

Mid-term evaluation of “MOBILIZATION OF THE DAHSHOUR WORLD HERITAGE SITE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT”



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

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Photo cover: “Vision of Dahshour” Drawing of a beneficiary in a UNWTO-MoT workshop

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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 Fund
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
M/SMEs	Micro, small and medium enterprises
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSC	National Steering Committee
PM	Programme Manager
PMC	Programme Management Committee
PMU	Programme Management Unit
SCA	Supreme Council of Antiquities
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	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WHS	World Heritage Site

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Terms	iv
Introduction.....	1
Premises, Context, objectives and methodology	1
Objective of the evaluation	1
Methodology applied.....	2
Limitations of the evaluation.....	3
Description of the development intervention.....	4
The need.....	4
The purpose.....	4
Components	5
Level of analysis: Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions	7
Findings, remarks and lessons learnt.....	8
Design.....	8
Implementation and progress	14
Coordination among stakeholders.....	14
Pace of implementation and progress	17
Sustainability	22
Monitoring & Evaluation	24
Emerging issues	26
Recommendations.....	27

Introduction

The task of an evaluator is never a simple one. After just several weeks of interaction within a programme, one cannot appreciate its depth and complexities in the same respect as those who work in the programme day in and day out. The evaluation seeks to determine what has been the progress up until now and how this progress relates to the goals of the intervention. Although, it is more than likely that the implementing partners will already have a great knowledge in terms of what the outcomes of the programme have been so far and the impacts of implemented activities. Much of what has been produced in this report will not be new to the management. So, what is left for the evaluator to offer is an outside perspective. By talking to other stakeholders, the evaluator can also offer feedback that others have not been able to provide directly. What we as evaluators anticipate, however, is that by putting in writing and stating what you as managers already know, will make a cause for celebration and also for change where needed.

Premises, context, objectives and methodology

Objective of the evaluation

As stated in the ToRs this rapid assessment will seek to improve the implementation of the JP *“Mobilization of the Dahshour World Heritage Site for Community Development”* during its second phase of implementation from December 2010 until April 2012. It will also seek and generate knowledge, identifying best practices and lessons learned that could be transferred to other programmes. The conclusions and recommendations generated by this evaluation will be passed on to the main users: the task managers, the Programme Management Committee, the National Steering Committee, the Secretariat of the Fund and the LED Forum.

A rapid assessment evaluation means that we primarily focused on the bigger picture (outcomes and outputs) and tackled only those programme’s activities and issues that emerged during the course of the evaluation.

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: (1) providing stakeholders and beneficiaries with the opportunity to reflect on the programme's progress and its obstacles; (2) generating knowledge that informs practice and leads to corrective actions; (3) providing beneficiaries and stakeholders with the tools to transform their environment and to get to the desired effects. The entire evaluation process was therefore as important as this report.

Methodology applied

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 so far. 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.

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

Key to the gathering information was the organization of a field visit to Egypt. The mission lasted seven working days from 17 to 25 October. Due to the number of partners involved in the programme the evaluation team extended the duration of the mission in two days over what was originally envisaged.

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 bird's eye viewer), 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.

In-depth informant interviews

The evaluator conducted semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 35 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 evaluator 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. The interviews were recorded and processed in real-time.

Beneficiaries' workshop

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. During the workshop the beneficiaries themselves discussed what progress they are making 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 that were central to the evaluation questions. The observation of the workshop organized by UNIDO with local SMEs and NGO facilitators was particularly helpful.

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 evaluator organised a debriefing workshop with the PMC at the end of the field mission to share preliminary conclusions and recommendations.

Limitations of the evaluation

Common time and resource constraints for conducting rapid assessment evaluations limit the ability to capture all relevant information. This is particularly notable when we face complex interventions that take place in complicated environments.

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 has seen considerable growth in recent years. Ecotourism, eco-lodges and nature-based attractions are becoming popular in the country. It is important to ensure that this segment of tourism is catered for so that Egypt's tourism sector can continue to grow and provide the widespread community with economic and employment benefits.

The purpose

The aim of the Joint Programme is to protect the area of the Dahshour pyramids and its ecosystem whilst fostering sustainable development, cultural and ecological management and revenue generation in the surrounding community.

Thus, the Joint Programme is centered on Egypt's UNDAF Outcome 3 (2007-2011), which promotes environmental sustainability and reduction of regional human development disparities. The programme framework is structured in two main outcomes; Outcome 1 is contributing to MDGs 1 and 3, through poverty alleviation activities. Outcome 2 is contributing

to MDGs 7 and 8 in its support to ensuring the long-term viability of environmental assets in Dahshour and the Memphis and its Necropolis.

