with disabilities), Social dialogue and tripartism, International Labour Standards and Just transition to environmental sustainability.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation followed the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation process was divided into four phases:
1. **Inception Phase**: Initial desk research and virtual meetings with the project team were conducted to inform the data collection methods. An inception report was finalized after receiving input from the project team, with a list of referenced documents provided in Annex 4.

2. **Data Collection Phase**: Using a mixed-methods approach, the team reviewed key project documents, including progress reports and monitoring data, to inform the evaluation questions. In-depth interviews were held with 38 respondents, including project stakeholders, government representatives, and NGOs. Additionally, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted in Sharkeya and Asyut, engaging a total of 105 participants, both end-beneficiaries and trainers, to gather detailed insights.
3. **Stakeholder Workshop**: A workshop in Cairo on August 28th allowed evaluators to present preliminary findings to project staff and stakeholders, incorporating feedback into the final report.
4. **Data Analysis and Reporting**: The evaluation team analyzed data from desk research, interviews, and FGDs. Qualitative data was coded according to the evaluation matrix, and quantitative data provided by the ILO was used to assess financial and project outcome indicators. Data was triangulated to verify findings and address any knowledge gaps.

Data Limitations: Challenges included the recent cabinet reshuffle, which limited access to certain stakeholders, a constrained timeline, which necessitated convenience sampling, and restricted observational visits to beneficiaries' businesses. Additionally, beneficiaries from the training-for-employment component could not participate due to their work commitments, leaving gaps filled by desk research.

Key findings

Relevance

The evaluation found that the EYE: FORSA project addressed gaps in knowledge and skills that beneficiaries required to find employment or start a business. It was mostly sensitive to women's needs in this regard as well. The self-employment track was more relevant compared to the wage-employment track. Interviewed stakeholders were generally satisfied with the alignment of the EYE: FORSA project with their own (institutional) priorities.

However, for women in particular, the Job Search Clubs (JSC) and job fairs still were not relevant as the offered jobs were too far away with too long working hours, and more focused on men (e.g. outdoor sales) and higher-educated individuals. Several targeted youths did not want to participate, out of fear to lose the T&K benefits.

The EYE: FORSA project was flexible to adapt based on feedback on the project implementation. During the implementation, certain challenges and opportunities arose that ILO addressed by making adjustments in the project design and content.

Coherence

EYE: FORSA largely contributes to Egypt's national objectives and strategies, particularly to the national Forsa programme. The project also effectively supported ILO objectives and other ILO projects in Egypt. Furthermore, it reinforced other stakeholders' efforts by granting them permission to use ILO tools (e.g. the training materials).

Effectiveness

The evaluation found that trainers were largely satisfied with the capacity-building trainings provided by ILO and Master Trainers and reported an increase in their capacity to provide trainings and support the T&K target group. The Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) and Get Ahead trainings were effective in enhancing the skills of beneficiaries in relation to self-employment. In many cases, particularly among SIYB beneficiaries, this resulted in the establishment and/or growth of businesses.

While the project activities were effective to develop employability and job searching skills, the effectiveness of the project to actually get employed was limited by the lack of suitable jobs in the areas close to the beneficiaries.

The main factors enabling and supporting the achievements of the project included:
- The arrangements and follow-up of the trainings, including the high quality of training materials and the support and flexibility of the ILO.
- The use of local trainers and involvement of local community leaders to recruit and consult potential beneficiaries
- The addition of financial literacy to the JSC component, which enabled beneficiaries to invest and start a business if they decided not to join the labour market.

Hindering factors included:
- Delays and weaknesses in the National Forsa programme, which affected the timeline and quality of the EYE: FORSA project (e.g. low-quality assets, issues with the lists of T&K beneficiaries).
- The resistance of potential beneficiaries to participate, out of fear of losing the T&K benefits.

Efficiency

The project was implemented in an efficient manner, with strategic use and (re)allocation of resources across components. The project staff was sufficient in number, and the team was well prepared. Challenges in efficiency resulted from country-wide inflation. Large delays experienced by the project were mostly caused by delays in the National Forsa programme, resulting in two no-cost extensions.

Overall, the evaluation found that the project was efficiently managed, and stakeholders expressed satisfaction regarding the management and communication of ILO. The project benefited from a suitable system of output indicators, measuring project progress towards quantitative targets. The absence of outcome indicators hinders the project from systematically tracking higher-level achievements, which was somewhat compensated by external assessments of the HR and Gender Academy and the tracer study.

Impact

The evaluation found various signs of impact on the empowerment of beneficiaries, as well as signs of potential impact on other members of the communities. The use of ILO materials beyond the EYE: FORSA project is an important enabler. The low supply of jobs is a key barrier for broader impact of the wage-employment track.

Sustainability

While many government and NGO stakeholders demonstrate technical capacity and willingness to continue and sustain the results, both stakeholder groups are limited by financial resources. Beneficiaries who found a job or started a business with EYE: FORSA support are largely expected to maintain their results. The overall economic situation, particularly inflation, is considered the main threat to business sustainability.

Conclusions

Relevance:

The EYE project was well-designed to support the economic empowerment of a vulnerable, hard-to-reach target population, particularly addressing the population's hesitation to risk losing T&K benefits. The project's relevance was further supported by the ILO's flexibility to

adapt the project design during implementation and by its alignment with the national Forsa programme, which was achieved through close cooperation with the government. Additionally, the self-employment track proved particularly relevant for female beneficiaries, meeting their specific needs and interests.

Coherence:
The project's high relevance and coherence at the national level stemmed from its alignment with the objectives of the national Forsa programme and collaboration with government authorities, which reinforced the project's consistency with other national initiatives. This alignment provided coherence, strengthening the project's role within the larger framework of economic empowerment and support systems in the country.

Effectiveness:
The project's effectiveness was bolstered by the ILO's adaptability and ability to work closely with government partners. The self-employment track, in particular, effectively served the female beneficiaries, empowering them to continue Get Ahead and SIYB training independently. However, the wage-employment track proved less effective, as the jobs offered often did not meet the standards or suitability for the target group, and the emphasis was placed more on job search abilities than on ensuring that these jobs met "decent work" standards per ILO criteria.

Efficiency:
The ILO implemented the self-employment track efficiently, both financially and timewise. However, the Get Ahead training was hindered by several external factors, including delays in asset delivery, issues with asset quality, and community disruptions, which impacted overall efficiency and timely outcomes in this area.

Impact
The self-employment track holds promise for creating a positive impact on community members beyond the direct beneficiaries, as various beneficiaries were able to employ others in their businesses. However, given the recent turnover within the MoSS, the strategic future of the National Forsa programme remains uncertain, making it difficult to measure EYE's long-term impact on national policy and related programmes.

Sustainability
The capacity-building initiatives conducted at both local and national levels are likely to sustain project activities beyond the initial funding period, promoting the continuation and growth of economic empowerment efforts initiated by EYE.

Lessons learned

1. The design of wage-employment activities should be closely aligned with the job offers available within reach of the beneficiaries. This perceived availability may also differ strongly between men and women. If there is no, or very limited, job offer, other economic empowerment activities should be considered.

2. Despite the benefits of close alignment with Ministry strategies and programmes, the project implementation may be significantly impacted by the quality and timeliness of the national efforts. While the benefits of close coordination outweigh the challenges, such technical support programs should always have risk mitigation strategies and flexible arrangements with the donor to account for issues with the national programme.

3. The absence of outcome-level indicators can hinder the monitoring and evaluation of the project, as well as the dialogue between the project team and the donor as it can create misunderstandings about the expectations of the project. At the same time, it hinders the final (external) evaluators from fully understanding what the project aimed to achieve, particularly when the outcome language is ambiguous.

Good practices

1. Continue enhancing Project and budget flexibility as crucial tool to ensure the relevance of the project for different groups of beneficiaries and throughout the project implementation.

2. Continue combining business training with asset delivery should ensure that asset delivery takes place shortly after the training completion. This enhances the relevance of the asset and enhances the ability of beneficiaries to select the most suitable assets.

3. Continue using local staff (NGOs, trainers, government officials) as crucial method for projects targeting hard-to-reach beneficiaries. These people are already trusted by the community and know how to navigate community dynamics, thereby using the most appropriate outreach channels.

Recommendations

Rec 1. Continue supporting the Government of Egypt, particularly the Ministry of Labour, to support (decent) job creation processes and (local) private sector development.

The wage-employment track was hindered by the general absence of suitable, formal jobs in the two governorates. While the trainings created enhanced employability skills, the jobs offered through fairs were often rejected by (female) beneficiaries due to the distance, working hours, and wages.

In the future, efforts to enhance access to wage-employment should be either 1) focused in areas with higher levels of (decent) work vacancies (especially for women) that was identified from in-depth market research at the beginning of implementation, or 2) combined with/preceded by initiatives to support private sector development and job creation in female dominated sectors.

At the same time, broader efforts of ILO Cairo should also focus on (decent) job creation and quality of jobs, given that the government is already planning to continue the JSCs and job fairs. Such support should focus on private sector development and opportunities for business developed (e.g. through continued Get Ahead and SYIB efforts) This furthermore requires coordination and division of roles between MoL and MoSS, given that MoSS has taken on various job-related responsibilities under the EYE:FORSA project.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
ILO Cairo DWCT, Ministry of Labour, employer organisations	High	Long-term	Medium

Rec 2. Include more focus on (digitalized) marketing in future (self-)employment trainings

Marketing is essential to ensure the survival and growth of supported businesses, hence intentional focus and dedicated resources at design need to be allocated to ensure that businesses have online and offline space to showcase their products. Various FGDs with beneficiaries noted the importance of a focus on marketing and requested more follow-up training on marketing skills and tools in general.

SIYB beneficiaries, in particular, requested more focus on online marketing, online sales, and overall digital skills. Various sources noted that it would have been beneficial if the trainings had a stronger component on online business management. Future SIYB trainings can include more examples or simulations that involve digital business tools, as well as basic digital literacy trainings for lower skilled beneficiaries with less digital skills.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
ILO HQ units working on SIYB and Get Ahead; future project teams	Low	Next projects	High

Rec 3. Integrate outcome-level and impact-level indicators in future programming, by creating a more comprehensive log frame

The tracer study was particularly helpful to understand how the project activities influenced the subsequent skills, decisions, and wage- or self-employment achievements of beneficiaries. However, as the project had no operationalized understanding of what constitutes "promoted self-employment" or "access to wage-employment" in its logframe, it is not clear how the achievements and challenges found by the Tracer Study linked to the project objectives and Theory of Change.

If a similar project is implemented in the future, it would be beneficial to repeat the Tracer Study, but with integrating some elements measured by the Tracer Study in the logframe. This way, the study can be used more efficiently to inform the Theory of Change logic and to inform "what works" to achieve the project objectives.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams and M&E staff	Low	Next projects	High

Rec 4. Apply a more flexible approach to the selection criteria for trainings

A recurrent negative result of the project was the occurrence of jealousy or disruption in the communities, as the support provided to T&K beneficiaries was also desired by non-beneficiaries just outside the scope of T&K. In particular, there were many T&K beneficiaries with less interest in EYE: FORSA (due to the risk of losing T&K benefits) while many non-beneficiaries were actually very interested but not eligible. At the same time, the larger interest in the training shows the need to continue or scale up the trainings.

Future efforts should take into consideration the negative effects of this situation on the community and consider broadening the criteria for participation, for example based on education level and income, more extensive needs assessments (are beneficiaries really interested to participate?) and not just on T&K status. Additionally, beneficiaries' thorough needs and skills assessment need to guide the nature of supported businesses in those communities to avoid market distortions and ensure the application of the do no harm principle.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams, ILO DWCT supporting National Forsa, MoSS	Low	Next projects	High

Rec 5. Explore income generating activities beyond the traditional single owned business and the wage employment.

Models like small production units supporting local value chains and economic clusters (cooperatives) can lead to positive results as it removes the burden of managing the business by one individual and show more resilience in face of volatile markets and economic situation. Moreover, new models like factories hiring women from home as unconventional wage-employment model can be explored. Yet, those models should be introduced after a thorough study of the local markets and impeded power dynamics. Also, sectoral targeting of sectors with intensive women as labour force and assessment and development of those sectors may lead to more focused wage-employment results.

Furthermore, this should be complemented by careful market assessments to understand the local market and which types of businesses are most likely to be viable in the village. Trainings should include clear recommendations on where business needs may exist and which sectors are already saturated.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams, ILO DWCT supporting National Forsa, MoSS, employer representatives.	Medium	Next projects	Medium

Rec 6. Expand support to self-employment training beneficiaries beyond the current 6 months

Longer follow-up on beneficiaries beyond the 6 months, by their management trainers, is essential to respond to T&K beneficiaries' needs as a highly vulnerable group. Follow-up can be from technical local experts who act like mentors to the small businesses and/or real support offered to beneficiaries beyond verbal advice, like linking them to suppliers and markets. This can enhance their sustainability chances.

Also, local NGOs can play a role in the businesses longer-term follow-up offering technical and financial support (e.g, top up to high performing businesses), market linkages and forming networks of beneficiaries running similar businesses or working across the same value chain to act as a support group and increase their businesses efficiency (e.g., group sourcing and sharing fixed expenses)

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams, ILO DWCT supporting National Forsa.	Medium	Next projects	Medium

Rec 7. Enhance linkages between national and local stakeholders

Better coordinator and open communication between MoSS, MoYS, MoL and NGOs (implementers on the ground) can strongly increase the potential to exchange lessons learned and ideas among different stakeholders.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
MoSS, MoL at national and local levels, future project teams	Low	During the continued implementation of National Forsa	Medium

1. Description of the Project

1.1. Context and background

Since 2015, the Egyptian government has undertaken substantial economic reforms, including the launch of the Takaful and Karama (T&K) conditional cash transfer program. With its progressive expansion, the T&K program is expected to support around 3.4 million families, particularly in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of a broader strategy for fiscal consolidation, which includes reducing fuel subsidies, T&K has become the main social assistance initiative for the nation's most vulnerable citizens. This initiative comes at a time when poverty levels have sharply increased, affecting approximately 33% of the population.

Recognizing that cash transfers alone are insufficient, the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) launched the National 'Forsa' (Opportunity) program in 2017. This programme complements the cash transfers by offering services and incentives designed to foster employment and income generation among the target population. Forsa is an essential component of Egypt's social protection system, specifically targeting working-age individuals from poor households, including both recipients of T&K benefits and those who narrowly miss qualifying based on the proxy means-test (PMT) score. The program's objective is to transition T&K beneficiaries from dependence on welfare to active participation in the workforce, thereby complementing other social benefit programs aimed at helping the poor achieve self-sufficiency and resilience.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has played a pivotal role in supporting the Ministry's development of the national Forsa program. Early on, the ILO emphasized that for Forsa to reach its full potential, MoSS would require significant capacity building, particularly in technical areas necessary to manage large-scale administrative processes related to active labour market programs, expert training initiatives, and skill development.

While MoSS has successfully enhanced its capacity to administer the conditional cash transfers (CCTs) program with considerable international support, developing the capacity needed for Forsa is likely to demand an even greater effort. Unlike CCTs, which are primarily focused on perfecting administrative processes, socio-economic empowerment programs require a higher level of technical expertise. This expertise is a critical factor in the success of active labor market programs and graduation programs worldwide. At the grassroots level, local civil society organizations (CSOs) in poorer governorates have traditionally been engaged in humanitarian and social activities. However, to effectively manage and deliver socio-economic services, these local CSOs will need substantial capacity development. Large-scale, competitive training of trainers and expert training programs focused on key skills and competencies are essential. As the leading UN agency for employment promotion, the ILO is well-positioned to implement such a capacity development program, building on its previous work.

Another critical element in realizing the socio-economic rights of target beneficiaries is the rigorous testing of support models. The ILO has extensive experience in Egypt with such testing and is well-equipped to roll out previously validated models that have demonstrated positive results. Additionally, there is a need to introduce innovative models in Egypt that have been successful in other similar countries but have not yet been tried locally. The evaluation of these models will rely on robust assessment measures to confirm their positive net effects.

1.2. Project description

Against this backdrop, the **EYE-FORSA project** was designed to address these capacity gaps by providing targeted technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives, leveraging ILO's

extensive experience and global best practices in employment promotion. Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Economic Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA) is a 4-years project, funded by the Government of Norway, with an approximate budget of USD 3.6 Million.

The project targets local institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs) to promote wage and self-employment and entrepreneurship for women and youth. It focuses on young jobseekers with basic education who've been unemployed for at least six months, helping them access and maintain suitable jobs. It also targets females excluded from the labour market, promoting female self-employment through managerial skills training and access to capital. By targeting potential entrepreneurs and BDS providers, the project anticipates economically empowered communities that start and sustain businesses with growth potential. Furthermore, the project emphasizes the importance of evaluating and scaling effective interventions to ensure long-term sustainability and impact. Linked to UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) no. 8, which focuses on "promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all,"[1] EYE-FORSA aims to create resilient and profitable income-generating activities.

The EYE: FORSA was conceptualized to be implemented within the same time frame of the National FORSA programme. The delay in the implementation of the National FORSA programme has impacted the implementation of EYE: FORSA. In fact, the transfer of funds to the NGOs to start implementation got delayed for over a year. This delay happened because the Ministry of Finance in Egypt had some financial conditions that the NGOs needed to meet before they could get the money. Because of this, the entrepreneurship and employment training programs got postponed. Despite this setback, the project still started getting everything ready and began carrying out the planned activities. The list of beneficiaries was shared with the MOSS as a database for trained beneficiaries; in order to be shared with the NGOs in the two implementation governorates once they received the money.

Another challenge the National FORSA project faced is the reluctance of Forsa beneficiaries to participate in the project activities because of fear of the discontinuation of Takaful cash transfer. It has been a recurrent challenge across the two components of the National FORSA Programme, in addition to the high illiteracy rate as well as the very low skills of the end beneficiaries. The beneficiaries express significant fear that their participation in the Programs activities will directly result in them losing access to the cash transfer they receive each month under Takaful programme. This challenge has been thoroughly discussed with MoSS on how to overcome the growing reluctance of beneficiaries, and it has been seriously considered to detach the support provided through FORSA National Program and consequently by EYE: FORSA completely from the process of evaluating the socio-economic status of beneficiaries and the decision to keep them or exclude them from the monthly cash transferred.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to "Economic Empowerment and Employment for Vulnerable Communities." This is a project aimed mainly at supporting graduation from the conditional cash transfer schemes of the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, by feeding into the national Forsa programme and its supporting World Bank loan to support wage employment and self-employment. The project has the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Strengthen CSOs, institutions and private sector partners to initiate and improve wage and self-employment activities for youth.
- **Outcome 2:** Increase access to wage employment.
- **Outcome 3:** Promote self-employment with special focus on females.

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[1] https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8

The following image demonstrates the activities, outputs and outcomes of the EYE-FORSA project, but also shows how the EYE-FORSA project contributes to the two outcomes on employment and self-employment of the national FORSA project. In addition to the National FORSA programme, EYE-FORSA includes a dedicated outcome on capacity building of CSOs, institutions and private sector partners. The EYE: FORSA programme also has a more dedicated focus on female self-employment.

