



**Development Business Associates
Mid Term Evaluation Report**

**Youth Employment in Aswan (YEP)
Implemented By
CARE and WorldFish**

**Funded By
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List of Abbreviations

ABA	Aswan Businessmen Association
ASC	Aswan Agricultural Support Center
ASDF	Agriculture Services and Development Foundation
BOT	Board of Trustees
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CDA	Community Development Association
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research
Coop	Agricultural Cooperative Association
DBA	Development Business Associates
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAFRD	General Authority for Fish Resources Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
M4P	Making markets work for the poor
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MIS	Management Information System
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OIC	Office of International Cooperation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
VC	Value Chain
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WF	World Fish
YEP	Youth Employment in Aswan Project

1. Executive Summary

Aswan is one of the poorer governorates in Egypt, ranked 12th among 22 governorates on the human development index with general unemployment higher and GDP per capita lower than the national average. The Governorate extends some 480 km from north to south. Accordingly, Aswan is considered one of the longest Governorates in Egypt.

It is one of the most important tourist sites that tremendously contribute to the tourism sector and the national economy. Beside tourism, agriculture is the main activity in the governorate, which is famous for growing sugar-cane, hibiscus, wheat, henna, and dates. Total cultivated land cover 175.7 thousand feddans. Sugar-cane cultivation covers 50% of this area, followed by palm trees, then hibiscus. The governorate contributes to industries including: sugar, chemicals fertilizers, phosphate, and fish preparing and packing.

The political and economic unrest in Egypt since January 2011 have resulted in major pressure on the already fragile economy with tourism sector coming to a complete halt, factories reducing their production and accordingly laying off labor. This resulted in an increase in unemployment levels.

1.1. Youth Employment in Aswan Project

The “Youth employment in Aswan project” (YEP) funded by Swiss program under domain 2 was proposed by CARE and WorldFish (WF) in response to a call for proposal. According to the approved proposal, CARE and WF believed that despite the moment of transition and crisis in Egypt, during the post 2011 revolution period, there are also tremendous opportunities for increased income and employment for youth in the agricultural sector (defined in its broadest sense to encompass farming, animal production and fisheries). Accordingly, the goal of the program was that there will be increased and sustainable income and employment for disadvantaged youth, women and men in Aswan. The project aims to provide increased and sustainable income for 2,500 disadvantaged youth and employment for a further 4,000 youth. The program will be implemented in the districts of Edfu, Kom Ombo, Nasr El Noba and Daraw. However, the fisheries interventions are concentrated around Lake Nasser area. Lake Nasser is an artificial lake, one of the largest in the World that was established as a result of the construction of the High Dam in Aswan in the 1960s.

The total population of the target areas amounts to over 1 million (not including Lake Nasser area which is administratively not part of the four districts) with an estimated 232,300 families. Total population is predominantly rural (74%) while the split between male and female is 49% and 51% respectively.

The total funding for the project over a three year period is CHF 4.77 million. The project effectively started July 1, 2014 and is currently scheduled to be completed June 1, 2017.

1.2. Implementing Partners

CARE is an international non-government organization mandated to work with the most marginalized communities. Though starting as a relief organization, CARE shifted to rural

community development in the early 1980's, and in 2009, CARE evolved from implementing project to a program approach to achieve greater and more sustainable impact. CARE has progressively built its experience and is continuously developing its approach, having shifted from direct service provision to building the capacity of farmers and agricultural cooperatives on integrated farming techniques. CARE also introduces best practices for climate change adaptation and mitigation, organizes farmers in farmer organizations to support them in gaining better access to markets, including export markets and most recently creating links with the private sector and adopting the value chain approach.

WF, on the other hand, is an international, non-profit research organization, with its headquarters in Penang, Malaysia. It is a member of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) Consortium, a global partnership of 15 research centers dedicated to reducing poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition and ensuring more sustainable use of natural resources. WF has had a major presence in Egypt since 1998.

The intended partnership between CARE and WF is based on a complementary relationship. CARE brings its strength in understanding poverty in the Egyptian context and in reaching out to communities while WF brings not only its expertise in fish and research but also in documentation, rendering a partnership in this project ideal by bridging and linking technical with social solutions.

1.3. Assignment Mandate

Development Business Associates (DBA) was contracted to perform a mid-term evaluation of the project covering the period from January 2014 to June 2016 with an initial additional six months inception phase (January 2013 to June 2013). The aim of the mid-term evaluation is to assess whether the project is on course compared to its original design. The evaluation team will assess the effectiveness of the approaches and the progress of the project against the stated outputs and outcomes, through a participatory process that involves all stakeholders. The evaluation is expected to identify the issues and challenges affecting the efficient implementation of the project and provide recommendations for the remaining period of the project.

