

Final evaluation of “MOBILIZATION OF THE DAHSHOUR WORLD HERITAGE SITE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT”



Eva Otero

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Final evaluation of the UN Joint Programme “Mobilization of the Dahshour world heritage site for community development”

External evaluation by: Eva Otero and Mohab Dawoud

Edited by: Desmond McCarthy

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eva.otero@leitmotivsocial.com

+34 630663181

We wish to thank the following people who contributed to this report:

Aarfa Ahmed – Member in the LED forum
Abd El Aziz Ashour Aly –Loan recipient
Abd El Karim El Semeny – Coordinator at UNWTO, Trainer of English, trainee of ILO
Abd El Wahab Mohamed – responsible for lending, BEST Office in Manshiet Dahshour
Adel Gendy, UNWTO National Consultant
Ahmed Atef, SFD Officer
Ahmed Farag, SFD Deputy Manager & Task Manager
Ahmed, Trainee on Tourist Guide
Amany Nakhla, Programme Analyst, UNDP
Amr Ahmed Kaseb - Board of Directors (Village of Manshayet Kaseb), LED Forum
Ashraf Salah, Manager in BEST & responsible for Microcredit
Atef Mohamed, Trainee on Project Management
Fatma Bakr, Focal Point BEST Foundation
Fekri Hassan, Director Cultural Heritage Program, French University in Egypt
Fidel Sendagorta, Ambassador, Spanish Embassy
Ghada Sayed, LED Forum
Giovanna Ceglie, UNIDO Representative and Director
Giulio Morello, UNIDO Industrial Development Officer
Gomaa Salama, Trainee on Basic Hospitality
Hayam Mohamed, Trainee on Handicraft
Heba Ahmed Mokhtar, Member in LED Forum, Treasurer at Local community Association
Heba Wafa, Joint Programme Coordinator, UNRC Office
Hesham El Gazar, Yadawy Company (Export of Handicraft products)
Hosam Ismail, Trainee on preservation of Antiquities
Ignacio Artaza-Zuriarrain, Country Director, UNDP
Injy Galal, UN Coordination Office
Jehad Mostafa, Trainee on Project Management
Khaled Fathy, Trainee on Basic Hospitality
Khaled Ramy, Egyptian Tourist Authority
Luis De Torres, Programme Manager, AECID
Mahmoud Afifi, Supreme Council of Antiquities
Maria Cruz Ciria, Head of Development Coordination, AECID
Maya Morsy, Country Coordinator, UN Women
Mohamed Abd El Monsef, Treasurer, BEST Office in Manshiet Dahshour
Mohamed El Hadidy, Coordinator , BEST Office in Manshiet Dahshour
Mohamed Farag, IMC Senior Project Manager
Mohamed Hamdy, Accountant, BEST Office in Manshiet Dahshour
Mohamed Salah, Member in the LED forum
Mohamed Yousef, PMU
Mohamed Youssef Ali – (Inspector MSA) Director of Dahshour Archeological site

Mohammed Farag, Industrial Modernization Center
Motaz Al Qotan, Working in Oriental cafe
Nancy El Molla, Project Assistant & responsible for field visits, ILO
Nora Mohamed, Trainee on Handicraft
Omar Abou Aish, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Osama Elnahas, Supreme Council of Antiquities
Rady Ez El Din, Trainee on Basic Hospitality
Ragab Suliman, Board of Directors (Village of Manshayet Dahshour), LED Forum
Ramy, Designer, Yadawy
Ranya Abd El Ghani, Trainee on Project Management
Samar Hussein Mohamed, Ministry of Tourism
Sara Ferrer, UN MDG Achievement Fund
Sherif Ibrahim, Trainee on Basic Hospitality
Sherif Ramadan, TDA Representative & National Project Coordinator
Sherin Adel, Member of the Board of Directors (Village of Mazghona), LED Forum
Suzan Abd El Rasoul, SFD Senior Manager & Task Manager
Suzan, MoT
Tamar Teneishvili, Culture Programme Specialist & Task Manager, UNESCO
Tarek El Qanawaty, Project Manager in Environmental sector in Dahshour, EEAA
Tarek Mohamed, Board of Directors (Village of Dahshour) financial administrator, LED Forum
Tareq ElQanawaty, Ministry of Environment
Vanessa Satur, Project Coordinator, UNWTO
Wael Arfa, UN Programme Coordinator
Yasmine El Essawy, National Coordinator, ILO
Yasmine Najib, BEST Foundation

Acronyms and Terms

Acronym	Term
BDS	Business Development Services
BEST	Business Enterprise Support Tools Foundation
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMC	Industrial Modernisation Centre
JP	Joint Programme
LED	Local Economic Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
M/SMEs	Micro, small and medium enterprises
MSA	Ministry of State of Antiquities
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSC	National Steering Committee
PM	Programme Manager
PMC	Programme Management Committee
PMU	Programme Management Unit
SFD	Social Fund for Development
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistant Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNWTO	World Tourism Organisation
WHS	World Heritage Site

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Executive Summary

Objectives and methodology

This is the final evaluation of the UN Joint Programme “*Mobilization of the Dahshour World Heritage Site for Community Development*”. The evaluation framework was people-centred whereby stakeholders and beneficiaries were the key actors of the evaluation process and not the mere objects of the evaluation.

The original questions prompted in the ToRs were combined with several issues raised during initial needs assessment and an evaluation framework was drafted. The evaluation framework has four levels of analysis (relevance; results; coordination & efficiency; and sustainability). In answering the evaluation questions, we drew from the best available evidence across a range of sources, such as interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, direct observation, third party research and documents. This report presents the main findings and answers to those questions on the basis of evidence.

Description of the development intervention

According to *Egypt Human Development Report 2008*, the governorate that administratively includes Dahshour area would only meet the first MDG targeting the reduction by half of the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day if additional intensified development efforts are undertaken. A recent socio-economic study showed that economic activities in the five villages comprising the Dashour area are characterized with limited size revenues and profits, and limited capacity for job-generation.

The aim of this Joint Programme is fostering sustainable development and revenue generation in the community of Dahshour through attracting tourism whilst protecting the area of the Dahshour pyramids and its ecosystem.

The programme framework is structured in two main outcomes; Outcome 1 “Employment, especially of youth and women in heritage arts, crafts, tourism and creative industries increased, contributing to poverty alleviation and empowerment” and Outcome 2 “Enhanced institutional capacity to manage cultural heritage and natural resources” aimed to develop institutional capacity for the long-term preservation and sustainable development of natural and cultural heritage assets in and surrounding the Dahshour community.

This Joint Programme runs from April 2009 until April 2013.

Findings

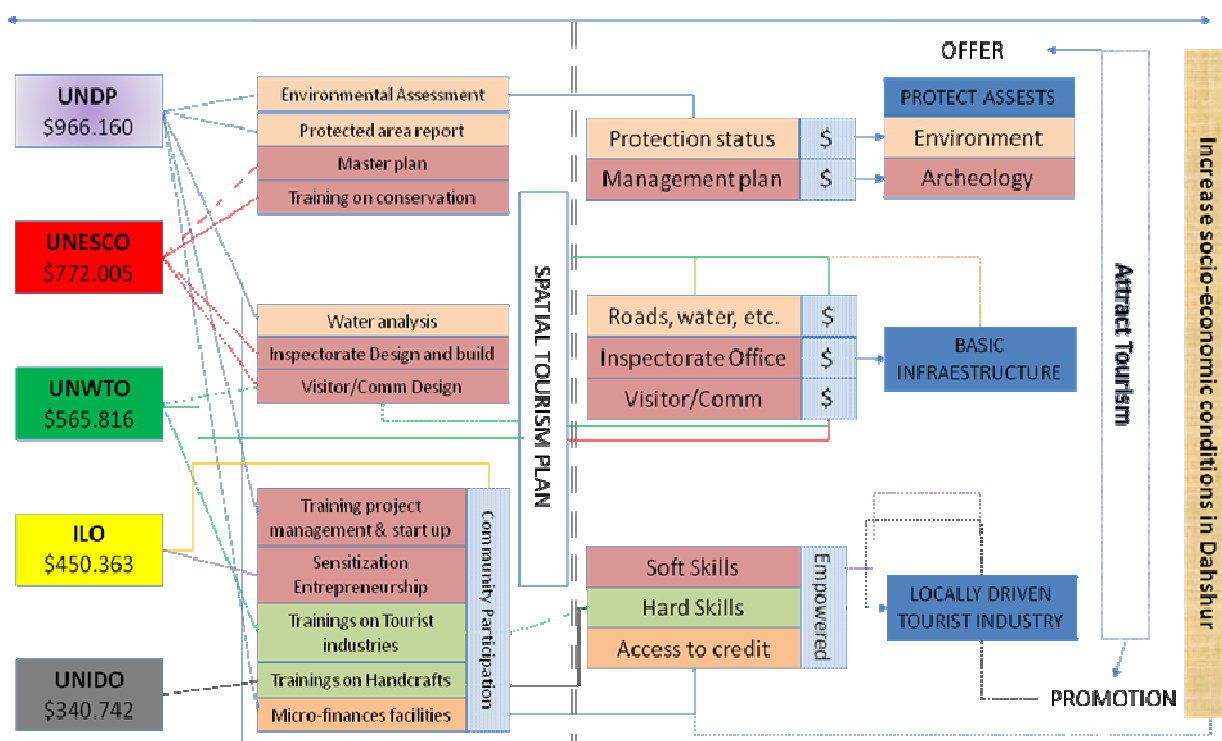
Relevance

The project uniquely combines in an integrated manner cultural heritage aspects, natural heritage dimensions, and community development components. The fact that the programme is in an enclave situated inside the *Memphis Necropolis*, which is arguably the most important archeological site of the world, gives this initiative a special relevance as a cultural development programme.

Moreover, the programme is fully aligned with National partners' mandates as well as with UNDAF and the MDGs. However, the design phase had important pitfalls, most relevantly the lack of involvement of key stakeholders, which had implications on the implementation phase and on the results achieved.

The Theory of Change

As evaluators, we have developed a model theory of change, based on inputs from the project documents and testimonies of the people consulted. The theory of change sets out some assumptions and theories as to how change will come about, and the project's role within that.



