



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale

2024 | Evaluation report

## IMPACT EVALUATION

Egypt

“Initiatives for Local Development  
of Egypt through the Support of  
Egyptians Abroad - ILDEA II”

AID 11625

MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI E DELLA COOPERAZIONE  
INTERNAZIONALE

Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo

Ufficio III - Sezione Valutazione

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION**

**“Initiatives for Local Development of Egypt trough the Support of  
Egyptians Abroad - ILDEA II”**

**CIG: 9927459E51**

[Final Report](#)

10 September 2024

## Table of contents

<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b><i>ii</i></b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b><i>iii</i></b>
<b>1. Context of the evaluated intervention .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Country context.....	1
1.1.1 Egyptian expatriates.....	1
1.1.2 National policies for the involvement of Egyptian expatriates in the country's development .....	2
<b>2. Description of the evaluated projet.....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 The intervention's logic and the objectives .....	2
2.2 Implementation of project activities.....	5
<b>3. Evaluation objectives.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Theorical and methodological framework.....</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1 Evaluation criteria.....	8
4.2 Methodology.....	8
4.2.1 Document review.....	8
4.2.2 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) .....	9
4.2.3 Focus groups discussions (FGDs) .....	9
4.2.4 Evaluation limitations.....	9
<b>5. Evaluation findings .....</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1 Relevance.....	10
5.2 Coherence .....	15
5.3 Effectiveness .....	20
5.4 Efficiency.....	30
5.5 Impact.....	37
5.6 Sustainability.....	38
5.7 Transversal .....	39
<b>6. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>7. Recommendations.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8. Annexes.....</b>	<b>44</b>
Annex I – Comparison of training costs .....	44
Annex II – List of documents consulted .....	46
Annex III – List of people interviewed .....	49
Annex IV – List of Focus Group Discussions .....	51
Annex V – Evaluation Matrix.....	53

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

IADC	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
ILDEA II	Initiatives for Local Development of Egypt through the Support of Egyptians Abroad II
IOM	International Organization for Migrations
IWG	Interagency Working Group
DGCS	Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo del Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale
GoE	Government of Egypt
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MoSEEA	Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs
MSMEDA	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency
MAECI	Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale
OCSE/DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee
QDB	Qualifications Development Bank Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToR	Terms of Reference

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Context of the evaluated intervention**

According to the most recent estimates provided by Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), the number of Egyptian expatriates living abroad would have reached 10.247 million in 2017. Of these, about 6.985 million live in the Arab countries, particularly in the Gulf region, while 155.892 are legal residents in Italy, according to data released in 2023.

Over the years, the Egyptian government has made great efforts to promote the contribution of Egyptians abroad to the development of their country of origin. The first step towards institutionalizing relations with the Egyptian diaspora was the adoption in 1983 of a law regulating the rights of Egyptians residing abroad and promoting their commitment to the country's economic development (Law 111/1983 on Emigration and Egyptians' Welfare Abroad). The importance attributed by the Government of Egypt (GoE) to Egyptians living abroad led to the establishment in 2015 of the Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates Affairs (MoSEEA). This ministry served as the competent authority to manage and oversee the affairs of Egyptian expatriates until June 2024, when a presidential decree sanctioned its merger with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus creating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates.

### **Description of the evaluated project**

The evaluation concerns the project "Initiatives for Local Development of Egypt through the Support of Egyptians Abroad - ILDEA II," which was implemented from February 5, 2019, to December 5, 2021 by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Egypt Country Office, in close collaboration with the Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs (MoSEEA). The initiative represents the second phase and refinancing of the project "Initiatives for Local Development of Egypt through the Support of Egyptians Abroad" (ILDEA), which was implemented in 2015-2016. ILDEA II was funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (IADC), Cairo office, with a total budget of €500,000.

The overall objective of the project was to support the GoE in consolidating efforts to involve Egyptian expatriates in the development of the country. The implementation of ILDEA II has been subject to some adjustments and non-cost extensions.

22 ministries (including MoSEEA) and some subsidiary institutions, such as the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (MSMEDA), are the direct beneficiaries of the project, while indirect beneficiaries include Egyptian expatriate communities abroad, local communities with low economic returns and characterized by irregular migration, representatives from civil society, the Egyptian academic world, and the private sector, as well as international partners involved in consultations.

The project's Theory of Change (ToC) was reconstructed by the evaluation team following an in-depth analysis of the documents and was illustrated in a specific diagram.

### **Evaluation objectives**

The purpose of the evaluation is twofold. On one hand, it aims to meet the need for accountability and transparency to all stakeholders involved in the project's activities, in order to understand the results and impact of the initiative. On the other hand, the evaluation seeks to facilitate a learning process by identifying lessons learned and formulating recommendations, with the goal of providing

concrete guidance on how to shape new development and cooperation initiatives, thereby improving their quality.

The thematic and temporal scope of this evaluation corresponds to all activities covered by the initiative from February 2019 to December 2021. The geographical scope encompasses both the national and regional levels by focusing on the interventions implemented within Egyptian migration-related institutions, based in Cairo, and in rural areas, specifically in Sohag, where vocational training modules were delivered.

The evaluation adopted a Human Rights Based Approach, i.e. based on the respect for human rights, gender equality and equity. This means that the approach emphasized the rights, participation and empowerment of women and vulnerable groups, in order to achieve valid and useful results for all.

### **Theoretical and methodological framework**

The analysis of the initiative was conducted using the six criteria identified by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. A cross-cutting criterion was also used with reference to lessons learned and best or promising practices of the intervention.

Qualitative methods were extensively used to gain a closer understanding of individual and collective experiences and to take into account multiple aspects of the intervention through people's representations and discourses. Quantitative data were not collected as the security clearance granted by the Government of Egypt (GoE) did not allow the administration of the initially planned survey for participants in vocational trainings in Sohag.

The evaluation process faced some **limitations** that affected the capacity to duly understand the project's implementation strategy. First of all, some relevant project documents were not received by the evaluation team. Another issue was the lack of handover when the former project manager left IOM. Another important limit was the lack of access to some important stakeholders. The fact that two and half years had passed since the project's end implied that some stakeholders were unsure on certain circumstances of the project, which led to information gaps.

Concerning the focus groups conducted in Sohag, the evaluators did not have the freedom to set sample selection criteria and methods because disaggregated data concerning the target group was not being shared with the evaluation team. Most importantly, the presence of three members of the MSMEDA team during focus group sessions may have affected the neutrality of the target groups' responses.

### **Evaluation findings**

#### **Relevance**

The intervention is very relevant to the needs and interests of the GoE which has taken relevant steps to strengthen its links with Egyptians living abroad, taking into consideration the importance of remittances and the potentialities that Egyptians abroad can bring to their country of origin.

The intervention presented a very limited focus on gender. Indeed, the needs assessment conducted to identify the skills with higher demand in the Sohag governorate did not carry out any analysis of the gender gap. Furthermore, the project delivered masculinised skills, i.e. electricity and plumber, to men and feminised skills, i.e. tailoring, to women.

In terms of equity, the intervention relevance was weak. In fact, despite the vocational training was delivered free of cost, the requirements for selecting participants did not consider aspects related to the risk of exclusion, like poverty, disability or widowhood, when selecting trainees.

The intervention was adapted to the capacities of the institutional actors. However, the evaluation fieldwork, showed that MoSEEA has limited capacity to monitor and coordinate the GoE's engagement with the diaspora.

### **Coherence**

ILDEA II has a high degree of coherence with many other initiatives promoting local development, while the number of funded interventions harnessing the diaspora engagement is very scarce.

Despite the presence of several complementary projects, especially the ones led by the GoE, the ILDEA II didn't seek any synergy with them, neither at national level, nor at Sohag governorate level, where the vocational trainings took place.

The project is also coherent with the "Egypt Vision 2030", the global development plan approved by the GoE and setting the main development priorities and strategies for the coming years. Although diaspora engagement is not clearly mentioned, this document does reaffirm the duty of the state to "protect Egyptians abroad in order to take care of their interests and to benefit from their expertise".

### **Effectiveness**

The project had the capacity to achieve valuable results, even if not all the expected, despite the difficulties faced during the implementation.

At global level, the analysis of the achievements under the project's general objective "Support to the Government of Egypt (GoE) to consolidate efforts to involve expatriates in the country's development" is quite positive, as both the strategies listed, i.e. the Communication and the Engagement strategies, were produced and validated.

Under Outcome 1 "GoE has a coordinated and strategic approach to dialogue and engages with Egyptian expatriates in the context of a new policy framework", the drafting of the policy framework involved 22 institutions, but only within the GoE, which is not aligned with the idea of a participatory process.

With respect to outcome 2 "Enhance national capacities to promote investment and trade opportunities to/with Egypt through the involvement of Egyptian expatriate communities", the most significant activity is the vocational trainings held in Sohag. A total number of 179 individuals took the examinations in their respective field and a total number of 275 courses were delivered.

The overall quality of the project logframe is positive and the vertical logic is coherent. However, the horizontal logic presents some weaknesses in terms of indicators' choice and targets.

The evaluation did not find any unintended (positive or negative) outcomes. In particular, no linkages between diaspora and local development were identified and no expatriates from Sohag have so far invested in the activities/enterprises started by trainees.

### **Efficiency**

The intervention achieved positive financial efficiency given that nearly 88% of the budget was spent, amounting to € 440,235.00.

In terms of management efficiency, the quality of the management of ILDEA II was not always in line with the expectations, the main reason being the personnel turnover within IOM, MoSEEA, and IADC office in Cairo, which resulted in a loss of the lessons learned from ILDEA I.

The budget constraints, the personnel turnover, and COVID-19 entailed the temporary suspension of the project and a lengthy and complex reformulation that had to be agreed upon by the implementing partners, who were also experiencing personnel turnover.

The partners' meetings were useful to address critical issues and to provide an official endorsement of agreements negotiated in advance. However, the project steering committees were not always effective in addressing all the topics of the intervention.

The COVID-19 outbreak was an additional limitation to project implementation since it contributed to a delay in the identification and planning of local development activities.

### **Impact**

ILDEA II produced a significant impact on the individual life prospects of people who had attended vocational training held in Sohag. Indeed, there are clear evidence, reported by interviewed participants, of living condition improvements.

The project has not produced any significant impact directly related to its general objective of supporting the Government of Egypt (GoE) in consolidating efforts to involve expatriates in the country's development. In other words, all the efforts made to promote the diaspora engagement haven't produced clear effects, since the corresponding validated strategies and action plans have never been used neither by MoSEEA nor by MSMEDA and the Egyptian diaspora continues to be engaged on several and usually atomised policies as it was before the intervention. The lack of a consistent monitoring exercise by MoSEEA of such policies and their effects represents a major limitation to correctly understand their potential impact and to improve their effects.

### **Sustainability**

The ILDEA II project was conceived to ensure sustainability of the results achieved but there is clear evidence of a weak appropriation of results from institutional actors. In fact, despite its role of coordination, MoSEEA did neither monitor nor facilitate synergies with other ministries' activities related to diaspora communication and engagement.

It is also important to underline that in June 2024 a presidential decision merged MoSEEA with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), thereby creating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates. It is still unclear which results this can produce but there is the potential for a more consistent leadership in this domain.

As regards participants in the vocational trainings, collected data indicate that linkages with Egyptians living abroad were not established neither during the project implementation, nor in a later stage. However, there is solid evidence that confirms the sustainability of achieved results in terms of income generating opportunities.

### **Transversal**

The evaluation has not singled out any best or promising practices established by the project. However, a number of lessons learnt were identified:

- It is necessary to ensure temporal continuity between different editions of the project, or between projects that have clear points in common.



- The donor must make sure that a “critical” monitoring of the intervention is in place and not limit its supervision to execution of project activities.
- When sub-contracting involves different actors at different levels, the actor managing sub-contracts must ensure that project’s implementing organisations have access to transparent information and must provide periodic updates and coordination.
- To ensure the proper functioning of the project steering committee, specific technical support and project monitoring must be ensured.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations resulting from the evaluation results are addressed to IADC and the Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (*Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo del Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale – DGCS*).

1. Acknowledge the political will of the GoE and its actual leadership capacity to promote diaspora engagement.
2. In case of pilot projects, develop a more strategic approach to harness their potential.
3. Ensure that IOM provides the technical leadership and management capacity expected from actors of this caliber and with these characteristics.
4. Avoid subcontracting large and strategic activities in order to ensure transparency, full control over implementation and compliance with project commitments by the actors responsible for execution.
5. Pay more attention to transversal aspects such as gender and equity at both project conception and implementation levels, especially in case of subcontracting.

# 1. Context of the evaluated intervention

## 1.1 Country context

### 1.1.1 Egyptian expatriates

According to the most recent estimates provided by Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), the number of Egyptian expatriates living abroad would have reached 10.247 million in 2017.<sup>1</sup> Of these, about 6.985 million live in the Arab countries, particularly in the Gulf region, while 155.892 are legal residents in Italy, according to data released in 2023.<sup>2</sup> Migration of Egyptian citizens to our country began in the 1970s, when many young and qualified middle-class people, mostly men, moved to Italy attracted by the economic and cultural prospects offered by our country. As for the distribution of Egyptian-born workers among sectors of economic activity, we find both successful entrepreneurs and unskilled workers employed in the construction and retail sectors.<sup>3</sup>

The relationship with the country of origin characterizes the entire migration process, from the arrival in the country of destination to the progress of the socioeconomic integration process. This mainly entails maintaining a constant relationship with the territories of origin primarily aimed at the economic support of family members, but also at the implementation of development or investment projects. Studies indicate, in fact, that remittances sent by the Egyptian diaspora are mainly used for general household consumption expenses, education-related expenses and, finally, medical care; the use of remittances for productive investments in Egypt remains marginal.<sup>4</sup>

Remittances from Egyptian expatriates reached \$28.33 billion in 2022. Although Egypt is among the top recipient countries for remittances, which constitute around 6% of its gross domestic product (GDP),<sup>5</sup> remittances from Egyptian expatriates decreased by about 31% in 2023, amounting to \$19.5 billion.<sup>6</sup> This decline is mainly due to the sharp drop in the use of official channels for transactions, attributable to the significant disparity between official and parallel exchange rates,<sup>7</sup> as well as the existence of a substantial percentage of foreign nationals who do not have access to a bank account.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/71776/CAPMAS-reveals-number-of-Egyptians-abroad-migration-and-marriage-of>.

