

University Centers for Career Development (UCCD) – Independent Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries:	Egypt
Final Evaluation:	September 2022
Evaluation Mode:	Independent
Administrative Office:	DWT/CO-Cairo
Technical Office:	DWT/CO-Cairo
Evaluation Manager:	Ricardo Furman
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Project Code:	EGY/17/02/AUE
Donor(s) & Budget:	USAID (US\$2,224,619)
Keywords:	Disability, Labour Market Information,

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Labour market information in Egypt is not readily available for different groups of users. While several institutions produce labour market information products, there is neither a joint repository, nor a common frame to produce labour market information in a unified manner.

Under a joint project with UNDP from 2015-2017 in Egypt, the ILO supported the creation of a business and disability network in Egypt, trained employment services and training providers on becoming more inclusive of persons with disabilities and introduced the ILO's Disability Equality Training (DET) methodology.

Present Situation of the Project

The project remained on track under its three outcomes. The project reached one of its most important milestones by disseminating the key findings of "The First National Survey on Employment of Tertiary Graduates in Egypt" in a workshop attended by the key relevant stakeholders and policy makers from the education and employment sector. The workshop presented also the main messages of the

"Brochure on Egypt's Labour Market Information for Education and Career Guidance". The project ensured a full handover of its activities under component 2 regarding the regular conduct of enterprises surveys and its IT tool to MoHE LMO officials for sustainability purposes. The finalization of the project's step by step guides under its three components is also another tool to ensure sustainability. The last quarter also witnessed the finalization of the step-by-step guide on how to utilize and disseminate labour market information, and how to conduct skills establishment surveys. The project also continued reaching out to additional new employers in each governorate through supervising the regular implementation of more roundtable discussions and the conduct of employers' skills surveys as per the agreed-upon workplan. Significant progress was made in the project's achievement in terms of raising awareness on disability inclusion through DET sessions implemented by UCCD DET potential facilitators. The second round of Disability Equality Training (Training of Facilitators) took place face to face for 15 UCCD staff. The purpose of the training is to introduce the UCCDs' staff members to the DET facilitation approach and to equip them with the skills needed to advocate and increase awareness on Disability inclusion among university staff and students. 8 out of those 15 UCCD staff submitted their plans for the implementation of DET rounds after a full process of coaching and rehearsal. The roll out of two DET sessions took place in Zagazig and Mansoura universities by two UCCD staff with the participation of a total of 42 university students.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The evaluation assesses the relevance and coherence of project's design regarding country needs and how the project is perceived and valued by the target groups and identifies the contributions of the project to, the SDGs, the countries UNDAF, the ILO objectives and Country Programme Outcomes and its synergy with other projects and programs. It also analyses the implementation strategies of the project, reviews the institutional set-up, coordination mechanisms and the use and usefulness of management tools. Also assessed the implementation

efficiency of the project, the strategies for outcomes' sustainability and orientation to impact to identify lessons and potential good practices for the key stakeholders. Based on these, it provides strategic recommendations for the different key stakeholders to strengthen the sustainability of project outcomes and for similar interventions in Egypt and in similar contexts.

The final evaluation covers the project duration from June 2018 to June 2022. The geographical analysis covers activities conducted in the project's target operating universities: Ain Shams, Alexandria, Mansoura, Menoufia, Sadat, Zagazig, Aswan, Beni Suef, Minya, Sohag, Tanta. The evaluation discusses how the project has addressed its main issues and the ILO cross-cutting themes.

The primary clients of the evaluation are the ILO constituents. These include UCCD staff Egyptian public universities and officials of MoHE Labour Market Observatory (LMO). Other relevant clients are the donor, AUC/ USAID, and ILO.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation was carried out in adherence with the relevant parts of the ILO Evaluation Framework and Strategy following the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation; and the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist 3 "Preparing the inception report"; Checklist 4 "Validating methodologies"; Checklist 5 "Preparing the evaluation report" and Checklist "6 Rating the quality of evaluation report. The methodology was participatory and included a mix-methods approach, with analysis of both quantitative (secondary) and qualitative (primary) data and was conducted by an international experienced consultant physically with support of a national consultant. The evaluation data was collected through a desk review, site visit consultations and virtual consultations with, implementing partners, beneficiaries, the donor, ILO and other key stakeholders. It was carried out through three key approaches: a theory-based evaluation approach, a process evaluation approach and an impact evaluation approach. The sample size was determined in consultation with ILO after which the individual beneficiaries' sample was randomly picked from the list provided by the project team. The consultants employed a non-probability sampling approach in which only those individuals with adequate information on the project, are reachable and willing to participate in the study are included in the sampling framework. The analysis involved coding of themes and content analysis augmented with comparative analysis. Information from the different sources was integrated using question by

method matrices to facilitate comparisons and to identify common trends and themes. Triangulation facilitated the validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. A stakeholders' workshop was organized to discuss initial findings and complete data gaps with key stakeholders, ILO staff and representatives of the development partners. The objective of this workshop was to validate and refine the data and findings by the relevant project team and stakeholders.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance, Coherence and Strategic fit