The theory of change illustrated here works towards an overarching goal that “*increases socio-economic conditions in Dahshour*”. The main strategy of the project is to achieve its final goal taking advantage of resources present in the area (archeology, environmental and the community) to attract tourism and therefore increasing living standards of the most needed people of Dahshour.

To make tourism work for the people, two important things need to happen. On the one hand, tourist resources have to be turned into tourist products, and it is also necessary to work on the “readiness of the community” to receive the tourists. This is what we have labelled as building the “offer”. On the other hand, the project needs to market those tourist products among suitable audiences, which is what we labelled as “promotion”. The project heavily focused on building the “offer” rather than in promoting the products, which all stakeholders considered as a sound strategy and an indispensable first step.

The theory requires the fulfillment of layers of preconditions that we have organized vertically in the diagram above.

The vertical dotted line in the middle of the ToC represents roughly where this project as it was formulated was supposed to arrive. Nonetheless, what we have found during the course of this investigation was that expectations created by the project, most importantly within the community of Dahshour, went well beyond that line.

The project succeeded in creating a common motivational horizon shared by all stakeholders and in planning activities and outputs that were to be the foundational building blocks to get there. This vision has strongly captured people's imagination and in consequence, raised expectations that went well beyond the scope of the project.

While the project accomplished pretty much all it was set to do, expectations raised (most importantly within the community of Dahshour) were much higher than its stated objectives.

Salient results

It is important to acknowledge the challenges the project faced particularly in the light of the political turmoil happening in Egypt during the past two years. Most relevantly, the tourist industry collapsed after the revolution and it still has not showed signs of recovering. Furthermore, the revolution had a powerful effect upon the mood of all stakeholders at every level. The structure and the power balance of many of the institutions involved within the project, and more concretely the governmental partners, also got greatly affected by the political events which translated into frequent changes in the mission of the institutions, in the senior management and in the focal points assigned to the project. We counted in total 48 personnel changes in governmental partners and UN agencies since the beginning of the project implementation.

Despite these challenges, the project has produced important results:

- a. The project has been drawing attention to Dahshour, particularly from supported governmental partners which have dedicated extra commitment and resources to the area. The most salient result has been how the MoT has gone the extra mile allocating 50 million EGP to undertake basic infrastructure work essential to care for potential oncoming tourists.
- b. The project has conducted wider training in a number of sectors related to tourism and business development. However, there is little evidence as to what impact this has had into people actually gaining skills, into jobs creation, and/or into changing the predominant business model designed to benefit big tour operators. However, trainings were very well received by the community, and that they had certainly created curiosity and increased expectations.
- c. A partial exception to this has been the creation of an incipient sector of artisans who have gone to the level of being able to produce product prototypes with the potential to be marketed widely.
- d. The component that has proven to have a deeper impact in building an entrepreneurship culture in the area has been the microcredit line implemented by BEST foundation.
- e. The project has succeeded in building relations of trust with important sectors of the community through the numerous training programmes and most relevantly through the creation of different

handcraft associations and particularly through the articulation of the LED Forum. However, the LED Forum in its present form is still far from sustainable. On the one hand, it lacks the social base to be considered representative of the area and it still has no sustainable activities to support itself.

Despite efforts done by the implementing team to produce a revised M&E framework including performance indicators that measure impact, there is still a heavy inclination towards utilizing activities or output indicators, while there were not sufficient indicators that capture progress at the level of impact.

Coordination and efficiency

In the midterm evaluation the relationship among the implementing partners was described as “silos” working in parallel. This is not the case anymore, the partners are now more engaged and a good number of cooperative efforts have been documented. However, it was widely acknowledged that these types of synergies (among governmental partners, UN agencies and at the local level) should have been facilitated and articulated in a more formal manner. The “jointness” of the programme is expressed through its capacity to jointly undertake and execute common activities such as planning, procurement and monitoring. However, the “pass-through” funding method does not provide sufficient basis for joint management of programme components.

The average delivery rate in December 2012 was at 86%. Nevertheless, there are great variations in the different components and some of them, especially UNESCO, presented an alarmingly low rate. More worrying is the analysis of the disbursement rate as it is a direct indication of “activities completed” according to plan. In December 2012, three months before the project closure, only UNDP, UNIDO and ILO have reached an 85% completion rate.

Sustainability

Despite the overall strength and potential of this JP and the commitment shown by a number of stakeholders, most relevantly by the MoT, the sustainability component is still a shortcoming and needs to be carefully considered for the programme to be able to leave behind a lasting legacy.

There is a clear expectation by many stakeholders and most remarkably by the beneficiaries that implementing partners should take a step forward and translate the foundational blocks into more tangible and lasting results.

Recommendations

1. In order to meet the expectations created by the Project and to build on the foundational work, the team should consider the design and implementation of a second phase.
2. It is recommended that a second phase should not be rushed into, allowing sufficient time (no less than 8 months) for the team to conduct a comprehensive stakeholders’ analysis, a participatory needs assessment for the next steps and an analysis of alternative strategies before a complete draft of the programme document is written.
3. During this “interim phase” a National Officer should be employed to coordinate the design of the second phase, to advocate and support governmental partners to deliver their commitments and to mobilize resources.

4. During the identification of stakeholders special focus should be given to those stakeholders not included in the first phase during the design. They are the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, the Governorate of Giza and especially the community of Dahshour.
5. In this sense the LED Forum should play a key role and therefore it should be sufficiently funded to keep growing during the “interim” period.
6. The Technical Office of AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development and Cooperation) should also be kept abreast with the design processes of the second phase of the programme. Their role as “scouting” donors should be acknowledged by involving them in the design of the next phase.
7. Gender should be fully integrated into the overall project development. This will include formal spaces for understanding what constitutes gender mainstreaming in all components, and designate responsibilities for it. A comprehensive strategy and an operational plan should be drafted by all components with the assistance of a gender expert.
8. It is strongly recommended that the next phase has a revised M&E framework including performance indicators that measure impact.
9. During the design phase, it is recommended to organize exchanges such as learning trips to other areas of Egypt with similar characteristics to those of this programme and where the partners have previously conducted successful programmes such as in Fayoum or in St. Katherine so that Dahshour can learn from them.
10. It is strongly recommended to translate this report into Arabic and to share it with the community in Dahshour through the LED Forum.

Premises, objectives and methodology

Objective of the evaluation

This is the final evaluation of the UN Joint Programme “*Mobilization of the Dahshour World Heritage Site for Community Development*”. The evaluation is **summative** in nature and seeks to:

1. Measure to what extent the joint programme has fully implemented their activities, delivered outputs and attained outcomes and specifically measuring development results.
2. Generate substantive evidence based knowledge by identifying best practices and lessons learned that could be useful to other development interventions at national and international level.

The conclusions and recommendations generated by this evaluation were passed on to the main users: the Programme Management Committee, the National Steering Committee, the Secretariat of the MDG Fund and the LED Forum in Dahshour.

This evaluation involved the collective examination and assessment of the programme by stakeholders and beneficiaries. The evaluation framework was people-centred whereby stakeholders and beneficiaries were the key actors of the evaluation process and not the mere objects of the evaluation. The evaluation process aimed to be reflective, action-oriented and seek to build capacity by providing stakeholders and beneficiaries with the opportunity to reflect on the programme's progress and its obstacles. As such, the entire evaluation process was as important as this final report.

In answering the evaluation questions, we drew from the best available evidence across a range of sources, such as interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, direct observation, third party research and documents. This report presents the main findings and answers to those questions on the basis of evidence.

Methodology

The object of analysis of this evaluation is the Joint Programme within the framework of the MDGs and the general aims of the thematic window for “culture and development”. Critical to this evaluation process was to ensure that the final report is relevant to the end users. To this end, a brief need assessment was conducted. Telephone consultations with three key staff helped to shape the scope of the evaluation.

The original questions prompted in the ToRs were combined with several issues raised during the brief needs assessment and the following evaluation framework was drafted. The evaluation framework has four levels of analysis (relevance; results; coordination & efficiency; and sustainability).

Level of Analysis	Key issues the evaluation would focus on
Relevance	To what extent was the design and strategy of the development intervention relevant (assess including link to MDGs, UNDAF and national priorities, stakeholder participation, national ownership design process)?
	How much and in what ways did the joint programme contribute to solve the (socio-economical) needs and problems identified in the design phase?

		To what extent was this programme designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated jointly?
		To what extent was joint programming the best option to respond to development challenges stated in the programme document?
		To what extent the implementing partners participating in the joint programme had an added value to solve the development challenges stated in the programme document?
		To what extent did the joint programme have a useful and reliable M&E strategy that contributed to measure development results?
		If the programme was revised, did it reflect the changes that were needed? Did the JP follow the mid-term evaluation recommendations on the programme design?
Efficiency & coordination		To what extent did the joint programme's management model (i.e. instruments; economic, human and technical resources; organizational structure; information flows; decision-making in management) was efficient in comparison to the development results attained?
		To what extent was the implementation of a joint programme intervention (group of agencies) more efficient in comparison to what could have been through a single agency's intervention?
		To what extent the governance of the fund at programme level (PMC) and at national level (NSC) contributed to efficiency and effectiveness of the joint programme? To what extent these governance structures were useful for development purposes, ownership, for working together as one? Did they enable management and delivery of outputs and results?
		To what extent and in what ways did the joint programme increase or reduce efficiency in delivering outputs and attaining outcomes?
		What type of work methodologies, financial instruments, and business practices have the implementing partners used to increase efficiency in delivering as one?
		What was the progress of the JP in financial terms, indicating amounts committed and disbursed (total amounts & as percentage of total) by agency? Where there are large discrepancies between agencies, these should be analyzed.
		What type of (administrative, financial and managerial) obstacles did the joint programme face and to what extent have this affected its efficiency?
		To what extent and in what ways did the mid-term evaluation have an impact on the joint programme? Was it useful? Did the joint programme implement the improvement plan?
Results		To what extent did the joint programme contribute to the attainment of the development outputs and outcomes initially expected /stipulated in the programme document? (detailed analysis of: 1) planned activities and outputs, 2) achievement of results).
		To what extent were joint programme's outputs and outcomes synergistic and coherent to produce development results? What kinds of results were reached?
		To what extent did the joint programme had an impact on the targeted citizens?
		Have any good practices, success stories, lessons learned or transferable examples been

	identified? Please describe and document them.
	What type of differentiated effects are resulting from the joint programme in accordance with the sex, race, ethnic group, rural or urban setting of the beneficiary population, and to what extent?
	To what extent has the joint programme contributed to the advancement and the progress of fostering national ownership processes and outcomes (the design and implementation of National Development Plans, Public Policies, UNDAF, etc.)
	To what extent did the joint programme help to increase stakeholder/citizen dialogue and or engagement on development issues and policies?
	To what extent and in what ways did the mid-term evaluation recommendations contribute to the JP's achievement of development results?
Sustainability	Is the programme supported by national and/or local institutions? Are these institutions showing technical - financial capacity and leadership commitment to keep working with the programme and to repeat it? Have operating capacities been created and/or reinforced in national partners?
	To what extent will the joint programme be replicable or scaled up at national or local levels?