Components

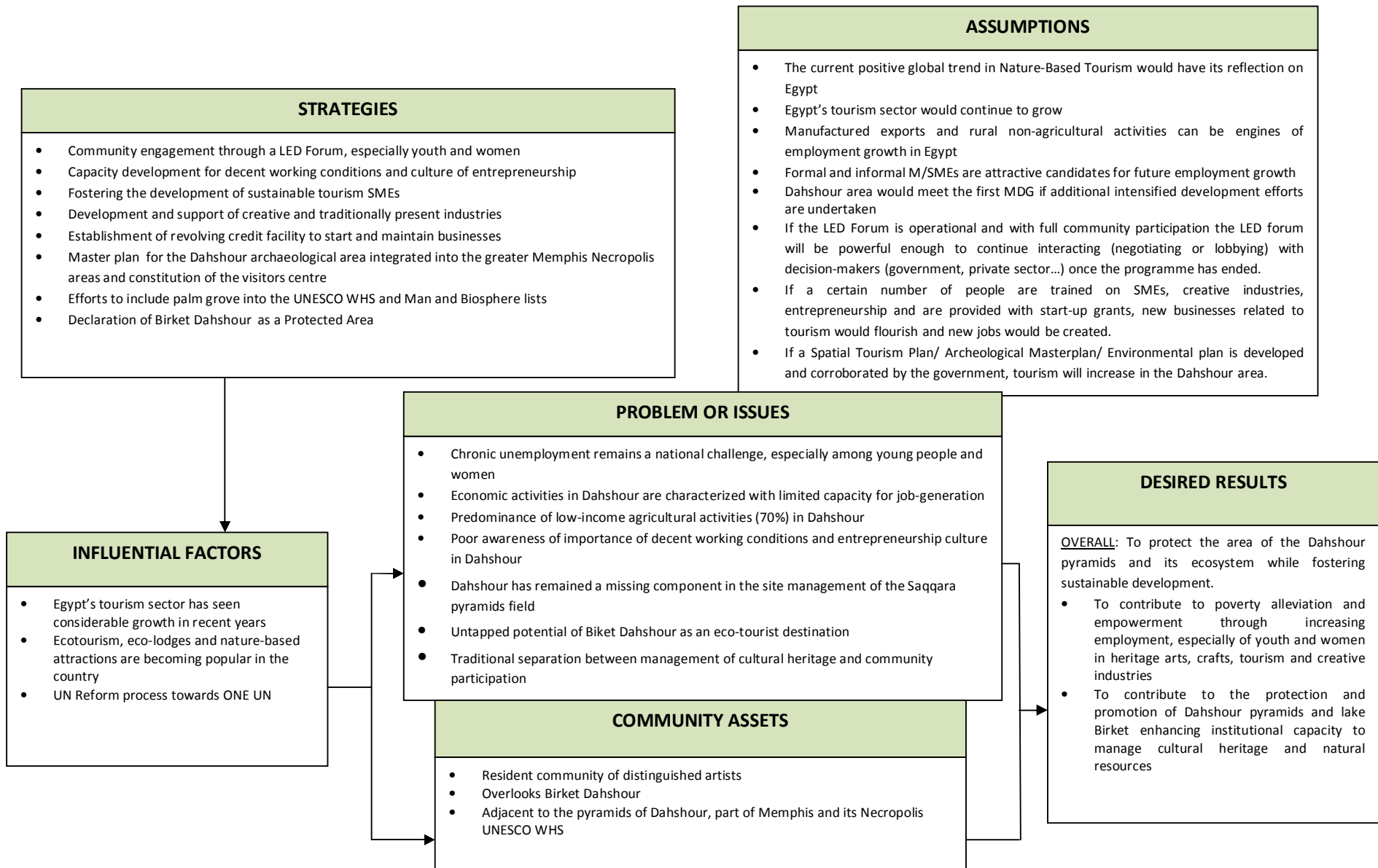
Outcome 1: “Employment, especially of youth and women in heritage arts, crafts, tourism and creative industries increased, contributing to poverty alleviation and empowerment”. This Outcome reflects an integrated approach to community engagement and development. It centers on capacity development, job 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.

- Output 1.1: Socio-economic community profile surveyed and LED forum operational to facilitate full community participation. *Implementing partners ILO - SFD*
- Output 1.2: Sensitization to entrepreneurship and capacity building on decent work conditions conducted. *Implementing partners ILO - SFD*
- Output 1.3: Locally driven tourism sector fostered through training, stocktaking, and technical support to Dahshour tourism M/SMEs. *Implementing partners UNWTO - MoT*
- Output 1.4: Creative industries supported, building upon existent local capacities within the Dahshour community. *Implementing partners UNIDO - IMC*
- Output 1.5: BDS and micro-finance facilities provided to Dahshour and the surrounding communities. *Implementing partners UNDP - SFD*

Outcome 2: “Enhanced institutional capacity to manage cultural heritage and natural resources”. This Outcome 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.

- Output 2.1: The development and implementation of SCA's action plan for the Dahshour component of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and its environment is supported. *Implementing partners UNESCO - SCA*
- Output 2.2: Rural tourism and eco-tourism activities are supported through the development of a government corroborated and locally driven Spatial Tourism Development Plan. *Implementing partners UNWTO - MoT*
- Output 2.3: Environmental support to the Dahshour Lake provided through assessment and development of a nationally approved sustainable strategy. *Implementing partners UNDP - EEAA*

The JP has addressed the importance of community development and the identification of informal leaders within the community to spearhead the programme and has, as a consequence delineated an inclusive approach to community mobilization and stakeholder involvement.



Level of analysis

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 is 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.

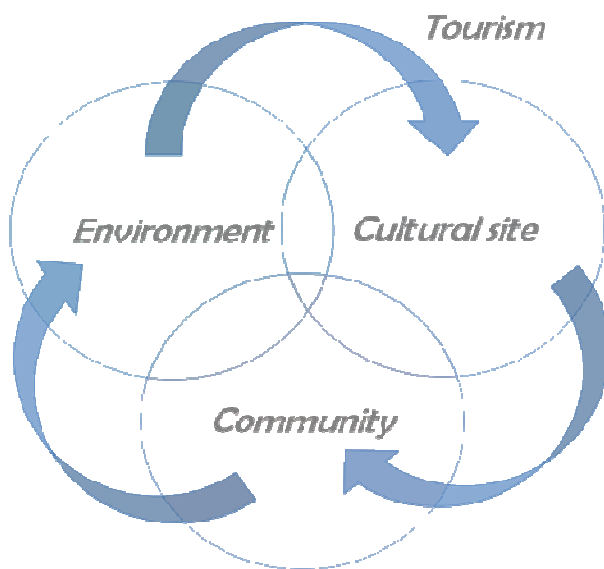
As a result of the documents reviewed and the brief needs assessment, an evaluation framework was drafted. The evaluation framework has five levels of analysis (design; implementation; progress; sustainability and M&E). The original questions prompted in the ToRs were combined with several issues raised during the brief needs assessment (see evaluation inception report for a complete evaluation framework).

Findings, remarks and lessons learnt

Design

“The Mobilization of the Dahshour World Heritage Site for Community Development” Joint Programme uniquely combines in an integrated manner cultural heritage aspects, natural heritage dimensions, and community development components. From the evidences collected during the course of the evaluation, it is clear that the programme has captured the imagination of all stakeholders, including the beneficiaries. 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.

Common vision of the programme



The majority of the stakeholders consulted shared a common vision of the programme that integrates four elements as described in the graph in this page. The image encompasses three intersecting circles, representing an environmental component, namely the preservation of the Dahshour seasonal lake, a cultural component that consists of the management of the Dahshour archeological site and its integration into the larger *Memphis Necropolis* and a community component that is understood as the improvement of the livelihoods and

working conditions of the local population through targeted employment-generation activities. A fourth component, tourism, is viewed to interweave with all three components mentioned above.