<sup>2</sup> Italian Ministry of Labor and Public Policies, "The Egyptian community in Italy Migrant population", 2023 report. See: <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/documenti-e-norme/studi-e-statistiche/egyptian-community-2023#:~:text=As%20at%201%20January%202023,EU%20citizens%20in%20numerical%20terms>.

<sup>3</sup> Ayman Zohry 2005, "The Migration patterns of Egyptians to Italy and France", CARIM Research Reports, 2009/17.

<sup>4</sup> IOM 2010, "A Study on Remittances and Investment Opportunities for Egyptian Migrants"; Qutb, R. (2022), "Migrants' remittances and economic growth in Egypt: an empirical analysis from 1980 to 2017", Review of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 7 No. 3. In any case, the distinction between consumption and productive investments when it comes to the use of remittances is far from being clear-cut. For more on this, see Gelb, S., Kalantaryan, S., McMahon, S. and Perez Fernandez, M., "Diaspora finance for development: from remittances to investment", Publications Office of the European Union, 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Data from World Bank, see <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TR.F.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=EG>.

<sup>6</sup> Dilip Ratha, Vandana Chandra, Eung Ju Kim, Sonia Plaza, and Akhtar Mahmood. 2024. "Migration and Development Brief 40: Remittances Slowed in 2023, Expected to Grow Faster in 2024", World Bank-KNOMAD.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*.

### **1.1.2 National policies for the involvement of Egyptian expatriates in the country's development**

Over the years, the Egyptian government has made great efforts to promote the contribution of Egyptians abroad to the development of their country of origin, recognizing their significant role at the political level as Egypt's "soft power," at the economical level as a source of international remittances, and at the social level as representatives of the country abroad. The first step towards institutionalizing relations with the Egyptian diaspora was the adoption in 1983 of a law regulating the rights of Egyptians residing abroad and promoting their commitment to the country's economic development (Law 111/1983 on Emigration and Egyptians' Welfare Abroad). In 2014, the constitution introduced the state's commitment to protecting the rights and freedoms of Egyptians residing abroad and, for the first time, established their right to be elected to parliament.<sup>8</sup> The importance attributed by the Government of Egypt (GoE) to Egyptians living abroad led to the establishment in 2015 of the Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs (MoSEEA). This ministry served as the competent authority to manage and oversee the affairs of Egyptian expatriates until June 2024, when a presidential decree sanctioned its merger with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus creating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates.

Among the measures adopted by the GoE to facilitate the involvement of the diaspora, the following are noteworthy:

1. Improving the procedures that allow Egyptians abroad to elect their representatives in Egypt and to vote on constitutional amendments and in presidential elections.
2. Organizing national conferences to cooperate with Egyptians abroad, including representatives of expatriates in 66 countries, the so-called "Egypt Can" conferences. These conferences have facilitated several cooperation opportunities concerning, among other things, the export of Egyptian products, learning, and tourism marketing.
3. Developing an online application that helps expatriates access various services, including obtaining official documents, education opportunities, car imports, passport updates, and opening bank accounts.
4. Launching, in January 2020, the "Egyptian Expatriates Investment Unit" by the General Authority for Investment, aiming to guide expatriates in identifying the most advantageous business opportunities, support decision-making processes, provide various investment services through the Investor Service Center, and act as a liaison between Egyptian expatriates and other stakeholders.

## **2. Description of the evaluated projet**

### **2.1 The intervention's logic and the objectives**

The evaluation concerns the project "Initiatives for Local Development of Egypt trough the Support of Egyptians Abroad - ILDEA II," which was implemented from February 5, 2019, to December 5, 2021, for a total duration of 34 months, by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Egypt Country Office, in close collaboration with the Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs (MoSEEA). The project was funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

---

<sup>8</sup> Yefet, B. (2023). "Egypt's diaspora policy in the post-June 2013 era as a transnational mechanism of regime legitimization", in *Globalizations*, 21(4).

International Cooperation (MAECI) through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (IADC), Cairo office, with a total budget of €500,000.

The overall objective of the project was to support the GoE in consolidating efforts to involve Egyptian expatriates in the development of the country. To this end, a strategic approach of dialogue with Egyptian expatriates was adopted in the context of a new policy framework, and the strengthening of national capacities to promote business opportunities with Egypt through the involvement and engagement of Egyptian expatriate communities is promoted.

The initiative represents the second phase and refinancing of the project “Initiatives for Local Development of Egypt through the Support of Egyptians Abroad” (ILDEA), which was implemented in 2015-2016 for a total duration of 20 months. The implementation of the project has been subject to some adjustments and non-cost extensions.

The outcomes and expected results of the project were as follows:

Outcome 1: GoE has a coordinated and strategic approach to dialogue and engage with Egyptian expatriates in the context of a new policy framework.

- Result 1.1: A new political framework for engaging expatriates is approved by the Egyptian government.
- Result 1.2: A team of national coordinators is employed by IOM and seconded to MoSEEA (variation approved on 12.11.2020).

Outcome 2: GoE engages expatriate communities to promote investment and trade in/with Egypt.

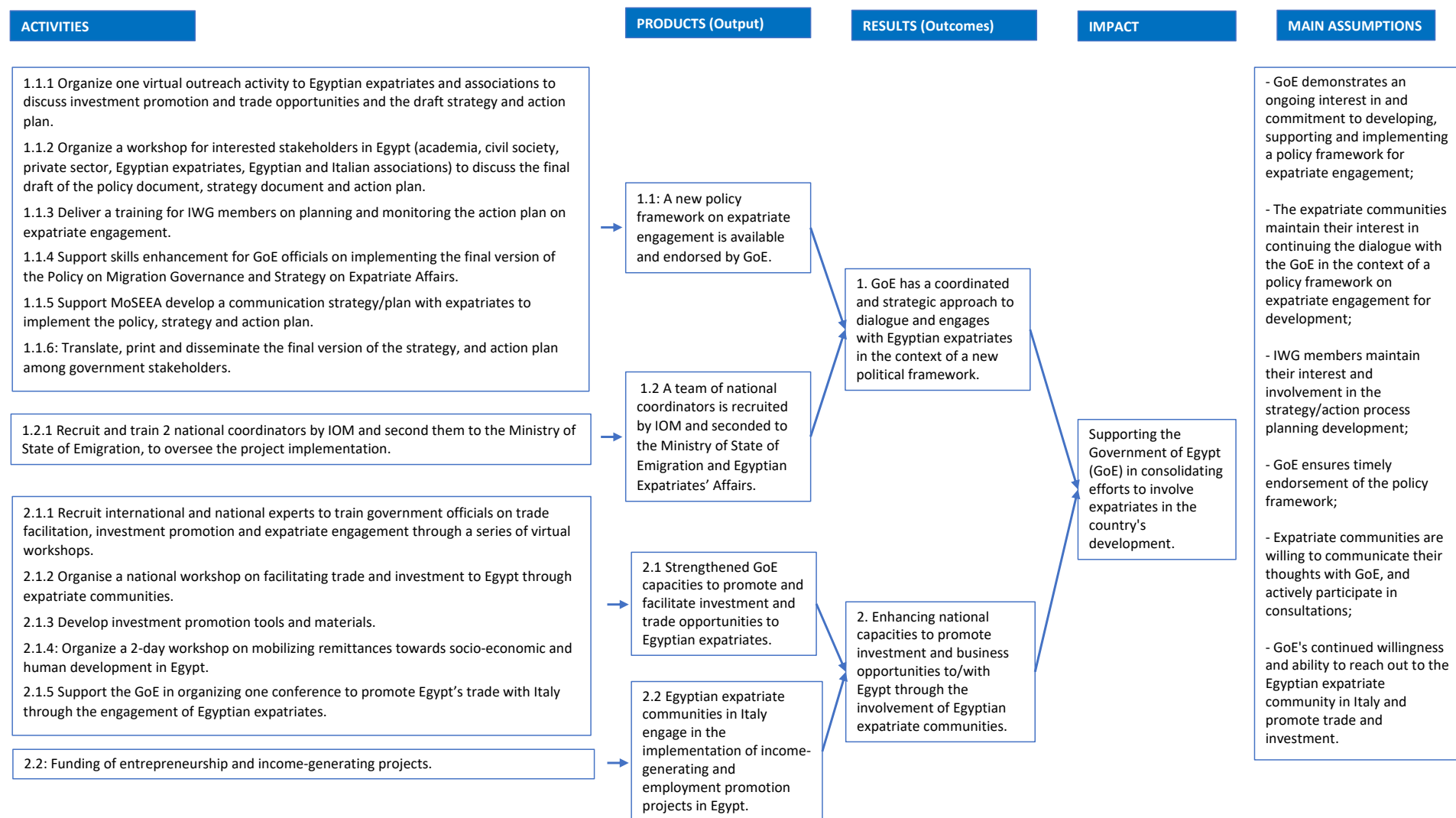
- Result 2.1: The government's capacity to promote and facilitate investments and business opportunities for Egyptian expatriates is strengthened.
- Result 2.2: Egyptian expatriate communities in Italy are involved in projects aimed at promoting employment and creating income-generating activities in Egypt (variation approved on 12.11.2020).

The Egyptian government, represented by at least 22 ministries (including MoSEEA) and some subsidiary institutions (such as MSMEDA), is the direct beneficiary of the project. Indirect beneficiaries include Egyptian expatriate communities abroad, local communities with low economic returns and characterized by irregular migration, representatives from civil society, the Egyptian academic world, and the private sector, as well as international partners involved in consultations.

The project's Theory of Change (ToC) was reconstructed by the evaluation team following an in-depth analysis of the documents. The ToC was developed considering the long-term vision underlying the ILDEA project and the relationship between objectives and expected results on one hand, and planned actions on the other.

The reconstruction of the initiative's Theory of Change is illustrated in the diagram on the following page.

Figure 1: Theory of Change diagram



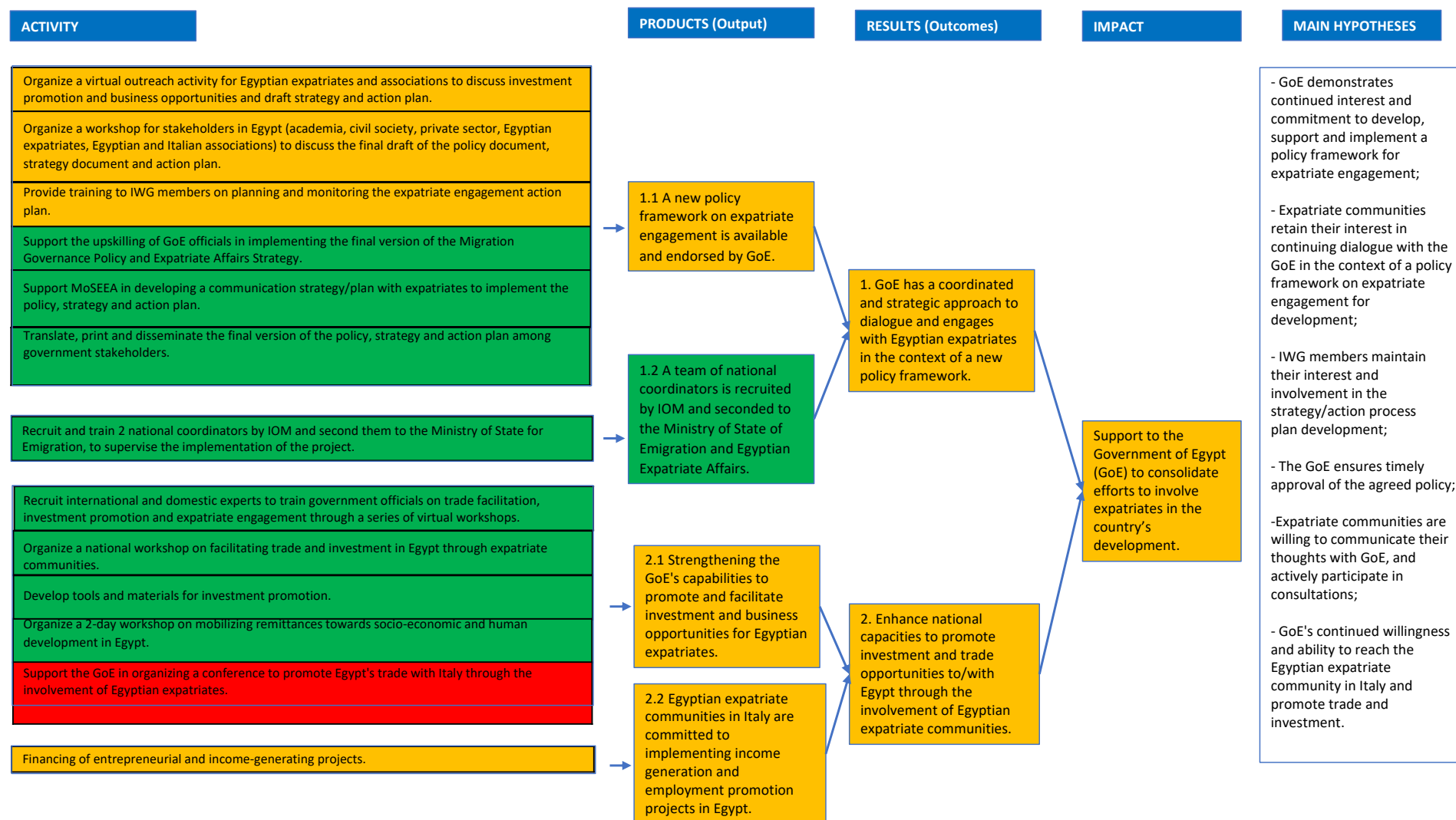
## **2.2 Implementation of project activities**

The project implemented large part of the activities planned: the strengthening of the capacities of the Government of Egypt, the development of the diaspora communication and engagement strategies and the corresponding action plans. However, limited interactions with external actors, particularly with the diaspora limited the salience of the project's first and second outputs.

The project also improved the technical capacities of the Ministry of State for Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs (MoSEEA) by recruiting 2 national project coordinators during the final phase of the implementation.

The table shows the status detail of all the levels of the intervention. The three colours show the different degrees of accomplishment of the activities: green implies full realization, orange indicates partial realization, while red means no fulfilment.

Figure 2: Implementation status of project activities and results



### 3. Evaluation objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is twofold. On one hand, it aims to meet the need for accountability and transparency to all stakeholders involved in the project's activities, in order to understand the results and impact of the initiative. On the other hand, the evaluation seeks to facilitate a learning process by identifying lessons learned and formulating recommendations, with the goal of providing concrete guidance on how to shape new development and cooperation initiatives, thereby improving their quality.