This evaluation followed a six-step process: (1) engaging stakeholders and conducting a brief needs assessment; (2) describing the programme and evaluation framework; (3) refining the evaluation framework and designing data collection tools; (4) gathering credible evidence; (5) consolidating data and writing the report; (6) sharing the draft report with the main users for feedback then finalization.

The first step was to understand how the evaluation might be used and what the main users needed to learn from the final report. At the same time, we constructed a preliminary description of the Joint Programme – the need, the purpose, the components, the logic model and a brief account of the main reported progress until December 2012. After better understanding the needs and the scope of the programme and of the evaluation, we refined a mixed methods evaluation approach and designed appropriate data collection tools.

Key to the gathering information was the organization of a field visit to Egypt. The mission lasted seven working days from 10 to 17 February 2013.

During the evaluation, the following research tools and data sources were used:

Desk review

The implementing partners provided a large preliminary body of documents (see annex 1 for a complete list). They included strategy documents, reports, and research publications that were examined together with additional relevant documentation gathered during the field mission. We also reviewed a number of third party reports and official documents.

Stakeholder map

We built a stakeholder map to identify and classify the JP's partners and staff members involved with the programme. The partners and staff were classified according to a) their relation with the programme (management, including PMC and evaluation reference group, direct partner, indirect partner and bellwethers), b) Type of Organisation (National Government; Local Government, Civil Society – NGOs and associations, Culture and Academy, UN, and other international organizations).

The map served two purposes: it provided a snapshot of the range of the programme's partners, and it was used to select potential interviews, focus groups and workshops informants.

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups

The evaluation team conducted semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with key informants selected based on the stakeholder map. Efforts were made to ensure a range of voices were represented covering all the categories of the stakeholder map.

For each of the potential interview groups, questions were drawn up that addressed some of the core evaluation questions and also intersected with the informant's background. Although the interview sheets were highly structured, the evaluation team freely followed-up on any emerging issues that appeared relevant to the core questions.

The interview questions were sent to the interviewees in advance. Providing respondents with time to think is often a more effective way to elicit solid evidence.

Workshops

In order to take into account the needs, expectations and views of the beneficiaries, the evaluation process included a workshop with the LED Forum in Dahshour as well as two workshops with 14 "champions" that had particularly benefited from the project's activities. During the workshops the beneficiaries themselves discussed their expectations, what progress they have made and how they are overcoming (or are to overcome) what problems.

Direct Observation

Due to time and resource constraints, observation was selective looking at a few activities when feasible and paying special attention to management processes and stakeholders behaviors (particularly beneficiaries) that were central to the evaluation questions.

Debriefing workshop

Sharing preliminary conclusions as often as possible with the stakeholders who have provided the information was a critical part of the analysis process. Consequently, the evaluation organised a debriefing workshop with the NSC at the end of the field mission to share preliminary conclusions and recommendations.

Limitations of the evaluation

The first and most obvious limitation of this research was the challenge of conducting a comprehensive evaluation of how the project has fully implemented their activities two months prior to the official ending of the intervention. This was particularly challenging assessing activities completion rates for UNESCO which delivery rate was lower.

Also, common time and resource constraints limit the ability to capture all relevant information. This is particularly notable when we face complex interventions that take place in complicated social and political environments.

Finally, some of the workshops were conducted in Arabic assisted by a translator. As such, this introduces a non measurable degree of deviation that should be taken into account when considering findings.

Description of the development intervention

The need

According to *Egypt Human Development Report 2008*, the governorate that administratively includes Dahshour area would only meet the first MDG targeting the reduction by half of the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day if additional intensified development efforts are undertaken. Additionally the *Egypt Human Development Report 2005* makes the case that sectors such as tourism, manufactured exports and rural non-agricultural activities can become engines of employment growth.

Poverty in Dahshour can be attributed to the predominance of low-income agricultural activities (70%). A recent socio-economic study, carried out by ILO-SFD showed that economic activities in the five villages comprising the Dashour area are characterized with limited size revenues and profits, and limited capacity for job-generation.

Of these five villages, Manchiet Dahshour provides an excellent setting as a priority for the programme interventions because it is located next to the pyramids of Dahshour; it overlooks Birket Dahshour, it holds a distinctive ecosystem in Middle Egypt with unique plant and animal biodiversity and has a significant resident community of distinguished artists.

The pyramids of Dahshour form part of the Memphis and its Necropolis World Heritage Site, inscribed by UNESCO in 1979. However, Dahshour site was only moderately opened to the public in 1996 after years of being utilized by the military.

The seasonal lake of Birket Dahshour, and its associated ecosystems, offers the potential to attract both experienced ornithologists as well as tourists with a general interest in natural heritage.

Egypt's tourism sector saw a considerable growth until 2011. However, the 2011 revolution which resulted in the toppling of the country's 40 year government led by Hosni Mubarak had a significant impact on Egypt's tourism industry. Visitor numbers declined by some 37% in 2011 to reach close to 9 million compared to over 14 million in 2010¹. As unrest continues in Egypt, with violence erupting again at the end of 2011 and during 2012, and as the country enters a transitional phase, the post-revolution era is likely to result in slow growth and a gradual return to pre-crisis levels.

The purpose

The aim of the Joint Programme is fostering sustainable development and revenue generation in the community of Dahshour through attracting tourism whilst protecting the area of the Dahshour pyramids and its ecosystem.

Thus, the overall goal of the Joint Programme is centered on Egypt's UNDAF Outcome 3 (2007-2011), which promotes environmental sustainability and reduction of regional human development disparities.

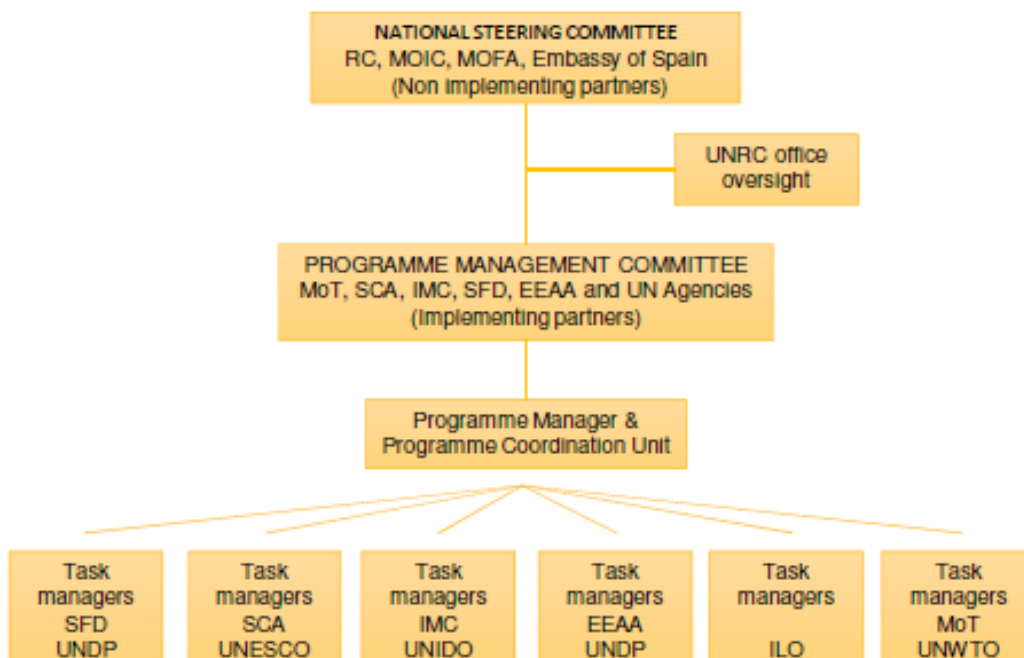
¹ <http://www.euromonitor.com/travel-and-tourism-in-egypt/report>

The programme framework is structured in two main outcomes; Outcome 1 *“Employment, especially of youth and women in heritage arts, crafts, tourism and creative industries increased, contributing to poverty alleviation and empowerment”* reflects an integrated approach to community engagement and development. It centers on capacity development, job creation and the provision of support to the development and sustainable operations of small, locally existent industries. Furthermore, it actively supports enhanced participation of women. This Outcome aimed at contributing to MDGs 1 and 3, through poverty alleviation activities.

Outcome 2 *“Enhanced institutional capacity to manage cultural heritage and natural resources”* aims to develop institutional capacity for the long-term preservation and sustainable development of natural and cultural heritage assets in and surrounding the Dahshour community. It is therefore aimed at contributing to MDGs 7 and 8 ensuring the long-term viability of environmental assets in Dahshour and the Memphis and its Necropolis.

This Joint Programme runs from April 2009 until April 2013.

Programme structure



Findings and remarks

Relevance and design

Alignment with national policies

As stated in the midterm evaluation the aims of the programme are fully aligned with National partners' mandates as well as with UNDAF and the MDGs.

Most relevantly, we were able to ratify how the aims of the programme are in agreement with the National Environmental Plan; page 41 argues for an increase of the ratio of Egyptian protected areas from 7.5% of the total area of the country to 15%. Also, according to the Strategic Spatial Framework for Sustainable Tourism Development², the recently completed National Tourism Strategic Plan's vision is summarized with the following statement *"A mature sustainable and responsible tourism industry contributing significantly to the economic development of Egypt and the quality of life of the people – primarily through enhancing contribution to national income, job creation and foreign earnings"* which is fully in line with the aims of the programme.

However, the design phase of the present programme had important pitfalls, due to the fact that non pre-programme budget was allocated.