The ILO component is well aligned to the development objectives of the Government of Egypt and focus of the government and the social partners. It is specifically relevant to Egypt's vision 2030 and supports the Strategic Objectives of Economic Development (SOED) and Improving Employability of its Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) 2030. Likewise, it aligns with the third objective of MoHESR's strategy and falls under ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) 2020-2022 Outcome 5. The project also aligns with and serves SDGs 8 (Good Jobs and Economic Growth) and 4 (Quality Education). It compliments ILO's work with the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and cooperates with ILO's ongoing projects. It is equally aligned to the youth employment and skills development programs and properly fits ILO's mandate to seal the gap between labour supply and demand labour market information is a key ILO mandate.

Validity of design

The project was clear in its articulation of the expected outputs, even though some of the planned activities were not realistic. The UCCD staff for instance provided idealistic action plans intended to make the UCCDs accessible but these could not all be achieved due to limited capacity and resources. The project was designed and succeeded in building the capacities of UCCD staff in LMI use, conducting enterprise skills surveys and tracer studies. A revision was made to the second outcome of the component with a view to support UCCDs carry out annual university-level tracer studies.

Project effectiveness

The project made positive progress, achieving a great deal of the overall project objectives although there were certain contextual and institutional threats external to the project despite the positive factors. The UCCDs for instance achieved almost all of their targets on time except for delays because of COVID-19, the response to which was nonetheless rapid and UCCD centers largely

transitioned to virtual platforms. Other threats to the realization of project goals included time constraints, overwhelmed staff, the limited availability of the databases of students, delays in approvals by university management and the high cost of required infrastructure renovation works.

Under outcome 1, the project succeeded in capacity building of UCCD staff especially on Disability Equality Training (DET), roundtables and enterprise skills surveys. The capacity-building program on collecting, analyzing and disseminating LMI was effective despite the time constraints, overwhelmed staff, and COVID-19. The analyses were done in close coordination with the Working Group (WG), comprising CAPMAS, MoHESR, UCCD select career counsellors and AUC. The Study tour to the US for UCCD staff, however, was virtual but it was a good opportunity to be exposed to some mature peers from the US.

Under the second outcome, the capacity building of the staff of ESS and Roundtables was successful and the Enterprise Surveys were effectively conducted. GISR conducted the first enterprise surveys and then the UCCD is involved gradually.

Under outcome 3, Accessibility Assessment of UCCD premises, DET training, and development of action plans for accessibility enhancement have taken place in different universities and with varied outcomes. Action plans have been developed for enhancing disability inclusion of UCCD services with the support of two national experts and a guideline for physical accessibility assessment of existing facilities was also developed for use by the UCCDs. An important achievement in most universities is to have centers that are accessible and providing inclusive services for students. Some UCCDs were successful in having had University leadership support to make the required physical changes and new constructions initiated enhancing accessibility for students with disabilities.

Management efficiency

The project had an arrangement in which ILO was a sub-grantee to AUC, with no direct communication or working relationship with the donor, USAID. There was no joint planning between AUC and ILO to develop a synchronized workplan for the entire project. As a result, there were frequent interruptions of many ILO activities because the UCCDs were often occupied or even overcome with other responsibilities. On the other hand, the project adopted a participatory approach through continually taking feedback from the UCCD staff, and ILO was supportive and responsive to partner needs.

Prior to the start of LMI training in 2019, USAID AOR participated in a coordination conference at the ILO to launch the labor market training and studies component. The ILO strategy was considered during this meeting, and some agreements were made. As a result, there was interaction and communication with USAID. Additionally, the National Project Specialist at ILO and the Deputy Chief of Party for the UCCD consistently co-planned operational actions to coordinate LMI interventions and studies. This occurred at least annually and quarterly. Project Managers would receive agreements from the ILO from the DCOP, who would then provide the ILO with feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Efficiency of resource use

Resources were utilized efficiently with consideration for value for money with planned activities and budgets utilized according to approved plans. COVID-19 pandemic affected operational expenses resulting in savings as some activities were conducted virtually, thus cheaper. As well, working with student volunteers to support different aspects also contributed to some saving. The UCCDs financial resources were nevertheless inadequate for making the required changes to make the UCCD centres more inclusive. Besides, having two different targets of the project; one for ILO and one for AUC was overwhelming to the available UCCD staff.

Project impact and orientation to sustainability

The results of the intervention are to a large extent likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDGs 8 (Good Jobs and Economic Growth) and 4 (Quality Education) and relevant targets, both explicitly and implicitly. The UCCD staff are willing to make a real change and with the capacity building and coaching provided for the staff, in addition to available information resources (manuals). However, there are glitches that may depress the project sustainability: the unavailability of sufficient financial resources, the limited access to information/databases of students with disabilities to support them and the high turnover of the staff.