Specifically, the evaluation aims to:

- Highlight how the initiative has strengthened the migration policies of the Egyptian government.
- Identify lessons learned and best practices to replicate in projects related to the inclusion of the diaspora in development initiatives.
- Verify the validity of the conclusions from the ex-post evaluation conducted in 2022.
- Determine whether the recommendations from the ex-post evaluation have been considered, implemented, and what results they have generated.

The evaluation is, therefore, **summative** as it focuses on how the intervention was implemented and its characteristics, highlighting strengths and aspects that can be improved. Furthermore, the evaluation is also **formative** as it emphasizes how obstacles encountered during project implementation were overcome, e.g. by ascertaining whether and to what extent the recommendations developed by the ex-post evaluation of the project, commissioned by IOM in 2022, were followed up.

This evaluation addresses a complex system in systemic and relational terms, involving two countries with different stakeholders and end-users, including numerous stakeholders (governments and relevant ministries, international, national and local non-governmental organizations, the Egyptian expatriate community, etc.), as well as various activities and strategies developed and put in place (such as the adoption of a policy framework and communication strategy). Therefore, it required the use of an integrated evaluation framework, including multiple lines of evidence and interconnected levels of analysis, organized according to a systemic and participatory methodological approach.

To fully capture all the above elements, the evaluation adopted a Theory of Change (ToC) approach. On the basis of the reconstruction of the ToC carried out by the evaluation team, the evaluation will seek to identify the extent to which the activities carried out acted as drivers of change, aimed at bringing about concrete improvements.

As the evaluation aims to provide an assessment of the second phase of the ILDEA II project, the thematic and temporal scope of this evaluation corresponds to all activities covered by the initiative from February 2019 to December 2021. Concerning the geographical scope, the evaluation covers both the national and regional levels by focusing on the interventions implemented within Egyptian migration-related institutions, based in Cairo, and in rural areas where other project activities were carried out, particularly in Sohag, where vocational training modules were delivered.

Furthermore, the evaluation adopted a **Human Rights Based Approach**, i.e. based on the respect for human rights, gender equality and equity. This means that the approach emphasized the rights, participation and empowerment of women and vulnerable groups, in order to achieve valid and useful results for all. The evaluation examined the extent to which a human rights and gender



equality approach was incorporated into project design and implementation, and the extent to which gender equality and equity dimensions and objectives were effectively pursued. The evaluation is also gender-sensitive in the sense that it not only addressed the ‘symptoms’ of gender discrimination (e.g. women's unequal access to resources), but also examined the structural determinants of gender inequality, such as gender-discriminating norms and roles, unbalanced power relations and social structures. To this end, the involvement of women and men in the activities was specifically analysed, both as active participants and as beneficiaries. This involved verifying (i) the use of participatory gender planning and participatory monitoring during implementation and (ii) the application and use of skills and knowledge learned to increase women's participation as beneficiaries. The evaluation also paid particular attention to equity, namely the use of participatory processes to ensure that the most disadvantaged groups are truly involved (not just as information providers, but as active participants in the process).

## **4. Theoretical and methodological framework**

### **4.1 Evaluation criteria**

The analysis of the initiative and its implementation was conducted using the six criteria identified by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. A cross-cutting criterion was also used with reference to lessons learned and best or promising practices of the intervention.

### **4.2 Methodology**

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the opinions and perceptions of project stakeholders, as well as the way in which participants perceive and interpret the changes brought about by the intervention, qualitative methods (interviews and focus group discussions) were extensively used. This allowed to gain a closer understanding of individual and collective experiences and to take into account multiple aspects of the intervention through people's representations and discourses. Quantitative data were not collected as the security clearance granted by the GoE did not allow the administration of the initially planned survey for participants in vocational trainings in Sohag.

#### **4.2.1 Document review**

The review of the documentation was mainly conducted during the initial phase of the evaluation and focused on the analysis of the intervention documentation (initial formulation, final formulation, annual and final reports, ex-post evaluation in 2022, and other documents generated by ILDEA II) as well as other relevant publications on the topic of migration and development. Some important documents could not be collected until the field phase, i.e. presentation of the results achieved by the vocational trainings, while others were simply not available, i.e lists of participants in the trainings (see section 4.2.4 with the description of the evaluation limitations).

#### **4.2.2 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

Interviews were instrumental in gathering opinions of the various actors involved in ILDEA II, examining activities delivered by the project, and clarifying possible contradictions. The interviews were conducted in person and online and were tailored to the different profiles of identified actors and stakeholders, ensuring the necessary plurality of perspectives on the actions developed within the project. Stakeholders belong to four main categories: (1) institutional actors: the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (IADC), MoSEEA and the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (MSMEDA), (2) consultancies: the author of the ex-post evaluation, DMA Global and Global Diaspora Insights and (3) vocational training providers (QDB and Noqoush), (4) Sohag-based organisations working on local development and (5) the project implementing partner, IOM. Interviews with diaspora members were not carried out due to the difficulties to get in contact with them. Overall, 33 stakeholders were interviewed.

#### **4.2.3 Focus groups discussions (FGDs)**

The use of the focus group technique allowed to gather collective but differentiated views of the project's relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability and, specifically, of delivered training. Although six focus groups, each involving of 8-10 individuals, were initially planned, in the end it was possible to organise only three focus groups gathering a total of 16 people.

The sample was not randomly chosen, but it was based on contacts shared by the MSMEDA local office in Sohag and included only individuals who passed training final tests. The number of female participants (7) represented more than 40% of the total number of participants, which complied with the minimum threshold of 20% indicated in the inception report.

#### **4.2.4 Evaluation limitations**

The evaluation process went through several challenges that affected the capacity to duly understand the project's implementation strategy. First of all, some relevant project documents were not received by the evaluation team: this is the case of the final logical framework, data on the achievements and sustainability of the results of the vocational trainings in Sohag, some Steering committee's notes, the 1st progress report from Feb 5 2019 to Feb 4 2020, the ToR of the Interagency Working Group (IWG), among others. Some documents were collected during the field phase, others were no longer available. Part of the difficulties is due to IOM file repository that migrated from offline to online support (PRIMA) in a way that caused the loss of some files during the process. Another issue is the lack of handover when the former project manager left IOM, producing a loss of information for the colleagues who took over on the project afterwards.

Another important limit was the lack of access to some important stakeholders, in particular IOM personnel who had previously left the organisation and GoE officials who participated in the diaspora investments training.

It is worth highlighting that the interaction with MoSEEA and MSMEDA from evaluators was possible only once the bureaucratic procedures related to the issuance of the security clearance had been completed, which took two months. The very security clearance also requested to replace the local expert, which required some time in terms of administrative procedures and briefing on the project.

The fact that two and half years had passed since the project's end implied that some stakeholders were unsure on certain circumstances of the project, which led to information gaps.

Concerning the focus groups conducted in Sohag, the evaluators did not have the freedom to set sample selection criteria (age/gender/geographical area/profession) or sample selection methods

(random/deliberate...etc.) because disaggregated data concerning the target group was not being shared with the evaluation team. This was explained by the fact that this data is confidential and may not be shared with any party, despite the confidentiality clause signed at the beginning of the assignment and binding the evaluators to non-disclosure.

Most importantly, the presence of three members of the MSMEDA team during focus group sessions may have affected the neutrality of the target groups' responses. Although the tiny sample of 16 individuals provided interesting insights, it cannot be considered sound enough to be representative of the whole cohort of participants.

## 5. Evaluation findings

### 5.1 Relevance

**Relevance - To what extent do the objective and design of the initiative respond (and continue to respond in the face of changed circumstances) to the needs, policies and priorities of the beneficiaries, the country and its institutions?**

#### 1. To what extent is the project relevant to the needs and interests of the GoE, the Egyptian population regarding local development, and Egyptian expatriates?

In order to have a clear understanding of the relevance of the ILDEA II, it must be emphasized that Egypt is one of the most important remittance recipient countries in the world, positioning in the 6<sup>th</sup> place between Pakistan and China.

<b>Top 10 global inbound remittances in 2022</b>	<b>Amount in Billion \$</b>
India	111.2
Mexico	61.1
Philippines	38.0
France	33.9
Pakistan	30.2
Egypt	28.3
China	26.1
Bangladesh	21.5
Nigeria	20.1
Germany	19.3

Source: World Migration Report (World Bank)

In 2022, the Egyptians residing in the Gulf countries (Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman) globally sent 73,6% of the total remittances received by Egypt, while Italy only accounted for 3,7%.

<b>Top 10 remittance-sending countries to Egypt</b>	<b>Amount in Million \$</b>
---	-----------------------------

Saudi Arabia	8.141
United Arab Emirates	8.094
Kuwait	3.700
United States	1.838
Qatar	1.771
Italy	1.157
Bahrain	780
Jordan	716
Oman	692
Canada	597

Source: Knomad 2022 (World Bank)

Concerning the number of Egyptians abroad, the most updated estimate from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) from 2017, estimated them at 10.247 million,<sup>9</sup> while those who are legally residing in Italy, as of 1st January 2023, were 155.892.<sup>10</sup>

Even if remittances and, more in general, financial contributions to relatives are of utmost importance, the diaspora's role goes much further, involving, for instance, its engagement in the following areas.<sup>11</sup>

**Advocacy and lobbying.** Organized engagement with authorities and other relevant stakeholders in countries of residence and origin.

**Migration.** Advisory and/or financial support to migrants.

**Emergency response.** Individual or collective support to people affected by humanitarian crises.

**Integration and social cohesion.** Support to newcomers and communities in residence countries.

**Peacebuilding.** Engagement in international, national and local peacebuilding, reconciliation and mediation processes at the top, middle-range and grassroots leadership levels.

**Community development.** Individual or collective support towards communities in countries of origin or heritage.

**Knowledge transfer.** Through individual or organized engagement with institutions / civil society in countries of origin or heritage.

**Economic development & job creation.** Investment and/or support to local businesses.

**Political engagement.** Engagement from outside, by return, or through financial or other support to political groups /parties.

Having this in mind, and considering the remittances figure and the potentialities that Egyptians abroad can bring to their country of origin, the GoE, has taken relevant steps to strengthen its links with Egyptians living abroad, since longtime, for instance:

**1983.** Law No. 111 on Emigration and Egyptians' Welfare Abroad.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/71776/CAPMAS-reveals-number-of-Egyptians-abroad-migration-and-marriage-of>

<sup>10</sup> Italian Ministry of Labor and Public Policies, "The Egyptian community in Italy Migrant population".

<sup>11</sup> Danish Refugee Council 2020. Diaspora Engagement Strategy. See: <https://pro.drc.ngo/resources/documents/diaspora-engagement-strategy/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.emigration.gov.eg/DefaultEn/Pages/lawdetails.aspx?lawCode=12%20>

**2004.** Law no. 154 by which Egyptian mothers married to non-Egyptian fathers may pass their Egyptian nationality to their children.<sup>13</sup>

**2014.** Revision of the Constitution of Egypt established the state's commitment to take care of the interests of Egyptians residing abroad: to protect them and ensure their rights and freedoms, and to enable them to perform their general duties towards the state and society and make a contribution to the development of the country.<sup>14</sup>

**2015** Adoption of the Egypt Vision 2030 which includes diaspora engagement as an actor which contributes to and impacts Egypt's development agenda through encouraging diaspora remittances, investments, and skills transfer for the socio-economic development of the country.

**2015.** Establishment of the Egyptian Ministry of Emigration and Egyptian Expatriate Affairs (MoSEEA). It represents the lead agency for the management of the affairs of Egyptians residing abroad. It works in coordination and cooperation with other ministries and bodies concerned with migration policy, including the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The MoSEEA specifically frames its strategies and activities in relation to helping deliver Egypt's 2030 Vision and the SDGs in order to *"promote economic and human development by stimulating the contribution of Egyptians abroad in creating an innovative and knowledge-based society"*.

**2016.** Launch of the ILDEA I. MoSEEA was involved in the first pilot edition of the project that allowed to contact the Egyptian diaspora organisations in Italy, to promote their involvement with local development projects and to produce a draft version of the diaspora engagement strategy.

In this regard, the intervention is very relevant to the needs and interests of the GoE.

Concerning the interests of the diaspora, it must be stressed that the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a growing appreciation of the resilience of expatriate communities as development agents. Furthermore, the pandemic has resulted in many expatriate communities displaying a heightened culture of care towards their homelands given the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Expatriates' engagement is emerging as front and centre to many recovery plans as public finances are substantially impacted by the pandemic. This means that the diaspora engagement strategy was launched at a unique moment in time to nurture a new culture of care and engagement of expatriates in Egypt.

Finally, the vocational training promoted in the framework of the local development initiatives in Sohag, was not supported by an initial analysis to identify the most suitable location. In general terms, however, all the upper Nile governorates are characterised by high levels of poverty and Sohag is among the most affected, according to the available figures published by CAMPAS in 2013.<sup>15</sup> For this reason, this activity is pertinent for the context in which it was provided.

## **2. How has the project adapted to social and economic changes during the implementation period (e.g. COVID)?**

---

<sup>13</sup> European Global Diaspora Facility. (2022). Diaspora Engagement Mapping: Egypt. ICMPD. See: <https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/library/egypt/>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.madamasr.com/en/2014/07/12/news/u/campas-poverty-rate-rose-to-26-percent-in-2013/>

The ILDEA II, during the most acute phase of COVID-19 pandemic, was on hold and subject to reformulation, but a steering committee was conducted on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2020. This emphasised the effort of the diaspora to support their families, but it wasn't discussed how the project could harness this situation. At the implementation level, preventive measures such as social distancing and mask-wearing were introduced in the vocational training. There weren't other significant changes that required adaptation from the intervention.

### **3. To what extent did the intervention address the gender, equity and human rights needs of the beneficiaries? To what extent were they involved?**

The intervention presented a very limited focus on gender, which was briefly addressed in the project proposal, but without any meaningful analysis of the root causes of the gender inequalities and to which extent the ILDEA II was expected to reduce such inequalities. The two project reformulations did not also address this issue.

The lack of a clear focus on gender was especially evident under output 2.2 "Egyptian expatriate communities in Italy engage in the implementation of income-generating and employment promotion projects in Egypt". The organisation that was recruited, the Qualification Development Bank (QDB), conducted a needs assessment to identify the skills with higher demand in the Sohag governorate, but without any analysis of the gender gap. This is an especially sensitive issue, given that the Upper Nile governorates, among them Sohag, are characterised by traditional and patriarchal societies.