Figure 1. Theory of Change of EYE: FORSA (after revision by the project team)
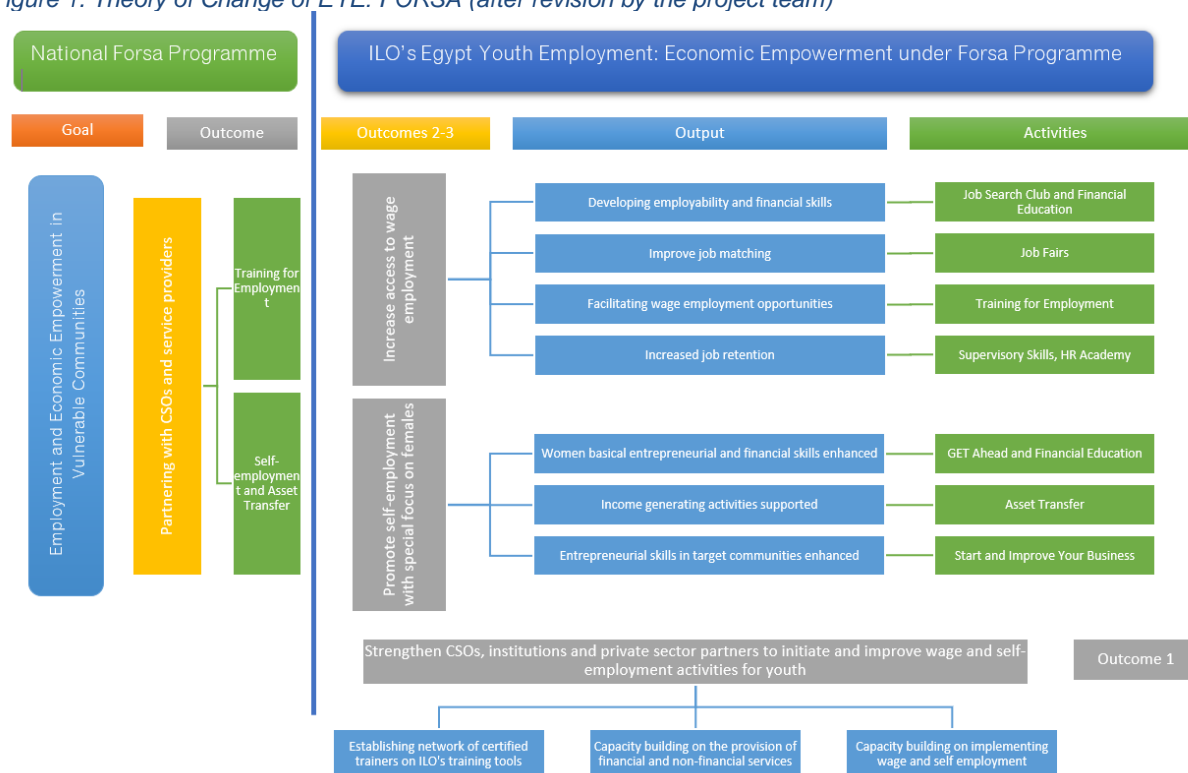
Source: ILO project description

2. Evaluation background

ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. As per ILO evaluation policy and procedures all programmes and projects with a budget between 1 and USD 5 million + must have to go through one internal and one independent evaluations. The project internal mid-term evaluation took place from October – December 2022.

The final independent evaluation will be managed by an ILO staff in process of certifications as evaluation manager and conducted by independent evaluators.

The evaluation in ILO is for the purpose of accountability, learning and 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.

The evaluation shall follow the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation; and the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist 4.8 "Preparing the inception report"; Checklist 4 "Validating methodologies"; and Checklist 4.2 "Preparing the evaluation report".

3. Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

3.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The overall purpose of the independent evaluation was to promote accountability and strengthen learning among the ILO and key stakeholders. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Assess the relevance and validity of projects design and implementation strategies in relation to the national (Egyptian), ILO and UN priorities and approaches, i.e., strategic fit to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), the country's United Nations Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF), the ILO objectives and Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) and how the project is perceived and valued by project beneficiaries and partners.

- Assess the synergy (coherence) with other ILO and non-ILO projects and programs.

- Assess the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objective and expected results regarding building the capacity of youth and women to join wage employment or self-employment, including capacitating partner organizations, and identify the supporting factors and constraints that have led to them, including implementation modalities chosen.

- Assess the impact and identify unexpected positive and negative results of the project.

- Assess the extent to which the project outcomes will be sustainable.

- Assess the implementation efficiency in terms of financial, human, etc. resources.

- Provide recommendations to key national projects stakeholders, ILO and the donor to promote sustainability and support further development of the project outcomes and towards similar interventions in the region.

- Identify lessons learned and good practices to inform the key stakeholders for future similar interventions.

3.2. Evaluation scope

The evaluation covered the whole implementation of the project, namely from January 2021 (signature of the protocol with the Government) to the end of June 2024, assessing all the results and key outputs that have been produced in this period. The geographical scope aligned with the setup of the project at the national and local levels and covered both governorates (Sharkeya and Asyut) as well as the targeted value chains.

3.3. Clients of the evaluation

The primary users of the evaluation are the Government of Egypt represented by the Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Government of Norway. Other users include:

- Local Government

- Ministry of Labour

- Ministry of International Cooperation

- Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI)

- Trade Union for Agriculture workers

- Financial and non-financial service providers

- Partner NGOs

- Etc.

In addition, the evaluation shall also be of interest for the ILO Technical and administrative back-stopers in the DWT/CO Cairo, regional office for Africa (ROAF) and relevant units in ILO HQ (employment department, WED programme), and PARDEV.

4. Evaluation criteria and questions

Following the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, the evaluation covers the following main evaluation questions (the full matrix is presented in Annex 2)

- **Relevance**
  - ➢ To what extent has the project taken into account the needs and priorities of tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries (i.e., local communities, SMEs, youth and women) identified in the project document?
  - ➢ How were ILO tripartite constituents and other project' stakeholders involved in the formulation and implementation of the project?

- **Coherence (internal and external)**
  - ➢ Is the project aligned with national and international development frameworks including the National Development Plan, United Nations Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF), ILO Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) and SDGs and their targets?
  - ➢ How well does the project outcome contribute towards the economic reform agenda of the Government including the three pillars of private-sector-led job creation, spatial integration, and inclusion?
  - ➢ To what extent did the project build on previous experience of the ILO (including lessons learned) and how well the project complements and fit with other ongoing ILO, UN agencies and government projects, interventions, and programs in the country?
  - ➢ Was the project design (implicit or explicit Theory of Change including external factors, implementation modalities, resource allocation, etc.,) comprehensive and realistic and purposeful towards achieving its objectives?
  - ➢ To what extent the project has specific targets for intended beneficiaries (women, youth, and local communities in an equitable manner)?

- **Effectiveness**
  - ➢ To what extent did the project achieve its outputs and outcomes by end of the project period?
  - ➢ Have unexpected positive or negative results (outputs and outcomes) been developed by or as a consequence of the project intervention?
  - ➢ What were the main internal and external factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes? How has the project managed those factors?
  - ➢ How effectively does the project covered the targeted geographical areas (Governorates) and value chains?
  - ➢ How effective were the backstopping support provided by ILO DWT-Cairo, and Sector and Enterprise units at the HQ?

- **Efficiency of resources use**
  - ➢ How efficiently have resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) been allocated and used to achieve the projects objectives? In general, did the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources?

➢ Were goods, service and works delivered on a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?
➢ Did the project create good relationship and cooperation with relevant national stakeholders and made good use of other ILO and non-ILO resources to strengthen its efficiency?
➢ How effectively has the project implemented its monitoring and evaluation strategy? To what extent that this contribute to accountability, management and learning?

- **Impact orientation by the project set-up, and impacts achieved vis-à-vis defined objectives and outcomes**
  ➢ Has the project contributed to achieving the proposed impacts? Is the programme strategy and programme management steering towards impact?
  ➢ Has the project contributed to a significant change in practices, technical capacity at local and national levels, governance or enabling environment?
  ➢ Is there evidence of positive changes in the life of the ultimate project beneficiaries and on policies and practices? How do you assess the probability that this changes or additional changes will occur?

- **Sustainability of projects outcomes and impacts beyond the project's lifespan**.
  ➢ Have the project outcomes been achieved in a sustainable manner that enable continuing benefits to the target groups beyond the project's lifespan?
  ➢ To what extent will national institutions and implementing partners will be willing/able to continue the project results without external funding or support?
  ➢ Are project beneficiaries likely to continue to feel improved conditions or access improved BDS after the project closeout?

Transversal criteria
  ➢ To what extent have the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation been taken into account and implemented, if not why?
  ➢ To what extent has the project brought lasting changes in line with the promotion of gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability?

5. Methodology and limitations

This evaluation was 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 and carry out through a mix methods approach including quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

The evaluation followed the following four phases:

5.1. Inception Phase

During this phase, preliminary desk research and virtual meetings with the project team were carried out to inform the data collection methods and tools. The inception phase is concluded after approval of the inception report. The list of consulted documents is presented in Annex 4.

- **Initial desk research** was carried out in the inception phase when planning the evaluation. The desk research supported the evaluation team to better understand the project, clarify the objectives of the evaluation, and provide a background for the development of data collection questionnaires.
- **Initial group discussions** with the project team were conducted online during the Inception Stage to better understand the specific context for the evaluation and the ILO's expectations regarding the evaluation.

5.2. Data collection phase

For this evaluation, the evaluation team used a mixed-methods data collection and analysis approach.

Desk research, which included a review of all available project documentation, including progress reports, work plans, monitoring data and research conducted under the project. The ILO was requested to provide the evaluation team with all relevant documentation and information. Important sources of data that the evaluation used as basis include the mid-term evaluation and the tracer study. This evaluation did not duplicate those findings, but rather complement and triangulate them.

Desk research was carried out to inform the evaluation questions listed above. The desk research also helped ensure the relevance of the interview questions (validation, exploration, etc.).

Second, **in-depth interviews for data collection** were conducted after submission of the Inception Report, to gather in-depth insights on the evaluation questions. Questionnaires were prepared for the main stakeholder groups, but subsequently tailored to the specific role of each respondent (Annex 5).

The evaluation included the following interview respondents:

National / Cairo interviews (6 interviews, 13 respondents)	Interviews in Asyut (4 interviews, 6 respondents)	Interviews in Sharkeya (4 interviews, 9 respondents)
- Federation of Egyptian Industries (2 males) - Ministry of Youth and Sports (2 females, 2 males)	- Ministry of Social Solidarity (1 male) - Ministry of Labour (1 male)	- NGO "Tamkeen" (2 males, 2 females) - Ministry of Labour (1 male)

- Ministry of Social Solidarity (1 male)	- NGO "GWLA" (2 males, 1 female)	- Ministry of Social Solidarity and deputy governor (2 males, 1 female)
- NGO "Lifemakers" (1 male, 1 female)	- ILO Local coordinator (1 male)	- ILO Local coordinator (1 female)
- NGO "Misr Elkhier" (1 male, 1 female)		
- Master Trainers (1 male, 1 female		
- Service providers (2 males)		
- Excoll Job Fairs (1 female)		

Additionally, 10 interviews were carried out with the EYE: FORSA project team, ILO Decent Work Country Team and the ILO Country Director. One interview was held with the donor. The total number of interviews therefore amounted to 24 interviews with 38 respondents.

Besides the KIIs with local stakeholders, the evaluation comprised **focus group discussions** with 1) beneficiaries and 2) trainers. The following FGDs were carried out in each governorate.

FGDs in Sharkeya	FGDs in Asiut
- One FGD with Get Ahead beneficiaries (1 male, 14 females)	- One FGD with Get Ahead beneficiaries (1 male, 11 females)
- One FGD with SIYB beneficiaries (9 females)	- One FGD with SIYB beneficiaries (2 males, 2 females)
- One FGD with JSC beneficiaries (12 females)	- One FGD with JSC beneficiaries (12 females)
- One FGD with Get Ahead trainers (1 male, 3 females)	- One FGD with Get Ahead trainers (3 males, 4 females)
- One FGD with SIYB trainers (3 males, 1 female)	- One FGD with SIYB trainers (1 male, 7 females)
- One FGD with JSC trainers (5 males, 5 females)	- One FGD with JSC trainers (4 males, 4 females)

The total number of FGDs was 12, (six with beneficiaries and six with trainers), comprising 105 respondents (84 female and 21 male).

5.3. Stakeholder workshop

On 28 August, a workshop was held in Cairo where the evaluators presented the preliminary findings to the main project staff and stakeholders. Feedback from the workshop was incorporated into the final report.

5.4. Data analysis and reporting

In this evaluation, the evaluation team highlights the key successes and challenges that appeared during the implementation of the project, presents its strengths and weaknesses while also showcasing good practices of the project.

The evaluation team relied mainly on qualitative data collected through desk research, interviews with stakeholders and FGDs. The data gathered from these three sources was coded based on a data collection and coding template in Word. The data collection template corresponds to the evaluation matrix, the questions of which can be found in Annex 2. Furthermore, the names of all interviewees and FGD participants were anonymized, and the content of the interviews was summarized.

Quantitative data that was received from the ILO was also used to analyse the project's financial information and to analyse the extent to which key indicators of the Project were achieved. Additionally, quantitative data was obtained through the tracer study. The data was not recalculated – rather, the analysis done in the tracer study was used.

The gathered data was triangulated, meaning that multiple different data sources were analysed at the same time to respond to the same research questions. This contributed to enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings, as one data source was verified with others to test its validity. At the same time this contributed to addressing potential knowledge gaps, as information gaps in one source could potentially be clarified by verifying it with other documents. For example, gaps in project documentation could be addressed through interviews with stakeholders or focus group discussions.

6. Limitations

The methodology chosen by the evaluation team aimed to ensure that the data collection covers the project holistically and addresses existing knowledge gaps. However, some limitations were present:

1. Due to the recent cabinet reshuffle in the Egyptian government, some of the key stakeholders who were part of the project were no longer in their function, and unable to contribute to the evaluation data collection. This was mitigated by careful triangulation of findings with the midterm evaluation (where such stakeholders were still in place) and with desk research.

2. The evaluation had a limited time scope, which required the team to rely on convenient sampling of beneficiaries and trainers, rather than a randomised sample, which would have increased the representativeness of the responses. This potential bias was considered in the analysis, but the content of the interviews/FGDs did not indicate that the sampled beneficiaries had a disproportionate positive or negative view, as compared with the tracer study and desk research.

3. The limited timeframe also hindered the evaluators from conducting visits to the beneficiaries' businesses or conduct other observation activities. The businesses were therefore discussed in the FGDs, but not otherwise observed.

4. The evaluation team was unable to meet with beneficiaries from the training-for-employment component, due to their ongoing employment in the factories in the industrial zone. They could not leave their work to meet with evaluators. Only desk research was used for this dimension of the project, and limited statements were made on this dimension.

7. Evaluation Findings

7.1 Relevance

According to the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, "relevance" indicates the extent to which an intervention addresses the needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders. The following chapter presents to what extent the project addressed these needs in its design and was flexible to adapt to changing needs and contexts.

To what extent did the project address the needs of its beneficiaries?

The Asyut and Sharkeya governorates were selected as they host some of the most poor and vulnerable beneficiaries in Egypt. The project targeted youth that are stuck in informal, low-productivity, and low-revenue activities, and their specific needs are often not reflected in existing entrepreneurship or skills programmes. Gender roles, traditions, and barriers related to childcare and family responsibilities create additional burdens for women to find suitable employment.[2]

> *"T&K beneficiaries did not have the funds to start a project; lacked the skills to be entrepreneurs; and did not know how to develop a business plan".[3]*
>
> *"Beneficiaries also lacked skills about pricing and marketing skills, as well as identifying their client segments and market research and understanding of market and competitors and calculating indirect expenses".[4]*

The evaluation found that the EYE:FORSA project addressed those gaps in knowledge and skills that beneficiaries required to find employment or start a business. It was mostly sensitive to women's needs in this regard as well. The self-employment track was more relevant compared to the wage-employment track. Several targeted youths did not want to participate, out of fear to lose the T&K benefits.

Regarding the **self-employment track**, consulted female beneficiaries noted that they wanted to feel valued and have a source of (diversified) income to offer better lives for themselves and their families. Starting a business from home would reduce the main barriers mentioned above.[5] They also noted the lack of opportunities for wage-employment.[6]

In all self-employment track FGDs, respondents noted that the trainings were very relevant to address their needs. The trainings used simple-to-understand language and interesting practical tools and examples.[7] Women in particular found marketing, communication, and negotiation most interesting, as well as all trainings on financial literacy, calculation of indirect expenses, etc.[8] The tracer study confirmed these findings: 96% of respondents found Get Ahead relevant and 98% found Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) relevant for their needs.[9]

Two NGOs also noted the difference between the national Forsa programme and ILO EYE: FORSA project in relation to the self-employment component: the asset transfer. "National Forsa lets people choose from only a few business models, while EYE: FORSA was much

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[2] EYE:FORSA project document, interviews with ILO staff, FGD with JSC trainers
[3] FGD with Get Ahead trainers
[4] FGD with SIYB trainers
[5] FGD with Get Ahead beneficiaries
[6] FGD with SIYB beneficiaries and FGD with Get Ahead beneficiaries
[7] FGD with SIYB and Get Ahead beneficiaries
[8] FGDs with Get Ahead beneficiaries
[9] Tracer study

more flexible and supported the business based on beneficiaries needs/interests and the assessment of the NGO. Therefore, the beneficiaries of EYE:FORSA showed better end results."[10]

Some small issues were mentioned regarding the training content. Some SIYB beneficiaries found the linkages with Egyptian Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA), less beneficial as they focused on the existing business and conventional businesses while other businesses were excluded by those support organisations. They also mentioned the need for (future) training to focus more on online marketing techniques and tools and general online business management. [11]

JSC trainers noted that family responsibilities and job distance formed the main barrier for women to find **wage-employment**. Job seekers also had their minds set on working in the public sector, as factories are far away and have long working hours.[12] One trainer noted that, with ILO, they conducted needs assessments to assess the needs of women and opportunities available to them.[13]

Overall, FGD respondents found the EYE:FORSA training and activities relevant to help build their confidence, gain financial literacy skills, and search for suitable opportunities. [14] The survey conducted as part of the tracer study reported that 92% of respondents believed that the training was suitable to their needs and important to find a job. The facilitators (96%) and content (95%) were most often listed as the main advantages of the training.[15]

However, for women in particular, the attendance of the JSC and job fairs still were not relevant as the offered jobs were still too far away with too long working hours, and more focused on men (e.g. outdoor sales) and higher-educated individuals.[16] At the same time, the training location and duration were perceived by only 50% of surveyed beneficiaries as beneficial, meaning that for half of the beneficiaries, these aspects of the training formed an issue.[17]

These challenges are linked to the broader problem in the governorates, namely the absence of a strong private sector with opportunities for employment. In Sharkeya, jobs are offered in the industrial sector, but besides that, in both governorate, job opportunities in general are very limited.[18] Therefore, while the JSC and training content may have been interesting and relevant, the absence of job opportunities hindered beneficiaries from putting the training in practice.