Gender equality and non-discrimination

The project mainstreamed gender equality and non-discrimination in the project strategy and outcomes and resources were allocated and suitably utilized for applicable activities. Gender equality was maintained in different activities of the project even though more females are represented in UCCD staff, and the activities and services provided for students. While the gender parity in most of the universities is 60% males and 40% females, in

a significant proportion of the centers there are 60% females and 40% males.

The DET, in addition to the Disability Inclusion Assessment, was a needed intervention to address the vulnerable groups of students with disability to access UCCD career services. The unavailable databases of disabled students in the universities, the limited support from some university leadership, and the expensive renovation of the buildings to be inclusive to disabled students hampered the success gender equality and non-discrimination efforts.

Implementation of the mid-term evaluation recommendations

Some of the midterm evaluation recommendations have been implemented; for instance, some UCCD staff had recommended changes in the LMI and DET trainings and ILO positively responded to the proposals. AUC also held a meeting with the ILO after the MTE to appraise the project progress which led to modification and updates to the implementation approach. More specifically, there was a modification around the employer roundtable. But other recommendations may not have been implemented because the findings and recommendations were not effectively disseminated. A project officer reported not to have heard of it, and that if there was any implementation, this may have happened at the level of senior project management.

Conclusions

Relevance, Coherence and Strategic Fit,

The project is coherent with Government's objectives, National Development Framework and beneficiaries' needs. It supports the outcomes outlined in ILO's CPOs and the SDGs. It also complements and fits with other ongoing ILO programmes and projects in the country and been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages/

Validity of Intervention Design

The project has been realistic in terms of expected outputs, outcomes, and impact given the time and resources available. The project targets, were also realistic and attainable although there was not factored in funds for implementing some of the recommendations of the accessibility assessment.

Effectiveness:

Quite some achievements have been realized in the overall project objectives/outcomes with most activities carried out as planned, although Covid 19 affected some of these.

Efficiency of resource use

Resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) were well allocated to achieve the project outputs, and specially outcomes The project was able to not only leverage resources to promote but realized some savings

Impact orientation and sustainability

The MOHE and UCCDs are likely to continue with most of the activities of the intervention which are likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDGs and relevant targets.

Gender equality and non-discrimination

To a large extent, the project has mainstreamed gender equality and the empowerment of persons with disability in the project strategy and outcomes and resources have been utilized on disability inclusion activities.

Mid-term evaluation recommendations

The project has addressed some of the mid-term evaluation recommendations including changes in the LMI and DET trainings that ILO positively responded to and there was a modification around the employer roundtable.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. The UCCD needs more follow-up visits from the consultants and coaching sessions to give the UCCD staff more support to effectively integrate the inclusiveness of UCCD in all activities. It would be more effective if the project targeted some of the resources to buy some inexpensive equipment that could make the UCCD more accessible and thus would get the buy-in of the university leadership. Additionally, the UCCDs can involve the businesses and employers in the DET and share with them the accessibility problem for PWD

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
ILO	High	Short-term - Sept – December 2022	Medium

2. Target more employers for the DET training and conduct DET training by UCCDs for employers they partnered with.

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
UCCDs	High	Short-term - Sept – December 2022	Medium

3. The certification step came too early thus it would be better to allow the UCCD staff more opportunities to

facilitate DETs and get advice preferably from their master trainers before they are officially certified.

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
AUC/UCCDs	Medium	Mid-term – Dec 2022 – Jan 2023	High

4. *Develop clear indicators for measuring the implementation of the Inclusion Action Plans and consider the timing of the activities to be more inclusive through building the capacity of the staff first than to start providing the services.*

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
UCCDs	Medium	Short-term - Oct – Jan 2023	Low

5. *Repeating Study tours to the US for UCCD staff (in person) would be a future step for sharing experiences, more development and exploring the other model of working.*

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
AUC	Medium	Long-term - Dec 2022 – Dec 2023	High

6. *The development of accurate databases for employers, students and graduates could be a future strategic step for the MOHE and ILO so more representative nationwide studies could be done. UCCDS should start to update their local employer’s databases from field mapping and networking to include them in the future studies to have a representative sample*

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
UCCDs/LOM and ILO	High	Short-term - Sept – December 2022	Medium

7. *Have a common TOC for all project components and empower UCCD staff in the planning process to integrate all activities.*

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
AUC	Medium	Mid-term - Sept – December 2022	Low

8. *Future ILO projects should include trade union representation to enhance sound relations between employers and workers through the promotion and*

protection of freedom of association, collective bargaining agreements and dispute resolution.

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
ILO	High	Mid-term - Sept – December 2022	Low

9. *To improve the working relationship and management approach between ILO and AUC which was not the most collaborative and cooperative, there is need to more effectively manage the partnership by creating a shared partnership vision and roadmap founded on a transparent and effective communication based on knowledge of each partner's strengths and weaknesses.*

Responsible	Priority	Time Implication	Level of resources required
ILO and AUC	High	Mid-term - Sept – December 2022	Low