



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Dahshur world heritage site mobilization for cultural heritage for community development Mid Term Joint Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Egypt

Mid-Term Evaluation: 01/2011

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

ILO Administrative responsibility:
EMP/ENTERPRISE

Technical Area: Local economic and social
development

Evaluation Management: MDG AF

Evaluation Team: Eva Otero

Project Code: EGY/08/50/UND

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WTO: 565,816 UNIDO: 340,742
ILO: 450,363

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economic and social development,
government capacity building

Extracted from the Executive Summary of the full report

This rapid assessment seeks 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. 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 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.

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

Desk review: 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 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.

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.

Direct Observation: Observation was selective looking at a few activities when feasible and paying special attention to management processes and stakeholders behaviours that were central to the evaluation questions.

Debriefing workshop: Debriefing workshop with the PMC at the end of the field mission to share preliminary conclusions and recommendations.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Design

- This Joint Programme 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* gives this initiative a special relevance as a cultural development programme.
- It is clear that the programme has captured the imagination of all stakeholders, including the beneficiaries and all share a common vision. The vision can be represented with three intersecting circles, representing an environmental component, a cultural component and a community component. A fourth component, tourism, is viewed to

interweave with all three components mentioned above.

- We could find numerous evidences that lead us to conclude that the aims of the programme were fully aligned with Egyptian national policies.
- 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.

Need assessment with all stakeholders

- Before drafting the logframe matrix with a description of outcomes, outputs and risks, it would have been 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.
- The programme made considerable efforts to overcome these shortcomings and made provisions to conduct a number of need assessments 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 manoeuvring flexibility allowed by the MDG-F, it was not possible to carry out major changes at this later stage.

- The main deficiency identified during design phase was the lack of involvement of major stakeholders, the community of Dahshour, the local authorities and, to a lesser extent, the military.

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 inception report takes into account many of the findings of these assessments and a number of

readjustments were duly made. However, the programme has the ability and needs to provide a more comprehensive advocacy strategy to make sure that solid waste and infrastructure are taken on board by the competent authorities responsible for it.

Currently several meetings are ongoing in this direction, and an understanding from the local authorities on the need to do something regarding these issues is developing. However, there is still the need to think outside of the box and to consider the inclusion of the private sector and also the need to include governorates that possess the resources and have a political voice.

Implementation and progress

- Within the JP there are ten implementing partners which are working in six pairs. Although these six teams work without conflict, they do not appear to be fully coordinating. An overwhelming number of informants thought that the coordination ought to improve among the different implementing partners and with the local stakeholders.
- The Programme Management Committee was identified as an important venue to exchange information and constructively challenge one another. However, many 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.
- The Local Economic Development (LED) forum promoted by ILO was frequently mentioned as a legitimate space to coordinate at the local level. 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). Local stakeholders still only identify the programme with the UN agency that they are directly working with.
- 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.

Possible duplication

- Although in general the spheres of action are well defined, there are a number of activities that could run the risk of duplicating each other. 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.

Possible 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, UNWTO-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. 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.

Pace

- The JP experienced a very slow start (with the exception of the component managed by UNWTO – MoT) due to a number of reasons. During the first year and especially the first 6 months the delivery rate was worryingly low, (24% of Year 1 of funding after 9 months of implementation).
- At the time of this evaluation the programme had managed to pick up the delivery rate to an acceptable 70% which is greatly remarkable.
- 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. However, there are great variations in the different components and some of them present an alarmingly low progress rate which has 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 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.
- 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 contact with mayors and other government representatives in Dahshour by individual implementing partners. At the national level, the issue of national ownership has been always a concern and to certain extent a struggle of the programme. The roles that have been designed and assigned to national partners vs. UN partners were somewhat flawed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- As the MDG-F secretariat indicated in September 2008, 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. 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. 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.
- 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

- 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.
- A significant number of the informants spontaneously identified the Spanish MDG Fund as the financier of this programme. This was specified both at national and local levels.

Recommendations

Design

- We recommend to the MDG-F secretariat to consider for future initiatives (especially those with a strong community empowerment component) to allocate 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 (EFW) to seek options to strengthen coordination.
- LED forum and local authorities should be invited to attend PMC meetings on regular basis.
- The Technical Office of AECID also be kept abreast with the decision making processes of the programme.
- We recommend the programme to increase its physical presence in Dahshour by – for instance - opening a local office.
- To increase the communication between the Dahshour and the national implementing partners we recommend to promote, on the one hand more frequent 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.

Pace

- We recommend a non-cost programme extension of 12 months.

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.