In practice, the intervention paid little attention to gender issues, delivering masculinised skills, i.e. electricity and plumber, to men and feminised skills, i.e. tailoring, to women. In fact, training has therefore contributed to exacerbating the gender gap since, in the first case, participants were offered to attend two levels and certify their skills to work abroad, while this was not the case for women. In other words, women had much fewer professionalising opportunities than men.

In addition, consultations with the Egyptian diaspora in Italy only involved men. No gender-disaggregated information is available on the MoSEEA officials who attended the training on economic diaspora engagement delivered by the consulting firm Global Diaspora Insights.

It is important to highlight that during the project implementation, an additional criterion was introduced: the fight against irregular migration. Neither the project proposal, nor the two reformulations included this point, but the increasing number of arrivals of Egyptian nationals to the Italian shores, convinced the implementing partners to pay attention to it. Therefore, ILDEA II included also this focus – which was mentioned in some steering committee meetings, but not reflected in any official document – and was implemented in a context characterised by irregular migration heading Europe. On the one hand, the choice of vocational training in fields in high demand has a direct relation with reducing irregular migration by convincing beneficiaries to stay in Egypt or improving regular migration i.e. in the Gulf countries. On the other, the Sohag Governorate was not considered a source of irregular migration, given that is mainly characterised by regular temporary migration, especially to Saudi Arabia. The selection of this area was proposed by MoSEEA based on a report published by the Central Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) in 2017 which, however, was never shared with the project partners nor with the evaluators. On the contrary, according to data from the National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons (NCCPIMTIP), the governorates with the

largest number of irregular migrants are: Sharkia, Dakahleya, Qalyoubia, Monufia, Gharbeya, Behera, Kafr El-Sheikh, Fayoum, Assiut, Luxor and Minya.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning human rights, the ILDEA II was consistent with "Reducing Inequalities (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10), "Promoting Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)" especially through the implementation of vocational training. Additionally, the project contributes to the achievement of SDG 17, "Partnerships for the Goals" by promoting the establishment of coordination/communication mechanisms between Egyptian government institutions, expatriates, and other migration and development stakeholders.

In terms of equity, the intervention relevance was weak. In fact, despite the vocational training was delivered free of cost, the requirements for selecting participants did not consider aspects related to the risk of exclusion, like poverty, disability or widowhood, when selecting trainees. This does not mean that none of the participants fell under these criteria, but the selection did not ensure (at least) a quota for vulnerable beneficiaries, thus paying little attention to the principle of equity. The rest of the components of the project concerning the GoE's capacity building cannot not be assessed against this aspect as relevant disaggregated data are not available.

#### **4. To what extent was the intervention adapted to the capacities of the institutional actors, the diaspora, the beneficiaries of vocational training, and other implementation stakeholders?**

The intervention is in itself a response to the capacities of the GoE in general and MoSEEA, in particular, to coherently interact with the diaspora, both in terms of communication, and of a comprehensive strategy to engage with different diaspora's profiles, potentialities, concerns and needs. As a result of this, the ILDEA II well adapted to this lack of capacities to mainstream the diaspora engagement across all institutional and private actors, to actually monitor the intervention and to actively and consistently engage with them. At the same time, it must be said, that paradoxically, the technical capacities in place at MoSEEA at the beginning of the ILDEA II were higher than at the end, as the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) that was created during the ILDEA I and initially charged to secure funding opportunities, was replaced by two project coordinators, whose mandate was only focused on project implementation. The intervention was not able to adapt to this change in the capacities of the ministry. In this regard, the evaluation fieldwork, showed that MoSEEA has limited capacity to monitor and coordinate the GoE's engagement with the diaspora, which questions the decision to entrust these tasks to this actor (see Sustainability criterion).

It is also important to emphasise that the engagement strategy simply represents a pathway for future interventions, and it lacks detailed contents to be considered as a full-fledged strategy. For instance: (a) a diaspora's profiling (i.e. ages, sex, time spent abroad, professional profiles), (b) migration prospects (i.e. return, migration to a third country, stabilisation, temporary migrations), (c) diaspora's engagement priorities (i.e. investment opportunities, philanthropy, technical skills transfer), (d) external threads (i.e. diaspora's political opposition, mistrust on the GoE activity and capacity, lack of legitimate representatives from the diaspora), (e) internal threads to the GoE (i.e. personnel turnover, weak capacity of coordination, changes in the priorities). Without this data, it is not currently possible for MoSEEA and the Egyptian government to know whether expatriate investments and trades are maximised, or whether their interventions are missing the mark. Such information was expected to be directly collected by the GoE.

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.nccpimandtip.gov.eg/en/Questions/>

Lastly, participants in the vocational training that were involved in the focus groups in Sohag reported that the levels were adapted to their capacities. No information is available concerning the capacities of the MoSEEA officials who attended the training on diaspora engagement; therefore, no conclusions can be drawn in this respect.

## 5.2 Coherence

**Coherence - To what extent is the intervention compatible with other interventions in the sector, within the same country, both by Italian cooperation and by other partners?**

**5. To what extent is the programme aligned and consistent with international and national policies, priorities and guidelines, - such as the country's Economic Development Plans and the Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030, particularly in terms of how to engage expatriates, create business opportunities, establish networks and partnerships between the two shores of the Mediterranean, and remove potential barriers to full cooperation from a social, cultural and economic perspective?**

If on the one side, the ILDEA II has a high degree of coherence with many other initiatives promoting local development, on the other, the number of funded interventions harnessing the diaspora engagement is very scarce. This is the case of interventions addressing topics related to strengthening the whole of GoE approach to implement diaspora communication and engagement strategies as there are no initiatives detected, neither in terms of capacity building nor in terms of actors' coordination.

To correctly frame the coherence with identified interventions, firstly, it must be recalled the “Egypt Vision 2030” which is a global development plan approved by the GoE that sets the main development priorities and strategies for the coming years. Despite the lack of references in this document to diaspora engagement, there are ambitious projects that were implemented or are still under implementation, especially promoting investments and fighting poverty, to which the diaspora may contribute. Egypt Vision 2030 is a comprehensive national agenda aimed at achieving sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental dimensions by year 2030. It aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and focuses on enhancing the quality of life for Egyptians, promoting social equality, and fostering economic growth through innovation and entrepreneurship.<sup>17</sup> Whilst it does reaffirm the duty of the state to “protect Egyptians abroad in order to take care of their interests and to benefit from their expertise”, diaspora engagement is not clearly mentioned. However, Egyptians abroad can actively contribute to it in the following ways:

- **Economic Investment:** Members of the diaspora often invest in their home country, contributing to economic growth. This includes direct investments in businesses and participation in development projects.
- **Knowledge Transfer:** The diaspora can facilitate the transfer of skills and knowledge back to Egypt, particularly in sectors such as technology, education, and healthcare. This aligns with the vision's focus on a knowledge-based economy and innovation.

---

<sup>17</sup> [https://mped.gov.eg/Files/Egypt\\_Vision\\_2030\\_EnglishDigitalUse.pdf](https://mped.gov.eg/Files/Egypt_Vision_2030_EnglishDigitalUse.pdf)



- **Cultural Exchange and Advocacy:** The diaspora can promote Egyptian culture and advocate for Egypt's interests abroad, helping to enhance the country's image and attract further investment and tourism, which are essential for economic development.
- **Remittances:** Financial remittances from the diaspora significantly contribute to the Egyptian economy, providing essential support for families and communities, which in turn helps alleviate poverty and improve living standards.

In the case of the Italian cooperation, the “Three-year planning and policy document 2021 – 2023”, the guiding framework for Italian development cooperation, acknowledges several contributions that diasporas can make to the development of countries of origin and destination and identifies specific priorities for Egypt that fully align with the “Egypt Vision 2030”. The document emphasizes the importance of multi-actor partnerships, which include diasporas as key stakeholders. Their experiences and expertise can significantly enhance the effectiveness of development initiatives. Examples of this importance are:

- **Knowledge and Resource Mobilization:** Diasporas are seen as vital in mobilizing resources and knowledge. They can contribute to development projects through financial investments, skills transfer, and fostering connections between Italy and their countries of origin.
- **Cultural and Social Links:** The document acknowledges that diasporas maintain cultural and social ties with their home countries, which can facilitate better understanding and cooperation in development efforts.
- **Advocacy and Representation:** Diasporas can play a role in advocating for the needs and priorities of their communities, ensuring that development programs are aligned with local contexts and challenges.
- **Support for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** The involvement of diasporas is linked to achieving the SDGs, as their contributions can address critical areas such as poverty alleviation, education, and gender equality, which are central to the development agenda outlined in the document.

However, despite the above, the plan does not identify specific priorities in which such contributions are harnessed. For instance, in the case of Egypt, it is emphasised the socio-economic development based on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, agriculture, job creation, especially for young people and women, and institutional strengthening, within a framework of promotion and protection of human rights. Furthermore, it does not define actual pathways for diaspora engagement. Conversely, the focus shifted to promoting sustainable migrants’ reintegration (i.e. Sawa project<sup>18</sup>), avoiding irregular migration (i.e. Play project)<sup>19</sup> or improving the vocational training system (Debt Swap programme)<sup>20</sup>.

---

<sup>18</sup> "SAWA: Towards equitable access to quality education and health services in Egypt for women, children and other members of migrant and host communities in vulnerable situations" implemented by the IOM.

<sup>19</sup> "PLAY - Positive Life Options for Young Egyptians", implemented by IOM, aims to promote job opportunities in the tourism sector for young Egyptians, to raise awareness about the risks of irregular migration and to promote youth mobility through regular migration opportunities.

<sup>20</sup> The Italian-Egyptian Debt Swap Programme is one of the most important cooperation facilities between Italy and Egypt, both for the significant value of resources mobilized, and for the strong local ownership. The Programme was established in 2001, with the signature of the first Debt-for-Development Swap Agreement between the two Governments, worth 149 million USD of debt generated from concessional loans converted into resources to finance fifty-three initiatives, in multiple sectors such as environmental protection, cultural heritage, rural development, small and medium enterprise development, education, social protection, etc. Leveraging on the success of the first phase, a second agreement, signed in 2007, enabled the conversion of an additional 100 million USD of debt. These resources were destined for the implementation of thirty-one projects focusing on human resource development, technology

Another interesting policy that is worth mentioning concerns temporary migration schemes that allow young Egyptians to acquire professional skills abroad with the expectation of generating a significant impact in the home country upon their return. This is the case of some projects funded under the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) in collaboration with EU Member States (among them Italy).

#### **6. To what extent is the intervention consistent with projects with/by other partners working in the same context and with similar objectives?**

Despite the presence of several complementary projects, especially the ones led by the GoE, the ILDEA II didn't seek any synergy with them, neither at national level, nor at Sohag governorate level, where the vocational trainings took place. Relevant projects include the following interventions.

##### **a) GoE's Engagement with Egyptian Diaspora**

The **"Aslak Altayeb" (Your Good Origin) initiative**,<sup>21</sup> spearheaded by the MoSEEA, harnesses the potential of Egyptians abroad to support and develop the economic, educational, health, and social aspects of rural villages in Egypt. This initiative aligns with the broader framework of the "Hayah Karima" (Decent Life) initiative, a comprehensive and integrated national program endorsed by the President of Egypt<sup>22</sup>. The multifaceted approach of "Aslak Altayeb" encompasses various health, social, and living aspects, as well as the implementation of infrastructure projects in different governorates. The initiative prioritizes Fayoum governorate, which ranks among the top ten Egyptian regions with high rates of irregular migration. By engaging the Egyptian diaspora in supporting the development of their home villages, the "Aslak Altayeb" initiative aims to address the root causes of irregular migration, such as limited economic opportunities and inadequate access to basic services. This innovative approach combines the expertise and resources of Egyptians abroad with the government's efforts to create a more equitable and prosperous future for rural communities.

**Enhancing governmental capacity to attract expatriate investment in Egypt.** The absence of a whole of GoE approach on diaspora engagement does not mean that certain public actors are not taking the lead to better understand the Egyptian expatriate investments and enhance institutional capacities to attract them sustainably into Egypt. This is the case of the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI). Even though it has been working on attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for a long time, in 2020 GAFI launched a unit dedicated to expatriate investments. A better understanding of the diaspora will allow GAFI to tailor communication and outreach and potentially create adapted products catering to the different segments of the expatriate community. The European Union Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF), an EU-funded project aiming at promoting diaspora engagement for development, has been working with GAFI since 2021 to support the new

---

transfer, primary production development, environmental protection, and social development. See: <https://ilcairo.aics.gov.it/home/country/debt-swap/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/practice/aslak-altayeb-your-good-origin-initiative>

<sup>22</sup> Haya Karima (Decent Life) Initiative, launched in 2019, is one of the most important and prominent presidential initiatives aimed at consolidating the efforts of the state, civil society and the private sector, intending to afford a decent life and sustainable development for groups most in need. The Initiative further aims to close the development gaps between towns and villages, invest in human development and reinforce the Egyptian personality through a series of projects in various sectors. The overarching goal of "Aslak Altayeb" is to raise the standard of living in more than 4,000 Egyptian villages and enhance the quality of life for 58 million citizens over the next three years.

unit in exploring the different diaspora investment mechanisms, and in creating a roadmap and communication plan to attract expatriate investments<sup>23</sup>.

**The Egypt Can Initiative.** It aims to form a national public opinion of Egyptians abroad, especially prominent experts and scientists in various fields, who provide their knowledge and experience in support of national and international issues and contribute with their efforts to various fields of development. It is based on yearly conferences addressing thematic areas, such as industry development in 2022.

**Remittances in Crisis: How to Keep Them Flowing.**<sup>24</sup> Egypt was among the first countries to join this International Call to Action, which was launched in June 2020. This initiative, led by the Embassy of Switzerland and the Embassy of the United Kingdom, aims to mitigate and combat the negative socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 on migrants and local economies. The Call to Action emphasizes the crucial role remittances play in supporting hundreds of millions of people globally and generates momentum around key measures to maintain remittance flows during the crisis.

#### **b) Italian development cooperation**

Consistently with the three-year planning and policy document 2021 – 2023, the recently funded projects in the framework of the Italian-Egyptian Debt Swap Program focus on productive sectors, but without any reference to the diaspora contribution. Among them, the following projects focusing on vocational training can be highlighted:

##### **“New Vocational Secondary School (VSS) pathway at the Italian-Egyptian Integrated Technical Education Cluster (ITEC) in Demo (Fayoum Governorate)”**

The project intends to contribute to the improvement of the professional and technical education system in Egypt, in order to meet the needs of the Egyptian labour market and enhance the competitiveness of Egyptian technicians in regional and global markets. The project aimed at establishing a new Vocational Secondary School pathway in the first Italian-Egyptian Integrated Technical Education Cluster (ITEC) in Demo, Fayoum Governorate, with the aim to pilot a new replicable Technical and Professional Education model improving the matchmaking between the labour market’s needs and skills possessed by the students.