In this regard, some interviewees also noted that the project may not have focused sufficiently on the "*decent work*" dimension in ILO's mandate. While the wage-employment track is fully focused on equipping beneficiaries with skills to find employment, there was insufficient attention on the creation of decent work in the governorates where informality is high. Although the jobs obtained by beneficiaries, recorded by the project, were in the formal sector, there were still issues noted with these jobs (e.g. in terms of wages, working conditions, etc.) and the share of beneficiaries being able to secure such formal jobs was small (14% according to the tracer study).[19] Particularly, as women were less able to access formal employment, they preferred nearby informal employment.

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[10] Interviews with stakeholders
[11] FGD with SIYB beneficiaries
[12] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[13] Interview with a JSC trainer.
[14] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[15] Tracer study
[16] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[17] Tracer study
[18] Interviews with ILO staff.
[19] Interviews with ILO staff

The EYE:FORSA wage-employment component also included the HR and Gender academy for employers. The evaluation noted that this was considered relevant by the training participants.

> "*Before the HR Academy all employers had some HR system but needed further development or missing the appraisal systems and succession planning. Gender policies were also an area for improvement*".[20]

> According to the HR and Gender Academy assessment, all six interviewed HR staff in the targeted factories found the training suitable for their needs and beneficial for their companies. Among the 15 interviewed labour supervisors, communication skills and problem-solving skills were perceived as the most beneficial training sessions.[21]

To what extent did the project address the needs and priorities of stakeholders?

The main stakeholders of the EYE:FORSA programme included the Ministry of Social Solidarity (in charge of the national Forsa programme), other ministries such as MoYS and MoL, governorate officials, and NGOs involved in the trainings and assets transfer activities.

Interviewed stakeholders were generally satisfied with the alignment of the EYE:FORSA project with their own (institutional) priorities.

At **national** level, interviewed Ministry officials were highly positive about the support of ILO/EYE:FORSA to their needs and interests. One respondent noted that they worked "hand-in-hand" with ILO to adjust the ILO tools, expand certain activities upon their request, and obtain trainings to build capacity.[22] Another stakeholder also emphasized the flexibility of ILO to design project content together, based on local and stakeholder needs.[23]

Local interviewed stakeholders noted that the capacity building provided by ILO were relevant and beneficial for them and aligned with their expectations.[24] Additionally, the EYE:FORSA project helped fill certain resource gaps that supported stakeholders to enhance their capacities.[25] For governorates, the project helped them to achieve their national Forsa targets.[26]

One governorate official, however, noted that they were not aware of all EYE:FORSA work (just the job fair). Another official noted that they would have liked more training from ILO, e.g. on market analysis and securing jobs.[27] MoSS staff at governorate level were not (or to a limited extent) involved in the design of the project or indicated that they influenced the implementation process.[28]

To what extent did the project adapt to changing needs of the beneficiaries and stakeholders?

According to interviewed stakeholders, the EYE:FORSA project was flexible to adapt based on feedback on the project implementation. During the implementation, certain challenges and opportunities arose that ILO addressed by making adjustments in the project design and content.

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[20] Interview with a stakeholder
[21] HR and Gender Academy assessment
[22] Interview with a stakeholder
[23] Interview with a stakeholder
[24] Interviews with stakeholders
[25] Interview with a stakeholder
[26] Interview with a stakeholder
[27] Interviews with stakeholders
[28] Interviews with stakeholders

As mentioned above, stakeholders were satisfied with the flexibility of ILO to adjust to changing needs and incorporating the needs of stakeholders.

> "*After JSC training we understood that there are issues with the employers, so the HR academy came into the picture, and we tailored job fair to focus on specific opportunities to match the beneficiaries background and employers' needs*".[29]
>
> "*EYE-FORSA added financial literacy content (4 days) to the original JSC (8 days) which was a unique addition by ILO for EYE-FORSA*".[30]

In particular, the adjustment of the official ILO tools to the context of Egypt and the specific beneficiaries was of great importance to ensure that the tools were suitable for them. This included, for example, merging the Get Ahead and financial literacy trainings, and simplifying the content.[31] Trainers themselves were also able to adjust the trainings using local familiar examples and simplified terms matching the trainees' capacities.

> Get Ahead trainers noted in particular that "*the [training] content is the same, but we adjusted the delivery of the training and the language to match the T&K beneficiaries. During the TOT, we shared our ideas (e.g. adding the business plan to the training) and the ILO adopted them.*"[32]
>
> Get Ahead, SIYB and JSC trainers both noted that "*trainers had the flexibility to use local examples and simple language during the training session, but the flow of the training and content is fixed for all trainers.*"[33]

The project also adjusted the selection criteria for beneficiaries to address challenges of finding beneficiaries. Persons with limited reading and writing skills could participate in EYE: FORSA later on, if they could bring a family member to the training who could support them. "*Sometimes they have new ideas and have the motivation to complete their project, but they just need to be accompanied by one of their family members to help them prepare their basic business plan*".[34]

Another ILO adaptation was allowing non-T&K beneficiaries to participate in some activities, due to the poor quality of MoSS' T&K beneficiary lists (incomplete contact information) and demotivated T&K beneficiaries to join JSC activities and irrelevance of SYIB to T&K backgrounds.

The devaluation of the Egyptian pound (EGP) led the project to have a surplus halfway through the project. This surplus was used to purchase assets for the Get Ahead beneficiaries who had received training but were still waiting for their asset (elaborated in section 4.3.2.2.). This enhanced the effectiveness and efficiency of the project.[35]

As the project was implemented in two governorates, the ILO project also had the opportunity to exchange lessons learned between the governorates. Interviewed staff concurred that they actively shared experiences. Examples of adjustments made based on exchange between the project staff include:

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[29] Interview with a stakeholder
[30] Interview with a stakeholder
[31] Interviews with ILO staff and stakeholders.
[32] FGDs with Get Ahead trainers.
[33] FGD with SIYB trainers and with JSC trainers
[34] Interview with ILO staff
[35] Interview with ILO staff

> *"We started with job fairs in Asyut and learned important lessons when it comes to mobilizing beneficiaries to attend the job fair. Here, we opened it up to whoever wanted to attend. Therefore, the T&K beneficiaries constituted a smaller share of the total visitors. Then in Sharkeya, we tried to send more targeted messages to our target group and opened the fair for them only. The share of the T&K beneficiaries – our target group – was then a lot larger".* [36]

7.2. Coherence

According to the OECD/DAC criteria, this evaluation looks at the project's internal and external coherence. As for internal coherence, it assessed the logic of the project, and the alignment with cross-cutting concerns of ILO. The external coherence evaluates consistency with the national strategies and with other projects/initiatives.

To what extent was EYE:FORSA externally coherent?

To what extent was the project aligned with national strategies and objectives?

Project impact and sustainability largely rely on whether the project objectives are aligned with ongoing efforts and priorities of the government. This increases the likelihood of incorporation of results in future policies and supports ownership by the government and their willingness to continue working towards the shared objectives.

EYE:FORSA largely contributes to Egypt's national objectives and strategies, particularly to the national Forsa programme. The project contributes less to recurring objectives to promote job creation.

Egypt has introduced **economic reforms** already since 2015, with the introduction of T&K and the subsequent launch of Forsa in 2023. One of the main goals of Forsa is to "*graduate beneficiaries of Takaful to economic self-reliance by enabling them to engage in wage employment or small-scale productive enterprises*".[37]

The EYE:FORSA project was launched with the core purpose to contribute to the national Forsa programme. Like the National Forsa programme, EYE:FORSA has two tracks, focusing on wage-employment and on self-employment. A third outcome of EYE:FORSA aims to enhance capacity of stakeholders to support youth employment, thereby contributing to the work of National Forsa on the long-term.[38]

Besides the alignment of tracks, the implementation of EYE:FORSA took place in close coordination with national Forsa in terms of the delivery of assets. Trainings and activities under EYE:FORSA were designed to incorporate the provision of assets by MoSS under the National Forsa programme.

Interviewed stakeholders noted that they "did not feel any gap in the ILO alignment to National FORSA objectives and goals. We count ILO as a team member of national Forsa".[39] As a stakeholder noted that the results of the EYE:FORSA were used to inform their approaches in other governorates[40], ILO staff similarly noted that EYE:FORSA functioned as a lab to test different interventions to help transition T&K beneficiaries out of the T&K programme.[41]

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[36] Interview with ILO staff
[37] James Allen IV, et.al. (2023) Key Findings from Midline Evaluation of Egypt's Forsa Graduation Program.
[38] EYE:FORSA project document.
[39] Interview with a stakeholder
[40] Interview with a stakeholder
[41] Interview with ILO staff.

However, the SIYB training was less aligned with the national Forsa programme, as it targeted the non-T&K beneficiaries. The training focused on higher educated, less vulnerable, beneficiaries and therefore seems less in line with the goals of National Forsa as it relates to the support to T&K beneficiaries.

Considering the broader development of Egypt, the government launched the **Egypt 2030 vision** in 2016, focusing on economic, social and environmental development. The vision focuses (among others) on improving living standards of Egyptians (i.e. eradication of poverty), guided by the principle of equity and accessibility. At the same time, the vision foresees a diversified, knowledge-based, competitive economy with a capacity to create jobs across different sectors.[42]

EYE:FORSA and the national Forsa programme focus on the eradication of poverty through enhancing vulnerable people's skills to find job opportunities or start self-employment. The project reflects the equity principle as it focuses on the most vulnerable target groups. The project, however, does not focus on the actual creation of job opportunities. As highlighted in the relevance section, the achievements of the EYE:FORSA project are hindered by the absence of sufficient suitable jobs and the irrelevance of some assets to the end-beneficiaries needs.

EYE:FORSA contributes explicitly to two of the four pillars of the **United Nations Partnership Development Framework (2018-2022)** for Egypt, namely inclusive economic development, and women's empowerment. Regarding the former, EYE:FORSA contributes to the aims of "*Improving the access of youth and women to livelihood opportunities*"; "*Improving the ability of the poor and the vulnerable to effectively participate in economic activities*"; and "*Strengthening capacity of local authorities and improve the competitiveness of the local economy*". However, as mentioned above, the UNPDF notes job creation as a crucial objective, which is less addressed in EYE:FORSA.

Regarding women's empowerment, EYE:FORSA supports the UNPDF objectives of "increasing the capacity of women to engage in productive economic activity, including in agriculture and the informal economy", and "promoting formal and informal education for girls and women in rural and urban areas".[43]

To what extent was the project complementary to, or duplicated, other projects of ILO and other development partners?

Coordination between projects can enhance the mutual reinforcement of efforts, thereby enhancing efficiency and impact. At the same time, duplication of efforts can waste efforts.

The project effectively supported ILO objectives and other ILO projects in Egypt. Furthermore, it reinforced other stakeholders' efforts by granting them permission to use ILO tools.

Within ILO, the EYE:FORSA contributes to the overall **ILO objectives** for the country, which comprise three pillars: governance, employment, and social protection. According to an interviewee, the EYE:FORSA project, through its self-employment track, focuses on the second track by creating businesses that can potentially create new job opportunities.[44] A few examples were provided of how the EYE:FORSA project supported broader objectives of ILO towards policy change, through collaboration with other projects or the Decent Work Country Team.

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[42] The National Agenda for Sustainable Development: Egypt's Updated Vision 2030 (2023)
[43] United Nations Partnership Development Framework 2018 to 2022
[44] Interview with ILO staff

> *"EYE:FORSA and the DWCT started a dialogue with the MoSS to discuss broader issues linked to social security and T&K. For example, that small farmers should not immediately lose T&K benefits when they enter the social security system"*.
>
> *"We have a group of ILO projects, including EYE:FORSA, working with farmers on topics related to just transition and green jobs, and working towards and macro-economic policy on this."* [45]

ILO staff and stakeholders noted that no other, similar projects were active in the two governorates, meaning that there is no overlap or hindering duplication.[46] At the same time, various NGOs were able to replicate the ILO tools in other governorates, thereby reinforcing the work of ILO. Stakeholders also noted the ability of Ministries to replicate some of the ILO trainings.[47]

> *"NGOs send us requests under their projects, which are unrelated to EYE:FORSA, to use our training materials such as Get Ahead. We provide them with permission and only ask them to acknowledge that it is an ILO training (i.e. the ILO copyright) and provide us progress reports so we can follow how the trainings go and even offer support if needed".* [48]

One NGO noted that they worked with IOM on another youth employment project, but no coordination happened between both projects due to the different nature of beneficiaries (ILO worked with T&K beneficiaries while IOM work with migrants).[49] Considering that employment challenges affect many groups of people in Egypt, exchange of experiences on "what works" could be beneficial to mutually enhance efforts and provide recommendations to the government.

Has there been internal coherence within the project and its components?

Was the project design comprehensive and realistic and purposeful towards achieving its objectives?

The mid-term evaluation in 2023 concluded that the project's design was "realistic, had everything gone according to plan". To account for activities that could not be implemented due to the large delays in the first phase of the project (caused by COVID-19 and the nearly one-year delay in asset transfers from MOSS to NGOs), the mid-term evaluation recommended a change of the Theory of Change, to reorganise certain activities and remove activities that could not realistically be implemented anymore.[50] However, the midterm evaluation's recommendations and the project's annual reports do not detail why exactly these changes were made.

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[45] Interviews with ILO staff
[46] Interviews with ILO and stakeholders.
[47] Interview with stakeholders.
[48] Interview with ILO staff
[49] Interview with a stakeholder
[50] Mid-term evaluation

ToC OUTCOMES BEFORE THE MID-TERM EVALUATION	ToC OUTCOMES AFTER THE MID-TERM EVALUATION
Outcome 1: Strengthened partner institutions and CSOs promote wage and self-employment and entrepreneurship for women and youth	Outcome 1: Strengthened CSOs, institutions and private sector partners to initiate and improve wage and self-employment activities for youth
Outcome 2: youth in targeted areas have an increased access to wage employment	Outcome 2: Increased access to wage employment
Outcome 3: Female self-employment, teamwork, and value chains are promoted	Outcome 3: Promoted self-employment with special focus on females
Outcome 4: Communities are empowered to support entrepreneurship for the poor, teamwork, and value chains.	

The original theory of change had a number of assumptions about the project's different areas of interventions. The assumptions about training content respond to target groups knowledge and skills proved to be valid either for Get Ahead beneficiaries, SIYB or NGOs. On the other hand, the assumption that "Job club members commit to undertaking sufficient job search activities and there are available jobs in the labour market" is proved to be partially valid as jobs in the labour market we not matching the job applicants' profiles and needs. Other assumptions such as "MFIs are properly identified and targeted and k knowledge management and event organization are well planned from the start of the project" were not tested.[51]

The evaluation concluded that the revised logframe and targets were realistic, and the project design was largely comprehensive and purposeful, particularly after revisions made after the mid-term evaluations. Challenges relate to the limited focus on decent work.

A review of the June 2024 logframe shows that the vast majority of targets were either achieved or exceeded, showing that the revised logframe remained **realistic** considering the remaining timeframe of the project and the increased targets for some activities. The new logframe shifted some activities and changed outcomes, but also increased targets for many activities. These changes were made in line with the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation.

The project design was **comprehensive** in its detailed needs/background assessment and subsequent consistent alignment with the National Forsa programme across its components (particularly after the ToC revision). The project document refers to previous projects and the lessons learned that applied to EYE: FORSA, as well as the use and adaptation of existing, well-tested ILO tools for entrepreneurship and employment. The project results show that particularly the self-employment track was well-designed and purposeful towards the objectives of enhancing economic empowerment (of women). The updating of the sequencing of support, as recommended in the mid-term evaluation, was applied effectively and enhanced the effectiveness of the project design.

A weakness of the project design links to the focus on wage-employment in a context where limited decent and formal job opportunities are available. The focus of the project was largely on the skills of the beneficiaries and to a lesser extent on the offer of jobs. Furthermore, the jobs that were offered were often not suitable in terms of hours and wages and were too far

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[51] EYE-FORSA project document April 2021

from the communities for women to combine with childcare and family responsibilities. This links closely to aforementioned statements that the concept of "decent work" was insufficiently introduced as the focus of EYE: FORSA was to find formal employment, rather than the creation of quality employment ("decent" work).

Did the project design integrate ILO's cross-cutting concerns on gender, persons with disabilities, environmental sustainability, social dialogue, and international labour standards?

Gender mainstreaming in projects comprises the integration of gender-related concerns in the design and needs assessments, in the overall implementation, and in the monitoring and evaluation. **The evaluation shows that the project was largely diligent in mainstreaming gender**. The project document reflects on the challenges of women as part of the target group, family dynamics, and the use of existing ILO trainings adapted for them. The capacity-building outcome and self-employment outcome also focus on specific support to women. M&E tools of the project include data disaggregated by gender, but reports do not include a more qualitative reflection on how women experienced the different activities.

The main challenge regarding gender links to the barriers women face to obtain wage-employment. The distance of available jobs makes it nearly impossible for women to benefit from the JSC and job fairs.

There is no reference to **persons with disabilities**, **environmental sustainability, or International Labour Standards** in narrative reports, project document, or in the logframe.

The limited space for trade unions in Egypt hinders the ILO from fully utilising **social dialogue** as a tool for the achievement of project objectives. The role of trade unions in policymaking related to employment creation and decent work is currently limited. Therefore, the project document and narrative reports do not refer to trade union engagement at all, and the mid-term evaluation did not reflect on this topic.[52] However, one ILO interview did provide an example of how EYE:FORSA supported other ILO efforts to support trade unions.

> ILO worked with trade unions to develop a position paper on the issue of just transition for women, and on the impact of the climate change on women, particularly those who are in the farming sector. EYE:FORSA has supported them financially to present the paper in COP 22 in Sharm El Sheik.[53]

7.3 Effectiveness

According to the OECD/DAC criteria, the evaluation of effectiveness reports on whether the intervention achieved its intended objectives. The following section examines the extent to which the EYE: FORSA project was able to achieve its expected outputs and outcomes, and whether the results vary across different groups. This section also analyses the main influencing factors that determined the effectiveness in meeting the project's goals.

 To what extent was the Project able to ensure the achievement of Outputs and Outcomes?

The project's logframe comprised 24 indicators at output level, divided across three outcomes and six outputs (two per outcome). The targets of various indicators were increased after the mid-term evaluation, to absorb the budget surplus, as well as to align with changes in other activities. The list of indicators, targets, and results is presented in Annex 7.

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[52] Project document and narrative reports
[53] Interviews with ILO staff

The majority of targets were achieved or exceeded during the project implementation. Only a few targets per output were (partially) missed (7 of the 24 targets).