The intersecting areas represent how stakeholders perceive the components to closely correlate with each other. For example, the improvement of the livelihoods of the community should be intimately connected with their level of raised awareness about the natural and archaeological values of their region. Also, one of the potential achievements of the programme should be to bring the local people forward to take ownership over the archaeological site.

The vision of integrating the four components was also shared by the local population. This was clearly expressed in a statement facilitated by the UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism during a number of participatory sessions in Dahshour where the community stated in regards to the touristic vision of Dahshour the need *“to provide the best quality experiences of the diverse heritage of Dahshour, in a clean environment, marketed to enable **guest participation**”*

*in the enduring local way of life, with appreciation of Dahshour's **cultural, natural** and spatial assets that remain **protected by the community** and ecologically sustainable".*

Alignment with national policies

During the course of the evaluation we could find numerous evidences that lead us to conclude that the aims of the programme were fully aligned with Egyptian national policies as well as with UNDAF and the MDGs. Apart from those already mentioned in the programme document, we were further 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 Development¹, 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, despite the clarity of the objectives of the programme among most stakeholders and the clear alignment with Egyptian National policies, the design phase experienced a number of limitations that are further affecting the implementation of the programme as we put forward below:

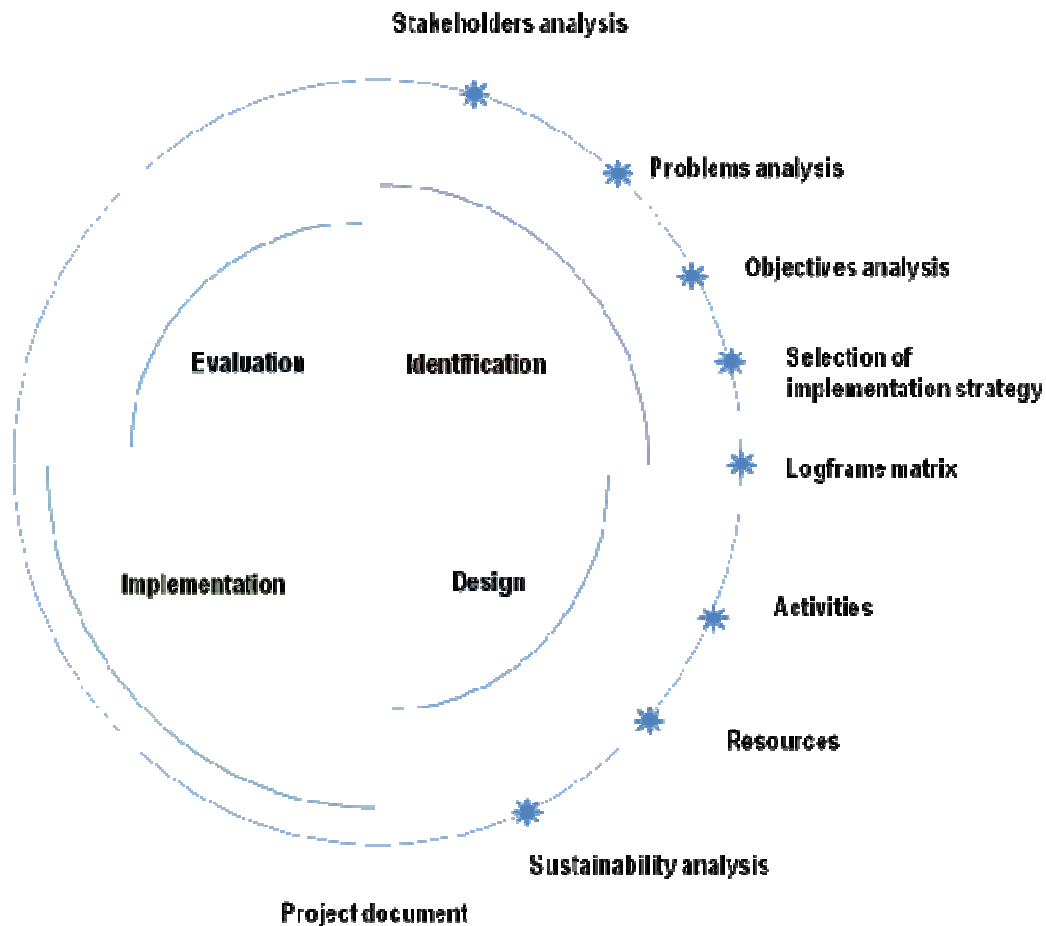
Stakeholder's analysis

The graph below illustrates a classical programme management cycle according to the logical framework approach², a long established design methodology used by a range of major bilateral and multilateral donors including UN agencies. As we can see, before we get to draft the logframe matrix with a description of outcomes, outputs and risks, it is essential to conduct a problem analysis or need assessment with all the stakeholders.

During the design phase of the present programme, due to the fact that no pre-programme budget was allocated, it resulted difficult to carry out a complete identification exercise which led to implications on the quality of the design and consequently on the implementation phase.

¹ Ministry of Tourism of Egypt and UNWTO, 2009, *Strategic Spatial Framework for sustainable development*

² Logical Framework Approach, AUS Guidelines, 2005



This is a classical challenge that many programmes face. If no “pre-programme document resources” are properly allocated, it is difficult to assemble the team and the time necessary to involve all stakeholders including the community. Actually, most informants identified that the main deficiency of the identification and design phase was the lack of involvement of two major stakeholders, the community of Dahshour and the local authorities.

There is a wide agreement that to protect the natural and archaeological value of this area and to make it sustainable, the programme should have consulted both the local community and the local authorities from the very beginning. Several informants also recognised the military as a missing stakeholder especially within the environmental component.

However, one must acknowledge that the involvement of the local authorities was not an easy task during the design phase. Indeed, one of the major challenges faced during the development and design of the programme was the revisiting of the Egyptian governorates. While writing the JP, Dahshour was firstly part of the governorate of Giza then it became part of the governorate of 6th of October. This administrative re-structuring and continuous changes made it difficult to meet with the governorate and include the local strategy within the programme plan.