##### **Applied Technology Schools and Teachers’ Enhancement Project (AT-STEP)”**

The project aims to improve the quality of technical education in Egypt, preparing vocational graduates for decent employment. To achieve this goal, it plans to establish a network of 100 Applied Technology Schools (ATS) overseen by a dedicated unit within the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE). This unit will ensure that the ATS adheres to international standards for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), enabling graduates to acquire certified competencies that are valued by employers both in Egypt and internationally. Additionally, the initiative seeks to enhance the skills of master trainers, teachers, and staff to replicate this educational model across all ATS.

---

<sup>23</sup> [https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/cpt\\_actions/enhancing-governmental-capacity-to-attract-expatriate-investments-into-egypt/](https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/cpt_actions/enhancing-governmental-capacity-to-attract-expatriate-investments-into-egypt/)

<sup>24</sup> <https://egypt.iom.int/news/egypt-among-first-countries-join-international-call-action-remittances-crisis-how-keep-them-flowing-aimed-ensure-flow-remittances-prevent-negative-socioeconomic-impacts-covid-19>

The choice of these two projects is motivated by the fact that also the ILDEA II funded vocational training, but without the strategic and systemic approach of these two examples (see section on Sustainability).

Besides the Debt Swap programme, the Italian Cooperation has funded other meaningful initiatives to strengthen Egypt's entrepreneurial ecosystem and support the creation of start-ups, particularly those founded and managed by women and youth:

**Accelerating High-Potential Entrepreneurship in Egypt:** This World Bank project, worth €5 million, aims to improve the investment readiness capabilities of start-ups and entrepreneurship support organizations. It also pilots an international linkages accelerator, scales up business angel investing, and strengthens the venture capital sector by building the capacity of local fund managers and investors. The project prioritizes the participation of women-led start-ups, enabling them to engage with entrepreneurs from other ecosystems and explore investment opportunities with foreign financial institutions.

**Support to Start-ups and SMEs in Egypt:** This €2 million initiative aims to enhance the long-term competitiveness and resilience of the most disadvantaged segments of start-ups and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Egypt. The project specifically targets the most vulnerable sub-segments, such as micro-enterprises and women-run businesses, by providing them with business advisory services, including support for greener business processes.

### **c) Intervention in the framework of the Migration Partnership Facility – circular labour migration**

The Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) is a European Union (EU)-funded initiative supporting the external dimension of EU migration policies. Launched in January 2016, the MPF supports dialogue and cooperation on migration and mobility between EU Member States and priority partner countries outside the EU. The MPF, currently in its fourth phase, operates mainly through grants aligned with priorities outlined in its Calls for Proposals. MPF grants cover two main thematic areas:

- Support to the EU's Migration Priorities with Partner Countries
- Support to Dialogue and Cooperation on Legal and Labour Migration (i.e., the EU's Talent Partnerships).

In the framework of the second point, there are 3 projects that are currently involving Egypt:

**The NET-Work You project**<sup>25</sup> aims to create an innovative and sustainable model for circular and skilled labor mobility between Italy and Egypt. This initiative will provide traineeship opportunities for 100 young Egyptians in the Apulia region of Southern Italy, focusing on enhancing their skills in the green economy, digitalization, and agriculture. A complementary training program conducted in both Egypt and Italy will help participants acquire professional skills recognized in both countries, thereby improving their employment prospects in Europe and their home country.

Additionally, the establishment of a Mediterranean multi-stakeholder network will strengthen public-private partnerships at local, regional, and national levels in both countries, promoting the exchange of best practices with other EU Member States. The project is implemented by Confcooperative – Unione Regionale della Puglia in collaboration with the International Centre for

---

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.migrationpartnershipfacility.eu/mpf-projects/57-net-work-you-creation-of-a-skills-network-to-increase-employment-opportunities-for-young-egyptians-in-the-green-job-sector/preview>

Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies - CIHEAM Bari, with a budget of €3,000,000 and a timeframe from April 2024 to April 2027.

The **MOBILISE project**<sup>26</sup> aims to establish a scalable and institutionally embedded circular talent development program between the Netherlands and Tunisia, Egypt, and Ethiopia. This initiative specifically targets the agricultural sector, seeking to address the labor market demands in the participating countries by involving partners from the public and private sectors while fostering cooperation with local higher education institutions. The project's goal is to strengthen climate-smart agriculture practices by enhancing the skills and competencies of young workers and students in the horticulture sector. MOBILISE will offer innovative in-country training programs prior to departure, developed through collaboration between Dutch and local educational institutions to ensure their effectiveness and relevance

The **HOMERe (High Opportunity for Mediterranean Executive Recruitment) project**<sup>27</sup> was a pilot initiative that aimed to facilitate cooperation between France and Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt. Its primary objective was to boost the legal temporary migration of talented youth through an innovative internship program. The project built upon the HOMERe network's previous activities by reinforcing institutional governance structures and expanding its three-phase mobility schemes for interns. HOMERe provided traineeship opportunities for students from Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt in French companies. These traineeships were integrated into the participants' study programs, with the goal of enhancing their employability upon returning to their home countries. The Migration Partnership Facility (MPF) funded the project, which aimed to support 250 trainees.

### 5.3 Effectiveness

**Effectiveness - To what extent were the direct and immediate expected results achieved, with attention to the different outcomes within the various target groups?**

Despite the difficulties faced during the implementation, the project had the capacity to achieve valuable results, even if not all the expected.

The ILDEA II was subjected to two reformulations that did not affect the formal definition of the project outputs and outcomes, with the exception of the output 2.1 which was added with the second reformulation and implied the recruitment of 2 project coordinators by IOM seconded at MoSEEA. Apart from this, changes were introduced at the activity level. This does not mean that they were negligible updates, as they reduced the role of Egyptian diaspora in Italy both in terms of contribution to the communication and engagement strategy and implementation of income generating activities.

As a result of this, the ILDEA II ended implementing two siloed interventions: (a) The technical support to the GoE (preparation of the communication and engagement strategies, training to officials, interministerial working group (IWG)<sup>28</sup>, high level conference and recruitment of two

---

<sup>26</sup> <https://mobilise-project.mailchimpsites.com/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.migrationpartnershipfacility.eu/mpf-projects/33-completed-project-high-opportunity-for-mediterranean-executive-recruitment-homere>

<sup>28</sup> The function of the IWG was to formulate priorities of the diaspora engagement strategy and action plan, and to facilitate its implementation. The IWG consists of high-level government officials and representatives from the 22 GoE

project coordinators seconded at MoSEEA) and (b) the vocational training in Sohag. In other words, the implementation of the ILDEA II is based on two separated sub-projects, and in the second intervention the diaspora contribution is missing.

**7. To what extent has the programme achieved the expected results? To what extent have institutional actors improved their capacities to engage the diaspora? To what extent has the programme facilitated productive investments by the diaspora?**

At global level, the analysis of the achievements under the project general objective “Support to the Government of Egypt (GoE) to consolidate efforts to involve expatriates in the country’s development” is quite positive, as both the strategies listed i.e. the Communication and the Engagement strategies were produced and validated. The performance of the indicator I.3,<sup>29</sup> under the general objective, “Number of entrepreneurship and income-generating projects successfully Implemented” does not clearly reflect the nature of the activity conducted, since vocational trainings cannot be directly considered, per se, as income generating projects, even if they lay important grounds to this end. A more detailed analysis in this regard is conducted under output 2.2.

The last indicator under the general objective, “I4. Number of trade & investment opportunities identified and pursued by GoE during the project lifetime”, did not record any results, as investments did not take place. In the opinion of the evaluators, this would have required more time and a follow-up activity after the high-level conference in which the strategies were presented.

Indicators	Targets	Achieved <sup>30</sup>	Comments
I.1.A national strategy & action plan on the engagement of Egyptian expatriate communities for development, elaborated & endorsed by GoE	A strategy elaborated & endorsed		<p>The strategy &amp; action plan together with the communication &amp; outreach strategy was produced on the basis of a draft version issued during the ILDEA I project.</p> <p>The strategy was officially endorsed and launched during the conference: “The Role of Remittances to Advance Investment and Sustainable</p>

institutions which were identified during an institutional review on expatriate engagement affairs conducted during the ILDEA I.

<sup>29</sup> The indicators’ numbers adopted in this report was developed by the evaluators in order to facilitate the Reading of the text.

<sup>30</sup> Green = Completely achieved, Yellow = Partially achieved Red = Not achieved

I.2 A communication and outreach strategy to expatriate communities in line with the provisions of the action plan developed & endorsed by MoSEEA	A strategy developed & endorsed		Development", held from 10 to 11 October 2021 in Cairo. 103 attendees, out of them 53 women, attended the launch of the strategy. Among participants there were also members of the diaspora, whose number was not recorded.
I.3 Number of entrepreneurship and income-generating projects successfully implemented	5		Three vocational training courses were conducted in Sohag. Two of them were delivered in two levels, 0 and 1.
I.4 Number of trade & investment opportunities identified and pursued by GoE during the project lifetime	At least 2		There is no evidence of results achieved under this indicator.

**Outcome 1. GoE has a coordinated and strategic approach to dialogue and engages with Egyptian expatriates in the context of a new policy framework**

The drafting of the policy framework (indicator I.1.1.), made with the support of an external consultancy, Global Diaspora Insights, was initially framed as a consultation with an array of actors that could enrich the debate, both inside and outside Egypt, i.e. academia, private sector, diaspora and Italian associations. Eventually, however, the consultations targeted 22 institutions, but only within the GoE. Despite the target value being achieved, the actual implementation involving only GoE institutions is not aligned with the idea of a participatory process, thus this indicator is considered only partly achieved.

The second indicator under Outcome 1, I.1.2 was added during the second reformulation, based on the formal request from MoSEEA and temporarily strengthened its capacities to monitor the ILDEA II. This has been partially achieved, given that 3 coordinators were initially expected to be recruited and finally just 2 were hired. The indicator I.1.3 has already been analysed under the general objective.

Indicators	Targets	Achieved	Comments
I.1.1 Number of GoE institutions/stakeholders' involved in the formulation of the strategy & action plan on expatriate engagement	Up to 30		22 stakeholders involved. The target is achieved, but it was decided to not involve actors other than the institutions of the GoE, which limited the participatory process
I.1.2 Up to three national coordinators seconded at the Ministry of State of Emigration to oversee the project implementation for a duration of 6-9 months	3		1 Field coordinators and 1 M&E coordinator were hired and seconded at the Ministry of State of Emigration during the last 7 months of the project. The decision to hire two consultants instead of three, was taken in agreement with the Ministry in the coordination meeting of 27 October 2021
I.1.3 A communication strategy and tools with Egyptian expatriates formulated and endorsed by MoSEEA	A Communication strategy document produced		Communication strategy was formulated by the international consultant and approved by the Ministry of State of Emigration and Egyptians Abroad.

#### **Output 1.1. A new policy framework on expatriate engagement is available and endorsed by GoE**

The first indicator under this outcome, I.1.1.1, is aimed at informing about the validation process of the National Policy on Migration Governance, a document drafted during the ILDEA I, which do not correspond to the communication and engagement strategies. It must be said that in the ILDEA II interim report, the recruitment of a consultant was initially meant to generate the (GoE) validation workshop but also to facilitate the adoption and implementation of this broader national policy. However, not only there isn't evidence of the achievement of this indicator, but there is no mention of it in the available information. This is also the case of the indicator I.1.1.6 "Number of government officials involved in discussions with IOM international staff (HQ or Regional office) on policy development – supporting MoSEEA in finalizing the final draft of National Policy on Migration Governance", for which there are no evidence.

In the opinion of the evaluators, both indicators refer to the IOM search for synergies among projects to put forward global goals that were finally dismissed. The indicators I.1.1.2 and I.1.1.3 inform about consultative processes to discuss the engagement with diaspora actors. In both cases, the result is far below the target values, as only 4 expatriates were involved. The reason for such a poor result lies on the fact that the list of 53 contacts of the Egyptian diaspora was provided by MoSEEA, which also explicitly requested not to reach diaspora's associations in Italy, due to their perceived lack of activity and representativity. The contact with these stakeholders was largely unfruitful, and just 4 finally accepted to attend the 2 sessions. It must be said that in the initial design of the two activities it was foreseen to organise a visit for MoSEEA in Italy to discuss the draft strategy and action plan with Egyptian expatriates and to inform them of investment opportunities, as it was done in the ILDEA I intervention.

Lastly, the indicator I.1.1.5 "Disseminated copies of the final version of the strategy and action plan to all relevant government stakeholders (translated in EN and AR)", does not provide any information to assess how many copies were actually distributed.



Indicators	Targets	Achieved	Comments
I.1.1.1 Final draft of National Policy on Migration Governance as well as the Strategy and Action Plan on Expatriate Engagement reviewed and presented for final validation	Document validated		The feedback from other institutions of the GoE was not received.
I.1.1.2 Number of expatriates associations/members involved in consultations on expatriates' strategy and trade and investment opportunities disaggregated by gender/association	At least 3 expatriate associations and 7 trade, investment and employment institutions		Four expatriates were involved in the consultations, no associations were involved as advised by the Ministry
I.1.1.3 Number of institutions - government/private sector academia/Egyptian expatriates/ Egyptian and Italian associations involved in consultations on the draft strategy, disaggregated by type and location	Up to 10 senior officials from MoSEEA and up to 30 from other Egyptian and Italian entities and Egyptian expatriates		2 Seniors officially and at least 4 from Expatriates participants in the consultation workshop.
I.1.1.4 A communication strategy and tools with Egyptian expatriates formulated and endorsed by MoSEEA;	1		A communication strategy was formulated by the international consultant and approved by the Ministry of State of Emigration and Egyptians Abroad.
I.1.1.5 Disseminated copies of the final version of the strategy and action plan to all relevant government stakeholders (translated in EN and AR).	100 copies disseminated		There is no information on how many copies were disseminated by MoSEEA.
I.1.1.6 Number of government officials involved in discussions with IOM international staff (HQ or Regional office) on policy development – supporting MoSEEA in finalizing the final draft of National Policy on Migration Governance	40 officials, up to 10 from MoSEEA, and up to 30 from Egyptian and Italian entities and Egyptian expatriates		10 attended two workshops for consultation and validation from officials of IOM and national and international consultants, in addition to 4 expatriates

### **Output 1.2 - A team of national coordinators is recruited by IOM and seconded to the Ministry of State of Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs**

The appointment of the national coordinators was a new output added in the second project reformulation, after discussions in the steering committee on the eligibility of this expenditure, as the project budget could not be spent to pay ministries' officials' salaries. To this end, 2 external experts were hired by IOM, seconded at MoSEEA, but physically based in the IOM office. The indicator I.1.2.2 has not been achieved as the recruited personnel was not considered sufficiently skilled for the positions covered.