1.4. Evaluation Technical Approach and Methodology

Upon the selection of DBA to undertake the mid-term evaluation of YEP, DBA evaluation team reviewed the basic available documents provided by the Office of International Cooperation (OIC) in order to gain an initial understanding of the project objectives and implemented activities. Simultaneously, members of the evaluation team met with CARE and WF Cairo based personnel.

The mid- term evaluation findings and recommendations were derived from the following:

- In depth and thorough literature review of the available project produced documents (original proposal, studies, reports, monitoring and evaluation kit, MIS, etc);
- External evaluation through an initial three days field visit using focus group discussions, meetings, visits, etc. involving three main team experts, as well as, assistants; and using a set of pre-developed evaluation questions and tools; and

- Self-evaluation through a three day workshop in Aswan involving all project stakeholders in order to discuss project's challenges and come up with recommendations and alternative actions using a set of specially designed tools.

During the first visit, the evaluation team conducted 17 meetings/interviews and focus groups attended by 152 people, while the self-evaluation workshop was attended by 94 participants representing the different stakeholders. The evaluation team was conscious of the gender representation and the overall participation of women was 32%.

The self-evaluation focuses on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability for the project Design, Approach and Interventions. Based on the findings, the team came up with overall recommendations for the project, management and organization, as well as, specific recommendations for each initiative. Furthermore, immediate actions were suggested by the self-evaluation workshop participants.

1.5. Evaluation Findings

Generally, the project does not show equivalent results to the time spent from the project (almost two years). Reasons for lack of results include working on seven VCs without focusing longitudinally on all phases of each VC; organizational/management weaknesses; lack of coordination among the Partners and within project components; and limited community outreach. As a result, only 28% of the approved budget has been utilized to date. The evaluation covers the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of all aspects of the project.

1.5.1. Project Design

Statistics clearly indicate that Aswan suffers from high levels of unemployment among youth as well as high levels of poverty particularly after the drop in tourism; hence any interventions related to job creation and increased income are highly needed by Aswan communities. The fact that Aswan is predominantly an agriculture governorate, justifies that such interventions be focused on the agriculture sector at large which includes both farming and animal livestock, making the project highly relevant to the targeted community. Nonetheless, the evaluation team observed that due to the tourism recession, there is a need for employment generation and income increase for people who are over 40 years. Furthermore, a significant number of the targeted Value Chain (VC) stakeholders are also over 40 years of age.

The VC strategy is effective in achieving the intended goal of creating jobs and increasing income but not at the 6,500 target. Hence, the evaluation team suggests reducing the target to approximately 4,800 beneficiaries. The evaluation team is also concerned about the large geographical scope and the extensive number of interventions which may affect the quality of implementation. The sustainability of project interventions is planned for via Aswan Agriculture Services Center (later titled Agriculture Services and Development Foundation, ASDF). Nonetheless, for ASDF to become a strong institution requires that CARE uses its vast experience in capacity building to support in building its systems as well as building a cadre of qualified personnel. Furthermore, CARE efforts should help strengthen this new entity to be institutionally independent while continuing to have overall supervision and provide specialized support to the project. CARE should also ensure the pass over of WF technical expertise to the foundation.

1.5.2. Value Chains Direct Interventions

All VCs are relevant to the needs of the community but at different levels relative to the importance of these VCs in the community's lives. The value chain selected strategy, is an effective approach, which researches all stages of a product from the inputs to production practices, value added activities through any form of processing and marketing potentials and identifies the gaps at each stage and possible interventions. Compared to the originally planned 11 VCs, during implementation CARE in collaboration with WF identified and reviewed seven value chains namely: 1) date palms; 2) tomatoes; 3) medicinal and aromatic plants; 4) poultry; 5) sheep/ goat; 6) dairy products; and 7) fisheries and aquaculture. Aswan has a natural comparative advantage geographically in three particular VCs: fish, date palms, and goat and sheep value chains.

However, creating 4,000 jobs and increasing the income of another 2,500, is not attainable as articulated by the main partner agencies as well as stakeholders. As a result, it is recommended to cut down the target beneficiaries by 25%. To date, the project is spread too thin among seven VCs and accordingly did not tackle all phases of each VC. Hence, the evaluation team is recommending to reduce the number of VCs adopted by the project to 4 VCs (including Fish VC).

The VC studies have an extensive knowledge base and identified needed interventions; however this was not translated into an implementation plan for the whole project. Translating the VCs studies' information into a database to provide VC stakeholders with knowledge and technical information is one of ASDF's performance indicators; however it has not been achieved. Furthermore, the participants in the self-evaluation workshop expressed a forceful need for such database.