The programme made considerable efforts to overcome these important shortcomings and made provisions to conduct a number of need assessments (which included a very comprehensive one by ILO) during the inception phase. However, these need assessments were conducted after the activities had been described and the resources had been allocated and despite certain maneuvering flexibility allowed by the MDG-F, it was not possible to carry out major changes at this later stage.

Solid waste management and basic infrastructure

In all the assessments conducted by the partners in the early stages of the implementation (most noticeably that of the ILO), both the local community and the local authorities put forward a new priority for the programme that was not contemplated in the original design, to deal with the problem of the solid waste management and to develop basic infrastructure to prepare for the tourism to come. The current situation of Dahshour in this respect is described below:

“The public networks for potable water and electricity supply, sewage disposal, garbage collection, and irrigation water are unreliable, polluted, or lacking altogether. (...) 91% of all women and men in Dahshour live in places that are unconnected to sewage drainage networks. (...) In a similar vein, 83.5% of all women and 78% of all men complain of the unsteady supply of electricity, with frequent power outages. In addition, 79.55% of all men and 87.2% of all women state that they themselves clean the streets and dispose the accumulating garbage in their village. The majority however dispose such garbage in the water canals within their villages (53.1% of men and 46.8% of women)³”

Also in the *Strategic Spatial Framework for Sustainable Tourism Development*, UNWTO identify five key weaknesses and threats that could jeopardize the development potential of Dahshour as a tourist destination, among them the *“lack of environmental management; solid waste collection, disposal and treatment, sewage treatment, drainage causing continual and excessive pollution of the villages, rural areas, canals, rivers and ground water resources, threatening the general health of the local population and detrimental to any sort of tourism”*.

This concern is clearly emphasized in a mission conducted by a UNIDO consultant⁴ that collected graphic evidences to demonstrate the graveness of this issue (see photograph below).

³ ILO, (2009) *Establishing the socio-economic profile of Dahshur and its satellite communities*.

⁴ Vinaccia, Julio (2009) *UNIDO A photographic overview*.



During the course of this evaluation it was loud and clear that 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 had to be a priority for the programme. 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.

After the ILO need assessment was conducted, the newly recruited Programme Manager organised a meeting with all stakeholders to present the findings and to write an inception report accordingly. The inception report takes into account many of the findings of the assessment and a number of readjustments were duly made. For instance, in the Annual Work Plans 1 and 2 specific activities were designed to engage local authorities so as to – indirectly-encourage them to play their role in addressing the issues of solid waste and infrastructure. The strategy aimed to engage senior level staff from the governorate in the programme’s events and meetings to let them see the current development of the JP with the intent that this would become a catalyst for them to invest from their part within the area.

Two additional important points should be made regarding the topic of solid waste management and basic infrastructure. Firstly, the UNWTO-MoT made efforts to adapt some aspects of their training so as to address these problems and an entire module was devised in order to try and minimize waste in Dahshour through a community education programme. The module aims at creating behavioural change among locals towards their environment.

Secondly, one must take into account that it is not the role of any UN agency to physically resolve these issues. Neither the duration nor resources of the programme allow such investment. However it is believed that, the project as a pilot and an introductory step into the areas could play a pivotal role in attracting the attention to Dahshour that could eventually lead to improve conditions.

It is also believed that, the programme does have the ability to provide a comprehensive advocacy strategy to make sure that solid waste and infrastructure are taken on board by the competent authorities responsible for it. There are currently ongoing meetings regarding these concerns and there is an emerging understanding from the local authorities on the need to take action on these issues. However, there is still the need to think outside of the box and to consider the inclusion of the private sector and the governorates that carry resources and have a political voice. Another possibility mentioned by several informants is to include the media within the programme to get Dahshour on the agenda and to become a priority for the government.

Lack of mechanism that can articulate the four components

Although, as mentioned earlier, most stakeholders see the programme as having four integrated components, the original design only articulates two. The first one is very community oriented and relates to employment, *“Gainful employment, especially of youth and women, in heritage arts, crafts, tourism and creative industries, increased contributing to poverty alleviation and empowerment”* and a second component that is institutionally oriented relates to capacity building, *“Enhanced institutional capacity to manage cultural heritage and natural resources”*.

Outcome 1 has five related outputs and Outcome 2 consists of three related outputs that are allocated to different implementing partners. A vast majority of the informants consulted agree that this original design has not sufficiently envisaged the appropriate mechanisms to articulate the intersections of those four components as perceived within the vision of stakeholders. To illustrate this point, one informant pointed out, *“how would we design the community empowerment component and the micro-credit facility so that it would relate to the environmental component? How do we promote a handicraft industry that relates somehow to the cultural heritage sites?”*

The original programme document describes coordination mechanisms that we will further analyse under the implementation chapter, such as the Programme Manager and the Programme Management Committee. However, it does not tackle specifically how particular programme’s outputs and their responsible partners are to intersect within the different spheres of the common vision.

Implementation and progress

Coordination among stakeholders

Within the JP there are ten implementing partners which are described both in the programme document and in the inception report. These implementing partners are working in six pairs and are responsible for the different outputs of the JP. Below are the six pairs:

SCA/UNESCO – Responsible for the archaeological component
EEAA/UNDP – Responsible for the environmental component
MoT/UNWTO – Responsible for the tourism promotion component
SDF/UNDP/BEST – Responsible for the micro-credit facility for the community
SDF/ILO – Responsible for the community empowerment
IMC/UNIDO – Responsible for the promotion of industries

Although these six teams work without conflict, they do not appear to be fully coordinating. At the time of the evaluation many described these working groups as “silos” working in parallel. Many informants agreed that the coordination mechanism among these six cells ought to be improved in order to avoid duplications and/or contradictory messages and to improve potential synergies. In reality there are a number of coordination mechanisms already within the programme that have the potential to be utilized more efficiently but there is also the clear need to create new channels for effective coordination:

The Programme Manager

The Programme Manager came on board very late (November 2009) and at the time of the evaluation he had been with the programme for only 10 months. Informants commend the work of the Programme Manager and recognize the dramatic improvement among the different stakeholders thanks to the communication flow that he promotes. A key example being the workshop organised to present the findings of the ILO assessment and the drafting of the inception report.