Indicators	Targets	Achieved	Comments
I.1.2.1 Recruited 2 national coordinators seconded to MoSEEA	Up to three national coordinators		The donor approved the recruitment of two national coordinators (field coordinator and M&E coordinator) seconded at the MoSEEA  Field coordinator and M&E coordinator were hired and seconded at the MoSEEA during the last 7 months of the project. As per the agreement with the Ministry to hire two consultants instead of three, on the coordination meeting of 27 October 2021.
I.1.2.2 Trained staff (newly appointed coordinators and ministry staff by IOM M&E staff)	Up to three national coordinators		Trainings not conducted because it was not considered necessary.

### **Outcome 2. Enhance national capacities to promote investment and trade opportunities to/with Egypt through the involvement of Egyptian expatriate communities**

The most significant activity under the outcome 2 is the vocational trainings in Sohag. A total number of 179 individuals took the examinations in their respective field and a total number of 275 courses were delivered. More in detail, the courses of plumbing and electricity had two levels, while tailoring just one. In terms of sex disaggregation, 158 participants were young men (88%) and 21 women (12%). The average success rate of this activity was 65%, which is considered by the training providers as a demonstration of the quality and the level of demand of the courses. Electrical installation was the most challenging examination, as only 50% passed both levels, while plumbing was less difficult, as 78% passed both levels. As regards the tailoring training, 70% trainees passed their examination.

Indicators	Targets	Achieved	Comments
I.2.1 Number of trade / investment / local business development opportunities identified and/or implemented	5 projects finalised in 2018 supported under ILDEA		3 vocational trainings funded in Sohag

### Output 2.1 - Strengthening the GoE's capabilities to promote and facilitate investment and business opportunities for Egyptian expatriates

The activities under this output were led by an external company, DMA Global, which developed the tool to drive trade and investment for expatriates (I.2.1.1). According to the initial project proposal presented by IOM to the Italian cooperation, the tool had to be disseminated through the Egyptian Foreign Service, who is responsible for managing the whole network of embassies and consulates, with the aim of achieving more ambitious results.

DMA was also involved in the failed attempts to create an Interministerial Working Group (IWG) (indicator I.2.1.3). There was a considerable delay in starting this activity during the time of the previous management at MoSEEA, due to prolonged discussions on its scoping. With the new management at MoSEEA, a coordinator was appointed to organize the workshops' preparations – who then resigned, and the position was vacant for a while before someone else was appointed. With the unstable situation at the Ministry and the tight timeframe for implementation of the activities (3 months contract for DMA Global), it was impossible to establish a sustainable working group from different government officials that will be supporting and overseeing the strategy implementation. DMA Global delivered trainings to GoE officials (indicators I.2.1.2 and I.2.1.4), that covered 6 topics and gathered 20 individuals. The indicator I.2.1.5, which refers to the “Number of users who access platforms, digital media products and other outreach tools/materials developed and disseminated under the project” was not measured. Lastly, the indicators on the “Number of attendees participating in the 2-day workshop on remittances’ mobilization” (I.2.1.7) among them relevant expatriates (I.2.1.6), was achieved.

Indicators	Targets	Achieved	Comments
I.2.1.1 Production of a tool on trade and investment promotion (the tool is an IOM contribution to the project)	A tool developed		DMA Global produced a tool to drive trade and investment for expatriates in Egypt.
I.2.1.2 Number of MoSEEA and GoE officials trained	20 officials		20 GoE officials trained on trade and investment promotion
I.2.1.3 Technical working group established from relevant government officials	A working group established		At the end of the project, the Interministerial Working Group (IWG) was not created

I.2.1.4 Series of 6 workshops conducted to government officials	6 workshops conducted		<p>Workshop 1: High-Level Session on Expatriate Contributions Beyond Remittances</p> <p>Workshop 2: Technical Workshop: Measuring Expatriate Tourism in Egypt</p> <p>Workshop 3: Technical Workshop: Measuring Expatriate Investment in Egypt.</p> <p>Workshop 4: Technical Workshop: Measuring Expatriate Trade with Egypt</p> <p>Workshop 5: Measuring Expatriate Contributions Beyond Remittances; Roadmap &amp; Way Forward</p> <p>Workshop 6: Driving Expatriate Trade;</p>
I.2.1.5 Number of users who access platforms, digital media products and other outreach tools/materials developed and disseminated under the project	At least 100, 000 users globally disaggregated by country		It was not possible to assess whether this target was met: the production of two main social media outreach tools was delayed – as the tools featured footages from events that took place towards the end of the project (10-11 October 2021). The editing process led to videos being posted online after the end of the project and no information was provided on the number of visits.
I.2.1.6 Number of relevant expatriate and private sector representatives participating in the conference for trade and investment promotion, disaggregated by age, and sex	up to 75 participants engaged in discussions on remittances		As requested by the Ministry, the conferences on trade and investment and the conference on remittances were merged due to the tight timeframe of the project. As a result, the conference tackled issues related to investment, remittances and local development. The conference was attended by the Minister of Emigration, and the Minister of Planning, in addition to high level representatives from the stock exchange and the academia, expatriates, parliamentarians and financial experts. A total of 103 individuals attended the conference, 53 of them were women.
I.2.1.7 Number of attendees participating in the 2-day workshop on remittances' mobilization			

**Output 2.2 - Egyptian expatriate communities in Italy are committed to implementing income generation and employment promotion projects in Egypt**

This output was one of the most affected by the project reformulations, as the new wording put less emphasis on the presence and contribution of the Egyptian diaspora in Italy. In fact, even if two different reports were shared with Egyptians living abroad, the indicators I.2.2.1 and I.2.2.3 do not measure how many expatriates actually received the information, but only the number of reports, which is insufficient to understand Diaspora involvement.

Concerning the indicator I.2.2.2 “Number of initiatives successfully implemented”, the initial formulation of the related activity implied a call for proposals to select local development initiatives through the mentorship of the Egyptian diaspora in Italy. As already mentioned, this contribution was removed and replaced by a very vague formulation. This was a decision taken in order to face the changing priorities of the implementing partners and respond to a political decision from MoSEEA, to not engage with organisations of Egyptians abroad. In practice, it became a limitation and the final solution completely overlooked the linkages with the diaspora.

In the same line, it must also be recalled that the only indicator adopted for this output does not inform on the actual number of participants involved, their sex, their assessment and the outputs achieved, (i.e. the number of participants who passed the examination). Probably, a clearer and more detailed definition of the activity would have facilitated the alignment since the beginning of the intervention.

Indicators	Targets	Achieved	Comments
I.2.2.1 Number of electronic reports disseminated to expatriates on the projects	3 reports shared		A summary of the project was shared with Egyptian expatriates, and they were notified on the progress of the activities in Sohag during the preliminary online meetings. Outreach to expatriates also took place at a later stage of the project after clearance from the Ministry on the list of expatriates.
I.2.2.2 Number of initiatives successfully implemented	After the 2021's reformulation, 2 projects implemented		three vocational trainings funded in Sohag
I.2.2.3 A final report on lessons learned and project performance developed and disseminated to expatriates residing in Italy	A report shared		A brief report with the main achievements and lessons learnt, along with a video on the project will be shared with the Egyptian expatriates
I.2.2.4 Number of missions to the community projects (delegation with MOSEEA implementing partner, donor agency, IOM)	At least 1 monitoring visit		A monitoring visit conducted in Sohag on 11-14 July 2021

## 8. What performance measures were used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the programme and its intermediate and final results?

The overall quality of the logframe is positive and the vertical logic is coherent; however, the horizontal logic presents some weaknesses in terms of indicators' choice and targets. First of all, there are not qualitative indicators that can complement the quantitative ones, sometimes their formulation is not precise; for instance the use of "at least" or "up to" should be avoided and precise values should be set. Second, indicators could have been oriented more to project outcomes rather than to project outputs; for instance the formulation: "Number of MoSEEA and GoE officials trained" could have been improved as "Number of MoSEEA and GoE officials who have acquired the skills to interact with the Diaspora". Lastly, in terms of gender approach, even if some indicators are disaggregated according to sex, this disaggregation is not retained in the case of the vocational trainings, though this information is equally important.

Despite the two project reformulations, the lengthy negotiations among the implementing partners, the validation of the last version at the beginning of 2021 and the definition of some of the target values of the participatory processes were misaligned with the actual implementation, in terms of number and variety of the participants' profiles.

In some cases, indicators with similar wordings overlap each other and it is unclear if they actually refer to the same activity and what they are meant to measure, as in the following examples:

I.1.1 Number of GoE institutions/stakeholders' involved in the formulation of the strategy & action plan on expatriate engagement	I.1.1.2 Number of expatriates associations/members involved in consultations on expatriates' strategy and trade and investment opportunities disaggregated by gender/association	I.1.1.3 Number of institutions - government/private sector academia/Egyptian expatriates/ Egyptian and Italian associations involved in consultations on the draft strategy, disaggregated by type and location
---	--	---

The lack of a proper measurement of the achievements is especially evident for indicator I.2.2.2 "Number of initiatives successfully implemented" since it doesn't focus on the number of individuals who were involved, nor in their life prospects' improvement. In addition, any indicator on the diaspora direct involvement is missing.

Another issue that affected ILDEA II was that several hypotheses were not met.

- GoE demonstrates continued interest and commitment to develop, support and implement a policy framework for expatriate engagement;		The GoE showed partial interest and avoided interaction with external actors, among them the diaspora itself
- The GoE ensures timely approval of the agreed policy;		Internal approval from the 22 ministries never occurred, but it was formally validated during the high-level conference
- Expatriate communities retain their interest in continuing dialogue with the GoE in the context of a policy framework on expatriate engagement for development;		The lack of concrete engagement of the diaspora by the ILDEA II made impossible to measure their interest

- IWG members maintain their interest and involvement in the strategy/action process plan development;		The IWG was never created
- GoE's continued willingness and ability to reach the Egyptian expatriate community in Italy and promote trade and investment		GoE's did not show willingness to reach the Egyptian expatriate community in Italy and to promote trade and investment

## 9. Were there any unintended (positive or negative) programme outcomes, bottlenecks and barriers for participants and non-participants, particularly women?

The evaluators tried to test the following hypothesis during the field visit in Sohag “The individuals involved in the trainings are taking advantage of the diaspora investments and expenditures, which improve their living conditions”. In other words, the assumption was that even if the ILDEA II did not create linkages between diaspora and local development, it was possible that expatriates from Sohag were investing in the activities/enterprises started by trainees and the housing market and buying good quality clothes, thus dynamising the local economy. According to the interviews conducted, there is no awareness on these linkages with the diaspora.

At outcomes level, some impactful bottlenecks affected the intervention. First of all, the COVID-19 pandemic, which obliged to follow strict distancing measures. Secondly, the training attended by women, i.e. tailoring, had to be delivered in a different place that was identified and rent for this purpose. Lastly, the access to Egyptians in Italy was monopolised by MoSEEA, which defined the target and the individuals to be reached.

## 5.4 Efficiency

**Efficiency - To what extent was the use of resources optimal for achieving the project results both in economic terms and in terms of timing and management efficiency?**

**10. Have the resources allocated (human, technical, financial) been adequate and appropriately exploited to achieve the expected results? Have the resource mobilization strategies made it possible to dispose of them in the appropriate ways and times?**

### Financial efficiency

First, it should be noted that the funding of 500.000 € provided by the Italian cooperation, was integrated by the reallocation from the ILDEA I project consisting of an additional 1,326 €, totalling 501,326 €.

Re-allocation from another Government of Italy Project (September 2019)	€ 1,326
Budget of the ILDEA project	€ 500,000
Total resources available	€ 501,326

The intervention achieved positive financial efficiency given that nearly 88% of the budget was spent, amounting to € 440,235.00.

Budget	Expenditures	Expenditures - Budget	% of budget spend
€ 501,326.00	€ 440,235.00	-€ 61,091.00	88%

The overall budget assigned to IOM totalled 132,507 € and represented 30,10% of the whole project budget; staff expenses amounted to 100,960 €, namely 20,14% of the budget, which substantially respected the 20% threshold agreed with the Italian cooperation. The amount did not vary despite the increased duration of the project (from 16 to 34 months) and the IOM internal revision of the salary scale, which resulted in a salary increase.

	Budget	Expenditures	Expenditures - Budget
Staff expenses	€ 100,980.00	€ 100,960.00	€ 20.00
Office expenses	€ 2,988.00	€ 2,746.00	€ 242.00
IOM overhead (7%)	€ 32,710.00	€ 28,801.00	€ 3,909.00
Total IOM budget	€ 133,690.00	€ 132,507.00	€ 1,183.00

In terms of operational expenses, all the budget headings had a certain underspending; in some cases, like for output 1.1, (recruitment of an external consultant, charged to finalise the policy framework on expatriate engagement) or output 2.1 (Strengthened GoE capacities), costs were lower than expected. In the case of output 1.2 (a team of national coordinators is recruited), the underspending was due to their late recruitment, 6 months before the end of the intervention.

Finally, output 2.2 (Engagement of Egyptian expatriates in local development) had the largest underspending (13,667.00 €), due to the difficulties in identifying the local development activities to be funded and the short timeframe available.