Firstly, most informants identified that the main deficiency of the formulation and design phase was the lack of involvement of two major stakeholders; the community of Dahshour and the local authorities. Several informants also recognized the military as a missing stakeholder, especially within the environmental component.

Also, during the mid-term evaluation, all local stakeholders and also a key number of stakeholders at the national level believed that dealing with the problem of the solid waste management and the basic infrastructure in Dahshour should have been a priority for the programme in the design phase. Not addressing this problem had the potential to endanger all the efforts made by the JP in order to attract tourism and subsequently provide new employment opportunities and economic security in the area.

These pitfalls on the quality of the design have had implications on the implementation phase, as is analyzed under the results chapter.

Finally, another drawback during the design of the project already identified in the mid-term evaluation was to do with the coordination mechanisms among the implementing partners that did not appear to be sufficiently articulated. We will further analyze this under the chapter "coordination and efficiency" where we particularly consider the value added of each of the implementing partners and assess the efficiency of the execution modality.

² Ministry of Tourism of Egypt and UNWTO, 2009, *Strategic Spatial Framework for sustainable development*

Results

The Theory of change

A theory of change helps to make sense of the different elements of work and contributions within a shared 'bigger picture' setting out how change was expected to happen.

A theory of change is more than a log frame. It is a way of constructing a common vision of how the broad goal of the project can be achieved. As evaluators, we developed a model theory of change, based on inputs from the project documents and testimonies of the people consulted. Feedback from the PMU, National Steering Committee and other stakeholders has been very positive, and most people have been able to recognise their own strategies and approaches in it. It is also important to acknowledge that this theory of change should not stand alone, but it should be 'nested' into wider agendas of the implementing partners.

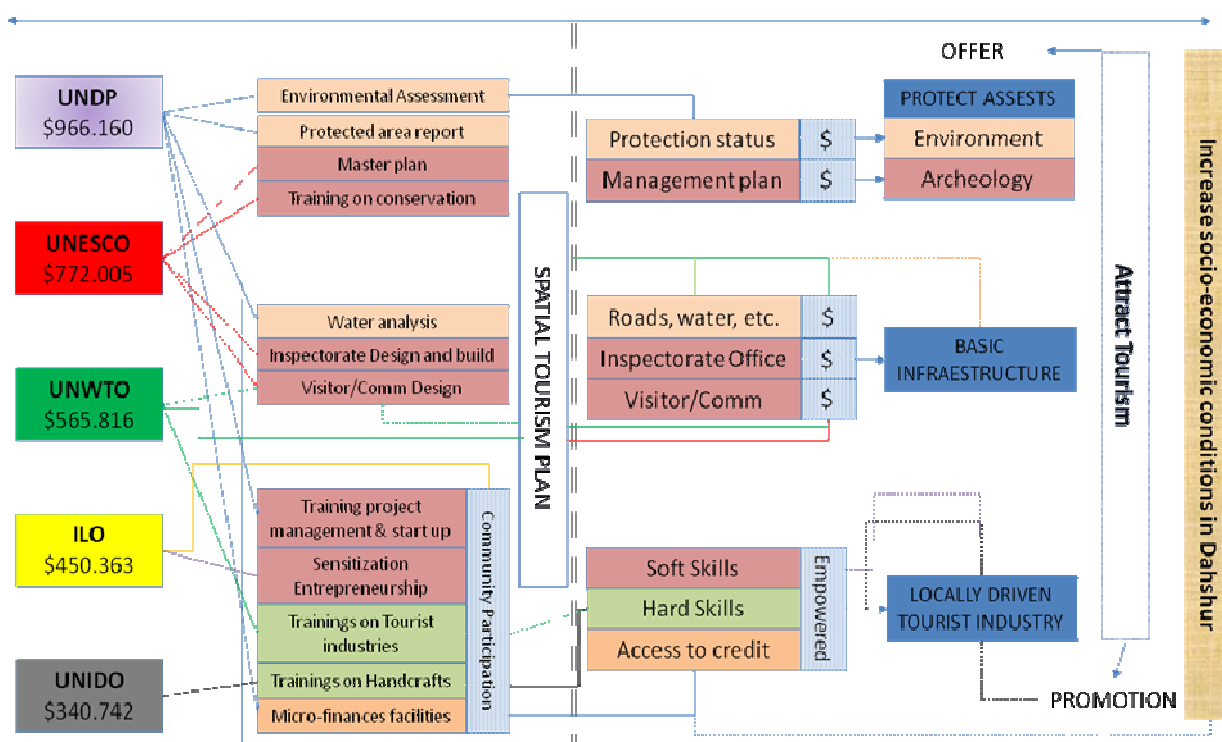


Diagram 1: Theory of Change

The theory of change illustrated here works towards an overarching goal that “increases socio-economic conditions in Dahshour”, and sets out some assumptions and theories as to how that change will come about, and the project’s role within that.

The main strategy of the project is to achieve its final goal which is ‘taking advantage of resources present in the area (archeology, environmental and the community) to attract tourism to increase living standards of the most needed people of Dahshour’.

To make tourism work for the people, two important things need to happen. On the one hand, tourist resources³ have to be turned into tourist products, and it is also necessary to work on the “readiness of the community” to receive the tourists. This is what we have labelled as building the “offer”. On the other hand, the project needs to market those tourist products among suitable audiences, which is what we labelled as “promotion”.

The project heavily focused on building the “offer” rather than in promoting the products, which all stakeholders considered as a sound strategy and an indispensable first step.

The theory requires the fulfillment of layers of preconditions that we have organized vertically in the diagram above.

The first layer refers to the three aspects necessary for the “offer” to be able to attract tourism:

1. Assets, i.e. archeological and environmental sites, need to be protected, officially and sustainably.
2. Development of basic infrastructure to care for potential tourism.
3. Establishment of a strong locally driven tourist industry to ensure that potential revenue derived from tourist activities goes to the community of Dahshour rather than to tourist operators based outside the community.

The second vertical layer set out those preconditions necessary for the first layer to occur:

- a. For the environmental site to be protected in a sustainable way, the area needs to have an official protection status, as well as a sustainable budget allocation with secure and clear governmental mechanisms responsible for its protection.

Equally, the archaeological site needs a clear management plan with a sustainable budget allocated for all the necessary conservation activities.

- b. Regarding basic infrastructure, the original design of the project only contemplated the building of a visitor/community centre and the refurbishment of the inspectorate building for the MSA. However, although this aspect was very marginally covered in the original design, the midterm evaluation pointed out that in all assessments conducted by the partners in early stages of the implementation (most noticeably that of the ILO), both the local community and the local authorities put forward a priority for the programme. This priority was to deal with the problem of the solid waste management, and to develop basic infrastructure to prepare for the oncoming tourism.
- c. Finally, to have a locally driven tourist industry the project needs to build a critical mass in the community, equipped with soft skills (i.e. how to set up a business, how to do basic accountancy, how to do a marketing plan, etc.).

³ Such as Natural resources (unique ecosystems); Cultural resources (archaeological values); Social resources (local community interests etc.)

Additionally, this critical mass also needs to have acquired hard skills. Hard skills would be the acquisition of knowledge concerning the basic aspects of the tourist trade such as basic hospitality and/or skills on how to produce handcrafts.

Lastly, this community needs to have access to credit.

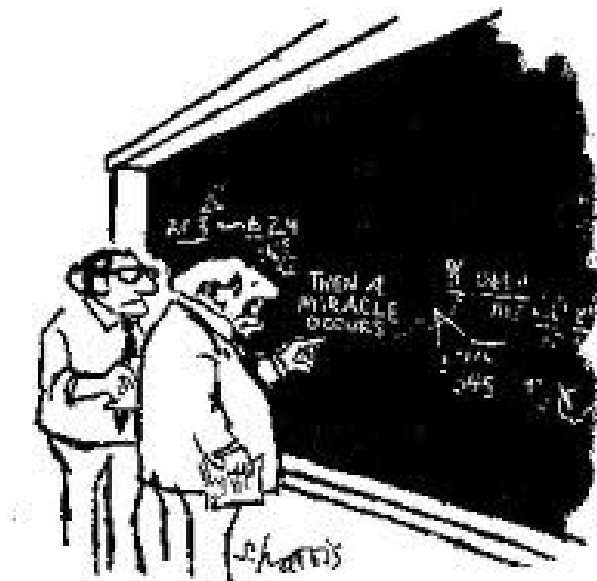
Empowerment is also an important aspect embedded in this ToC, although frequently overlooked, that needs to accompany the acquisition of new skills and the access to resources. Empowerment is not easily defined in concrete terms and can mean different things to different people. However, most definitions of empowerment suggest that it comprises not only forms of observable action, such as being able to produce or manage a new tourist product, but also the motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their actions. This is the ability to use decision making power to bring about positive transformations.

The missing middle

The vertical dotted line in the middle of the ToC represents roughly where this project as it was formulated was supposed to arrive. Nonetheless, what we have found during the course of this investigation was that expectations created by the project, most importantly within the community of Dahshour, went well beyond that line. There were two reasons for this.

1. As the midterm evaluation stated, stakeholders consulted shared a clear common vision of the final goal of the programme. Furthermore this vision that integrates iconic cultural heritage aspects, natural heritage dimensions, and community development components has strongly captured people's imagination and in consequence, raised natural expectations.
2. Concrete activities undertaken by the project during its implementation frequently pointed to that horizon powerfully imagined by stakeholders. For instance, when a community group was trained on how to make a particular handcraft product they would automatically assume that they would be able to sell it and therefore increase their income. Equally, when people got training on how to care for tourists they would expect tourists to arrive. On the other hand, when the project produced a report recommending (for instance) the environmental area to become protected, many expected the goal to be getting the protection status for the area and not only to producing the report and putting it at the disposal of the authorities.

The project succeeded in creating a common motivational horizon shared by all and in planning activities and outputs that were to be the foundational building blocks to get there. However, it has also created a "missing middle" as this picture illustrates humorously.



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

Monitoring and evaluation

As the MDG-F secretariat indicated in September 2008⁴ and the midterm evaluation in 2011, although the M&E framework was clear, there were not sufficient *"indicators that capture progress at the level of impact"*. Despite efforts done by the implementing team to produce a revised M&E framework including performance indicators that measure impact, there is still a heavy inclination towards utilizing activities or output indicators such as "number of people trained" rather than impact indicators such as "number of sustainable tourist related businesses created".