The Programme Management Committee

The Programme Management Committee was also identified as an important venue to exchange information and constructively challenge one another. So far this space has been mainly used by the different implementing agencies to give public presentations on the different components of the programme. Although this is a valid use of the PMC, according to the MDG-F guideline, the PMC should be a decision-making space overseeing the programme’s technical/operational decisions that are required to manage the Joint Programme appropriately. A vast majority of relevant informants agreed that at present the PMC was more of a space where information could be shared and ratified rather than one where hard decisions could be taken.

There was also the felt need to include other stakeholders within the PMC, on the one hand, to involve the local stakeholders and on the other, to involve the donors (not for them to be decision makers but rather to be informed on the decisions made).

LED Forum and coordination at the local level

The Local Economic Development (LED) forum promoted by ILO was also frequently mentioned as a legitimate space to coordinate at the local level. Following the well tested LED approach, ILO organised a number of sensitization sessions in Dahshour with the NGOs that were best known and trusted within the communities. Within the sessions there were around 360 participants. Two sessions were held within each village and with the support of the local people, ILO were able to select key players to become part of the LED forum. In this approach, the community selected its own representative members for each village. Local authorities were invited to the opening of the LED forum and to be part of it.

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

Local Economic Development is a strategy for employment promotion through micro and small enterprise development, support of social dialogue and development planning. At the center of the approach is the creation of public-private partnerships that bring together stakeholders in the local economy, including representatives of regional and local government, employers' and workers' organizations, Chambers of Commerce, cooperatives, producers' associations, women organizations and other NGOs. The partnership can be developed in a forum (LED Forum) or institutionalized in a Local Economic Development Agency (LEDA). The LED approach has been adopted successfully by ILO in a number of countries. For this evaluation we could review documentation related to best practices in Uruguay, Mozambique and Sri Lanka.

However, the LED forum is still at an embryo stage and is not yet widely recognised as the legitimate interlocutor of the programme in Dahshour (although it has that potential). Some local stakeholders still only identify the programme with the UN agency that they are directly working with, often UNWTO that is the agency that has been working with the community for the longest period and UNIDO that has also tested an approach for coordination at local level with local associations. However, there still appears to be lacking a common presence of the programme in Dahshour.

There was also a wide agreement that a higher level of engagement from the part of the local authorities is necessary to move forward. Actually, the need for it to be better articulated was already stated in the communication of MDG-F secretariat as early as September 2008.

In general more coordination is needed

As previously mentioned, an overwhelming number of informants thought that the coordination ought to improve among the different implementing partners and with the local stakeholders.

Some "organic" coordination was already happening among implementing partners, for instance, we can mention as a best practice informal decision-making meetings between UNIDO and ILO that took place in order to make sure no duplication was occurring in the

training modules. It was widely agreed that these types of working spaces should be facilitated and articulated in a more formal manner.

It was also vastly agreed that although coordination is important for UN agencies it is even more vital to promote good coordination among National implementing partners. In this regard, UN has the ability to play an excellent role, creating platforms for coordination; spaces that can help form methodologies for results based management.

It was also noted that strong coordination is not an end in itself and should always be at the service of concrete results, exercise with the necessary flexibility and not add another bureaucratic level in the programme but rather to truly facilitate the exchange of ideas and most importantly facilitate the agreements for relevant work plans that need to be carried out.

National ownership

As already stated above, although the secondary objective of every UN Joint Programme is the improvement of coordination among the UN agencies, strong coordination is more important among national implementing partners for the sake of sustainability. At the moment it is often the case that the UN agency is the one taking the weight of the implementation of the activities.

Potential duplication

Although in general the spheres of action are well defined, there are a number of activities that could risk duplicating each other. An in-depth analysis of all the activities of the programme was well outside the scope of this rapid assessment. However, one group emerged during the interviews and the desk review as a potential source of duplication; the training programmes, and 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). As mentioned above, some corrective actions have been taken by several of these agencies to make sure that duplication does not occur. However, even if duplication of content is avoided, proper coordination is still a missing factor. An integrated training programme among all the agencies is required to guarantee that the trainings reach the appropriate local audiences and that the best students have the opportunity to attend the entire programme, ensuring that timetables and contents are coordinated to suit the students' needs.

Contradictory messages

Other activities that emerged during the evaluation that appear to require better coordination were the different spatial studies of the area conducted by UNESCO-SCA, 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.

The master plan prepared jointly by UNESCO and SCA has two main tasks according to the ToRs. Firstly, the plan would redefine the boundaries of the Memphis Necropolis World

Heritage Site Core Zone and Buffer Zones. This plan includes several areas surrounding the World Heritage Site of which the Date Palm Groves and the Dahshour Lake represent a major component. Secondly, the plan would define the actual Master Planning process of the Dahshour Archaeological Site and its surrounding areas.

The study prepared by UNDP and EEAA is an environmental assessment limited to the Dahshour Lake and the surrounding Date Palm Groves in the Dahshour area. The study focuses on assessing the environmental value of the lake Birket Dahshour to better understand the intricacies of the existent eco-system. EEAA and UNDP will technically support efforts to have Birket Dahshour be declared as a Protected Area, based upon its proximity to the WHS Memphis and its Necropolis.

UNWTO in collaboration with MoT prepared a Spatial Tourism Development Strategy for Dahshour comprising of Birket Dahshour and the programme's five main villages. The strategy provides an overall framework for the subsequent detail planning and implementation of a sustainable tourism infrastructure and superstructure for the proposed Dahshour Rural Tourism Cluster.

During the evaluation it became clear that SCA and MOT and EEAA have different perspectives regarding Dahshour and all retain different mandates. Therefore, making sure all the studies have a common message could be a challenge.

A number of key informants agreed that there are high risks of overlapping among the three studies and that the programme should reach a point where all plans/studies merge together and adopt the same approach. After comparing and combining recommendations from all sides, a single master plan needs to be created for Dahshour. What is currently missing is one comprehensive study to link all the different aspects of the programme together also outlining who should be responsible for implementing the different recommendations at the end of the programme.