Interestingly, at the project closure, budget was left to actually implement additional activities and meet the targets. However, the donor did not agree to a no-cost extension (except for the evaluation) and therefore the project was not able to continue.[54]

To what extent has the project made progress towards strengthened CSOs, institutions, and private sector to promote employment and self-employment, for women and youth

Besides its focus on training and support for beneficiaries, the EYE: FORSA implemented a component focused on capacity-building of stakeholders. The purpose of this component can be considered two-fold, namely 1) to ensure the quality of the activities under the wage-employment and self-employment tracks, and 2) to broaden the impact of EYE:FORSA by capacitating stakeholders to continue providing support to women and youth in their areas of work.

The evaluation found that trainers were largely satisfied with the trainings provided by ILO and Master Trainers and reported an increase in their capacity to provide trainings and support the T&K target group.

Capacity-building was largely implemented through a cascading system: ILO provided intensive **training** on the ILO tools to Master Trainers, who subsequently provided Training of Trainers to staff of NGOs and other organisations such as MoSS and MoYS. Ultimately, those trainers worked directly with beneficiaries.

Trainers who participated in interviews and FGDs noted that they gained additional knowledge and skills as part of the EYE:FORSA project. Trainers appreciated the ILO manuals and the logistical support on the ground, as well as learning about T&K beneficiaries as a specific target group.[55]

> *"SYIB as a manual is very comprehensive and well-studied and developed which is beneficial for us as trainers to study. The simulation section was also new to us and very beneficial. SYIB changed the trainers' mindsets and made them look at trainees as business owners rather than beneficiaries who need support. We learned how to work with multiple beneficiaries coming from different backgrounds and educational levels."[56]*

Quality control was an important aspect of this component, given the distance between ILO and the beneficiaries (*ILO ▯ Master Trainer ▯ trainer ▯ beneficiary*). ILO staff explained that a comprehensive feedback system was in place, facilitated firstly by having open contracts with Master Trainers to ensure that they could conduct follow-ups with their trainers.[57]

Furthermore, ILO focal points in the two governorates regularly attended (and sometimes recorded part of) the workshops with beneficiaries and reported on the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps to the ILO project team. Where needed, online meetings were conducted to provide feedback to trainers and suggestions for improvements.[58] This feedback loop had an additional benefit, namely that the quality of the trainings by each trainer improved throughout the project. JSC trainers confirmed that this approach took place.[59] Both Trainers on governorate levels and Master trainers at central level shared during the group discussion their satisfaction of the

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[54] Interview with ILO staff
[55] FGDs with SIYB and with Get Ahead trainers.
[56] FGD with SIYB trainers
[57] Interview with ILO staff
[58] Interview with ILO staff
[59] FGD with JSC trainers

content and capacities enhancement from the training and later during training delivery to beneficiaries and follow-up in the case of Get Ahead.

Only **small criticisms** were provided by SIYB trainers, related to training venues, responsibilities for targeting of beneficiaries (as this was left fully to the trainers and unclear to them in the beginning), and the budget for training, which remained the same despite inflation.[60]

EYE-FORSA did not consist of capacity building support offered to different NGOs. Some large well-equipped NGOs like Lifemakers and Misr-Elkhier did not receive any CB support from the project but nominated individuals to be enrolled in Get Ahead and SIYB TOT. It was clarified by EYE-FORSA team that those NGOs joined the program late as they joined the National FORSA program after a year and half of implementation. So, EYE-FORSA did not tailore CB training to those NGOs but invited them to nominate trainers for different components such as SIYB and Get Ahead. Other local NGOs indicated that capacity-building was mostly focused on the trainers (who are part of the NGOs staff) certification on ILO tools such as Get Ahead and SIYB and less on the capacity of the NGO as a whole.

However, some examples were found in an NGO in Sharkeya who received capacity building as an organization on proposal writing, monitoring and evaluation, assessments and business development services. This NGO who benefited from a broader range of capacity building reported on how the EYE: FORSA contributed to the work of the NGO as a whole. For example, one NGO noted that "*we submitted a new proposal and scored 95%. This was because of the ILO training benefits. And also managed to better track and report on their projects results and established BDS center after the received capacity building from EYE-FORSA*"[61]

Other NGOs in Assyut noted, however, that the EYE:FORSA did not increase their institutional capacity, but only that of their specific training staff. They requested similar organizational level trainings on management, proposal writing, BDS, etc.[62]

Another target group who benefited from the offered capacity building support by EYE-FORSA is **the MoYS staff** who received the JSC and financial literacy TOT and got certified to cascade the training in Sharkeya and Assuit. Overall, the trainers showed high satisfaction from the received TOT and mentioned that the training methodology was very interesting to them especially the activities management in the classrooms, yet JSC trainers requested follow-up and refresher training[63].

To what extent has the project made progress towards increased access to wage employment for youth in targeted areas

The first track of the project focused on enhancing opportunities for youth to access wage-employment. Activities under this track included the Job Search Clubs, job fairs, employability training, on-the-job-training and financial education. The project also held training (HR Academy) for employers.

While the project activities were effective to develop employability and job searching skills, the effectiveness of the project to actually get employed was limited by the lack of suitable jobs in the areas close to the beneficiaries.

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[60] FGDs with trainers of all tools.
[61] Interview with a stakeholder
[62] Interview with a stakeholder
[63] FGDs with JSC trainers

The tracer study found that 75% of the **JSC beneficiaries** (with a large difference between 80.0% for Asyut and 42% for Sharkeya) demonstrated skills necessary for the job market (e.g. CV writing, personal interviews, etc.). 92% of respondents reported that they gained new knowledge.[64]

> *"It changed our mindset on how to conduct an interview and your body language during the interview. How to search for jobs, use more channels to find a job, and how to communicate with others and use the right wording writing the CV."[65]*

Several interviewees noted that the majority of participants of the JSCs and job fairs had found a job. As noted by one trainer "*the JSC enabled youth to change their mind set regarding employment in the public sector*" and explore private sector jobs as well. Beneficiaries noted that, after the trainings, the trainers created a Whatsapp group to continue sharing job opportunities.[66] Additionally, follow-up with employers showed clear levels of satisfaction with the work of the newly hired beneficiaries.[67]

However, the tracer study found that only 14% of beneficiaries found employment after the trainings and sessions. The study importantly noted that "*none of them got social insurance or a well-paying job*". This low number is largely related to the absence of job opportunities (reported by 60% of the respondents) and due to home duties (46%).[68] Trainers noted that several beneficiaries accepted informal jobs, as they were closer to home and allowed them to maintain the T&K benefits.[69] Those are not captured by ILO (as ILO reports only formal jobs).

> Women who managed to secure jobs after the JSC support found their jobs in nearby informal businesses like local nurseries, small factories, or started their own home-based business. Age, marital status and educational level played a factor in women ability to find jobs in the formal sector especially in Sharkeya. Young single females with middle to high educational level were better able to secure formal job with contract and benefits.[70]

Some of the beneficiaries who obtained jobs through EYE: FORSA noted that "*the working hours are around 10 hours, we face some problems with management, and the work is physically heavy*".[71] In fact, 9 of the 12 female JSC beneficiaries in the FGD noted that they prefer to have a home-based businesses and requested vocational training support to start a business.[72] As a respondent stated: "*The JSC benefited me in my life but not to find a new job.*"[73] Respondents of the tracer study noted in this regard that they do benefit from the trainings in their personal life (e.g. on managing money).[74]

Lastly, the HR and Gender Academy Training Assessment found positive results of the training on the skills and behavior of HR staff and labour supervisors. Interviews with ILO also noted the benefit of commencing the Academy later in the programme, to ensure that the training provided to the companies was connected to the hiring of the wage-employment track beneficiaries.

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[64] Tracer study
[65] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[66] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[67] Interview with a stakeholder
[68] Tracer study
[69] FGD with JSC trainers
[70] FGDs with JSC beneficiaries
[71] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[72] FGDs with JSC beneficiaries
[73] FGD with JSC beneficiaries
[74] Tracer study

> The 15 supervisors interviewed for the HR and Gender Academy Training Assessment noted that the training helped them in amending many policies and procedures for employees, particularly in regard to overall communication with employees and consideration of their different background. The six HR staff also provided examples of improvements after the training, such as establishing a legally compliant leave system, and initiating performance reviews and onboarding trainings. Additionally, various examples of new, gender-sensitive practices were provided, such as workplace nurseries and awareness-raising on gender equality in the workplace.[75]

An interesting wage-employment model that was tested by EYE-FOSA is linking women beneficiaries to entrepreneurs who offered vocational training to women and were supposed to use those women later as their labour force while the entrepreneurs secure the market demand. Women beneficiaries received the vocational training and gained a decent skill, but later the planned partnership between the entrepreneur and the women beneficiaries did not proceed as planned due to the far distance between women in Asyut and Entrepreneurs in Cairo and the poor price offering from the entrepreneur side. It was clarified in one of the KIIs that this model needs an intermediary body (e.g. local NGO or cooperative) that can represent the women beneficiaries and communicate with entrepreneurs, organize the women production, ensure quality and efficiency and negotiate the products prices with the entrepreneurs. This model of assigning local NGO to represent women is already being tested in Assuit, yet it is too really to generate results and lessons learned from this pilot.

To what extent has the project made progress towards the promotion of self-employment, particularly of women

The second track of the project focused on enhancing the skills of beneficiaries and opportunities for beneficiaries to establish a business or grow their existing business. Activities included the Get Ahead and financial literacy for the most vulnerable and less educated beneficiaries and Start and Improve Your Business trainings for beneficiaries with higher levels of education. This track focused particularly on female beneficiaries.

The evaluation found evidence to conclude that the SIYB and Get Ahead trainings were effective in enhancing the skills of beneficiaries in relation to self-employment. In many cases, particularly among SIYB beneficiaries, this resulted in the establishment and/or growth of businesses. The effectiveness of Get Ahead was affected by delays in the asset transfer, asset matching, and quality of provided assets.

SIYB FGD respondents noted improvements in their businesses as a result of the trainings. Examples include increased resilience and market adaptation, as well as better organisation of financial records, and sourcing raw materials together as a group.[76] Various examples of business growth or expansion were mentioned, including the partnership with family to expand the business, resulting in larger clients with larger orders. Others introduced an online shop and/or hired additional staff.[77]

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[75] HR and Gender Academy Training Assessment
[76] FGDs with SIYB beneficiaries
[77] FGD with SIYB beneficiaries

> The tracer study found that, overall, 95% of surveyed SIYB participants reported increased skills that would contribute to business success, and 98% has increased motivation for their business. As a result of the training, 62% of beneficiaries reported increased sales and 73% made profits, and 93% of beneficiaries still held a running business during the time of the tracer study. Compared to the SIYB control group, the SIYB beneficiaries made more profit in the past six months before the survey, more often have a legally registered business, and more often have a business that is still running.[78]

Similar to SIYB, the **Get Ahead beneficiaries** also reported improvements in their businesses and business skills, which was confirmed by the use of business language during the FGDs. Female participants added that even if they faced some challenges at the beginning to attend the training and later start their own business due to their families' lack of support, once their family members started watching them succeed and generate income, they offered them support.

All participants of the Sharkeya FGD confirmed that the training was a direct reason to start their business and that they benefited on personal level and on business level from the training. One female beneficiary noted, for example, that she "*started organizing my financial records and receipts from suppliers. I started calculating the household contribution to the business and add it to my expenses list like the household electricity/water and the business owner time into the expenses.*"[79] Most of the trainees in one FGD were in touch to source raw material collectively to get lower prices.[80]

> The tracer study found that 98% of surveyed Get Ahead beneficiaries are using their new skills and 94% gained motivation for their business after then training. On average, 46% of beneficiaries reported increased sales, while beneficiaries who received assets showed a larger increase in sales. 26% of respondents reported profit in the last months before the survey. However, the difference between the control group and GA beneficiaries is minimal in all areas of comparison.[81]

Similar to the tracer study, interviewed stakeholders noted that Get Ahead beneficiaries who received an asset (shortly) after the Get Ahead training showed more positive results, as the business was better planned. "*Beneficiaries thought about the business during the training, made the decision and received asset that meet their needs and expectations*".[82]

The tracer study results for Get Ahead are somewhat lower than for SIYB. E.g. 46% of Get Ahead beneficiaries reported increased sales compared to 62% of SIYB beneficiaries. Additionally, 26% of GA beneficiaries reported increased profit, compared to 73% of SIYB beneficiaries.[83] One explanation is the difference in target groups, as the Get Ahead training is a more basic approach to engage the most vulnerable (sometimes even illiterate) beneficiaries.[84] Furthermore, the SIYB beneficiaries were not in the T&K system, meaning they were more dedicated to make the business work (because they have nothing to fall back on)[85]. Additionally, the Get Ahead training was more dependent on the asset, as explained next.

The Get Ahead component was heavily affected by the **delays in delivery of the assets** through the government as well as issues with assets' **quality**. This is elaborated in the next section.

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[78] Tracer study.
[79] FGD with Get Ahead beneficiaries
[80] FGD with Get Ahead beneficiaries
[81] Tracer study.
[82] Interview with a stakeholder
[83] Tracer study
[84] Interviews with ILO staff
[85] Interview with ILO staff

Did the project create any unintended results?

Various interviewees noted that, actually, the selection of T&K beneficiaries (for JSC and Get Ahead) resulted in **dissatisfaction within communities** as there are various vulnerable persons just outside the T&K scope but who were equally in need of economic empowerment support. Also, as not all Get Ahead beneficiaries received assets, watching fellow beneficiaries receive assets created some disturbance as well.[86] One NGO noted that "*we tried linking the excluded beneficiaries to other entities who fall outside EYE-FORSA criteria*".[87]

The targeting strategy of beneficiaries under EYE-FORSA was developed to respond to the poor Takaful and Karama MoSS lists shared with the project. The project started capitalizing on their local partners to outreach to beneficiaries and share the lists of beneficiaries who shows interest in EYE-FORSA activity back with EYE-FORSA team to validate those lists with MoSS making sure those beneficiaries are T&K beneficiaries. The wide outreach activities that not necessarily targeted only T&K beneficiaries, but later excluded some community members because their names were not found on T&K database caused frustration in the communities and conflict among community members.[88]

Another form of market disruption resulted from the assets disbursed by NGOs under the national FORSA programme. As NGOs had limited time to deliver assets to targeted beneficiaries (3 to 4 months), NGOs did not conduct deep market/beneficiaries needs assessments and started delivering the same assets to a large number of beneficiaries. This approach created market distortion as beneficiaries started opening similar businesses at the same villages and competing in the local market. The **local market became oversaturated**, and the business owners had to compete over pricing and other incentives which created conflicts in the communities and market distortion.[89]

Which external and/or internal factors affected the achievements of the project?

Throughout the project, various factors have influenced the project implementation and achievement of results. These factors relate both to the project itself, and to external factors outside ILO control, particularly in relation to National Forsa.

Enabling factors

The following factors and approaches were identified by ILO staff and stakeholders as enabling and facilitating the project and its results.

Firstly, the **arrangements of the trainings** were highly appreciated by trainers, namely the frequent follow-up by the Master Trainer and the coordinator on the ground who supported logistics.[90] Various stakeholders and trainers noted that, overall, the support by, and flexibility of ILO was an enabling factor supporting the project.[91] In this regard, trainers and stakeholders noted as enabling factor the **high quality** of the specific materials (e.g. the SIYB manual[92]) and the quality of the overall project deliverables[93].

Secondly, trainers and NGOs noted that the **use of local trainers** was an important enabler for attracting beneficiaries for the trainings, as these trainers are familiar with local dynamics

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[86] Interviews with stakeholders, FGDs with Get Ahead trainers and Get Ahead Master Trainers
[87] Interview with a stakeholder
[88] FGDs with a stakeholder
[89] FGDs with Get Ahead trainers
[90] FGDs with Get Ahead trainers
[91] Interviews with stakeholders and FGDs with trainers
[92] FGD with SIYB trainers
[93] Interview with a stakeholder

and languages and are therefore already trusted by the communities.[94] Similarly, Master Trainers and ILO staff also indicated that **MoSS community leaders** have an influence on the T&K beneficiaries (e.g. to mitigate fears of losing T&K benefits) and the engagement of those leaders improved the outreach to beneficiaries (i.e. compensating for the poor T&K list quality as described below).[95]

Additionally, in the context of local needs, various trainers and stakeholders referred to the **needs assessments** conducted to beneficiaries during selection process as contributing factor, considering that this helped the project target specific needs of the beneficiaries in the two governorates (particularly in relation to the delivery of assets).[96]

One FGD with JSC trainers noted as particular strong point of the project the **addition of financial literacy to the JSC component**. Namely, they perceived that enabled beneficiaries to invest and start a business if they decided not to join the labour market.[97] The previous sections demonstrated that, indeed, various (female) JSC beneficiaries become more interested in self-employment. Therefore, the JSC contributed to broader economic empowerment, not just wage-employment. On the other hand, if this training encouraged self-employment, it may not have been well-thought-through in the wage-employment component. National FORSA in its plan delivers a behavioral change sessions to T&K beneficiaries to identify their preference of whether to join the self-employment or wage-employment track, but those sessions needed further validation as later beneficiaries started showing different preferences during project's implementation.

Challenges

The project encountered various difficulties which hindered the achievement of results, and which delayed the project implementation (elaborated in section 4.4.1.2). The following factors were most commonly noted as barriers to the project's success.

Firstly, the project faced various difficulties with the outreach to, and selection of, beneficiaries. ILO staff and stakeholders noted that the **MoSS lists of T&K recipients were of poor quality** (e.g. wrong phone numbers and outdated status of beneficiaries[98]).[99] Moreover, the MoSS T&K list maintained different criteria (e.g. education level, age) than the Get Ahead criteria.[100] One stakeholder noted that the T&K lists are outdated as they also include beneficiaries who are actually not even eligible for T&K, and some information was not accurate like phone numbers.[101] This took a lot of efforts from ILO and NGOs, together with local MoSS staff, to validate.[102]

Then, the project team faced **one major challenge related to both components**, namely that many targeted youths did not want to participate in EYE: FORSA, or were not interested in insurance. If they would obtain formal (self-) employment after the EYE:FORSA support, they would no longer be eligible for the T&K benefits. Besides the T&K financial support, being on the T&K list also grants access to various subsidies. Therefore, several interviewees noted that many targeted youth preferred to stay on T&K rather than trying to find employment.[103]

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[94] FGD with SIYB trainers and interview with a stakeholder
[95] Group interview with Master Trainers, interview with ILO staff
[96] Interview with a stakeholder, FGD with Master Trainers
[97] FGD with JSC trainers
[98] FGD with Get Ahead trainers.
[99] Interviews with ILO staff and stakeholders
[100] Interview with ILO staff
[101] Interview with a stakeholder
[102] Interviews with ILO staff and stakeholders
[103] Interviews with ILO staff and FGD with JSC trainers

"*The available job opportunities are not attractive enough to lose the T&K benefits.*"[104] The mid-term evaluation of the National Forsa programme noted the same issue.[105]

A large barrier to the effectiveness of the Get Ahead trainings was the **delay in the disbursement of the assets** under national Forsa. As mentioned before, the best results of Get Ahead were found among the beneficiaries who received training first, and their asset (that matched their needs and capacities) shortly after, enabling them to immediately put the training in practice. However, the initial delays resulted in Get Ahead beneficiaries waiting for up to a year to receive the asset. In some cases, beneficiaries dropped out (refused the asset) or needed follow-up and refreshers to help them get started.[106]

Beneficiaries and trainers of Get Ahead also noted that, in some cases, the provided **assets were of low quality**, which hindered the effectiveness of the Get Ahead training to create a viable business.[107] ILO staff and NGOs noted that only very short time periods were given to NGOs to select the assets, hindering from conducting research to find the best quality assets or tailor the assets to the demands of the beneficiaries.[108]

Lastly, as already mentioned in previous sections, an important barrier to the wage-employment component was the overall absence of a strong private sector in the governorates, resulting in an **absence of (decent) job opportunities**.