Actually, an overwhelming number of informants including the beneficiaries agreed that M&E mechanisms should have been revised in order to efficiently monitor the impact of the programme.

Within the dotted line

At the left of the dotted line is where the outputs of the project stayed. We have compiled here an effectiveness table that relates each element of the ToC with specific project's outputs. We have then made

⁴ Interoffice memorandum from the Assistant Administrator and Director of the partnership Bureau, UNDP New York, September 2008

assessments as to how far each output has been delivered and also how far each element went within the ToC (represented by lines in diagram 1).

We can see through this effectiveness analysis, the project accomplished pretty much all it was set to do, even though expectations raised where much higher that its stated objectives.

Outputs as expressed in the original design	How do outputs fit within the ToC	Effectiveness assessment (even beyond the dotted line)
Output 2.3 <i>Environmental support to the Dahshour Lake provided thorough assessment and development of a nationally approved sustainable strategy</i>	Environment → Protect Assets To safeguard officially environmental assets the project needed a legitimate “ecological assessment” and a “protected area report” that would set up robust environmental arguments to make the area worth protecting.	UNDP produced a quality environmental assessment and a protected area report as stated in the PRODOC. They pushed the envelope further lobbying to get the area “officially protected”. This was not possible because of the opposition of the Ministry of Defense. However, the Ministry of Environment finally declared the area “environmentally managed”. This is a format where protection level is more flexible than that of a “protected area” in terms of agricultural management and building permits although still provides the framework to control hunting activities and protects bio-diversity. There are some incipient steps to set up a commission within the Governorate of Giza to manage the new area. However, this has not taken shape yet and no budget has been allocated for it.

<p>Output 2.1 <i>The development and implementation of MSA's action plan for the Dahshour component of the UNESCO WHC and its environment is supported.</i></p>	<p>Archeology → Protect Assets The management plan for the archeological site needed to be preceded by a credible master plan mapping all archeological artifacts in the area. Additionally training on conservation, more specifically for the inspectorate's officials, had to be conducted.</p>	<p>UNESCO produced a master plan for the archeological site with recommendations for the MSA. UNESCO also delivered training on conservation to 30 government officials as it was stated in the PRODOC. We have no evidence that these activities will translate into a detailed management plan for the area with budget allocation for its implementation by the MSA.</p>
<p>Output 2.1 <i>The development and implementation of MSA's action plan for the Dahshour component of the UNESCO WHC and its environment is supported.</i></p>	<p>Basic Infrastructure Some of the "basic infrastructure" needed for the project was a visitor/community centre within or next to the archeological site and an adequate inspectorate building to host the authorities in charge of managing the site.</p>	<p>The MSA, in close collaboration with UNESCO has given a plot of land for the construction of the Visitor Centre inside the archeological site. The MoT has committed 4.4 mill EGP to build the centre. By the time of the evaluation we did not have access to the final design for the building.</p> <p>UNESCO is focusing on rehabilitating the building for the inspectorate, although plans are well advanced and all works are expected to be finished at the end of the project, at the time of the evaluation building works had not yet started.</p> <p>UNDP also produced the water analysis with a proposed water quality improvement intervention for the Governorate of Giza that has not been taken any further.</p>
<p>Output 2.2 <i>Development of a government corroborated and locally driven Spatial Tourism Development Plan</i></p>	<p>Spatial Tourism Plan In order to map and coordinate all tourist resources in the area, as well as to understand the challenges and opportunities of them, the project needed an integral tourism development plan comprehensively including all aspects needed to build the offer to attract tourism.</p>	<p>UNWTO produced an integral tourist plan developed with the community and the MoT at the initial stages of the project. Following the recommendations of the tourist plan the MoT allocated 50 mill EGP for basic infrastructure in Dahshour (three roads) and allocated 4.4 million EGP to build the visitors centre on the plot of land that the MoA gave to the project. This has been the most significant contribution that the project has done on providing "basic infrastructure". The construction of the roads has already started.</p>

<p>Output 1.2 <i>Sensitization to entrepreneurship and capacity building on decent work conditions conducted</i></p>	<p>Soft skills →Tourist Industry To get a critical mass of people which has acquired the necessary soft skills the project needed to deliver a training programme on management projects, startup businesses and self-employment.</p>	<p>ILO delivered specific training on entrepreneurship following a Trainer of Trainers approach that reached over 300 people. They also took positive actions conducting training exclusively targeting women. Also UNDP through the SFD delivered a comprehensive training on business development. In both cases, the modules were consistently rated as having been necessary and of very good quality by beneficiaries. However there is no evidence that training has produced behavioral changes prompting trainees to take action.</p>
<p>Output 1.3 <i>Locally driven tourism sector fostered through training, stocktaking, and technical support to Dahshour tourism M/SMEs</i></p>	<p>Hard skills →Tourist Industry Equally, to get a critical mass of people which has acquired the necessary hard skills the project designed training programmes on different types of potential tourist industries (basic hospitality, horse cart driving, tourist guides, etc.) and very specifically on how to produce marketable handicraft products.</p>	<p>UNWTO gave extensive rather than intensive training reaching over 3000 people. Feedback from trainees on the quality of the trainings was excellent. However, we only could gather anecdotal evidence that these people have actually gained the skills they were trained for (English, tourist guides, etc.) and no evidence that these people are actually using their acquired competences to set up their own businesses.</p>
<p>Output 1.4 <i>Creative industries supported, building upon existent local capacities within the Dahshour community</i></p>		<p>UNIDO and IMC focused on providing training on handicrafts using local material (especially palm leaves). We have evidence that tells us that a critical mass of people in Dahshour, particularly women, now know how to produce these products. They have gone much further in the ToC. Through the LED forum they have made efforts to market these products in National Fairs, where the LED Forum represented associations of artisans from Dahshour, and have even gone as far as to sign trading deals with a handful of shops in Cairo. There is an embryo of locally driven industry around the handcraft in Dahshour.</p>
<p>Output 1.5 <i>BDS and micro-finance facilities provided to Dahshour and the surrounding communities</i></p>	<p>Access to credit →Tourist Industry To ensure the most vulnerable members of the community have access to necessary credit the project planned to set up micro-finance facilities.</p>	<p>UNDP in close collaboration with SDF and the BEST Foundation set up a microcredit line mainly benefiting Mashiet Dahshour. They have disbursed 294 loans of up to 3,000 EGP. We found anecdotal evidence that this service is actually impacting on the final goal of the project</p>

		“increasing the economic status of the neediest people in the area”, providing jobs and extra income to the clients. However this impact is not necessarily happening through the tourist industry.
Output 1.1 <i>Socio-economic community profile surveyed and LED forum operational to facilitate full community participation</i>	Empowerment → Tourist Industry An essential precondition for empowerment was to support a formal community structure whose mission was to promote, coordinate, organize and facilitate the locally driven tourist industry.	ILO has successfully set up the LED Forum, a now formal NGO representing all five villages covered by the project. The LED Forum is functional and has a clear mission. However, it still lacks legitimacy, social base and capacity to fulfill its role.

Analysis of salient results

Challenges

Before analyzing the results of the project it is important to contextualize this intervention and to acknowledge the challenges the project faced particularly in the light of the political turmoil happening in Egypt during the past two years.

The Egyptian revolution, which occurred in February 2011, affected greatly the vision of the project, whose main assumption was to use tourism in order to affect positively the economic conditions of the people of Dahshour. After the revolution, the tourist industry collapsed and it still has not showed signs of recovering. Actually, tourism took a further hit in late January this year when thugs looted Cairo's historic Semiramis InterContinental Hotel. According to the head of Egypt's Federation of Tourism Chambers, occupancy rates had fallen in early 2013 to a record-low rate of 15% in Cairo⁵.

Something intangible but very relevant derived from the revolution was the effect that it had upon the mood of all stakeholders at every level, from the senior management of the implementing partners to the focal points and the population of Dahshour. The revolution led to an explosion of freedoms, where everybody thought everything was possible and that positive change would occur immediately. The sense of empowerment died out in the face of the complications that followed the event, leaving people disconcerted and disillusioned. This has transformed the optimism into somber questions that were frequently expressed during the course of the evaluation such as *“if the revolution could not deliver change, then how can this project impact our daily reality?”*

The structure and the power balance of many of the institutions involved within the project, and more concretely the governmental partners, also got greatly affected by the political events. For instance, the

⁵ <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/02/26/hot-air-balloon-crash-egypt/1947963>

Ministry of Defense, that was the owner of the site until 2003 and still holds an important role in the area, gained a much greater power as a result of the revolution. As a consequence, their refusal to accept the lake as a protected area was going to have greater weight than envisaged. Another relevant example is the Ministry of Antiquities that went from being Supreme Council to Ministry twice during the past two years.

All this has translated into frequent changes in the mission of the institutions, in the senior management and in the focal points assigned to the project. Moreover, although unrelated to the revolution, UN agencies also had a frequent turnover in their project personnel and in their managerial positions and even the coordination of the project changed hands twice since its launch leaving the position of Project Manager vacant for several months. We counted in total 48 personnel changes since the beginning of the project implementation.

In August 2012, a banal dispute between a Christian laundryman and a Muslim customer plunged the entire community of Dahshour into a perilous sectarian conflict culminating in the Copts abandoning their homes and businesses in the village. As a result of the tensions, the area was made off limits for several months making it difficult to carry on with the activities of the project.

Despite these obvious challenges, the project has produced important results that will be analyzed and qualified below.

Protection of assets & basic infrastructure

An important achievement of the project has been drawing attention to Dahshour and particularly how it has supported governmental partners for them to dedicate commitment and resources to the area. In this regard, the most salient result has been how the MoT has gone the extra mile allocating 50 million EGP to undertake basic infrastructure work essential to care for potential oncoming tourists.

Furthermore, we have now a new “environmentally managed area” which is an essential step for EEAA to continue conversations with the Governorate of Giza to set up a committee to manage the new area in order to protect its biodiversity. This status is also key to attract donors in order to have a sustainable conservation plan for the lake and the surrounding areas.