Operational expenses			
Output 1.1: A new policy framework on expatriate engagement is available and endorsed by GoE	€ 36,529.00	€ 28,906.00	-€ 7,623.00
Output 1.2 A team of national coordinators is recruited by IOM and seconded to the Ministry of State of Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates' Affairs	€ 14,670.00	€ 11,217.00	-€ 3,453.00



Output 2.1 Strengthened GoE capacities to promote and facilitate investment and trade opportunities for Egyptian expatriates	€ 14,670.00	€ 11,217.00	-€ 3,453.00
Output 2.2 Egyptian expatriate communities in Italy engage in the implementation of income-generating and employment promotion projects in Egypt	€ 184,800.00	€ 171,133.00	-€ 13,667.00
Other costs	€ 12,520.00	€ 14,375.00	€ 1,855.00
IOM overhead (7%)	€ 32,710.00	€ 28,801.00	-€ 3,909.00
Total expenses	€ 501,326.00	€ 440,235.00	-€ 61,091.00

Concerning output 1.1, “A new policy framework on expatriate engagement is available and endorsed by GoE”, it was initially decided that IOM would support the GoE in finalising the engagement strategy drafted during the ILDEA I; however, in the second project reformulation, it was decided to recruit the same consultant who initially worked on the document. The main reason was the lack of availability of professionals able to conduct such a process within IOM staff.

The output 1.2 is assessed in the next section, as it affects the project management.

Regarding output 2.1, the resources provided were adequate to deliver the training to the GoE officials.

The evaluators analysed in detail the efficiency of output 2.2 and found that it is very poor. To conduct this analysis, similar training activities delivered by public and private centres were taken into consideration, and the amount paid for each certificate is usually at least 4 times lower than for amount paid the ILDEA II project, which means that more than 1.000 certificates could have been issued instead of the 275 issued by the project (see annex I).<sup>31</sup>

Part of the limited efficiency is due to the several subcontracting layers that characterised this activity and the corresponding overhead that each organisation retained. Given that MSMEDA didn't have the capacity to deliver the training itself, it recruited the company Qualification Development Bank (QDB), a well-reputed provider, which then recruited two implementing companies, the advanced Vocational Training Center (VTC), under the General Union of Workers in Construction and Wood Industries, and Noqoush Academy for Designs and Crafts. In addition, to ensure the quality and the standards of training on electricity and plumbing, all the tools and machinery were sent back and forth from Cairo, as they were not locally available.

In this way, the most suitable conditions were ensured for the delivery of the training, but since the implementing partners weren't established in Sohag, after the end of the training, they left the governorate. If on the one side, informal contacts over WhatsApp were kept with the trainers, on the other, the need for further guidance on training topics was unmet. The presence of other training

---

<sup>31</sup> For the sake of clarity, the 175 participants had 275 certificates of participation, given that the plumber and electricity training had two levels, 0 and 1, and many participants attended both.

resources and support for entrepreneurship are available, but the lack of contacts between trainers and trainees produced a loss of opportunities. For instance, none of the trainees who took part in FGDs were aware of the loans at advantageous conditions offered by MSMEDA.

The presence of several layers of subcontracting also limited the budget available for the intervention given the overhead that each organisation retained. According to the agreement signed between IOM and MSMEDA on December 20<sup>th</sup> 2020, the available budget was 175,725.00 €, of which 12,300. € (7%) were under the overhead budget line. Information about the overhead applied by QDB, Noqoush and VTC was not provided; however, if we assume that the same percentage is applied, the available budget shrinks to 141.346 €. <sup>32</sup>

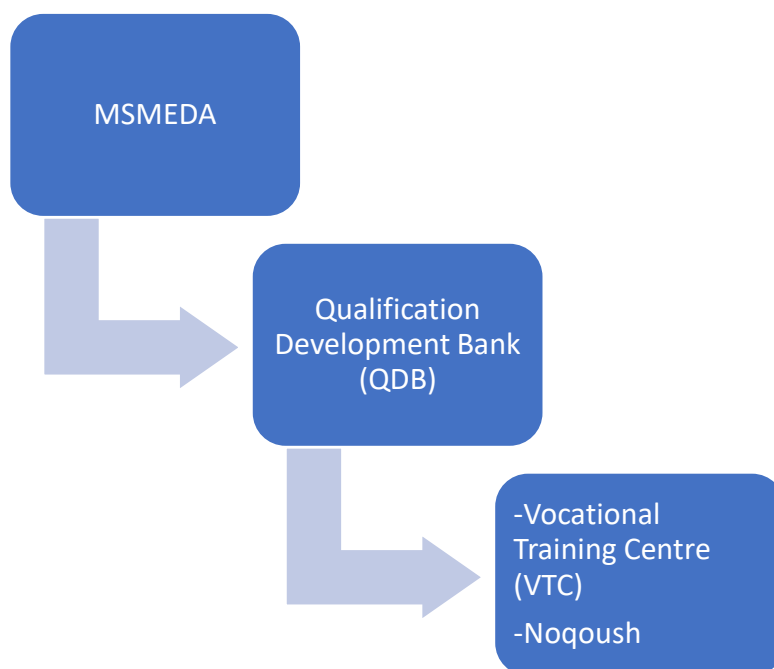


Figure 3. Subcontracting chain for the output 2.2

### Management efficiency

The daily project management was ensured by IOM and stakeholders' committees were periodically held by the intervention partners, MOSEEA, MSMEDA, and the donor, IADC.

The quality of the management of ILDEA II was not always in line with the expectations, the main reason being the personnel turnover within IOM, MoSEEA, and IADC office in Cairo, which resulted in a loss of the lessons learned from ILDEA I.

The personnel turnover exacerbated delays in the implementation, which was especially sensitive at IOM level, since this was the organisation in charge of project coordination. In fact, the project coordinator responsible at the beginning of the project resigned in March 2020, without any handover. Due to the budget constraints produced by the salary revision, it was not possible to hire another project manager. In his place, project coordination was ensured by the Head of the Labor Mobility and Human Development (LHD) unit, together with a Senior Programme Assistant. In February 2021, however, the Head of LHD unit left and until the end of the ILDEA II, the Senior Programme Assistant was the only professional responsible for its implementation.

<sup>32</sup>  $((175,725.00 \text{ €} - 7\%) - 7\%) - 7\%$

Overall, the salary revision had a broader impact on the IOM country office's capacity to deliver results with the expected quality and timeliness since the available budget did not cover personnel costs.

The budget constraints, the personnel turnover, and COVID-19 entailed the temporary suspension of the project and a lengthy and complex reformulation that had to be agreed upon by the implementing partners, who were also experiencing personnel turnover. In the case of IADC, between the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, a new Head of Office and Technical Expert took office and requested a more detailed revision of the project reformulation initially approved by the former technical Expert.

The same situation affected MoSEEA, at the top management level and in the daily coordination. For instance, ILDEA I funded the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) which was operational until the first months of ILDEA II. The appointment of the two project coordinators was delayed because it was unclear, from the IADC side, if their cost was eligible for funding. Once recruited, they didn't receive a handover nor were they provided with laptops to work.

The narrower scope and capacities to reach the Egyptian diaspora abroad were in part balanced by direct contacts with some top-level representatives, i.e. former ambassadors. However, such contacts weren't aligned with the needs of the project, as they were mainly business persons, while the project needed individuals with interests in social inclusion activities. In addition, MoSEEA's capacities cannot be compared to those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), that is responsible for the whole network of embassies and consulates. Surprisingly, the MFA was part of the initial project proposal that IOM submitted to the Italian cooperation, where it was in charge of the following tasks:

- Support the outreach activities and consultations for the draft strategy and action plan on expatriate engagement with the Egyptian expatriates in Italy, as well as in other countries.
- Support the training of economic attaches as well as continue outreach of the Egyptian Diplomatic missions abroad to expatriate communities in key destination countries.
- Dissemination of information on trade and investment opportunities in Egypt.

Another limitation that hindered the capacity of the project to create linkages between the diaspora and the vocational training beneficiaries was the poor ICT facilities that made online meetings difficult to hold; no solutions were identified to overcome the problem, i.e. the MSMEDA office in Sohag, other public offices, or private facilities.

In addition, the presence of several layers of subcontracting for the vocational training in Sohag hampered IOM from directly interacting with the companies in charge of the training, VTC and Noqoush, and to monitor their implementation.

Concerning MSMEDA, the key personnel involved was not affected by turnover, but in a similar way as MoSEEA, has structures of recent creation (respectively 2017 and 2015) and still in the process of consolidation.

The partners' meetings were useful to address critical issues and to provide an official endorsement of agreements negotiated in advance. However, the steering committees were not always effective in addressing all the topics of the project. For instance, the diaspora involvement was not part of the discussions for a long period and it was unclear which role each partner had to play. Certain decisions were not subject to thorough debates like those to conduct the vocational training in Sohag, a governorate not especially affected by the irregular migration. In other cases, the steering committee did not react on time to important issues, like gender equality and fight against irregular migration, that were not sufficiently addressed by the vocational training companies. Moreover, the

lack of previous interventions in this governorate, implied an extra effort to interact with local stakeholders, among them local NGOs who were responsible for informing potential trainees.

The fact that the implementing partners were national public actors also implied lengthy periods in order to agree upon decisions. For example, the negotiation between MSMEDA and IOM for the delivery of vocational training suffered delays due to discrepancies on specific aspects of the contract which was then signed in December 2020.

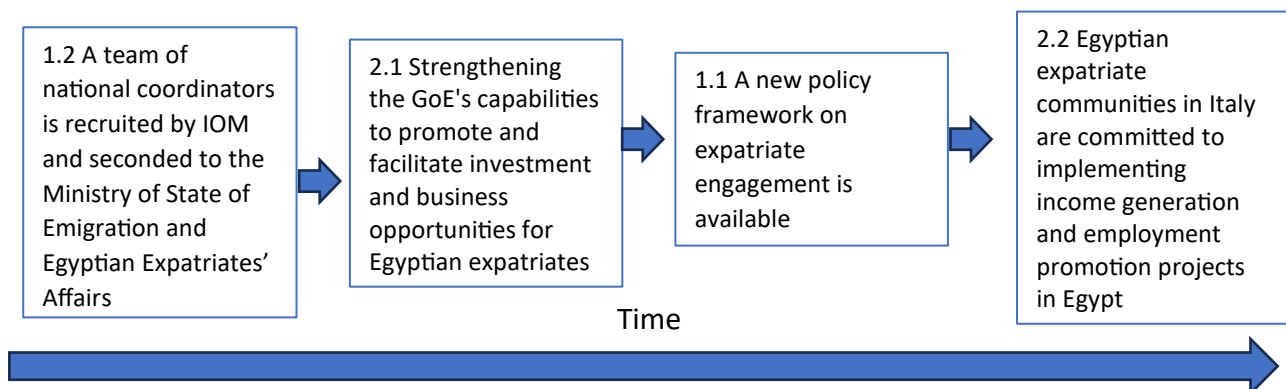
According to the steering committees' minutes, delays also affected MSMEDA itself due to the difficulties in identifying the suitable intervention in the timeframe requested and to internal processes to recruit and ensure the implementation of vocational training, which overall required more than 8 months including the 3 month-training.

Lastly the interim and end of project reports did not address several critical elements:

- Lack of a sources of verification for follow-up on the achievement of specific indicators
- Lack of a case management system to document various operations and interventions
- Lack of information of success stories or lessons learned

### Project design efficiency

The ILDEA II was built on the results and recommendations from ILDEA I, and it replicated the focus on the strengthening of GoE's capacities to harness and facilitated diaspora contributions to local development. Also for the second phase, it was decided to launch another pilot edition instead of a more ambitious and progressive approach that would have required more time and budget. More in details, instead of scheduling a short timeframe in which all the outputs had to be achieved almost simultaneously, it would have been preferable to first ensure the presence of technical capacities, train GoE officials and then launch the Strategy participatory process and implement the employment promotion projects in Egypt.



This solution would have facilitated the appropriation of the strategy by GoE officials, who could have led its implementation, the interaction with the diaspora and the funding of the income generation and employment promotion projects. This solution would have consolidated the interministerial working group (IWG), and strengthened the coordination with relevant actors.

This logic of intervention is applied by the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), which structures the diaspora engagement according to key pillars.<sup>33</sup> They are chronologically organised: the political

<sup>33</sup> Diaspora Engagement Model for Development. African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC). 2021[https://www.idiaspora.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd181/files/resources/document/diaspora\\_engagement\\_model\\_final\\_291121.pdf](https://www.idiaspora.org/sites/g/files/tmzbd181/files/resources/document/diaspora_engagement_model_final_291121.pdf)

will lead to better know the diaspora and promote a diaspora-friendly environment that will set the ground for the National Diaspora Policy that enables government policymakers to easily understand what they can do, how they can do it, and the resources needed to achieve short-, medium-, and long-term goals in this regard. Furthermore, the pillars assist government policymakers in assessing what measures have already been put in place and the gaps that must be addressed to establish a successful Diaspora engagement model for development.

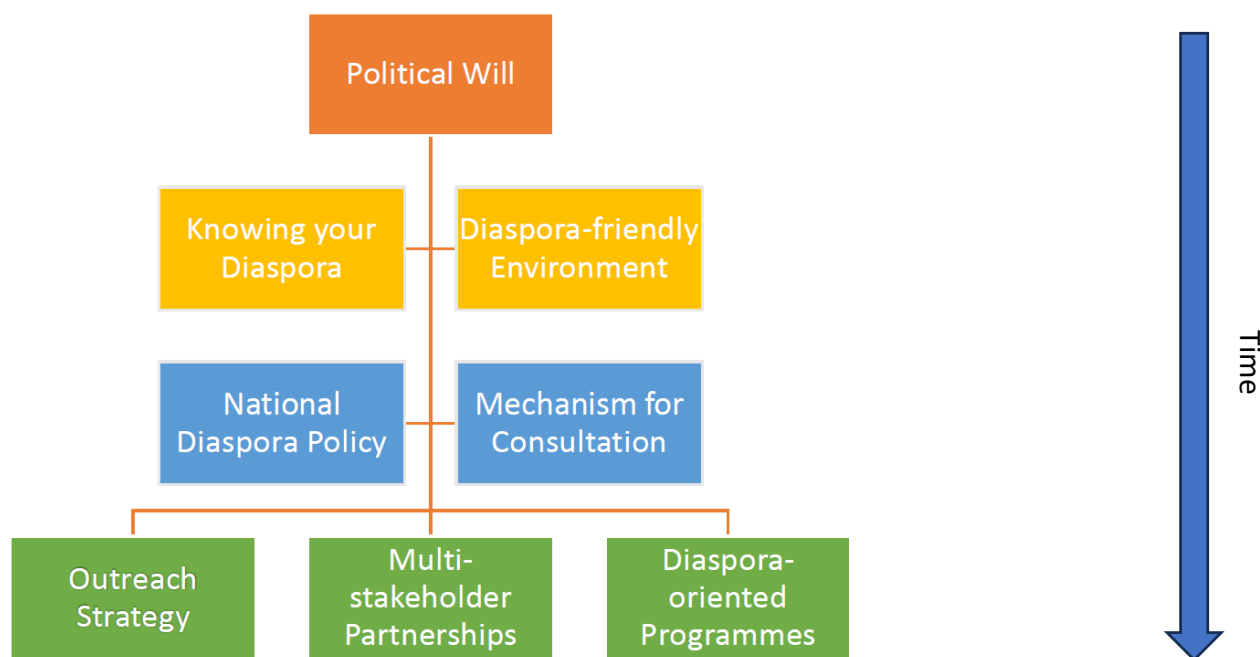


Figure 4. Key Pillars of the diaspora policy according to ADPC

#### 11. To what extent have delays in intervention and adverse situations forced a review of planning and execution?

ILDEA II was subject to two budget reformulations. In both cases, they only affected the activity level, hence without requiring approval from the Italian cooperation. Delays in project implementation forced to submit two no-cost extensions. The original implementation period agreed by IOM and IADC was of 16 months, from February 2019 to June 2020; however, after its expiration, the lack of meaningful project's results led to a revision of the intervention which then restarted in February 2021. Another no-cost extension of three additional months was finally requested by MSEMEDA and agreed upon during a Steering Committee meeting in June 2021, with a new end date of the project on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2021.