7.4. Efficiency

According to the OECD/DAC, the efficiency criterion considers the extent to which available resources can deliver expected activities, outputs, and outcomes in an economical and timely manner. Hence, this chapter will consider to what extent financial, time and human resources were used to achieve expected results in an economical manner. Furthermore, the flexibility of management arrangements contributes to achieving the Project's goals and the sufficiency of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically and efficiently to achieve expected results?

Were financial and human resources allocated strategically and efficiently to achieve expected project results?

At the project signature stage (June 2020), the total budget provided by the Government of Norway comprised 3,634,941.92 USD for the entire scope and duration of the project. The budget remained unchanged throughout the project. One no-cost extension was granted in June 2022 and one in June 2024. After the revision of the logframe and ToC in early 2023, several budget reallocations took place. The budget was fully spent by the end of the project.

Table 1. Reallocation of costs during the project

Explanation of cost adjustments	Initial budget	Budget after Jan 2023	Actual expenses July 2024
Outcome 1: Some capacity-building activities were significantly reduced, and replaced with additional activities, including from the former Outcome 4	761,251.06	512,435.57	411,597.19

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[104] FGD with JSC trainers
[105] James Allen IV, et.al. (2023) Key Findings from Midline Evaluation of Egypt's Forsa Graduation Program.
[106] Interview with stakeholders and ILO staff, FGDs with Get Ahead trainers.
[107] FGDs with Get Ahead trainers and beneficiaries
[108] Interviews with ILO staff and stakeholders

Explanation of cost adjustments	Initial budget	Budget after Jan 2023	Actual expenses July 2024
Outcome 2: JSC costs were significantly reduced, although job fair costs were increased. Supervisory skills trainings and the HR and Gender Academy costs were also significantly reduced. Some activities were moved here from Outcome 1 or merged with Outcome 1 activities.	851,492.24	643,652.75	525,924.91
Outcome 3: Costs for Get Ahead were nearly doubled, and the costs from Outcome 4 for SYIB were moved to Outcome 3. New output for 400 female beneficiaries receiving assets was developed.	564,142.99	1,144,595.53	858,036.86
Outcome 4	*405,817.44*	0	0
Project management costs	940,192.39	930,000.00	717,436.06
Programme Support Costs and Provision for Cost Increase	496,907.47	404,258.07	318,031.87
Savings made by the project			803,915.03
Total	3,613,986.15	3,634,941.92	3,634,941.92

Source: Budget breakdown provided by the project team.

The project was implemented in an efficient manner, with strategic use and (re)allocation of resources across components. The project staff was sufficient in number, and the team was well prepared. Challenges in efficiency resulted from country-wide inflation.

Various examples were found of **efficient and strategic allocation of funding** within the project. A key example is the reallocation of savings due to devaluation to the purchase of assets (500,000 USD was allocated to the new output "*provide female beneficiaries with assets complemented with training*" under Outcome 3). This significantly reduced the impact of the delays in asset delivery by the government (as described in section 4.3.). The purchase of assets meant that the remaining Get Ahead trainings could be implemented more effectively and enhanced the overall results of that component.

Another example is the fact that, for a period of time, the EYE: RAWABET and EYE: FORSA were implemented in parallel by the same team. This resulted in **two efficiency gains**. Firstly, as the projects were implemented in parallel, there were cost-savings for EYE:FORSA by utilising to some extent the resources of EYE:RAWABET. Secondly, the EYE: FORSA staff was already used to working together on a similar project, which enabled them to kick-start the current project. Interviews demonstrated that the project team comprised sufficient staff for the scope of the project and were able to build on their knowledge from EYE:RAWABET.[109]

The **economic situation** affected the project budget in different ways throughout the project. Initially, devaluation of the USD allowed the team to make savings in the first years of the project execution, as mentioned above. However, more recent inflation has not only affected the overall project results, but also affected the salaries of the trainers and value of the assets Some interviewed stakeholders were disappointed that their fees were not adjusted against the inflation rates.[110] Furthermore, some trainers noted that they were not paid for the outreach part of the trainings, which actually took a lot of efforts.[111]

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[109] Interviews with ILO staff
[110] FGD with Get Ahead trainers
[111] FGD with SIYB trainers

.   Was the timeline of the project planned in a reasonable manner?

The initial project timeline in the donor contract spanned from 1 June 2020 to 30 June 2023. Two no-cost extensions were granted, firstly extending the project by one year to June 2024, and secondly extending the project until August 2024 to accommodate the final evaluation. The project faced more than a year's delay in the implementation of activities, largely due to factors outside the control of ILO.

The design of **EYE:FORSA's workplan was largely dependent on the national Forsa programme**. Namely, as a tool to support national Forsa, the EYE:FORSA project was meant to be implemented in parallel (mostly to combine Forsa's assets with EYE:FORSA training, selecting the NGO partners for asset delivery, and receiving the list of Forsa beneficiaries) and inform national Forsa with its project results.[112]

As noted in interviews and project documentation, the national Forsa programme was significantly delayed in its implementation, thereby affecting the EYE:FORSA timeline and milestones as well. This was one of the core reasons for ILO's request for the one-year no-cost extension in 2022.[113]

Besides the delay of Forsa, the **procedures to obtain approval** and sign cooperation agreements with Ministry counterparts also took more time than expected, meaning that the project could only formally commence on 24 January 2021.[114]

On the other hand, only a very **short time was granted to NGOs** between the ministry approval to disburse the assets and the actual delivery of assets. The short time period hindered NGOs from conducting diligent research into the most suitable and quality assets, resulting in the previously mentioned low quality of assets in some cases.[115]

To what extent were Project management and governance mechanisms effective to the achievement of the Project objectives?

The project was implemented by a dedicated project team based in Cairo, with the support of the Cairo-based Decent Work Country Team and occasional support from specialists in Geneva.

Overall, the evaluation found that the project was efficiently managed, and stakeholders expressed satisfaction regarding the management and communication of ILO. Some challenges were identified at the local level.

At **national** level, stakeholders involved in EYE:FORSA were satisfied with the management of the project by ILO, as well as with the communication and information provided by ILO during the project implementation. As mentioned earlier, one stakeholder noted that they worked "*hand-in-hand*" with ILO during the project implementation.[116]

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[112] Annual Progress Reports 2021 and 2022
[113] Interviews with ILO staff, donor meeting June 21st, 2022, Annual Progress Reports 2021 and 2022
[114] Annual Progress Report 2021, donor meeting June 21st, 2022.
[115] Interviews with ILO staff and stakeholders
[116] Interview with a stakeholder

> *"EYE-FORSA had strong management, and the partnership was smooth".*
>
> *"Communication went smooth with the ILO, and they were helpful and responsive".*
>
> *"We had frequent meetings and had open discussions and clarifying roles and responsibilities".[117]*

At the **governorate** level, the overall perception of stakeholders and trainers on ILO project management and communication was positive as well. Despite certain issues, most interview and FGD respondents were generally satisfied.

> *"We had frequent and open communication with the ILO team".[118]*
>
> *"The ILO team was very flexible and responsive".[119]*
>
> *"We had frequent online meetings to share updates during implementation".[120]*
>
> *"The ILO local coordinators were very flexible and responsive".[121]*

Interviews with ILO and stakeholders noted examples of strong coordination on the ground. As found in section 4.3.2., there were quality control measures in place as ILO focal points attended (and recorded) the trainings and provided feedback to the project team. The ILO team confirmed that the focal points performed well and their presence in the field enhanced the project coordination.[122]

One NGO noted that the ILO could have been more flexible with payments. They had to achieve 100% of activities to get the next instalments which also delays instalments disbursements and implementation.[123] In a Get Ahead FGD, trainers complained that they voiced concerns on the financial and workplan details to their ILO staff, but their complaints "*were not brought to the central team*" and remained unaddressed.[124] SIYB trainers also noted that, besides general satisfaction with ILO, there was insufficient clarity on ILO's plan and "*communication was quite hard*".[125]

Interviews with ILO and project staff provided only positive information regarding the **internal management** of the project and collaboration between the project team, the DWCT and specialists in Geneva.[126] Examples provided by the staff showed that the project team made good use of the technical knowledge available in Cairo and HQ.

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[117] Interviews with stakeholders
[118] Interview with a stakeholder
[119] Interview with a stakeholder
[120] FGDs with SIYB trainers
[121] FGD with JSC trainers
[122] Interviews with ILO staff
[123] Interview with a stakeholder
[124] FGD with Get Ahead trainers
[125] FGD with SIYB trainers
[126] Interviews with ILO staff

> The revision of the ILO tools and merger of the Get Ahead and financial literacy training were conducted in Geneva through close collaboration between the project team and the specialists in HQ.[127]
>
> For different tools and activities under the project, the team reached out to specialists to gather advice on their use or adaptation.[128]

Was the M&E system designed to measure the project's performance, outcome indicators and contribute to learning?

After the changes to the Theory of Change initiated after the mid-term evaluation, the project's progress was measured through 24 indicators at output level, divided across the three outcomes and six outputs (two per outcome). The project had a dedicated M&E officer during the first years, who left the project right after mid-term evaluation. Shortly after, an external M&E consultant was recruited.

The project benefited from a suitable system of output indicators, measuring project progress towards quantitative targets. The absence of outcome indicators hinders the project from systematically tracking higher-level achievements, which was compensated by external assessments of the HR and Gender Academy and the tracer study.

The **output indicators** are concrete, clear and measurable. They provide sufficient information on the achievement of the outputs. The logframe includes targets, progress by year, and the final results, thereby providing a clear overview of the project's activities, activity-level achievements, and reached target groups. However, the logframe does not include differentiation of beneficiaries, e.g. by gender or location (except in the output 3.2 indicators). From the logframe itself, it is hard to understand the gender dynamics in the activities.

While the project made clear efforts to track output-level progress, there are no official indicators for the expected **outcomes**. Therefore, it is not fully clear how the project defined and assessed its higher-level achievements particularly under Outcome 2.

> However, some of the output-level indicators can actually be considered outcomes. For example, regarding training, outputs are the immediate results such as number of people trained, while outcomes are the consequences of this training, such as increased skills. Therefore, the two indicators on *"% of beneficiaries obtained at least 20% knowledge increase"* can be considered outcome indicators.

Interviews with ILO and the logframe show that there was no specific target for the number of persons who should gain wage- or self-employment as a result of the project, or targets for other outcome-level achievements. ILO staff explained that they were left out on purpose as the target numbers of National Forsa were not known until the midline of the project. The rationale behind this decision, according to ILO, was that the actual achievement of (self-)employment is not under the control of the project but depends on various external factors and decision made by the beneficiaries.

However, the absence of higher-level objectives and targets (quantitative and qualitative) prevents the project from having a clear view of what it aims to achieve. Namely, the current logframe would suggest that the ultimate goal of the project is to train people, without defining

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[127] Interviews with ILO staff
[128] Interviews with ILO staff

what the training should contribute to. Similarly, the absence of higher-level targets hinders the assessment of the effectiveness of the project towards its expected impact. For example, looking purely at the logframe, the data would suggest that the project was highly effective in its wage-employment component, although the tracer studies and FGDs actually show that only a small share of beneficiaries actually gained employment.

Although there were no indicators or targets for these aspects, **the project did actually measure outcome results** through its additional evaluation/impact activities. For example, the HR and Gender Academy Training Assessment reviewed how the academy training contributed to change in the participating companies (though with a limited number of respondents). Similarly, the tracer study reviewed for both tracks (Get Ahead, SIYB and JSC beneficiaries) how the trainings resulted in increased skills and subsequent success in business or employment.

> The **tracer study** was a crucial addition to the project's M&E system. In the absence of the outcome-level indicators, the tracer study provided the much-needed data to assess the projects medium-term results. As described above, the tracer study was able to explain why outputs and short-term outcomes of trainings (skills) did not always result in the outcomes (increased access to employment, promotion of self-employment), or what contribution the project actually made, in comparison to control groups. The study also provided qualitative explanations for the presence or absence of results. However, the absence of outcome indicators in the project logframe hindered the design of the tracer study – namely, it is not aligned with the project's M&E system.

7.5. Impact

According to the OECD/DAC criteria, impact focuses on the extent to which a Project can create higher-level changes in terms of significance, transformative potential, scope, or timescale. In this case, it refers mostly to the increased economic empowerment of women and youth in the governorates beyond the initial target groups.

This section reviews whether the combination of the wage and self-employment tracks with the capacity building component has resulted in the potential reach of other women and youth.

The evaluation found various signs of impact on the empowerment of beneficiaries, as well as signs of potential impact on other members of the communities. The use of ILO materials beyond the EYE:FORSA project is an important enabler. The low supply of jobs is a key barrier for broader impact of the wage-employment track.

Beyond the wage- or self-employment, the EYE:FORSA beneficiaries of all trainings noted that the project activities had a **significant impact on their personal lives** as well. For example, 71% of surveyed Get Ahead beneficiaries agreed that the training had a positive impact on their lives, by increasing their self-confidence. The training also benefited financial management within the household. Additionally, 70% of respondents perceived that the training enhanced their marriage opportunities.[129] Therefore, the project contributed to the broader definition of "economic empowerment" of beneficiaries beyond the mere increase in income.

Various signs were found through the evaluation that the project may create benefits for youth and communities beyond those who participated in the training. For example, the tracer study found that 41% of the 1100 surveyed **SIYB beneficiaries are able to employ people** (between one and six employees). Although Get Ahead focuses more on micro-businesses, 35% of beneficiaries still employ one or more people. Therefore, the training supported not

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[129] Tracer study

only self-employment of beneficiaries but also job creation for other community members, as wider impact of the project.[130]

Trainers also provided examples of how they used the **trainings in activities other than the EYE: FORSA project**. The flexibility of the ILO to allow other organisations to use the trainings in their projects is a huge enabler of impact. For example, multiple Get Ahead trainers joined other entities like the National Council of Women or the FAO as a trainer, which allows them to continue these trainings in other contexts or governorates, thereby vastly expanding the number of beneficiaries of these tools.[131] The following quotes were gathered from the trainer FGDs:

> *"As staff member of the faculty of agriculture, I introduced the SYIB materials and launched entrepreneurship incubator at the university."*
>
> *"The SYIB accreditation enabled us to find more opportunities like in the National Council of Women, GIZ, and other partners."*
>
> *"The follow-up on businesses enabled us to acquire a lot of new information that we used to offer coaching to other beneficiaries outside EYE-FORSA."*
>
> *"I conducted workshops in the university of Arish – faculty of commerce on entrepreneurship and used the content in those workshops."*

The MoYS also started using the JSC content for another project funded by UNICEF.

The Business Development Services in particular focused on enhancing sustainability and impact of the EYE: FORSA services. The aim was to train a large number of individuals who could start BDS in their communities to continue the trainings after conclusion of the project.

> *"We managed to establish our own BDS center after the training and developed its vision, mission, objectives and started expanding its services to all our beneficiaries T&K and non-T&K beneficiaries"*

Some of the JSC trainers noted their intention to replicate the training, without concrete examples of how to do so. However, the **impact of continued JSC trainings is unclear** considering the findings in the effectiveness chapter. Without significant investment in the private sector and job creation overall, even if more beneficiaries are trained, the absence of (decent) jobs would hinder them from actually finding employment.

With regards to cross-cutting concerns of ILO, progress towards impact was made in relation to gender equality, but less in relation to other topics.

As elaborated in the effectiveness chapter, the project had concrete benefits for women and strengthened their position both in business development and in their ability to contribute to their family income as a whole.

However, the limited focus on the other cross-cutting concerns, as described in section 7.2, meant that no impact was created in relation to ILS, social dialogue, persons with disabilities, and environmental sustainability.

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[130] Tracer study
[131] FGD with Get Ahead trainers.

7.6. Sustainability

According to OECD/DAC criteria, sustainability analyses the extent to which a project's achievements can be maintained in the future. This section will consider the extent to which jobs and businesses are sustainable and whether stakeholders have capacity, resources, and interest to maintain the results and mechanisms put in place by the project.

To what extent have stakeholders shown ownership and capacity of the project results?

Sustainability of the trainings and tools put in place by the project depend largely on the ability of stakeholders to continue utilising them. This section describes whether stakeholders are likely to maintain the project results.

While many government and NGO stakeholders demonstrate technical capacity and willingness to continue and sustain the results, both stakeholder groups are limited by financial resources.

Interviews noted that **government** officials, particularly at national level have sufficient technical capacity to maintain the trainings, as staff are aware of how the protocols and the tools should be used. For example, MoYS can continue implementing the JSC and financial literacy using their own Master Trainers.[132] Initial signs of the continued use was found in the use of lessons learned from EYE:FORSA in the activities of national Forsa in other governorates: Four job fairs were organised in another governorate following the ILO model.[133]

Interviewed stakeholders noted, however, that the government lacks sufficient staff and financial resources to continue implementing the trainings across Egypt, despite their expressed willingness to do so.[134] One official noted that they did not receive the database of certified trainers (to use them in future projects).[135] Given the recent government turnovers, the new strategic direction of the government is not yet known, nor is therefore the future of the national Forsa programme.[136]

The training of **NGO** staff to become certified ILO trainers ensured that NGOs have the in-house capacity to maintain and repeat the trainings. This is facilitated by the permission granted by ILO for the reuse of the training materials outside EYE:FORSA. ILO staff noted that these particular NGOs were selected due to their size and reputation: the larger, well-known NGOs are likely to stay in function in the near future and are better able to obtain funding to continue the training in other projects.[137]

Additionally, the FEI now included the HR academy as part of their service packages and they have their own self-sustaining model to ensure the HR academy continuation after the project. However, the capacity of NGOs to continue the trainings is dependent on the available financing for projects including such trainings. One NGO noted that they are currently preparing a funding proposal based on the experience with EYE:FORSA.[138]

What signs can be seen that youth's businesses and employment are sustainable?

This section presents whether it is likely that businesses will remain up and running in the upcoming years and whether newly employed beneficiaries are likely to hold their job.