Pace of implementation and progress

The JP experienced a very slow start (with the exception of the component managed by UNWTO – MoT) due to a number of reasons that can be grouped in three categories:

- Staffing issues – the programme did not allow a realistic time span to adequately assemble the necessary working team. Although this was partially due to the design, one must also consider some key unexpected issues that arose which had important consequences during the implementation. For instance, several potential PMs declining the work offer which resulted in having to begin the recruiting process again from scratch. This unique circumstance led the programme to be without a central coordinating figure during the first six months of the implementation phase.

- It also took longer than expected to identify suitable task managers and focal points for the programme in the different implementing agencies. When this evaluation was conducted the full team had only just been assembled.

There were also a number of key players who left their jobs and were replaced. The normal settling process of the new staff also delayed the implementation pace.

- Unexpected problems – During the first year a number of unexpected issues emerged. Most notably regarding the elaboration of the master plan for the *Memphis Necropolis* prepared by SCA and UNESCO. Before commencing with the master plan the implementing agencies found serious difficulties in locating the appropriate topographical maps. The issue was particularly complicated as the mapping of the area was to include not only Dahshour but the entire *Memphis Necropolis*. This particular issue is relevant as it affected greatly the pace of the component being implemented by UNESCO and SCA, that to this date still shows alarmingly low delivery rates.

Another important set back was that it resulted impossible for the SCA to host the PM of the programme and the coordination unit as it was stipulated in the original programme document, *“The Joint Programme Manager within the Programme Coordination Unit will be hosted by SCA and recruited by a joint decision of the PMC”*. This resulted in the PM having to look for an alternative space to host the programme unit which could only be done once having confirmed that no other partner would host the PM and after getting written consent of all implementing partners which took a long time.

- The administrative rules and regulations of all the partners and especially those of the UN were frequently mentioned as a major bottle neck for the implementation of certain activities. The involvement of several HQs in the procurement and recruitment procedures were mentioned to somewhat hinder these activities.

As a result, the pace of implementation during the first year and especially the first 6 months was worryingly low, (24% delivery rate of Year 1 funding after 9 months of implementation)⁵.

At the time of this evaluation the programme had managed to pick up the delivery rate to an acceptable 70% which is greatly remarkable.

⁵ MDG-F-secretariat feedback message: Egypt/culture and development, year 2009

Delivery rates June 2010

	Total Budget Approved	Total Amount Transferred	Total Budget Committed	Delivery Rate
UNDP	\$ 966.160,00	\$ 168.099,00	\$ 117.131,00	79%
ILO	\$ 450.363,00	\$ 174.410,00	\$ 124.113,00	71%
UNESCO	\$ 772.005,00	\$ 254.393,00	\$ 118.499,00	46%
UNWTO	\$ 565.816,00	\$ 208.650,00	\$202.372,00	97%
UNIDO	\$ 340.742,00	\$ 113.955,00	\$ 85.249	75%
TOTAL	\$ 3.095.086,00	\$ 919.507,00	\$ 647.364,00	70%

Actually although during the first months of implementation the progress was slow there is already much to celebrate and very concrete results are being achieved (which can be seen below under each output):

Output 1.1 *Socio-economic community profile surveyed and LED forum operational to facilitate full community participation.*

- The Socio-economic Profile has been developed and its findings have been integrated into programme's interventions and sheds light over a number of important issues such as the "solid waste management issue" that was overlooked in the original design.
- LED Forum has been established bringing together different actors from the community of Dahshour and connecting actors and institutions; LED has increased communication and coordination among the five villages, adding new community and natural leaders to existent ones. The establishing of LED forum also helped other programme partners to articulate the society/community around common interests.

Output 1.2 *Sensitization to entrepreneurship and capacity building on decent work conditions conducted*

- Training modules have been developed.
- Preparation for the training is on going.

Output 1.3 *Locally driven tourism sector fostered through training, stocktaking, and technical support to Dahshour tourism M/SMEs*

- Training Needs Analysis has been prepared following a thorough participatory methodology and an M&E system for the trainings has been developed to guarantee the quality of them (although it does not measure the impact).
- 600 people are currently being trained using Training Needs Analysis. It is also worth noting that an important feature of UNWTO's implementation of programme activities has been to foster south-south cooperation during the programme. For the training programme,

UNWTO has hired an experienced consultant of Indian nationality, who has served as Team Leader for an ambitious rural tourism development programme in India.

Output 1.4 *Creative industries supported, building upon existent local capacities within the Dahshour community*

- An analysis on niche markets, tourism markets and the creative industries potential in Dahshour was conducted, including a rapid assessment on creative entrepreneurship within local communities.
- A report and audiovisual material on Dahshour creative sectors were subsequently finalized.
- A national expert with experience in the development and promotion of Egyptian ethnic products was recruited on a part-time basis in November 2009.
- Preparation for the training is ongoing.
- A number of awareness sessions have been undertaken with the community members.

Output 1.5 *BDS and micro-finance facilities provided to Dahshour and the surrounding communities*

- BDS provider has been contracted to provide Micro credit to Dahshour community.

Output 2.1 *The development and implementation of SCA's action plan for the Dahshour component of the UNESCO WHC and its environment is supported.*

- Mapping of the site is ongoing.
- GIS-based maps for Dahshour archeological sites have been collected in preparation for the development of the master plan.

Output 2.2 *Rural tourism and eco-tourism activities are supported through the development of a government corroborated and locally driven Spatial Tourism Development Plan*

- Spatial Tourism Plan for Dahshour has been developed and community leaders including local parliamentarians, members of the Senate and local mayors have attended workshops and have been consulted on the conclusions and recommendations of the Plan.

Output 2.3 *Environmental support to the Dahshour Lake provided through assessment and development of a nationally approved sustainable strategy*

- The first draft of the ecological assessment has been submitted by the consultant. It has to be mentioned that the ministry of environment were very much involved in the study itself. The ecological assessment widely utilized the expertise of the Ministry.