A salient and tangible result essential to protect the archeological site has been the production of a master plan of the area. The plan redefined the boundaries of the Memphis Necropolis World Heritage Site Core Zone and Buffer Zones. This plan also includes several areas surrounding the World Heritage Site of which the Date Palm Groves and the Dahshour Lake represent a major component.

Equally important, although less tangible, has been how the Ministry of Antiquities has embraced more openly the idea that the engagement of the community is essential for the protection of the archeological sites. This project had the unique premise in its initial design for the MSA to engage with the community directly in the archeological protection of the site. This component has such relevance that the MSA was supposed to play the central role of hosting the coordination of the entire project and facilitate the connections between the site and the community. However, an early disagreement in relation with this very vision by the former Head of the MSA (then SCA) stopped this from happening, and the project ended up being coordinated from an independent office. It is therefore especially relevant how the MSA seems to

have changed its view is now more inclined to engage with the community. A recent example of this has been how the MSA dealt with a sector of the population in Dahshour who wanted to build a burial place inside the archeological site. We collected testimonies certifying that in this conflict the MSA has been engaging and negotiating directly with the community although the protocols are still very hierarchical.

In this regard, some informants agreed that the revolution might have been a wakeup call for the Ministry of Antiquities that was traditionally trying to keep archeological sites out of reach from the community to protect sites from looting. However, what we witnessed during the revolution was communities with a clear sense of the value of the sites were protecting them themselves, as was the case in the Cairo Museum and in Luxor. While those communities more disengaged and unaware of the significance of the sites in their daily lives, such as in the Giza Plateau, took the situation of chaos as an opportunity for looting.

Despite the slight shift in the attitude of the MSA, looting remains a very delicate issue. It is recognized that full protection of the sites also requires the assistance of the Ministry of Interior and certain law enforcement together with community engagement. We found examples in Dahshour of mansions being built by families who have “found” archeological artifacts and sold them on the black market. With these kind of role models, it is extraordinarily difficult to educate the community in order not to seek immediate personal economic prosperity as opposed to protecting sustainably the common historical assets for the common good.

Locally driven tourist industry

This was the first time the UN has designed an intervention targeting Dahshour. As stated in the midterm evaluation, maybe the biggest shortcoming of the design was the fact that the community of Dahshour was neither engaged nor was it consulted during the process. However the people of Dahshour were meant to be the primary beneficiaries of this initiative whose “uniqueness” precisely lay on the premise that the community was to be fully involved with the process of attracting tourism and benefiting from it.

Training programmes for the community

UNWTO has been the partner that has conducted wider training in a number of sectors related to tourism. They had an ambitious target of 3000 people trained that has been actually surpassed according to project reports. However, there is no evidence as to what impact this has had. We could only collect anecdotal evidence through direct observation of people actually gaining skills and no evidence as to how this has translated into jobs and/or has altered the predominant business model designed to benefit big tour operators. What we could collect were indications that training was very well received by the community, and that it has certainly created curiosity and increased expectations.



Zooming in...

By the end of the project and in partnership with the French University of Cairo, 23 tourist guides were officially certified to accompany tourists around the Pyramids of Dahshour and the surrounding lake. We met the best of these students.

Khaled⁶ has been a qualified tourist guide for over 10 years and has worked in different parts of the country. He is from Dahshour and explained how those pyramids, where he played when he was a child, were made him develop an interest in archeology and ancient history that eventually led him to become a tour guide (a future he does not want for his children). He feels the job is very precarious and unstable and that it is difficult, even after 10 years of experience, to be taken as a full staff member by one of the operators.

Khaled found out about the training organized by UNWTO and saw a good opportunity to expand his knowledge; learning how to do nature tours in English and particularly bird watching around the lake.

Khaled is therefore an experienced guide, with excellent English, passionate about his job and particularly about Dahshour. He is also someone who is familiar with people from different backgrounds and with different viewpoints. Yet even a person like Khaled could not find the type of encouragement and empowerment to explore new business models that could benefit himself and his community, without having to go through traditional tour operators.

This is not to say the project has failed. Khaled acquired new skills that will benefit his career. What this story illustrates is how complex it is to change the mindset of people who only know one business model that the project was trying to alter. Empowerment is a very long road.

UNIDO and IMC trained about 500 people on the production of handcrafts, 150 of which are now fully qualified. We can safely conclude that the project has promoted an incipient sector of artisans who have gone to the level of being able to produce product prototypes using local materials (palm leaves) that have the potential to be marketed widely and therefore with the potential to impact positively on the economic conditions of the people of Dahshour. Furthermore, we have evidence that tells us that some of these products have been promoted in National Fairs through the LED Forum and that there are a small number of deals signed already with Egyptian traders in Cairo; one of them already working. This has translated into small revenues for the artisan associations, although it is still not clear if there has been an increase of income for the families in Dahshour.

The visitor centre is to host one of the concrete components that the project puts at the service of the community to keep revenues from potential tourism. In the budget allocation form the MoT has provisions for the centre to host five bazaars to sell local handcraft products. This is definitely a step in the right direction.



Zooming in...

This component has done a good job doing gender disaggregation and taking positive action to benefit women in the community. However, a deeper gender analysis was lacking and we also have here all the ingredients for a classic gender unbalanced situation in livelihood projects.

⁶ Name has been altered

A woman has learnt a new trade and now works for a number of hours daily producing these new products while she still needs to care for the family and the household. However, if there is an increase in the family income derived from these activities, it is likely to be her husband who will be the one deciding how to spend these extra financial resources.

Actually, although we know the number of women who benefited from the training is high, we do not know how many of them were the heads of the households and how the project has affected the use of time.

Promoting entrepreneurship

The component that has proven to have a deeper impact in building an entrepreneurship culture in the area has been the microcredit line. The BEST Foundation through their microcredit facility has disbursed 294 micro-credits of up to 3000 EGP in the vicinities of Dahshour, mainly in Manshiet Dahshour. This revolving fund that started being around 1.5 million EGP has grown to be nearly 2.5 million EGP in the space of two years which is a powerful indication of the sustainability of the initiative.

It has been reported that this initiative is actually creating jobs in Dahshour, which could be true, although the project has not documented them systematically; neither could we find more than anecdotal evidence of this happening. This is also backed by the impact assessment recently conducted by ILO.

Furthermore, we could not find the connection between sensitization done under the project to promote entrepreneurship and the micro finances provided. It would have been interesting to see how the people who attended the ILO training or the Business Development training took advantage of the microcredit facilities , i.e. taking loans and setting up their own businesses.

In the design of the project microcredit was put as a financing mechanism to promote entrepreneurship and to support tourism industry and other sectors developed by the project like handicrafts. However, this connection was not apparent. Neither could we see that the promotion of the tourist industry was a priority for the microcredit scheme. An explanation about why this happened came from one of the comments to the draft of this report:

“Since the revolution and deterioration in tourism in Egypt as general and with very few tourists coming to Dahshour no one seemed to be interested to start-up new businesses in tourism. Moreover, the anticipated tourism was the supposed demand for the handicraft industries within Dahshour so none of the newly trained artisans was willing to take a risk by taking a loan to produce handicrafts while not being sure of if they can sell it or not which was also the opinion of IMC who thought that loans will be a risk at that time. Yet another demand started to grow for microloans from the Micro and small enterprises struck by the recession that followed the revolution and needed a source for finance and as the project was targeting the community the microfinance mechanism was utilized to support them. Linking now at the future where the handicraft sector is coming close to maturity and hopes are building that tourism will stream in one day the micro finance mechanism will be utilized more to support these sectors.”

The scheme also provided a good opportunity for the partners to work together. The launching of the microloans faced some cultural challenges. Islam traditionally opposed taking credit with interest and a

number of devoted Muslims in Dahshour would not take advantage of this scheme. UNDP, SFD and BEST used the networks of the LED Forum to organize sensitization workshops for the population to explain why the microcredit scheme in the project was not against Muslim practice.



Zooming in...

Heba⁷ took a microloan to buy basic equipment to start a falafel shop outside her house. We visited the stall that had a healthy clientele and which has become the only source of income for a family of 13 members. In this case both Heba and her son were working in this new business venture, which meant that the loan produced two new jobs.

This story is an obvious success story. However, if we go into the nuances of it we find legitimate questions that illustrate the complexity of this component.

Gender empowerment

Heba is one of the 18% of female borrowers who theoretically has increased her economic status thanks to the project⁸. Heba chose not to tell her son she took the loan. She did not want to embarrass him, by making him believe that she was the driving force behind the business. As a result, she took the financial risk, she does the cooking, she serves the clients together with her son but the “owner” of the business is still the man of the house who seems to be providing for the family. This illustrates a complex cultural mindset powerfully embedded that cannot be challenged only by a micro credit scheme.

Black economy

A legitimate question the project might want to ask itself is whether this kind of black economy is the one they want to promote. This business is obviously not paying taxes and the two jobs that it has produced so far are totally precarious. It could well be that this is just the first step that can be realistically taken to get some form of income to these people, but should the project have thought ahead to try to get these new entrepreneurs into a more stable and secure economy? This is something that has been reflected by some of the implementers. As a key stakeholder stated *“unfortunately most microenterprises in Egypt are operating in the “grey” area without licenses, often these businesses bring more liabilities on them than benefits. However, microfinance as a development tool aims at the long term to formalize such businesses by graduating them after some cycles to get licenses and become formal businesses to be able to access more finance and benefits”*.

Organizing the community

Despite all the challenges the project has succeeded in building relations of trust with important sectors of the community through the numerous training programmes that the community regarded as positive

⁷ Name has been altered to preserve confidentiality

⁸ According to reports provided by the BEST Foundation

(although insufficient) and most relevantly through the creation of different handcraft associations and particularly through the articulation of the LED Forum.

The LED Forum was necessary to have Civil Society organized with the mission to drive tourism. If the project wanted to make that connection between the tourist industry and the community, an essential step was to identify or create a valid interlocutor. It is important to note that prior to the project there was not an association in the area with this geographical scope and this concrete mission.

The LED Forum is now a fully functional and a well equipped organization representing all the five villages of the project, which is an important achievement. This is important as the different components of the project did not equally reach the five communities; those that were better targeted were Dahshour and Manshiet Dahshour. However, the LED Forum in its present form is still far from sustainable. On the one hand, it lacks the social base to be considered representative of the area (it has only 19 members) and it has no sustainable activities to support itself. It therefore needs a lot of capacity building, nurturing and accompanying to take it to an institution level so that it can efficiently represent the interests of the community when facing other important stakeholders such as government partners or the private sector (i.e. tour operators and craft traders). A number of stakeholders, most relevantly ILO, are well aware of these shortcomings and are already designing proposals on means of sustainability for the LED Forum.