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[132] Interviews with staff and stakeholders
[133] Interview with a stakeholder
[134] Interview with a stakeholder
[135] Interview with a stakeholder
[136] Interviews with ILO staff
[137] Interview with ILO staff
[138] Interview with a stakeholder

Beneficiaries who found a job or started a business with EYE:FORSA support are largely expected to maintain their results. The overall economic situation, particularly inflation, is considered the main threat to business sustainability.

Get Ahead trainers in one FGD noted that, "*based on our follow-up around 70% can **sustain and grow their business***." The resilience and adaptability of the beneficiaries is a key enabler for business sustainability.[139] Furthermore, beneficiaries who first received training and subsequently received an asset of good quality and aligned with their needs, are considered to have higher chances of sustainability of their business.[140]

SIYB trainers equally believed that a large share of businesses can sustain, largely due to the flexibility and adaptability of beneficiaries, although it also depends on "*the personality of the entrepreneurs and the nature of their business idea, and their ability to network with the right stakeholders*".[141] Follow-up conducted by one NGO, six months after completion of the trainings, showed that 98% of their trained businesses were still viable.[142]

FGDs and the tracer study found various potential barriers affecting business sustainability in the future. The overall economic situation, including price drops, inflation, financial instability and a lack of resources, were most commonly mentioned by beneficiaries as barriers for business sustainability.[143] SIYB trainers speculated that beneficiaries' ability to source raw materials might also become a barrier in the future.[144]

The sustainability of **wage-employment** has differed among beneficiaries. JSC trainers noted that several of those beneficiaries who found employment have maintained their jobs (and some even got promoted). FGD participants noted that "*we believe those who succeeded in getting a job have good chances to sustain their jobs*".[145]

On the other hand, the distance and low wages also resulted in employed beneficiaries resigning and searching for work elsewhere. Such examples were mentioned by both trainers and beneficiaries. However, in these cases it was the decision of the beneficiary to resign. There were no examples of beneficiaries who lost a job by being fired.[146]

Therefore, job sustainability depends largely on the job satisfaction of beneficiaries. As various complaints regarding distance, working hours, and wages were voiced by FGD respondents (beneficiaries and trainers), there is a possibility that more employed beneficiaries may drop out and look for other jobs (with no guarantee of success).

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[139] FGD with Get Ahead trainers
[140] Interviews with stakeholders
[141] FGD with SIYB trainers
[142] Interview with a stakeholder
[143] Tracer study and FGDs with SIYB and Get Ahead beneficiaries
[144] FGDs with SIYB trainers
[145] FGDs with JSC trainers
[146] FGDs with JSC trainers and beneficiaries

8. Conclusions

The following conclusions were developed by the evaluation team, based on the triangulated findings presented in Chapter 4.

The EYE:FORSA project was **a largely well-designed effort to support economic empowerment** of a vulnerable, but also hard-to-reach target population due to this population's desire not to lose the T&K benefits. The project's relevance and effectiveness were supported by ILO's flexibility to adjust the project design throughout the implementation, based on feedback from the trainers and NGOs. Similarly, the high relevance, coherence, and effectiveness at national level related closely to the alignment of the project with the national Forsa programme and to the close cooperation with the government. The project already influenced decisions taken by the government in relation to expanding trainings to other governorates.

The **self-employment track was particularly relevant and effective** for the needs and interests of female beneficiaries as was more suitable considering gender dynamics. As the training designs were of high quality and interest, the results of the track were also largely positive, with good expectations for new businesses' sustainability. Given the capacity and permission of trainers to continue the Get Ahead and SIYB trainings outside EYE:FORSA and given the ability of various beneficiaries to employ personnel in their businesses, **this project track is likely to create impact** for community members beyond immediate beneficiaries.

While the ILO was largely efficient (financially and timely) in the implementation of the self-employment track, the **Get Ahead trainings were highly affected by external factors**: delays in assets delivery, asset quality, and community disruption. These factors, and the higher vulnerability of the Get Ahead target group (i.e. lower education, T&K beneficiaries) explain why the SIYB training showed better results among beneficiaries than the Get Ahead training.

The **wage-employment track was less effective**, because offered jobs (e.g. through job fairs) were often unsuitable for beneficiaries, particularly women, and due to the overall weakness of the private sector, resulting in low job creation and availability. The lesson learned from this project may be to better tailor wage-employment efforts to areas where decent work is indeed available. Furthermore, as the primary focus was on enhancing beneficiaries' ability to find jobs, the project had a limited focus on whether offered jobs were indeed "decent" per ILO standards.

Third Party **Monitoring efforts**, such as the HR and Gender Academy Assessments and the Tracer Study, but also trainers' efforts to follow-up with trainees, were of great importance to assess the results of the project on beneficiaries. Namely, the project's logframe itself did not include indicators for outcome monitoring, which would have hindered significantly the ability of the project to understand "what works" in the context of economic empowerment and to inform the national Forsa programme, if there had not been these studies. As this was not considered in the logframe and initial design, the project design lacks a clear understanding of what constitute outcome-level achievements.

Recent turnover in the MoSS means that the strategic direction and future of the National Forsa programme are currently unclear. Therefore, the impact of EYE:FORSA on National Forsa and other related policies cannot be known at this stage. However, the capacity-building efforts at local and national level are likely to ensure continuation of the project activities in the future.

Overall, the EYE:FORSA project was important both to test approaches and to support MoSS in the implementation of the National Forsa programme by showing "what works" in the economic empowerment of vulnerable women and youth. Despite significant impact of external factors on the project's achievements, it was overall effective with potential for broader impact and sustainability.

9. Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP)

Lessons learned

LL 1. The design of wage-employment activities should be closely aligned with the job offers available within reach of the beneficiaries. This perceived availability may also differ strongly between men and women. If there is no, or very limited, job offer, other economic empowerment activities should be considered.

LL 2. Despite the benefits of close alignment with Ministry strategies and programmes, the project implementation may be significantly impacted by the quality and timeliness of the national efforts. While the benefits of close coordination outweigh the challenges, such technical support programs should always have risk mitigation strategies and flexible arrangements with the donor to account for issues with the national programme.

LL 3. The absence of outcome-level indicators can hinder the monitoring and evaluation of the project, as well as the dialogue between the project team and the donor as it can create misunderstandings about the expectations of the project. At the same time, it hinders the final (external) evaluators from fully understanding what the project aimed to achieve, particularly when the outcome language is ambiguous.

Good practices

GP 1. Continue enhancing Project and budget flexibility as crucial tool to ensure the relevance of the project for different groups of beneficiaries and throughout the project implementation.

GP 2. Continue combining business training with asset delivery should ensure that asset delivery takes place shortly after the training completion. This enhances the relevance of the asset and enhances the ability of beneficiaries to select the most suitable assets.

GP 3. Continue using local staff (NGOs, trainers, government officials) as crucial method for projects targeting hard-to-reach beneficiaries. These people are already trusted by the community and know how to navigate community dynamics, thereby using the most appropriate outreach channels.

6. Recommendations (Rec)

Based on the evaluation's findings and conclusions, the evaluation team has developed the following recommendations.

Rec 1. Continue supporting the Government of Egypt, particularly the Ministry of Labour, to support (decent) job creation processes and (local) private sector development.

The wage-employment track was hindered by the general absence of suitable, formal jobs in the two governorates. While the trainings created enhanced employability skills, the jobs offered through fairs were often rejected by (female) beneficiaries due to the distance, working hours, and wages.

In the future, efforts to enhance access to wage-employment should be either 1) focused in areas with higher levels of (decent) work vacancies (especially for women) that was identified from in-depth market research at the beginning of implementation, or 2) combined with/preceded by initiatives to support private sector development and job creation in female dominated sectors.

At the same time, broader efforts of ILO Cairo should also focus on (decent) job creation and quality of jobs, given that the government is already planning to continue the JSCs and job fairs. Such support should focus on private sector development and opportunities for business developed (e.g. through continued Get Ahead and SYIB efforts) This furthermore requires coordination and division of roles between MoL and MoSS, given that MoSS has taken on various job-related responsibilities under the EYE:FORSA project.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
ILO Cairo DWCT, Ministry of Labour, employer organisations	High	Long-term	Medium

Rec 2. Include more focus on (digitalized) marketing in future (self-)employment trainings

Marketing is essential to ensure the survival and growth of supported businesses, hence intentional focus and dedicated resources at design need to be allocated to ensure that businesses have online and offline space to showcase their products. Various FGDs with beneficiaries noted the importance of a focus on marketing and requested more follow-up training on marketing skills and tools in general.

SIYB beneficiaries, in particular, requested more focus on online marketing, online sales, and overall digital skills. Various sources noted that it would have been beneficial if the trainings had a stronger component on online business management. Future SIYB trainings can include more examples or simulations that involve digital business tools, as well as basic digital literacy trainings for lower skilled beneficiaries with less digital skills.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
ILO HQ units working on SIYB and Get Ahead; future project teams	Low	Next projects	High

Rec 3. Integrate outcome-level and impact-level indicators in future programming, by creating a more comprehensive log frame

The tracer study was particularly helpful to understand how the project activities influenced the subsequent skills, decisions, and wage- or self-employment achievements of beneficiaries. However, as the project had no operationalised understanding of what constitutes "promoted self-employment" or "access to wage-employment" in its logframe, it is not clear how the achievements and challenges found by the Tracer Study linked to the project objectives and Theory of Change.

If a similar project is implemented in the future, it would be beneficial to repeat the Tracer Study, but with integrating some elements measured by the Tracer Study in the logframe. This way, the study can be used more efficiently to inform the Theory of Change logic and to inform "what works" to achieve the project objectives.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams and M&E staff	Low	Next projects	High

Rec 4. Apply a more flexible approach to the selection criteria for trainings

A recurrent negative result of the project was the occurrence of jealousy or disruption in the communities, as the support provided to T&K beneficiaries was also desired by non-beneficiaries just outside the scope of T&K. In particular, there were many T&K beneficiaries with less interest in EYE: FORSA (due to the risk of losing T&K benefits) while many non-beneficiaries were actually very interested but not eligible. At the same time, the larger interest in the training shows the need to continue or scale up the trainings.

Future efforts should take into consideration the negative effects of this situation on the community and consider broadening the criteria for participation, for example based on education level and income, more extensive needs assessments (are beneficiaries really interested to participate?) and not just on T&K status. Additionally, beneficiaries' thorough needs and skills assessment need to guide the nature of supported businesses in those communities to avoid market distortions and ensure the application of the do no harm principle.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams, ILO DWT supporting National Forsa, MoSS	Low	Next projects	High

Rec 5. Explore income generating activities beyond the traditional single owned business and the wage employment.

Models like small production units supporting local value chains and economic clusters (cooperatives) can lead to positive results as it removes the burden of managing the business by one individual and show more resilience in face of volatile markets and economic situation. Moreover, new models like factories hiring women from home as unconventional wage-employment model can be explored. Yet, those models should be introduced after a thorough study of the local markets and impeded power dynamics. Also, sectoral targeting of sectors with intensive women as labour force and assessment and development of those sectors may lead to more focused wage-employment results.

Furthermore, this should be complemented by careful market assessments to understand the local market and which types of businesses are most likely to be viable in the village. Trainings

should include clear recommendations on where business needs may exist and which sectors are already saturated.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams, ILO DWT supporting National Forsa, MoSS, employer representatives.	Medium	Next projects	Medium

Rec 6. Expand support to self-employment training beneficiaries beyond the current 6 months

Longer follow-up on beneficiaries beyond the 6 months, by their management trainers, is essential to respond to T&K beneficiaries' needs as a highly vulnerable group. Follow-up can be from technical local experts who act like mentors to the small businesses and/or real support offered to beneficiaries beyond verbal advice, like linking them to suppliers and markets. This can enhance their sustainability chances.

Also, local NGOs can play a role in the businesses longer-term follow-up offering technical and financial support (e.g, top up to high performing businesses), market linkages and forming networks of beneficiaries running similar businesses or working across the same value chain to act as a support group and increase their businesses efficiency (e.g., group sourcing and sharing fixed expenses)

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
Future project teams, ILO DWT supporting National Forsa.	Medium	Next projects	Medium

Rec 7. Enhance linkages between national and local stakeholders

Better coordinator and open communication between MoSS, MoYS, MoL and NGOs (implementers on the ground) can strongly increase the potential to exchange lessons learned and ideas among different stakeholders.

Addressed to:	Resource investment	Timeline:	Priority-level:
MoSS, MoL at national and local levels, future project teams	Low	During the continued implementation of National Forsa	Medium

Annex 1. Terms of Reference (ToR)

International Labour Organization

Project "Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Economic Empowerment under FORSA Program"

1. Key facts

Title of project being evaluated	Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Economic Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA)
Project DC Code	EGY/20/01/NOR
Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project	DWT/CO Cairo
Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project	DWT/CO Cairo
Countries covered	Egypt
Donor	The Government of Norway
Project implementation date	January 2021 – June 2024
Project budget	3,634,941.86 USD.
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	Outcome 5 (current Outcome 3): Decent work in the rural economy Outcome 4: Promoting sustainable enterprises
SDG(s) under evaluation	Goal 1, Target 1.2 Goal 2, Target 2.3 Goal 8, Target 8.2
Type of evaluation	Independent Final Evaluation
Date of evaluation	19 October 2024
Evaluation manager	Ndalama Gracious

2. Background information

As part of major economic reforms implemented since 2015, the Government of Egypt has launched a conditional cash transfer programme entitled Takaful and Karama (Solidarity and Dignity in Arabic). The programme has gradually expanded its reach, and currently due to the repercussions of COVID 19 pandemic, an increase is expected to benefit around 3.4 million families in Egypt. As fuel subsidies and other "fiscal consolidation" measures have been taken to decrease public debt, T&K represents the main social assistance programme providing income support to its poorest segments. Poverty has been on the rise in Egypt and stood at the last count at about 33% of the population.

The Government acknowledged the need to complement cash transfers with services and incentives to promote jobs and income generation among its vulnerable segments. The Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) thus announced the launch of the National 'Forsa' (Opportunity in Arabic) programme in 2017. The ILO has since supported the Ministry in conceiving the programme. Forsa targets working age members of "poor" households, e.g., those qualifying for T&K benefits under its means testing and those that are not currently benefitting but had applied to T&K and had been found to live close to the means-test PMT score. A World Bank loan in 2019 has been signed including additional budget support for T&K as well as USD 50M to kick-start Forsa.

Forsa will provide services and incentives to promote both self-employment/income generation and access to existing jobs/wage employment. The ILO has provided continuous support to the Ministry in the development of

the Programme. Together with the World Bank it has advised the Minister and senior staff of the Ministry on good international practices in setting up "active" social assistance programmes or "graduation" programmes. It has then funded technical expertise within the Forsa programme unit established by the Ministry, as part of its programme on youth employment in Egypt.

Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Economic Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA) is a 4-years ILO project, funded by the Government of Norway, with an approximate budget of USD 3.6 Million. To achieve its potential, some key factors need to be in place. First, the capacities of MoSS need substantial development; the Ministry has been able to build its capacities around delivering the conditional cash transfers (CCTs) programme with a lot of international support. Capacity development for Forsa will take, arguably, an even greater effort. CCTs are largely about getting administrative processes right; socio-economic empowerment programmes also require a level of technical expertise to be in place. This is a critical factor in the success of ALMPs/graduation programmes internationally. At the grassroots level, civil society organisations in poorer Governorates have for the most part undertaken humanitarian and social activities. For local CSOs to be able to manage and deliver socio-economic services, serious capacity development efforts are required. Competitive training of trainers and training of experts' programmes, on key skills and competencies, are required on a rather large scale. As the lead UN agency on employment promotion, the ILO is well placed to deliver such a capacity development programme, building on previous work. The other key factor to support the realisation of target beneficiaries' socioeconomic rights is to adequately "test" models of support. The ILO has done just that for many years in Egypt and will be able to rollout previously tested models that have demonstrated results. There is also a need to introduce in Egypt some innovations, e.g., models that have worked in other similar countries but have not yet been tried out in Egypt. The testing of these models will build on solid evaluation measures, to ascertain their positive net effects.

The EYE: FORSA was conceptualised to be implemented within the same time frame of the National FORSA programme. The delayed of the implementation of the National FORSA programme has impacted the implementation of EYE: FORSA. In fact, the transfer of funds to the NGOs to start implementation got delayed for over a year. This delay happened because the Ministry of Finance in Egypt had some financial conditions that the NGOs needed to meet before they could get the money. Because of this, the entrepreneurship and employment training programs got postponed. Despite this setback, the project still started getting everything ready and began carrying out the planned activities. The list of beneficiaries was shared with the MOSS as a database for trained beneficiaries; in order to be shared with the NGOs in the two implementation governorates once they received the money.

Another challenges the National FORSA project faced is the reluctance of Forsa beneficiaries to participate in the project activities because of fear of the discontinuation of Takaful cash transfer. It has been a recurrent challenge across the two components of the National FORSA Programme, in addition to the high illiteracy rate as well s the very low skills of the end beneficiaries. The beneficiaries express significant fear that their participation in the Programs activities will directly result in them losing access to the cash transfer they receive each month under Takaful programme. This challenge has been thoroughly discussed with MoSS on how to overcome the growing reluctance of beneficiaries, and it has been seriously considered to detach the support provided through FORSA National Program and consequently by EYE: FORSA completely from the process of evaluating the socioeconomic status of beneficiaries and the decision to keep them or exclude them from the monthly cash transferred.

Project Contribution to National Development Plans, Norway's Priorities, UNPDF, P&B, SDGs
▪ **Link to National Development Plans:**
With the above said, the project is linked to the social safety net programme
established by the Ministry of Social Solidarity to allow poor families and household
in the working age to transform from depending on social welfare to become part
of the local workforce and equip them to be more resilient.
▪ **Link to Norway's priorities:**
The Government of Norway takes an integrated approach to its foreign and
development policy, which is designed - among other things - to develop the private
sector, promote economic development, good governance and measures that can
lift people out of poverty for good. Norway is one of the founding member States
of the ILO and a long-standing and generous partner in the promotion of the Decent
Work Agenda. Norway has ratified the eight Fundamental Conventions and the
four Priority Conventions, as well as 98 Technical Conventions.
▪ **Link to United Nations Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF) for Egypt (2018-2022):** The project will contribute to achieving UNPDF outcomes, namely Outcome 1.1: pro-employment economic policies for growth, investment and structural transformation; Outcome 1.2: local economic development and MSMEs; Outcome 1.3: technical & vocational training; Outcome 1.4: growth with equity: integration of poor and vulnerable groups; Outcome 4.1: women's economic empowerment.
▪ **Link to P&B 2022-2024:** The project will contribute to achieving the P&B 2020-2021 outcomes, namely: Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all; Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and

decent work; and Outcome 5: Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market. It is linked to CPO EGY101, EGY 103 and 106. Indicators 3.5.1, 4.2.1, 5.1.1, 5.3.1, and 5.3.2.
▪ **Link to SDGs:** The project is linked to Goal #8: Decent work and economic growth; indicator 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities. Putting job creation at the heart of economic policymaking and development plans, will not only generate decent work opportunities but also more robust, inclusive and poverty-reducing growth as the project will seek to achieve. As well as Goal #1 aiming to end poverty in all its forms; indicator 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors, systems.