To put these early results into perspective we conducted an analysis of the progress rate of the outputs based on the number of activities that were either done or on track⁶ at the time of the evaluation. We also considered “being on track” all those activities that were due to start in the second half of the programme (i.e. second half of Year II and Year III). The results of the

⁶ Activities that have been launched AND were progressing at a satisfactory rate according to the stakeholders and the progress reports.

analysis are to be taken consciously as a comprehensive examination of the sources of verification for each activity was well beyond the scope of this evaluation. Therefore it is not possible to make an accurate perceptual rate in terms of “progress achieved” for each of the activities. The following assessment is based on statements of key stakeholders collected during interviews, direct observation and a careful revision of partners’ progress reports.

Output	Partners	Progress rate
Output 1.1: Socio-economic community profile surveyed and LED forum operational to facilitate full community participation.	ILO - SFD	100%
Output 1.2: Sensitization to entrepreneurship and capacity building on decent work conditions conducted.	ILO – SFD	100%
Output 1.3: Locally driven tourism sector fostered through training, stocktaking, and technical support to Dahshour tourism M/SMEs	UNWTO - MoT	61%
Output 1.4: Creative industries supported, building upon existent local capacities within the Dahshour community.	UNIDO - IMC	57%
Output 1.5: BDS and micro-finance facilities provided to Dahshour and the surrounding communities.	UNDP - SFD	100%
Output 2.1: The development and implementation of SCA's action plan for the Dahshour component of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and its environment is supported.	UNESCO - SCA	31%
Output 2.2: Rural tourism and eco-tourism activities are supported through the development of a government corroborated and locally driven Spatial Tourism Development Plan.	UNWTO – MoT	80%
Output 2.3: Environmental support to the Dahshour Lake provided through assessment and development of a nationally approved sustainable strategy.	UNDP - EEAA	50%

As we can see the average progress of the outputs at 72% roughly coincide with the reported delivery rate. However, both in the analysis of the progress of the outputs and the delivery rates we can see that there are great variations in the different components and some of them present an alarmingly low progress rate and have the potential to jeopardize the execution of the overall objectives.

Sustainability

Despite the overall strength and potential of this JP, the sustainability component is currently a big downfall within the programme and needs to be considerably substantiated for the programme to be able to leave behind a lasting legacy. The programme sets itself from the beginning as a poverty alleviation initiative. However, the lack of impact indicators (see M&E chapter) makes it difficult to assess whether it would produce such results. Indeed there is a clear expectation by many stakeholders and most remarkably by the beneficiaries that the workshops, trainings and reports that are being done must move a step forward and translate into tangible and lasting results.

The programme has very clearly constructed a vision that is shared by the vast majority of the stakeholders and also it has developed a number of outputs with detailed activities related to them. Yet, often conjectures are made that link to the ends of the programme, the activities and the vision or the expectations of the stakeholders. One must be aware that if these assumptions are not properly tested the programme may not produce the lasting impact that it is aiming for.

Examples of perceived assumptions in the programme

If the LED Forum is operational and with full community participation the LED forum will be powerful enough to continue interacting (negotiating or lobbying) with decision-makers (government, private sector...) once the programme has ended.

- A number of informants including community experts agreed that in a country so centralized and hierarchical such as Egypt, the unbalanced power relations between decision-makers such as government officials and community representatives will be too great to expect that after three years the community will be empowered enough to sit alongside government bodies on an equal foot.

If a certain number of people are trained on SMEs, creative industries, entrepreneurship and are provided with start-up grants, new businesses related to tourism would flourish and new jobs would be created.

- This assumption was also widely challenged during the course of the evaluation. Many believed that if there is no concrete accompaniment during the implementation of the businesses development and there is no guarantee of the supply of clients (i.e. new tourists), there would be no lasting impact. Equally, if the community does not acquire concrete jobs where they can implement what they have learnt in the trainings (soon after they have finished) the efforts would have been ultimately worthless.

If a Spatial Tourism Plan/ Archeological Masterplan/ Environmental plan is developed and corroborated by the government, tourism will increase in the Dahshour area.

- This assumption was challenged in two main ways. Firstly, by questioning who is expected to fund the actual implementation of the proposed plans? Secondly, many posed the question of who should be coordinating and making sure that the physical

parts of the recommendations of these plans such as the infrastructure will be implemented, constructed and sustained as without these infrastructures (roads, hotels, visitor's centers) tourism is not likely to prosper.

- It is worth mentioning though that a number of key stakeholders are confident that some of these assumptions are realistic and through programme's interventions will be supported and realized. Many suggested that if indeed the lake finally gets declared a protected area, it will be put under the umbrella of Ministry of Environment, so it will de facto enjoy legal, budgetary and institutional support alike any other protected area in Egypt and therefore would increase the sustainability of this component greatly. The same idea applies to the Archaeological Plan and Tourism Plan that have the potential to become one of the strategic management instruments for years to come in the SCA and in the Ministry of Tourism.
- Another issue is that there is no comprehensive marketing plan to attract potential tourists. Actually when stakeholders were asked "what will be the typical profile of the tourists?" the answers varied greatly from "a spin off to the tourist from Giza" to "national tourism" to "ornithologists and environmentalists" to "high class tourism".

National ownership

A key to the sustainability to any development programme is the level of national ownership or the degree to which competent authorities are willing and able to continue with the legacy of the programme. In the present case, the national ownership has very different levels depending on the component and on whether we take a national or local perspective.

At the local level the involvement of the local authorities is still quite poor despite some contacts with mayors and other government representatives in Dahshour by individual implementing partners. In general an adequate articulation with the local authorities still does not as such exist.

At the national level, the issue of national ownership has been always a concern and to a certain extent a struggle of the programme. The roles that have been designed and assigned to national partners vs. UN partners were somewhat flawed.

In the case of UNWTO and MoT, the Ministry agreed to release the services of a senior official of the Tourism Development Authority to serve as the UNWTO National Consultant during the MDG-F programme. This will potentially ensure the linking of programme activities, conclusions and recommendations with the overall tourism development policies of Egypt and will definitely improve the national ownership and therefore the sustainability of the programme. In other cases, UN agencies have tended to assume the leading role in terms of completing contracts, taking strategic decisions and spending the money. This may often leave an impression that the National partners have a lesser role which may consequently result in them not following and sustaining the work of the programme once it has ended.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The new Tourist Coffee Shop

At the beginning of May 2010, UNWTO-MoT was to conduct training programmes in Manchiet Dahshour. UNWTO-MoT publicised these trainings through various awareness raising sessions and by displaying posters advertising the training in public places such as youth clubs, coffee shops, the street, workshops and through local NGOs. Mr Tamer el Garhi (a local businessman) was interested in the training programme and was able to seek further information from the Tourism Training Centre established by the UNWTO-MoT which is located in the main entrance of the village. Here he was also informed that a training module on basic hospitality would be conducted in the second phase of the UNWTO-MoT training beginning October 2010.