Lastly, the COVID-19 outbreak was an additional limitation to project implementation, but, as explained above, it was not the most important one. In any case, it contributed to a delay in the identification and planning of local development activities.

#### 12. How cost-efficient is the programme in terms of use of funds, skills and time of the team that implemented the programme and the partners that supported it?

The final financial report submitted by IOM on June 8<sup>th</sup> 2022 does not provide information about the individual activities, as expenditures are aggregated at output level. For this reason, the cost efficiency of most of the individual activities cannot be clearly assessed.

By contrast, the evaluators were able to analyse the contract signed between IOM and MSMEDA, where some useful information to assess the efficiency of the vocational training activities was found (and, as described under question 10, this was found to be very poor). Efficiency could also be partially assessed for output 1.2, “A team of national coordinators is recruited by IOM and seconded to the Ministry of State of Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates’ Affairs”, for which the cost of recruitment is considered appropriate by the evaluators.

## **5.5 Impact**

**Impact - What significant effects of the intervention, both positive and negative, intended or unforeseen or foreseeable, have occurred in a broader sphere (community welfare, human rights, gender equality, economic and environmental) and over a longer time frame than the intervention itself?**

**13. To what extent have the vocational training activities had an impact on the living conditions of the participants, including women?**

ILDEA II produced a significant impact on the individual life prospects of people who had attended vocational training held in Sohag. Indeed, there are clear evidence, reported by interviewed participants, of living condition improvements in terms of:

- o Increased purchase of new household appliances (or updating and repairing appliances)
- o Taking care of children’s education, enrolling in private lessons, and purchasing books
- o Increasing the quantity and quality of meals
- o Taking care of the children’s health
- o Purchasing furniture and furnishings
- o Increasing the capital available for individual entrepreneurial projects

The reported impacts have benefited men and women indistinctly.

In Sohag, the project did not produce any structural effects, such as an improvement in living conditions at a local level. This is due to the very nature of the intervention, consisting of three-month training activities, which did not set objectives of this magnitude.

**14. To what extent has the programme had an impact on engagement and investment between Egyptians living in Italy and their country of origin? What factors have promoted or limited it?**

Considering that the general objective of ILDEA II was to “Support the Government of Egypt (GoE) in consolidating efforts to involve expatriates in the country’s development,” the project has not produced any significant impact directly related to this goal.

In other words, all the efforts made to promote the diaspora engagement haven’t produced clear effects, since the corresponding validated strategies and action plans have never been used neither

by MoSEEA nor by MSMEDA and the Egyptian diaspora continues to be engaged on several and usually atomised policies as it was before the intervention.

The lack of a consistent monitoring exercise by MoSEEA of such policies and their effects represents a major limitation to correctly understand their potential impact and to improve their effects.

## 5.6 Sustainability

**Sustainability - To what extent can the benefits of the initiative be sustained in the medium and long term?**

### **15. To what extent will the Egyptian diaspora continue to be actively involved economically?**

The ILDEA II project was conceived to ensure sustainability of the results achieved, thanks to the definition of a global framework of communication and engagement with the Egyptians abroad, the trainings strengthening officials' capacities, the development of tools and materials for the promotion of diaspora's investments, the creation of the Interministerial Working Group led by MoSEEA, and the support to income generating activities sustained by members of the diaspora in Italy.

In practice, there is clear evidence of a weak appropriation of results from institutional actors. In fact, despite its role of coordination, MoSEEA did neither monitor nor facilitate synergies with other ministries' activities related to diaspora communication and engagement. In line with this, there is no formal record of activities, metrics and targets to implement the action plan; the interministerial working group was never created, the trained officials are no longer working at MoSEEA, and there are no consultation bodies involving diaspora representatives. However, certain pre-conditions for a more structured monitoring framework are still in place, i.e. informal bilateral exchanges of information as well as a generalised interest for diaspora engagement from MoSEEA.

Despite this, the limited competences that a ministry of state has compared with other full-fledged ministries,<sup>34</sup> the absence of a Project Coordination Unit (PCU), the difficulty to have a stable core team with strong policy mandate and the impossibility to have direct presence abroad weaken the capacity of MoSEEA to be a leading actor.

In the light of the above, the organisational sustainability of the intervention was never subject to an assessment, neither in the project proposal, nor during the implementation and additional support should have been ensured after the end of the project to operationalise diaspora policies. It is evident that there was an extreme dependency on external funding and, for this reason, it would have been advisable to have a resource mobilisation plan, to explore potential funding avenues.

It also important to underline that in June 2024 a presidential decision merged MoSEEA with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), thereby creating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates. It is still unclear which results this can produce but there is the potential for a more consistent leadership in this domain.

---

<sup>34</sup> The ministries of State have less competences than full-fledged ministries. More specifically, MoSEEA's functions are essentially ones of technical support and coordination, but it hasn't formal presence neither abroad, nor at Governorate levels across Egypt.

## **16. To what extent will the skills acquired through vocational training continue to improve the living conditions of participants and their families?**

As regards participants in the vocational trainings, collected data indicate that linkages with Egyptians living abroad were not established neither during the project implementation, nor in a later stage. However, there is solid evidence that confirms the sustainability of achieved results in terms of income generating opportunities. Even if training cannot be strictly considered as income generating activities, the survey conducted by QDB 6 months after the project's end shows that a significant number of trainees improved their salary or found a job, and this regardless of the training type. This is also confirmed by the focus group conducted in the framework of the evaluation, more than 2 years and half later: 15 out of 16 participants in the focus group are currently employed, some of them have employed other workers, others have enlarged their business and diversified the production (tailoring). Furthermore, participants affirmed having not experienced any crises that limited the continuity of their business and did not identify any factor limiting the sustainability of their businesses, citing high demand and low competition in the areas where they operate.

## **5.7 Transversal**

### **Transversal - Have lessons learnt, best or promising practices of the intervention been established?**

The evaluation has not singled out any best or promising practices established by the project. However, a number of lessons learnt were identified:

- It is necessary to ensure temporal continuity between different editions of the project, or between projects that have clear points in common. The lack of such continuity has the consequence of losing the historical memory of previous project's editions due to changes in the actors involved.
- The donor must make sure that a "critical" monitoring of the intervention is in place and not limit its supervision to execution of project activities. An appropriate monitoring system is crucial to detect deviations or difficulties that may represent a risk for the achievement of project's results.
- Special attention must be paid to cases when sub-contracting involves different actors at different levels, as in the case of the ILDEA II vocational training. In such circumstances, the actor managing sub-contracts must ensure that project's implementing organisations have access to transparent information and must provide periodic updates and coordination.
- ILDEA II had a steering committee, a formal space that periodically brought together the project members, with the aim of ensuring high-level discussion and decision-making. To ensure its proper functioning, specific technical support and project monitoring must be ensured.



## 6. Conclusions

The evaluation conclusions are presented by criterion.

### Relevance

The design of ILDEA II is very relevant for the GoE's needs as well as for those of a large part of the Egyptian diaspora interested in the development of its country of origin. However, during the project implementation, these needs were not always taken into due account. In fact, the development of the diaspora communication and engagement strategy did not rely on a sound needs' assessment and consultations only involved a few Egyptian migrants in Italy although the Egyptian diaspora is overwhelmingly based in the Gulf countries.

Moreover, during the project implementation, an additional element was introduced to the intervention's logic: the fight against irregular migration. To this end, it was agreed to deliver income generating activities in a governorate characterised by irregular migration heading to Europe. However, the choice of Sohag did not meet this requirement. In addition, while for vocational trainings in Sohag jobs on high demand were correctly identified, the lack of a gender approach resulted in reiterated gender segregation in employment.

Concerning human rights, ILDEA II was instrumental to improving access to decent work, facilitated by strategic partnerships that contributed to a better achievement of such goals.

Equity was not taken into sufficient consideration, as despite the fact that trainings were delivered free of cost, elements related to the risk of exclusion, such as poverty, disability or widowhood were not taken into account for the selection of trainees.

### Coherence

Although there are few funded interventions promoting diaspora engagement, ILDEA II has a high degree of coherence with several initiatives promoting local development, especially the ones led by the GoE or funded by the Italian cooperation. In spite of this, ILDEA II did not create any synergy with them, neither at national level, nor at Sohag governorate level, where the vocational trainings took place.

### Efficiency

ILDEA II had sufficient capacities to overcome the serious drawbacks suffered during the implementation and could spend a significant share of the budget.

The project design foresaw the implementation, almost at the same time, of interconnected activities, which produced a domino effect when difficulties arose.

IOM, despite being the UN agency specialised on migration, had a weak role in providing guidance on issues that were fundamental for the successful implementation of the project, such as the involvement of the Egyptian diaspora in Italy, the choice of a governorate with high irregular migration, and the definition of appropriate selection criteria for trainees.

In 2020, IOM experienced personnel issues (due to the above-mentioned internal revision of the salary scale), that were exacerbated by the COVID 19 and resulted in a poor capacity to manage the intervention, especially between February 2020 and February 2021.

The role of MSMEDA in the intervention was residual as it didn't have the capacity to directly deliver the training. Several subcontracting layers that characterised the delivery of this activity jeopardised

the capacity to monitor the implementation of the vocational training providers and resulted in the low efficiency of this activity.

The project steering committees were strategic spaces to address critical issues and to provide an official endorsement of agreements negotiated in advance; however, they were not always effective in timely addressing all the sensitive topics of the project.

Solutions provided to overcome these situations were appropriate and consisted in conducting a closer monitoring of the project, applying for project's reformulations and no cost extensions, and ensuring dedicated human resources.

### **Effectiveness**

The project successfully implemented several activities that achieved large part of the results foreseen at output level, but some weaknesses in involving external actors limited the achievement of the project outcomes.

Among the most important outcomes achieved, it is worth citing the new diaspora communication and engagement policy framework and the strengthening of GoE's capabilities to promote and facilitate investment and business opportunities for Egyptian expatriates.

The expected commitment of the Egyptian expatriate communities in Italy to implementing income generation and employment promotion projects in Egypt was far to be attained, due to the weak participatory process and the lack of a structured diaspora engagement strategy implemented by the intervention.

### **Sustainability**

The project succeeded in laying a cornerstone for dealing with the diaspora in the but the institutional actors, i.e. MoSEEA and MSMEDA, benefitted to a very limited extent from the project results over the medium and long term. In particular, the capacities built were not sufficiently harnessed to facilitate the diaspora engagement. In this vein, even if the GoE is launching ambitious initiatives, they are not based on a defined strategy, their results are not analysed and there is not a clear involvement of the Egyptians living abroad in the definition of priorities. The organisational sustainability of the intervention was never subject to an assessment, neither in the project proposal, nor during the implementation and additional support should have been ensured after the end of the project to operationalise diaspora policies. The recent merge of the MoSEEA with MFA can potentially entail a more consistent leadership in this domain.

The income generating activities conducted in Sohag are highly sustainable since final beneficiaries are still benefiting from vocational trainings' outcomes, but without any clear linkage with Egyptians expatriates.

### **Impact**

Due to the low level of appropriation from the GoE, the impact that the project had on reinforcing its capacities is very limited, which do not ensure the consolidation of efforts to involve Egyptian expatriates in the country's development.

Participants in vocational trainings experienced significant positive change in their lives, since they improved the wealth of their households and increased savings for future investments. Such effects are likely to last longer, but, again, without any clear support by Egyptians living abroad. In addition, the lack of a more structured approach toward local development did not bring about any impacts on a more generalized improvement of living conditions In target areas.

## 7. Recommendations

This section presents the recommendations resulting from the evaluation results. They are addressed to IADC and the Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (*Direzione Generale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo del Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale* – DGCS).

1. Acknowledge the political will of the GoE and its actual leadership capacity to promote diaspora engagement. These conditions need to be in place:
  - Verify the GoE's interest in conducting a mapping of Egyptian communities and leaders in Italy, together with their needs assessment.
  - Based on the diaspora's needs assessment, verify the GoE's interest in identifying synergies with other funded development initiatives and promoting diaspora engagement.
  - Ensure that the minimum conditions for the implementation of the intervention are in place: first and foremost, technical and institutional stability, as well as the capacity of the actors involved.
  - Provide funding to further strengthen GoE capacities and identify strategic development initiatives with contributions from the Egyptian diaspora in Italy. It is preferable to avoid pilot interventions to maximize interventions' impact.
2. In case of pilot projects, develop a more strategic approach to harness their potential. Specifically, the following phases should be taken into consideration:
  - Project conception: Clearly identify the hypotheses and specify the innovations introduced, such as in methodology, domains of intervention, and actors involved. Highlight the added value of the expected results and the potential for scaling up, which motivates the adoption of a pilot project.
  - Project implementation: In addition to standard periodic reports, analyze the intervention in light of the above-mentioned criteria.
  - Project evaluation: Whether evaluations are internal or external, frame them using the above-mentioned criteria throughout the entire evaluation cycle in order to influence the planning and identification phases of the interventions.
3. Ensure that IOM provides the technical leadership and management capacity expected from actors of this caliber and with these characteristics.
4. Avoid subcontracting large and strategic activities in order to ensure transparency, full control over implementation and compliance with project commitments by the actors responsible for execution.

5. Pay more attention to transversal aspects such as gender and equity at both project conception and implementation levels, especially in case of subcontracting.