Tourism promotion

Finally, there have also been some steps taken on tourist promotion for Dahshour. A specific page has been developed within the MoT and two tourist circuits were fully designed. Although the project has undertaken certain activities to do with the promotion of tourist products, most of the focus is clearly placed on building the offer. Actually, it still is not clear what the profile of the tourists who would be attracted to the area, or in other words what the market niche of Dahshour is. Already during the mid-term evaluation three possible profiles surfaced a) a spinoff of mainstream tourism coming to the Giza plateau, b) an alternative international tourism more specialized on nature and archeology, c) International expats living in Egypt and National tourism.

Coordination & efficiency

Working together

Within the JP there are ten implementing partners working in six groups responsible for the different outputs of the JP:

EEAA/UNDP – Responsible for the environmental component

MSA/UNESCO – Responsible for the archaeological component

ILO – Responsible for the community empowerment and training on soft skills

IMC/UNIDO – Responsible for the promotion of handcrafts

MoT/UNWTO – Responsible for the tourism promotion component

SDF/UNDP/BEST – Responsible for the micro-credit facility for the community

In the midterm evaluation the relationship among the partners was described as “silos” working in parallel. This is not the case anymore, the partners are now more engaged and a good number of cooperative efforts have been documented.

An observable indicator of an increase in engagement is the fact that frequent disagreements surface in spaces like the PMC according to a number of testimonies. This reflects how partners are attempting to negotiate and work together rather than in parallel in their own parcels of the project.

Following the famous Tuckman theory⁹, we can conclude that at the time of the midterm evaluation the project team was “forming”. That means that implementers were driven by individual behaviors, avoiding controversy or conflict. They focused on being busy with routines such as team organization; who does what, when to meet, etc. The team meet a in the PMC about the opportunities and challenges the project presented but the tendency was behaving quite independently. This space was mainly used by the different implementing agencies to give public presentations on the different components of the programme. A vast majority of relevant informants agreed that the PMC was then a space where information could be shared and ratified rather than one where hard decisions could be taken.

At the time of the final evaluation, the team moved from the “forming” to the “storming” stage where different ideas were competing for consideration. The team is now addressing issues such as how they will function independently and together and what leadership model they will accept. Team members had opened up to each other and confront each other's ideas and perspectives.

However, only in a few instances the team has moved to “norming” where the team manages to have one common goal and one mutual plan to achieve it, giving up their own ideas and their organization’s agendas to agree with others in order to make the team function for a clear and common goal.

Main examples illustrating team work:

Although coordination is important for UN agencies it is even more vital from a sustainability standpoint to promote good coordination among national implementing partners. In this regard, the JP have had the ability to play an excellent role, creating platforms for coordination; spaces that help the exchange of ideas and most importantly facilitate the agreements for relevant work plans that need to be carried out.

A good example that illustrated these synergies was a letter sent by the Ministry of Environment to all relevant parties in the government requesting to declare the lake a protected space. The rest of the project partners concerned (MSA, MoT) quickly responded officially agreeing with the proposal. This is not to be taken for granted as according to the partners these organizations have a history of disagreement and conflicting agendas in other parts of the country. The quick endorsement by MoT and MSA might not have happened without the umbrella of this project.

⁹ <http://www.businessballs.com/tuckmanformingstormingnormingperforming.htm>

Another notable case of collaboration was the agreement reached by UNWTO/MoT and MSA/UNESCO to locate the visitor centre within the archeological site. As we have already presented, MoA gave a plot of land for this purpose, while MoT allocated the budget for building the centre working closely with IMC to dedicate five bazaars to sell handcrafts from the area inside the building.

The training component was identified in the midterm evaluation as one where duplications could occur but also one with an extraordinary potential for interaction, more specifically those modules that relate to the promotion of small businesses (module on entrepreneurship by SFD; module on SMEs by UNWTO; module on entrepreneurship/soft skills by ILO; module on promotion of industries by UNIDO).

Even if duplication of content was not evidenced, proper coordination was still a missing factor. An integrated training programme among all the agencies was required to guarantee that the training reached the appropriate local audiences and that the best students have the opportunity to attend the entire programme, ensuring that timetables and contents were coordinated to suit the students' needs.

Despite some documented efforts by a "training task force" created after the midterm evaluation. This collaboration did not occur fully. There is no common database of trainees and little coordination in relation to targeted audiences, marketing of the training or potential complementarities of the contents.

A noticeable exception to this was the training imparted by ILO and UNIDO where ILO was providing "soft skills" to the same students that UNIDO was providing "hard skills".

Other activities that emerged during the evaluation that appear to require better coordination were the different spatial studies of the area conducted by UNESCO-MSA, WTO-MoT and UNDP-EEAA. These three studies aim at advising the competent authorities about the best ways to re-organize and manage the space in Dahshour in accordance with the objectives of the programme.

During the midterm evaluation it became clear that MSA and MOT and EEAA had different perspectives regarding Dahshour and all retain different mandates. A number of key informants agreed that there were high risks of overlapping and contradictory messages among the three studies and that the programme should reach a point where all plans/studies merge together and adopt the same approach. Although this "common approach" has not been fully adopted, we could see examples of good synergies happening in relation to "the spatial organization of the area". More concretely, the roads being constructing in Dahshour under the supervision of the MoT took into consideration the environmental assessment done by EEAA and UNDP not to invade the environmentally protected space. The agreement on the location of the visitor centre between MoT and MSA is also an example of good collaboration regarding the physical planning of the site.

At the local level, the Local Economic Development (LED) forum promoted by ILO was frequently mentioned as the legitimate space to coordinate with the community.

At the time of the evaluation, the LED forum was formed and functioning with the aim of representing the community and working as a liaison between the programme implementation agencies and the people of Dahshour. To illustrate, implementing partners such as BEST/SFD used the LED Forum to coordinate the

sensitization programme on leading and Islam¹⁰; UNIDO used the LED Forum to represent the artisan community in national Fairs and UNWTO is working together with ILO and LED Forum to set up the Tourism Development Units.

These types of collaborations occurred organically rather than systematically thanks to committed individuals and especially to the work of the Programme Manager who is credited with having been a key figure in facilitating communication among the different stakeholders.

However, it was widely acknowledged that these types of synergies (among governmental partners, UN agencies and at the local level) should have been facilitated and articulated in a more formal manner.

The “jointness” of a joint programme is expressed through its capacity to jointly undertake and execute common activities such as planning, procurement and monitoring. However, the “pass-through” funding method does not provide sufficient basis for joint management of programme components.

This “pass-through” execution modality used by the MDG-F joint programmes where funds are channeled to each participating UN agency has translated into a stronger commitment to UN Agency Headquarters rather than to joint accountability. The lack of one clear reporting line to a JP governing body and/or manager rather than to the UN headquarters, combined with certain institutional inertia, has impaired full joint implementation and has raised a challenge for joint delivery. In conclusion despite remarkable examples of collaboration among different implementing agencies a real sense of “jointness” was not fully embedded in the implementation of the programme.

Delivery rates and disbursement rates - December 2012

	Total budget Approved	Total Amount Transferred	Total Budget Committed	Total Disbursed Budget	Delivery rate	Disbursement rates
UNDP	966.160,00 USD	966.160,00 USD	850.000,00 USD	816.905,59 USD	88%	85%
ILO	450.363,00 USD	450.363,00 USD	450.363,00 USD	424.363,00 USD	100%	94%
UNESCO	772.005,00 USD	772.005,00 USD	562.075,00 USD	367.075,00 USD	73%	48%
UNWTO	565.816,00 USD	565.816,00 USD	444.863,00 USD	398.676,97 USD	79%	70%
UNIDO	340.742,00 USD	340.742,00 USD	340.742,00 USD	318.450,76 USD	100%	93%
TOTAL	3.095.086,00 USD	3.095.086,00 USD	2.648.043,00 USD	2.325.471,32 USD	86%	75%

¹⁰ This programme aimed at unpacking and explaining why this particular leading programme did not contravene Islam's precepts.

As we can see in the table above, the average delivery rate (% of budget committed over budget approved) in December 2012 is at 86%. However, there are great variations in the different components and some of them, especially UNESCO, present an alarmingly low rate almost at the end of the project.

UNESCO and MSA clarified during this evaluation that the delay in the delivery and in the disbursement of their budget was caused by the confusion within the MSA on the nature of the approved Visitor Center. The approval was given in May 2012 for a Visitor Center but the negotiations and differences continued between the MSA and MoT on the nature of the Center that was supposed to have some elements of Community Center and some touristic activities that MSA were reluctant to approve. This long period of negotiations for the Visitor Center inside the archaeological site and the eventual Community Center outside, in one of the villages, maintained UNESCO in a necessity to keep the funds for the Community Center or for the renovation and extension of the Antiquities Inspectorate premises on the site of Dahshour.

More worrying is the analysis of the disbursement rate (% budget spent over budget approved). It is alarming as the budget disbursed is a direct indication of “activities completed” according to plan. In December 2012, three months before the project closure, only UNDP, UNIDO and ILO have reached an 85% completion rate.



Zooming in...

To put into perspective the disbursement rate we compile a list of the project activities that are to be occurring within the next two months. The resulting list is to be taken cautiously as a comprehensive examination of each activity and their sources of verification were well beyond the scope of this evaluation.

The following list is not meant to be comprehensive but an illustration of the volume of work that is still ahead. It is based on statements of key stakeholders collected during interviews, direct observation and a careful revision of partners’ progress reports.

1. UNESCO is to rebuild the inspectorate offices in the Dahshour site. So far the procurement process is well advance but building works are still to start.
1. UNWTO is to complete coordination for the signaling and promotion material for tourist circuits: UNIDO is to provide decorations, UNESCO is to produce information maps in two languages; UNESCO is to produce signaling posts for the archeological area; UNWTO is to produce informative leaflets and posters.
2. UNWTO is to organize a “familiarization tour” for national and international tour operators to visit the Dahshour area and potential tourist circuits.
3. UNWTO and ILO are to set up the Tourist Coordination Units to facilitate together with the LED Forum Tourism development and promotion at the community level.
4. UNIDO is to organize handcraft exhibitions in Cairo to promote the artisan industry of Dahshour.