Since then, the local businessman decided to set up a business – the new tourist coffee shop – as he has previous experience in these sorts of activities. He was able to rent a piece of land around 800m² situated at the main entrance of Manchiet Dahshour where he constructed his new coffee shop in a simplistic eco-style (Hinna). The coffee shop has been operational to this day providing some beverages and water pipes. He is now preparing for and is ready to serve several kinds of food for the expected tourists in the near future. He is currently participating in the second UNWTO-MoT training phase that is offering his establishment practical training in basic hospitality services.

As the MDG-F secretariat indicated in September 2008⁷, although the M&E framework is clear, there are not sufficient “*indicators that capture progress at the level of impact*”.

At the outcome level, there are very little impact indicators. In Outcome 1 there are a few impact indicators relating to employment, although it remains unclear on how they will be measured. In Outcome 2, there are no impact indicators despite the fact that there is an expectation of impact among the stakeholders. For instance, the indicator related to the output about the Dahshour lake is “*Environmental strategy for Dahshour lake and its associated ecosystem [to be] developed*”⁸. The indicator does not measure an impact but a process “the environmental strategy”, however the expectation among stakeholders is that the programme will actually succeed in making the lake a protected area rather than just providing a strategy on how this can be achieved.

At output level, there are not any impact indicators. Also, there is a very heavy inclination towards utilizing quantitative indicators that often fail to capture best practices and success stories.

The box on the left tells one of the success stories that the UNWTO-MoT has captured as a result of one of their trainings. However, these types of stories are only being gathered on an anecdotal basis due to the fact that the indicators and other forms of M&E of the programme are not conducive enough to capture them.

Choosing the most efficient set of indicators is crucial to ensuring that the correct results are being measured. It is important to bear in mind that results can only be measured effectively once

⁷ Interoffice memorandum from the Assistant Administrator and Director of the partnership Bureau, UNDP New York, September 2008

⁸ Revised Results and Resource Framework, Final inception report

the stakeholders have agreed upon appropriate performance indicators. If no agreement is reached, there is a risk that inappropriate performance indicators will be adopted.

During the evaluation we detected some disagreements among stakeholders in the type of indicators that should be used. However, an overwhelming number of informants including the beneficiaries agreed that M&E mechanisms need to be revised in order to efficiently monitor the impact of the programme.

Emerging issues

Gender

At all levels the programme has internalized the importance of gender mainstreaming. Gender has been integrated into the strategy papers and also into a number of outputs such as need assessments and training modules. There has also been an effort to involve women beneficiaries in all the activities. During the course of the evaluation we acquired sufficient evidences to conclude that the programme has made a very good effort to go beyond being gender neutral to actually ensuring that it is creating a positive impact for women as well as for men. It would be advisable however, that gender is also taken into account when drafting performance indicators to measure impact.

Visibility of MDG Spanish Fund

A significant number of the informants spontaneously identified the Spanish MDG Fund as the financer of this programme. This was specified both at the National level and at the local level. The incorporation by all agencies of the MDG-F logo in most of the material related to the programme has increased its visibility tremendously. Another factor that has contributed to the increasing visibility of the MDG-F is the consistent mentioning of the fund by the Resident Coordinator when talking in relevant public occasions. These speeches have been picked up by the press.

Recommendations

This section contains general principles, which need to be considered in consort with sound analysis of the programme budgetary limits.

Design

- We recommend to the MDG-F secretariat to consider for future initiatives (especially those with a strong community empowerment component) to allocated adequate pre-programme funds and sufficient time for the country offices to conduct a comprehensive stakeholders' analysis, a participatory needs assessment and an analysis of alternative strategies before a complete draft of the programme document is written.

Coordination

- In order to improve the coordination among stakeholders and to avoid possible duplications and contradictions, we recommend that the project should organize an Externally Facilitated Workshop to seek options to strengthen coordination. Forming of working groups or task forces, for instance on Training programs and/or Master planning could be an option (see annex 3 for more details on forming working groups).
- LED forum and local authorities should be invited to attend PMC meetings on regular basis. It should also be put to the PMC and the NSC the possibility to formally extend the PMC to include these stakeholders. Whenever possible the PMC should be also held in the field. The programme should continue to invite LED forum, community representatives, local authorities in all relevant events; such as seminars, workshops etc.
- The Technical Office of AECID (Spanish Agency for International Development and Cooperation) should also be kept abreast with the decision making processes of the programme. We recommend that as well as being a part of the NSC they receive the minutes from the PMC.
- We recommend the programme to increase its physical presence in Dahshour by - for instance - opening a local office or through any other appropriate option in the light of the available resources. This will serve as a local reference where the community can interact with the various implementing partners.
- To increase the communication between the Dahshour and the national implementing partners we recommend to promote, on the one hand more frequents visits to Dahshour from the Cairo based partners and on the other hand, to increase the presence of Dahshour stakeholders in the meetings held in Cairo. We also recommend that all stakeholders study the possibility of organizing learning trips to other areas of Egypt with similar characteristics to those found in this programme and where the partners have conducted previous successful programmes such as Fayoum or St. Katherine of which Dahshour can learn from.

Pace

- We recommend a non-cost programme extension of 12 months. The extension aims to ensure that all outputs catch up with the delivery rate without compromising the quality of the products. Also, it would provide the programme with the necessary breathing space to make up for the very slow start.

Sustainability

- To ensure that the extension contributes to enhance the sustainability of the programme, it should be subjected to two deliverables: a) a revised M&E framework including performance indicators that measure impact; b) a comprehensive exit and sustainability strategy.
- At the local level, special attention should be given to build capacity within the local actors, most importantly within the LED forum by promoting their official registration and by providing them with training to mobilize resources. The capacity building of local actors for sustainability could also convert into a potential working group.