Project Objectives
The overall impact of the project is to contribute to "Economic Empowerment and Employment for Vulnerable Communities." This is a project aimed mainly at supporting graduation from the conditional cash transfer schemes of the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, by feeding into the national Forsa programme and its supporting World Bank loan to support wage employment and self-employment. The project has the following outcomes:
Outcome 1: Strengthen CSOs, institutions and private sector partners to initiate and improve wage and self-employment activities for youth.
Outcome 2: Increase access to wage employment.
Outcome 3: Promote self-employment with special focus on females.
Key project results so far as report by the project by February 2024 are:
• More than 70 partners reinforced on Cairo level and in the two target governorates Asyut and Sharkia to be able to contribute to the implementation of the national programme. • A pool of certified 105 trainers on different entrepreneurship and wage employment training tools built • Facilitated the access of job seekers to more than 8000 vacant jobs through four job
• 3400 beneficiaries reinforced with entrepreneurship and self-employment
interventions for 1 youth and women in the target areas.
• More than 1000 beneficiaries reinforced with core employability skills to facilitate their
insertion in the labour market. youth in both target areas.

Evaluation background
ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. As per ILO evaluation policy and procedures all programmes and projects with a budget between 1 and USD 5 million + must have to go through one internal and one independent evaluations. The project internal mid-term evaluation took place from October – December 2022.
The final independent evaluation will be managed by an ILO staff in process of certifications as evaluation manager and conducted by independent evaluators.
The evaluation in ILO is for the purpose of accountability, learning and 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.
The evaluation shall follow the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation; and the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist 4.8 "Preparing the inception report"; Checklist 4 "Validating methodologies"; and Checklist 4.2 "Preparing the evaluation report".

3. Purpose, objectives, and scope of the evaluation

Purpose:
The overall purpose of the independent evaluation is to promote accountability and strengthen learning among the ILO and key stakeholders. The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:
• Assess the relevance and validity of projects design and implementation strategies in
relation to the national (Egyptian), ILO and UN priorities and approaches, i.e., strategic
fit to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), the country's United Nations
Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF), the ILO objectives and Country
Programme Outcomes (CPOs) and how the project is perceived and valued by project
beneficiaries and partners.
• Assess the synergy (coherence) with other ILO and non-ILO projects and programs.
• Assess the extent to which the projects have achieved its stated objective and
expected results regarding building the capacity of, youth and women to join wage
employment or self-employment, including capacitating partner organizations, and
identify the supporting factors and constraints that have led to them, including
implementation modalities chosen.
• Assess the impact and identify unexpected positive and negative results of the project.
• Assess the extent to which the projects outcomes will be sustainable.
• Assess the implementation efficiency in terms of financial, human, etc. resources;
• Provide recommendations to key national projects stakeholders, ILO and the donor to
promote sustainability and support further development of the project outcomes and
towards similar interventions in the region;

• Identify lessons learned and good practices to inform the key stakeholders for future
similar interventions.

Scope:
The evaluation will cover the whole implementation of the project, namely from January 2021 (signature of the protocol with the Government) to the end of June 2024, assessing all the results and key outputs that have been produced in this period. The geographical scope will be in line with the setup of the project at the national and local levels and coves all the governorate as well as the targeted value chains.

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.

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

Clients:
The primary users of the evaluation are the Government of Egypt represented by the Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Government of Norway. Other users include:
- Local Government
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of International Cooperation
- Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI)
- Trade Union for Agriculture workers
- Financial and non-financial service providers
- Partner NGOs
- Etc.

In addition, the evaluation shall also be of interest for the ILO Technical and administrative back-stopers in the DWT/CO Cairo, regional office for Africa (ROAF) and relevant units in ILO HQ (employment department, WED programme), and PARDEV.

4. Evaluation criteria and questions (including Cross-cutting issues/ issues of
special interest to the ILO) The evaluation will cover the following evaluation criteria in line with the DAC criteria, UNEG guidelines and ILO evaluation policy guidelines:
  • Relevance
  • Coherence
  • Effectiveness
  • Efficiency
  • Impact orientation
  • Sustainability

The evaluation should consider key evaluations dimensions including Human rights (HR), the SDGs (relevant SDGs and indicators and the principle of "no one left behind") and ILO crosscutting themes such the Gender and non-discrimination (i.e., people with disabilities), Social dialogue and tripartism, International Labour Standards and Just transition to environmental sustainability.

The HR perspective in the evaluation means (i) linking the process to people, (ii) setting tools and approaches appropriate for collecting data; (iii) set-up processes of broader involvement of stakeholders, and (iv) enhance access of the evaluation results and process to all stakeholders.

A gender equality perspective implies (i) applying gender analysis by involving both men and women in consultation and evaluation's analysis, (ii) inclusion of data disaggregated by sex and gender in the analysis; (iii) the analysis of gender-sensitive strategies and objectives and gender-specific indicators addressing strategic and operational needs of women.

In line with the results-based approach applied by the ILO, the evaluation will focus on identifying and analyzing results through addressing key questions related to the evaluation criteria and the achievement of the outcomes/ objectives of the project using the mainly, but not only, indicators in the logical framework of the project.

The list of questions presented below should be reviewed and adjusted during the preparation of the Inception report. It should reflect the dimensions and cross-cutting themes presented above. Any adjustment should be approved as part of the approval of the inception report by the Evaluation manger.
Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluator shall examine the following key issues:
1. Relevance
• To what extent has the project taken into account the needs and priorities of tripartite
stakeholders and beneficiaries (i.e., local communities, SMES, youth and women)
identified in the project document?

• How were ILO tripartite constituents and other project' stakeholders involved in the formulation and implementation of the project?

2. Coherence (internal and external)
• Is the project aligned with national and international development frameworks including the National Development Plan, United Nations Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF), ILO Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) and SDGs and their targets?
• How well does the project outcome contribute towards the economic reform agenda of the Government including the three pillars of private-sector-led job creation, spatial integration, and inclusion?
• To what extent did the project build on previous experience of the ILO (including lessons learned) and How well the project complements and fit with other ongoing ILO, UN agencies and government projects, interventions, and programs in the country?
• Was the project design (implicit or explicit Theory of Change including external factors, implementation modalities, resource allocation, etc.,) comprehensive and realistic and purposeful towards achieving its objectives?
• To what extent the project has specific targets for intended beneficiaries (women, youth, and local communities in an equitable manner)?

3. Effectiveness • To what extent did the project achieve its outputs and outcomes by end of the project period?
• Have unexpected positive or negative results (outputs and outcomes) been developed by or as a consequence of the project intervention?
• What were the main internal and external factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes? How has the project managed those factors?
• How effectively does the project covered the targeted geographical areas (Governorates) and value chains?
• How effective were the backstopping support provided by ILO DWT-Cairo, and Sector and Enterprise units at the HQ?

4. Efficiency of resources use
• How efficiently have resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) been allocated and used to achieve the projects objectives? In general, did the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources?
• Were goods, service and works delivered on a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?
• Did the project create good relationship and cooperation with relevant national stakeholders and made good use of other ILO and non-ILO resources to strengthen its efficiency?
• How effectively has the project implemented its monitoring and evaluation strategy? To what extent that this contribute to accountability, management and learning?

5. Impact orientation by the project set-up, and impacts achieved vis-à-vis defined objectives and outcomes
• Has the project contributed to achieving the proposed impacts? Is the programme strategy and programme management steering towards impact?
• Has the project contributed to a significant change in practices, technical capacity at local and national levels, governance or enabling environment?
• Is there evidence of positive changes in the life of the ultimate project beneficiaries and on policies and practices? How do you assess the probability that this changes or additional changes will occur?

6. Sustainability of projects outcomes and impacts beyond the project's lifespan.
• Have the project outcomes been achieved in a sustainable manner that enable continuing benefits to the target groups beyond the project's lifespan?
• To what extent will national institutions and implementing partners will be willing/able to continue the project results without external funding or support?
• Are project beneficiaries likely to continue to feel improved conditions or access improved BDS after the project closeout?

7. General
• To what extent have the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation been taken into account and implemented, if not why?
• To what extent has the project brought lasting changes in line with the promotion of gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability?

5. Methodology
An evaluation team from international and national consultants will carry out the evaluation through a mix methods approach including quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The specific development of the evaluation

methodology will be defined in consultation between the evaluation team and the evaluation manager and will be described in detail in the inception report to be submitted by the evaluation team. During the data collection process, the evaluation team will compare and cross-validate data from different sources (project staff, project partners and beneficiaries) to verify their accuracy, and different methodologies (review documentary, field visits and interviews) that will complement each other.

For required quality control of the whole process, the evaluator/ evaluation team will follow the EVAL evaluation policy guidelines and the ILO/EVAL checklists available in the Annex II.

The evaluation team is encouraged to propose alternative mechanism or techniques for the data collection phase. These will be discussed with the project and the evaluation manager at the Inception phase. Any alternative should be reflected in the Inception report.

The evaluation will be implemented through a consultative and transparent approach and should use the following methods and tools:
• Desk review of country and ILO policy documents, project documents, progress
reports, and other to be provided by the project and on request of the evaluator
• Semi-structured interviews with key informants and stakeholders;
• Focus Group discussions with beneficiaries i.e., representatives of MSMEs, women,
youth and people with disabilities, as well as other relevant stakeholders as
appropriate;
• Direct observation during field visits;
• A workshop on preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations with all key
stakeholders at the end of the field work, including tripartite partners, implementation
agencies, ILO relevant officers and donors

Inception phase

A desk review will analyze project documentation including the project document, approved logframe, implementation plan, annual reports project deliverables and other relevant documents. The evaluation team will also review other documentation including NDPs, Office Workplan, UNSDCF, and relevant national reports. The desk review will suggest a number of initial findings that in turn may point to additional or fine-tuned evaluation questions.

The evaluation team will have a first methodological briefing with the evaluation manager, and after that, another two meetings. A preliminary meeting with the project team to plan the data collection and understand project expectations, and another one with the donor for learning and managing the expectations too.

This will be reflected in the Inception report that will translate the TORs in an operational work plan. The Inception report will be reviewed and approved by the evaluation manager prior to the field work phase.

Data collection phase

Interviews The evaluation team will undertake group and/or individual interviews with selected stakeholders including the ILO staff of technical units and field technical specialist who are involved in the management and implementation of the project. A first meeting will be held with the ILO Director of DWT/CO Cairo, backstopping Specialists, the evaluation manager and with the Project Team. After that, the evaluation team will meet relevant stakeholders including members of various committees and technical working groups involved in the project, as well as project beneficiaries to undertake more in-depth reviews of the respective national strategies and the delivery of outputs of the respective objectives of the project. An indicative list of persons to be interviewed will be developed by the evaluation team in consultation with the project management. This will include, but not limited to:
• ILO DWT/CO-Cairo
• ILO HQ staff: Employment
• ILO Project team
• ILO constituent partners
• Project beneficiaries
• National Forsa Management team
• Ministry of Labour.
• Ministry of Youth
• Local government entities in Assiut and Sharkeya
• Partner NGOs
• Provider of financial and non-financial services

Presentation of preliminary evaluation results in a workshop

The evaluation team will have a debriefing session with the ILO Director of DWT/CO -Cairo and the project team to discuss preliminary results.

A Stakeholders workshop will be organized at the end of the field work in Cairo, Egypt to present findings and complete data gaps with key stakeholders, ILO staff and representatives of the donor.

The evaluation manager will be responsible for organizing the workshop. The identification of the participants of the workshop and logistics will be the responsibility of the project team in consultation with the evaluation manager. The workshop shall be organized hybrid mode (physical & virtual) to accommodate as much stakeholders as possible

After the workshop a reflection meeting with the project team and the national counterparts would be beneficial to wrap-up all comments on the preliminary findings.

Development of the evaluation report
The evaluation team leader will develop an evaluation report in a draft and final version. He(she) will submit the first draft of the report to the evaluation manager, who would provide methodological comments if need be. The draft will also be quickly reviewed by the project manager to correct any factual error. After review and adjustments by the evaluation team leader, the evaluation manger will circulate the draft report to the backstopping units, the donor, the key national partners, and relevant stakeholders for comments. The evaluation manager will collect the feedback on the first draft, consolidate and submit it to the evaluation team leader who will incorporate the feedback as appropriate, and send the final report to the evaluation manager. The evaluation manger will send it to the RO evaluation focal point for review and clearance and submission to the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) for approval. At the end, after EVAL/ILO approval, the evaluation report will be submitted to the key stakeholders by the Country Office and uploaded in the EVAL public repository of evaluation reports (e-discovery). The draft (for comments) and final evaluation report will be officially submitted to the donor in consultation with PARDEV-ILO.

6. Main deliverables The evaluation team will be responsible for the following deliverables:

(1) **Inception report** (with detailed work plan and data collection instruments) following ILO EVAL Checklist 4.8 "Preparing the inception report", in English, should include:
• Description of the evaluation methodology and instruments to be used in sampling,
data collection and analysis and the data collection plan mentioned above; • Guide questions for questionnaires and focus group discussions; • Detailed fieldwork plan for the three regions should be developed in consultation with the Evaluation Manager and project team; • The proposed report outline.

(2) A **draft version of the evaluation report** (following ILO EVAL Checklist 4.2 "Preparing the evaluation report") in English with Executive Summary in English and Arabic (maximum 30 pages plus annexes) as per the following proposed structure:
• Cover page with key project and evaluation data • Executive Summary • Acronyms • Description of the project • Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation • Methodology and limitations • Clearly identified findings for each criterion or per objective • Conclusions • Recommendations (i.e., for the different key stakeholders) • Lessons learned and good practices • Annexes:
- TOR
- Evaluation matrix
- List of people interviewed
- Schedule of the field work
- Documents reviewed
- Data collection tools
- Lessons learned
- Emerging good practices
- Table with the status achieved of project indicators targets and a brief comment
per indicator

(3) **Final version of the evaluation report** incorporating comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders.

(4) **Evaluation Executive summary** (English) formatted in ILO-EVAL template and following the Checklist 4.4: Preparing the Evaluation Report Summary
All reports, including drafts, will be written in English. In addition, the national consultant will prepare an Executive Summary of the evaluation report in Arabic. Ownership of data from the evaluation rests jointly with the ILO and the evaluation team. The copyright of the evaluation report will rest exclusively with the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentations can only be made with the written agreement of the ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

7. Management arrangements and work plan (including timeframe)
The evaluation team leader will report to the evaluation manager _____, with whom he/she should discuss any technical and methodological matters. The evaluation manager will supervise the evaluation team with the oversight of the Regional Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. The final approval of the report will be done by EVAL.

The evaluation will be carried out with full logistical and administrative support of the project and ILO DWT/CO-Cairo.

All draft and final outputs, including supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data should be provided to the evaluation manager in electronic version compatible with Word for Windows. The first draft of the report, after

a quick review by the project team to propose corrections for possible factual errors, will be circulated for a review by the relevant stakeholders and submit their comments in two weeks period. The evaluation manager will consolidate comments from stakeholders and present it to the evaluation team for integration into the final report as appropriate. For comments that are not incorporated in the report, the consultant is expected to document reason(s) why these are left out.

It is expected that the work will be carried out over a period of **6 weeks from May- Mid June 2024**, according to the below timetable. The evaluation will be conducted by the evaluation team comprising of a lead international consultant and a national consultant and is estimated to take a total of 48 working days (23 for the international lead consultant and 18 for the national consultant) as indicated in the workplan below:

Tentative Work plan

Tentative Work plan

Briefing with the evaluation manager and the project manager and Desk review	Introduction meeting with the project team, setting contacts, review the core set of project documents. Request any additional documentation	Evaluation team (ET), project team and EM	6	3	**14th-20th July 2024**
Startup discussion	Virtual meetings with the project team, CO Director, and the donor	ET			**22nd-23rd July 2024**
Inception Report	Submission of the inception reports and evaluation tools	ET			**29th July 2024**
	Provide comments to the Inception report and evaluation tools,				**1st August 2024**
	Include comments in the Inception reports and finalize tools approved				**5th August 2024**
Interviews with stakeholders and filed work	Virtual and face-to face interviews with the stakeholders identified during the inception phase. Visits to project sites on interventions s stakeholders Egypt. Activities:	ET (with the project support)	9	9	**6th -21st August 2024** (6th-8th) Cairo 11th-15th Assiut 18-19 Sharkeya 20-21 Cairo
Presentation of preliminary findings workshop	Presentation of preliminary findings and debriefing Face-to-face/ virtual workshop	ET (with the project support)	1	1	**25-26 August 2024**
Development of the draft report	A report addressing the evaluation questions.	ET	6	4	**31th August 2024**
Draft report circulated by Evaluation Manager to stakeholders for comments	Evaluation manager does a methodological review, circulate the report and consolidate the feedback of the stakeholders to the evaluation team	EM	0	0	**12st September 2024**
Finalize evaluation report and submit to evaluation manager	The evaluation team incorporates the feedback from stakeholders and submits to the manager the final	ET	1	1	**18th September 2024**

	text of the evaluation report and the Evaluation Summary, for the review and final approval by EVAL				
Total			23	18	

8. Budget A budget under the full control of the evaluation manager will cover:
For the evaluator/ evaluation team:
- Fees for 23 days for the team leader (international consultant)
- Fees for the 18 days for the team member (national consultant)
- DSA and travel as per ILO regulations
For the evaluation exercise as a whole:
- Interpretation and translation
- Field visit logistics-
- Stakeholders' workshop
- Any other miscellaneous costs

9. Profile of the evaluation team An independent evaluation team will be comprised of two experts including a Team Leader and a team member. The team leader will conduct his work both virtually and physically for the final workshop. The field visit will be conducted by the national consultant. The following is an indicative summary of responsibilities of the respective evaluation team members:

Evaluation team leader responsibilities a. Briefing with ILO/ Evaluation Manager b. Desk review of programme and related documents c. Preliminary discussions with the CO Directors, Project Team and related officials d. Development of the Inception report including the evaluation instruments e. Undertake virtual consultations with all possible stakeholders f. Facilitating of the presentation of preliminary findings workshop g. Development of the draft evaluation report h. Development of the final evaluation report

Evaluation team member responsibilities a. Briefing with ILO/ Evaluation Manager b. Support the desk review of programme and other related documents c. Participate in the preliminary engagement with the CO and project staff d. Participate in the development of an inception report e. Organise and take part in virtual and field interviews/field work with stakeholders jointly
with the team leader f. Participate in the presentation of preliminary findings workshop g. Provide inputs in compiling information for the draft and final evaluation report versions
The evaluation team will be selected on the basis of proven evaluation experience and meeting the following criteria:

Team leader
• Advanced degree in social sciences, Economics, or related graduate qualifications. • A minimum of 7 years of professional experience specifically in evaluating international
country development initiatives, including UN projects as sole evaluator or team leader
(specific experience in economic empowerment and livelihood programs, active labour
market programs in rural set-up including wage employment interventions and self
employment interventions in informal set-up.
• Proven experience with logical framework. Theory of change, gender analysis and
other strategic planning approaches.
• Experience in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, including survey
design.
• A good understanding of ILO mandate and tripartite structure and the UN system.
• Experience in facilitating workshops for evaluation findings.
• Work experience in MENA region and especially Egypt will be an asset. • Fluency in English, Arabic knowledge would be an asset.
• Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
• Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.