5. UNIDO, financially assisted by UNDP, is to organize and conduct training for handcraft marketing for the artisans in Dahshour.
6. UNDP is to organize a “Clean Up Campaign” around the lake to raise awareness among local population on the issue of solid waste.
7. Finally, it is important to underlie that the construction works for the Visitors/Community Centre have yet to start and no specific starting date has been fixed. Therefore there is a high risk that this activity it is not tackle soon and this could adversely affect the trust and expectations generated at the local level.

Sustainability

The programme sets itself up from the beginning as a poverty alleviation initiative. However, the lack of impact indicators makes it difficult to assess whether it has produced such results. Indeed there is a clear expectation by many stakeholders and most remarkably by the beneficiaries that implementing partners should take a step forward and translate the foundational blocks into tangible and lasting results.

Despite the overall strength and potential of this JP and the commitment shown by a number of stakeholders, most relevantly by the MoT, the sustainability component is still a shortcoming and needs to be carefully considered for the programme to be able to leave behind a lasting legacy.

The Ministry of Tourism has taken up the torch of this project. Not only have they mentioned Dahshour explicitly in the official strategy, they have also incorporated the area as a new destination in their web page, and most importantly they have made concrete budget allocation for the Governorate of Giza to undertake concrete necessary infrastructure in the area. However, there is no guarantee that the MoT, despite their political will, will have the financial capacity to undertake the type of financial investment necessary to take the project to the next level. There are also other important components that fall outside the MoT scope.

Other governmental partners have also shown signs of owning the project, although they have not made the necessary financial commitments to make the components of the project fully sustainable. IMC, for instance will provide 80 % of technical assistant to all artisan associations registered with them. This is undoubtedly a good step, but it does not guarantee the sustainability of the industry in Dahshour. Predictably, new artisans and associations will still need to be supported on a number of fronts until they can sustain themselves with the revenues derived from their commercial activity.

This idea is also applicable to the training of tourist industries provided by UNWTO. If there is no concrete accompaniment for the implementation of business developments and there is no guarantee of the supply of clients (i.e. new tourists), there will be no lasting impact. Equally, if the community does not acquire concrete jobs where they can implement what they have learnt in the training, the efforts will have been ultimately worthless.

EEAA is fully committed to the environmental conservation of the lake and their surrounding areas. However, the sustainability of this component relies heavily on setting up a permanent committee under the supervision of the Governorate of Giza which is still at a very embryonic stage.

Finally, the Ministry of Antiquities has shown a much higher level of engagement and commitment to that shown at the beginning of the project. UNESCO is also optimistic that the MSA can take on the recommendations emerging from the master plan regarding the preservation of a buffer zone for the archeological site, conservation work for the archeological artifacts and the engagement with the community. However, these necessary measures and particularly the two latest ones (conservation and community engagement) require a long term commitment, a considerable amount of resources and an important shift in the mindset of the institution. So far, there is no guarantee that the Ministry will be able to take on such a venture.

An issue partially addressed by the project that is enormously relevant to sustainability is the necessity to equip Dahshour with the basic infrastructure to care for tourism. The midterm evaluation had already acknowledged that it was not the role of any UN agency to physically resolve these issues. Neither the duration nor resources of the programme allowed such investment. However it was believed that the project as a pilot and an introductory step into the area could play a pivotal role in attracting the attention to Dahshour that could eventually lead to an improvement in conditions. This has only partially occurred in the case of the roads built by the MoT. In general there are still questions marks surrounding who is expected to fund and make sure that the necessary infrastructure will be constructed and sustained, as without these infrastructures (roads, waste management system, etc.) tourism is not likely to prosper.

At the community level, the LED Forum is now functional and operational. However, it is acknowledged that this organisation is still a long way from being fully representative of the community and powerful enough to interact (negotiate or lobby) with decision-makers (government, private sector...) without the support of the implementing partners. In a country as centralized and hierarchical as Egypt, the unbalanced power relations between decision-makers such as government officials and community representatives is too great to expect that after three years the community will be empowered enough to sit alongside government bodies and private sector on an equal footing.

In this somehow precarious future, one component stands as fully sustainable, the microcredit line implemented by the BEST Foundation. This revolving fund has produced sufficient evidence to conclude that it will sustain itself and will grow beyond the life of the project. However, the link with the tourist industries in Dahshour would need to be strengthened.

Conclusions and lessons learned

1. The programme are fully aligned with National partners' mandates as well as with UNDAF and the MDGs. However, the design phase of the programme had important pitfalls, most relevantly the lack of involvement of key stakeholders, which had implications on the implementation phase and on the results achieved.
2. The project uniquely combines in an integrated manner cultural heritage aspects, natural heritage dimensions, and community development components. The fact that the programme is in an enclave situated inside the *Memphis Necropolis*, which is arguably the most important archeological site of the world, gives this initiative a special relevance as a cultural development programme.
3. The project succeeded in creating a common motivational horizon shared by all stakeholders and in planning activities and outputs that were to be the foundational building blocks to get there. This vision has strongly captured people's imagination and in consequence, raised expectations that went well beyond the scope of the project.
4. While the project accomplished pretty much all it was set to do, expectations raised (most importantly within the community of Dahshour) where much higher than its stated objectives.
5. Despite efforts done by the implementing team to produce a revised M&E framework including performance indicators that measure impact, there is still a heavy inclination towards utilizing activities or output indicators, while there were not sufficient indicators that capture progress at the level of impact.
6. It is important to acknowledge the challenges the project faced particularly in the light of the political turmoil happening in Egypt during the past two years. Most relevantly, the tourist industry collapsed after the revolution and it still has not showed signs of recovering. Furthermore, the revolution had a powerful effect upon the mood of all stakeholders at every level. The structure and the power balance of many of the institutions involved within the project, and more concretely the governmental partners, also got greatly affected by the political events which translated into frequent changes in the mission of the institutions, in the senior management and in the focal points assigned to the project. We counted in total 48 personnel changes in governmental and UN partners since the beginning of the project implementation.
7. Despite these challenges, the project has produced important results:
 - a. The project has been drawing attention to Dahshour, particularly from supported governmental partners which have dedicated extra commitment and resources to the area. The most salient result has been how the MoT has gone the extra mile allocating 50 million EGP to undertake basic infrastructure work essential to care for potential oncoming tourists.
 - b. The project has conducted wider training in a number of sectors related to tourism and business development. However, there is little evidence as to what impact this has had into people actually gaining skills, into jobs creation, and/or into changing the predominant business model

designed to benefit big tour operators. However, trainings were very well received by the community, and that they had certainly created curiosity and increased expectations.

- c. A partial exception to this has been the creation of an incipient sector of artisans who have gone to the level of being able to produce product prototypes with the potential to be marketed widely.
 - d. The component that has proven to have a deeper impact in building an entrepreneurship culture in the area has been the microcredit line implemented by BEST foundation.
 - e. The project has succeeded in building relations of trust with important sectors of the community through the numerous training programmes and most relevantly through the creation of different handcraft associations and particularly through the articulation of the LED Forum. However, the LED Forum in its present form is still far from sustainable. On the one hand, it lacks the social base to be considered representative of the area and it still has no sustainable activities to support itself.
8. In the midterm evaluation the relationship among the implementing partners was described as “silos” working in parallel. This is not the case anymore, the partners are now more engaged and a good number of cooperative efforts have been documented. However, it was widely acknowledged that these types of synergies (among governmental partners, UN agencies and at the local level) should have been facilitated and articulated in a more formal manner. The “jointness” of the programme is expressed through its capacity to jointly undertake and execute common activities such as planning, procurement and monitoring. However, the “pass-through” funding method does not provide sufficient basis for joint management of programme components.
9. The average delivery rate in December 2012 was at 86%. Nevertheless, there are great variations in the different components and some of them, especially UNESCO, presented an alarmingly low rate. More worrying is the analysis of the disbursement rate as it is a direct indication of “activities completed” according to plan. In December 2012, three months before the project closure, only UNDP, UNIDO and ILO have reached an 85% completion rate.
10. Despite the overall strength and potential of this JP and the commitment shown by a number of stakeholders, most relevantly by the MoT, the sustainability component is still a shortcoming and needs to be carefully considered for the programme to be able to leave behind a lasting legacy.
11. There is a clear expectation by many stakeholders and most remarkably by the beneficiaries that implementing partners should take a step forward and translate the foundational blocks into tangible and lasting results.

Recommendations

This section contains general principles, which need to be considered in tandem with a sound analysis of budgetary limits.

1. In order to meet the expectations created by the Project and to build on the foundational work, the team should consider the design and implementation of a second phase.
2. It is recommended that a second phase should not be rushed into, allowing sufficient time (no less than 8 months) for the team to conduct a comprehensive stakeholders' analysis, a participatory needs assessment for the next steps and an analysis of alternative strategies before a complete draft of the programme document is written.
3. During this "interim phase" a National Officer should be employed to coordinate the design of the second phase, to advocate and support governmental partners to deliver their commitments and to mobilize resources.
4. During the identification of stakeholders special focus should be given to those stakeholders not included in the first phase during the design. They are the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, the Governorate of Giza and especially the community of Dahshour.
5. In this sense the LED Forum should play a key role and therefore it should be sufficiently funded to keep growing during the "interim" period.
6. The Technical Office of AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development and Cooperation) should also be kept abreast with the design processes of the second phase of the programme. Their role as "scouting" donors should be acknowledged by involving them in the design of the next phase.
7. Gender should be fully integrated into the overall project development. This will include formal spaces for understanding what constitutes gender mainstreaming in all components, and designate responsibilities for it. A comprehensive strategy and an operational plan should be drafted by all components with the assistance of a gender expert.
8. It is strongly recommended that the next phase has a revised M&E framework including performance indicators that measure impact.
9. During the design phase, it is recommended to organize exchanges such as learning trips to other areas of Egypt with similar characteristics to those of this programme and where the partners have previously conducted successful programmes such as in Fayoum or in St. Katherine so that Dahshour can learn from them.
10. It is strongly recommended to translate this report into Arabic and to share it with the community in Dahshour through the LED Forum.