Team member Evaluation Consultant
• University degree in social sciences or related graduate qualifications.
• A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in evaluating social development
projects initiatives or related social research as team member in Egypt (i.e., data tools
design and data collection and analysis).
• Experience in economic empowerment and livelihood programs, active labour market

programs in rural set-up including wage employment interventions and self employment interventions in informal set-up.
• Proven experience with logical framework, theory of change, gender analysis and other strategic planning approaches.
• Knowledge and experience of the UN and ILO systems and their mandates would be desirable.
• Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
• Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.
• Fluent in spoken and written English and Arabic.
• Have no previous or current involvement – or offers of prospective employment – with the ILO project or programme being evaluated.
• Have no personal links to the people involved in managing the project/programme (not a family member, friend or close former colleague).

10. Legal and ethical matters
The final evaluation mission will observe utmost confidentiality related to sensitive information and feedback elicited during the individual and group interviews. To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners and stakeholders, the project staff will generally not be present during interviews. However, programme staff may need to make introductions whenever necessary, to facilitate the final evaluation process. The evaluation team will follow the standard Code of Conduct which should be carefully read and signed. **Annex 1**

Annex 2. Evaluation matrix

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants
Relevance				
To what extent has the project taken into account the needs and priorities of constituents and other stakeholders?	Examples of alignment of project objectives with stakeholder needs. Extent to which interviewees perceive that their needs were considered	Project documents, government documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders
To what extent has the project taken into account the needs and priorities beneficiaries (i.e., local communities, SMES, youth and women) identified in the project document?	Examples of alignment of project objectives with beneficiaries' needs. Extent to which beneficiaries perceive that their needs were considered	Project documents, reports on youth in Egypt	Desk research, interviews, FGDs	ILO staff, stakeholders, beneficiaries
How were ILO constituents and other project stakeholders involved in the formulation and implementation of the project?	Examples of consultations listed in project documents Extent to which interviewees perceive that constituents were consulted	Project documents	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders
Coherence				
Is the project aligned with national development frameworks including the National Development Plan, United Nations Partnership Development Framework (UNPDF), ILO Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs)?	Examples of alignment between project objectives and objectives of national development frameworks and ILO strategies Extent to which interviews perceive alignment between the project and national and ILO frameworks	Project documents, national strategic documents	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, national stakeholders
How well does the project outcome contribute towards the economic reform agenda of the Government including the three pillars of private-sector-led job creation, spatial integration, and inclusion?	Examples of alignment between the project and the economic reform agenda Extent to which interviewees perceive that the project design contributes to the economic reform agenda	Project documents, national reform documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, national stakeholders
Is the project aligned with SDGs and their targets?	Examples of alignment between the project and the SDGs Extent to which interviewees perceive that the project design contributes to the achievement of SDGs	Project documents, SDGs	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders

To what extent did the project build on previous experience of the ILO (including lessons learned)?	Reflections on the previous projects in project documentation Examples of lessons learned integrated in the current project, as listed in project documentation and by interviewees	Project documents	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
How well the project complements and fit with other ongoing ILO, UN agencies and government projects, interventions, and programs in the country?	Examples of coordination with other projects listed in documentation and by respondents Extent to which respondents perceive that the project complements or duplicates other efforts	Project documents, documents of other projects	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
Was the project design comprehensive and realistic and purposeful towards achieving its objectives?	Extent to which respondents perceive the project was realistic and achievable Examples of delays and missed targets	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
To what extent does the project have specific targets for intended beneficiaries (women, youth, and local communities in an equitable manner)?	Existence of targets in the logframe	Project logframe	Desk research	
Did the project design integrate ILO's cross-cutting concerns on gender, persons with disabilities, environmental sustainability, social dialogue, and international labour standards?	Examples of activities and approaches towards each of the cross-cutting concerns Extent to which respondents perceive each of the cross-cutting concerns were integrated in the project design.	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
Effectiveness				
To what extent did the project achieve its outputs (targets) by the end of the project period?	Number of targets missed, achieved, and exceeded	Project logframe	Desk research	
What progress was made towards increased access to wage employment for youth in targeted areas	Examples of increased access reported by respondents and in project documentation Extent to which respondents perceive that the project helped to increase access to wage employment	Project documentation and monitoring data	Desk research, interviews, FGDs	ILO staff, stakeholders, beneficiaries
What progress was made towards promotion of self-employment, particularly of women	Examples of increased self-employment opportunities reported by respondents and in project documentation Extent to which respondents perceive that the project helped to start/improve their businesses	Project documentation and monitoring data	Desk research, interviews, FGDs	ILO staff, stakeholders, beneficiaries
What progress was made towards strengthened CSOs, institutions, and private sector to promote employment and self-employment, for women and youth	Examples of enhanced capacity of stakeholders to promote (self-) employment Extent to which respondents perceive that the capacity of these stakeholders was increased	Project documentation and monitoring data	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders

Have unexpected positive or negative results (outputs and outcomes) been developed by or as a consequence of the project intervention?	Examples of unexpected results, most commonly mentioned in reports and by respondents	Project documentation and monitoring data	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders
What were the main internal and external factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes?	Examples of supporting and hindering factors, most commonly listed by respondents and noted in reports	Project documentation and monitoring data	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders
Efficiency				
How efficiently have resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) been allocated and used to achieve the project's objectives?	Alignment between spent budget and achieved targets. Extent to which respondent perceive that the project was implemented efficiently Examples of cost-saving mechanisms implemented by project staff	Project budget, financial reports, and other documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
In general, did the results achieved justify the costs or could the same results be attained with fewer resources?	Extent to which staff and stakeholders perceive that the financial investment was worth the results Examples of cost-saving mechanisms implemented by project staff	Project budget, financial reports, and other documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff and stakeholders
Were goods, service and works delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?	Existence of delays recorded in project documentation Factors most commonly listed in documentation and by stakeholders as influencing timeliness	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff and stakeholders
How effective were the backstopping support provided by ILO DWT-Cairo, and units at HQ?	Extent to which respondents noted satisfaction with the support provided by ILO DWT and HQ Examples of support provided by ILO DWT and HQ	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
Did the project create good relationships and cooperation with relevant national stakeholders?	Extent to which national stakeholders were satisfied with the collaboration with the project team		Interviews	Stakeholders
How efficiently has the project implemented its monitoring and evaluation strategy? To what extent does this contribute to accountability, management and learning?	Alignment of the logframe with SMART/RACER indicators Suitability of the indicators to measure project progress for all components Examples of the use of M&E data in project decision-making	Logframe and project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff
Impact				
What progress towards, or signs of, impact can be noted towards the economic empowerment and employment for vulnerable communities as a result of the project outcomes?	Examples of improved economic empowerment as listed in documentation and by respondents Extent to which respondents perceive that the project was impactful	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews, FGDs	ILO staff, stakeholders, beneficiaries
Is the project strategy and programme management steering towards impact?	Examples of measures taken to ensure project impact	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff

Has the project contributed to a significant change in practices, technical capacity at local and national levels, governance or enabling environment?	Examples of improved local and national capacity and policy as listed in documentation and by respondents Extent to which respondents perceive that the project impacted governance	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff and stakeholders
Sustainability				
To what extent are the results for beneficiaries sustainable, in terms of continued employment / self-employment?	Extent to which respondents perceive that businesses and jobs of beneficiaries are sustainable Examples of foundations that support the sustainability of businesses / jobs	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews, FGDs	ILO staff, stakeholders, beneficiaries
To what extent will national institutions and implementing partners be willing/able to continue the project results without external funding or support?	Examples of resources, capacity, and signs of willingness that stakeholders can continue the trainings and other activities Extent to which respondents perceive that stakeholders can continue implementing the activities	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff and stakeholders
What enablers or barriers will affect sustainability?	Examples of supporting and hindering factors, most commonly listed by respondents and noted in reports	Project documentation	Desk research, interviews	ILO staff, stakeholders

Annex 3. Evaluation schedule

The evaluation was conducted along **three main phases**: 1) inception phase, 2) data collection 3) reporting and finalization.

	21-25 Jul	28 Jul – 1 Aug	4 – 8 Aug	11 – 15 Aug	18 – 22 Aug	25 – 29 Aug	31 Aug - 5 Sept	8 – 12 Sept	15 – 19 Sept
Inception Stage									
Initial desk research	X								
Preparation of the Inception report		X							
Feedback and resubmission			X						
Data collection stage									
Online interviews			X	X					
Field work in the provinces			X	X	X				
Reporting stage									
Preliminary findings workshop					X				
Analysis and first report draft					X	X			
Feedback and resubmission							X	X	X

Annex 4. Documents reviewed

Project documents

EYE:FORSA project document – January 2021

EYE: FORSA Progress Report 2021
EYE: FORSA Progress Report 2022
EYE: FORSA Progress Report 2023
EYE: FORSA Progress Report 2024

EYE:FORSA budget breakdown

EYE:FORSA logframe and Theory of Change

EYE:FORSA Monitoring & Evaluation Plan – September 2023.

Formal Annual Meeting Meeting Minutes - Egypt's Youth Employment: Economic Empowerment under Forsa Programme (EYE FORSA / MFA ref. no EGT-20/0002). June 21st, 2022.

Dr. Edwin Ochieng Okul and Dr. Ahmed Seliem (2022) Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Economic Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA) – Internal Midterm Evaluation.

Zienab Anwar (2024) Final report on Assessment of results of the "Training for Employment Program and the Human Resources and Gender Academy"

North South Consultants Exchange (2024) Tracer Study of results of the training activities of Egypt's Youth Employment: Economic Empowerment under Forsa Programme.

Other sources

James Allen IV, et.al. (2023) Key Findings from Midline Evaluation of Egypt's Forsa Graduation Program.

The National Agenda for Sustainable Development: Egypt's Updated Vision 2030 (2023)

United Nations Partnership Development Framework 2018 to 2022

Annex 5. List of interviews respondents

Table 2. Stakeholder interviews

#	Name	Gender	Organization
1	Adel Nour eldin	Male	Federation of Egyptian Industries
2	Ashraf Rady	Male	Federation of Egyptian Industries
3	Fatma Metwally	Female	Get Ahead Master trainer
4	Medhat Abdelrashid	Male	MoSS
5	Manal Gamal	Female	MoYS
6	Nanis ElNakory	Female	MoYS
7	Reda Ahmed	Male	MoYS
8	Ahmed Abdelmegid	Male	MoYS
9	Ahmed Habat	Male	Lifemakers NGO
10	Shahira Abdelmegid	Female	Lifemakers NGO
11	Dina Shawky	Male	Misr Elkhier NGO
12	Ashraf Noaman	Female	Misr Elkhier NGO
13	Hossam Shalaby	Male	Smart Innovations service provider
14	Mostafa Helmy	Male	SIYB Master trainer
15	Sameh Ibrahim	Male	Helol service provider
16	Heba Rashed	Female	Excoll Job Fairs
17	Eithar Soliman	Female	Embassy of Norway

Table 3. ILO staff interviews

#	Name	Gender	Position
1	Roland Sarton	Male	Employment Specialist
2	Maryam Khalil	Female	Programme officer for Sharkeya
3	John Samuel	Male	National coordinator and Coordinating JSC
4	Rasha Radi	Female	Admin and Finance Assistant, Get ahead and Financial Education
5	Farouk Salah	Male	M&E consultant
6	Salah Elrashidy	Male	Programme officer for Asyut
7	Wafaa Abdelkader	Female	Specialist for Workers Activities
8	Eric Oechslin	Male	ILO Country Office Director

Annex 6. Lessons learned and good practices

Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA)

Project DC/SYMBOL: EGY/20/01/NOR
Name of Evaluator: Loes van der Graaf, Noha Hassan
Date: 28 September 2024

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.

LESSON LEARNED 1	The design of wage-employment activities should be closely aligned with the job offers available
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	If there are no suitable jobs available in the vicinity of the beneficiaries, or the jobs are unsuitable for specific people (e.g. women), the employability trainings may enhance skills but will not enhance the employment rate of beneficiaries. If there is a general low offer of jobs in an area, the provision of training would not enhance the opportunity of people to find employment
Context and any related preconditions	General low offer on the job market, unsuitable working conditions particularly for women, long hours and low wages, far distance from the community.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries seeking employment
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The training to enhance employability resulted for only 14% in formal employment.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	The training was effective to enhance skills and overall empowerment.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Conduct a market assessment to assess whether job skills training is most suitable, or whether alternative economic opportunities should be explored.

LESSON LEARNED 2	Project implementation may be significantly impacted by the quality and timeliness of parallel national efforts
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	If a project comprises technical assistance to a national programme, the project may be affected by challenges and delays outside its control if such issues arise in the national programme.
Context and any related preconditions	The EYE:FORSA project aimed to support the implementation of the government's Forsa programme in two governorates. However, as the national Forsa programme was heavily delayed, the project could not ensure that project activities built on support (assets) provided by the government. This caused delays in the project and barriers to effectiveness, that were outside the project's control.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Stakeholders and beneficiaries involved in the project
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Delays in the project due to delays in the national programme

Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Flexibility in budget allocation in the project to take over some of the responsibilities of the government (provision of assets) to mitigate delays.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Projects depending largely on national efforts should have risk mitigation and "plan B's" in case the national component is not delivered as planned.

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	The absence of outcome-level indicators can hinder the monitoring and evaluation of the project
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	The evaluation team was hindered in measuring effectiveness by a lack of clear understanding of what was expected under the outcome "increased access to wage employment for youth in targeted areas"
Context and any related preconditions	The outcome was formulated as "increased access to wage employment for youth in targeted areas" but without accompanying indicators. Therefore, the evaluation team understood this outcome to mean increased employment rates, while the project team understood this as increased skills to find employment.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	N/a
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The evaluation of the effectiveness criteria was hindered because progress towards the outcome was not monitored by indicators in the logframe and continuous discussions took place between the project team and evaluation team.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Include outcome indicators in the project design and agree clearly with the donor on what results are expected from activities. Describe these expectations in the project document.

▶ **Template 4.2: Emerging good**

Egypt Youth Employment (EYE): Empowerment under FORSA Programme (EYE/FORSA)

Project DC/SYMBOL: EGY/20/01/NOR
Name of Evaluator: Loes van der Graaf, Noha Hassan
Date: 28 September 2024

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

GOOD PRACTICE 1	Continue enhancing project and budget flexibility is crucial to ensure the relevance of the project for different groups of beneficiaries and throughout the project implementation.
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	During the project, lessons learned and feedback from stakeholders and partners were used to adjust the project content, thereby enhancing and maintaining its relevance throughout the implementation period.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Such flexibility is conditional to the rules of the donor to reallocate funding across project budget lines. It also relies on ILO's flexibility to adjust existing ILO tools to local needs. Also, it requires regular quality engagement of stakeholders so that feedback can be obtained regularly and effectively.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	Feedback and suggestions from the trainers were used to update the training tools to the specific needs of beneficiaries in the selected governorates. This enhanced the relevance of training for them (e.g. some simplifications). Furthermore, the changes in the ToC outcomes, and budget reallocation allowed the project to mitigate the impact of the delays in the government programme and enhance again the effectiveness of the project activities (specifically the reallocation of budget to purchase assets).
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The project activities increased in relevance and effectiveness, which created better results for beneficiaries
Potential for replication and by whom	All future projects across should consider enhancing flexibility and response to feedback to maintain relevance. This should be discussed with donors.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	

GOOD PRACTICE 2	Continue combining business training with asset delivery should ensure that asset delivery takes place shortly after the training completion.
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	If a project combines business training with provision of an asset for business development (e.g. livestock, machinery, other tools related to business), the asset should be delivered shortly after the completion of the training, so that the beneficiary can directly implement their knowledge and select a proper asset.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	The delivery of assets by government institutions can be affected by delays. In this project, government delays in asset delivery created gaps of up to a year between training and asset delivery. Some beneficiaries had already forgotten what they learned or were in general not interested anymore.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	The project has shown that short time periods between training and asset delivery enhanced the effectiveness of the project,

	namely by enhancing the quality and success of the established business
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Beneficiaries were more likely to have a successful business.
Potential for replication and by whom	Any future projects combining business training with asset delivery
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	

GOOD PRACTICE 3	**Continue using local staff (NGOs, trainers, government officials) as crucial method for projects targeting hard-to-reach beneficiaries.**
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	By using trainers and representatives of the local community to reach out to beneficiaries, they are more likely to participate. These people understand local concerns and traditions and can speak to beneficiaries in their language and reduce distrust.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Communities are sometimes reluctant to engage with persons they do not know. There may be a cultural or language barrier, or misunderstandings.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	By using local trainers to recruit training participants, local youth were more likely to sign up for the training
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	More beneficiaries were able to benefit from the training
Potential for replication and by whom	All future projects targeting specific communities.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	

Annex 7. Logframe indicators and targets

Indicators	Target	Achievement
Outcome 1: Strengthen CSOs, institutions and private sector partners to initiate and improve wage and self-employment activities for youth		
Output 1.1: 75 partners supported to implement wage employment and self-employment activities		
# of partners trained to deliver wage and self-employment	75	83
# of individuals trained with support from EYE Forsa	200	369
# of ToT Trainings held	9	11
# of trainers certified on ILO Training Tools	130	98
# of MFIs staff trained	9	19
# of partners trained on provision of business development services	9	23
# of partner staff trained in M&E/MIS	90	86
Output 1.2: Exchange knowledge with partners for wage & self-employment promotion		
# of round tables discussions held	4	2
# of knowledge products disseminated.	8	9
Outcome 2: Increase access to wage employment		
Output 2.1: 1000 BNFs have improved wage employment skills		
# of job search clubs held	60	79
# of beneficiaries trained on employability	1000	1511
% of beneficiaries obtained at least 20% knowledge increase	85%	78%
# of financial education training held	60	79
# of beneficiaries trained on financial skills	1000	1511
Output 2.2: 800 BNFs obtain and/or retain employment opportunities		
# of job fairs organized	4	4
# of employers engaged.	120	97
# of beneficiaries received apprenticeship/training for employment schemes	800	800
# of private sector beneficiaries attended supervisory skills training	40	111
# of private sector beneficiaries attended Academy training	25	21
Outcome 3: Promote self-employment with special focus on females		
Output 3.1: 3000 BNF have improved business management skills for income generation		
# BNFs trained on financial Education & GET Ahead	2000	2034
# of BNF trained on SIYB program	1000	1073
% of beneficiaries obtained at least 20% knowledge increase	85%	81%
Output 3.2: 400 female BNFs have access to business management training and asset transfer		
# female BNFs trained on financial Education & GET Ahead	400	400
# of females received assets	400	400