The VC staff depends on the training and exchange visits as the main methodology to change farmers, fishers and manufacturers' practices. Model farms were used but on a limited scale though it is a very effective method in persuading farmers with best practices. To date, no advocacy interventions are planned because the capacity-building component is focused on improving NGOs/Cooperatives capacities to manage economical businesses more than building advocacy groups.

The VCs initiatives to date are sporadic and do not cover all the stages of each VC which reduces the project's ability to achieve the intended performance indicators or outcomes related to the VCs. The focus was mostly on training as well as studies in the case of fish with limited interventions at the input, processing and marketing levels. In addition, it is the evaluation team's observation that not all project staff understands the VC approach. In daily management of the project, the VCs became a project component with specific activities rather than an overall strategy. Hence, the evaluation team recommends that the staff be oriented to this approach and that a project organizational and functional structure corresponds to this understanding.

1.5.3. Enabling Environment (Value Chains Support Activities)

1.1.1.1. Micro-Credit

The micro credit intervention though started disbursement of loans only as of June 2016, it is the most organized in terms of implementation steps. It also has the most clearly measured results due to its nature. It definitely caters to the needs of the poor for financing which is significant. Furthermore, it seems that micro-credit has strong linkages with the VCs since almost all borrowers are within the VCs stakeholders, yet the link between the VCs and micro-finance is unsystematic. Therefore, the evaluation team recommends strongly developing a mechanism to link both the VCs and micro credit as the funding arm. Also beneficiaries have requested to increase the loan amount from LE 5,000 to LE 10,000. Micro credit has a relatively strong chance of sustainability as it is expected to cover its administrative cost and CDAs are eager to run micro credit programs as a source of income to the CDAs itself.

To date, the project provided LE 900,000 credit capital with 2% interest rate to 3 CDAs and both Kofour and Om Shalbiah CDAs contributed LE 55,000 and 45,000 respectively to increase the capital. It is expected that the 3 micro credit grants will create 600 jobs. The three CDAs disbursed 137 loans with a total value of LE 568,000. The goat/sheep VC received the highest number of loans equal to 103 loans, followed by 27 loans to poultry representing 75% and 20% respectively of the total number of loans.

1.1.1.2. Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA)

VSLA intervention was not planned for in the project and does not correspond to community expressed needs. The VSLA was resisted by the communities, at first, as they did not know its rules. In the Egyptian Society, VSLA is built on the idea of a “Gamea” (Social Solidarity Group).

Currently, there are 4 CDAs selected and trained to organize VSLA groups and were able to persuade beneficiaries to join the groups. During the meetings and the workshop, both the CDAs and the beneficiaries expressed their appreciation of the VSLA as a financial product targeting the very poor and focusing on women.

Similar to the micro credit, VSLA's accomplishments are evident, it benefits the poor and women in particular, it is highly linked to the VCs, however in an unsystematic way. It has a high chance of sustainability due its low expenses. The self-evaluation also showed that there is an appetite among the community and the CDAs to expand in this intervention.

1.1.1.3. Entrepreneurship

In Egypt, in general entrepreneurship remains limited among the labor force and this can be partially contributed to the education system that does not encourage innovation. Aswan community is no different; hence entrepreneurship was not one of the expressed needs of the communities.

The entrepreneurship initiative was not effective in achieving the anticipated results. One of the reasons that contributed to its challenging situation is the definition and criteria of entrepreneurship adopted by the project which seems to be irrelevant to the Aswan community and agriculture sector in particular.

Accordingly, the evaluation team is reluctant to consider the entrepreneurship component under the project as being relevant to communities' needs or as an approach for job creation in the short term. The evaluation team suggests that entrepreneurship be treated as a cross cutting theme with the objective of identifying potential entrepreneurs from the VCs direct stakeholders since it cannot be disconnected from the VCs.

1.1.1.4. CDAs Capacity Building

The project's main strategy for achieving the needed job opportunities and increased income is the VC approach which requires the mobilization of all social parties to expand community outreach. Also, with the wide geographical scope and the desire to increase chances of sustainability, partnership with local CDAs becomes a must. The capacity building of partner CDAs is essential for them to understand the VC approach and to be able to manage profitable businesses related to the VCs. The evaluation team did not recognize any efforts exerted in explaining the concept to the CDAs to ensure that their projects work in the same line. On the other hand, the project provided the CDAs and Coops with generic training on business management, good governance, proposal writing, gender issues and conducting simple feasibility studies. It is worth noting that the process of selecting the partner CDAs was transparent and efficient

The project until date did not act on linking the CDAs or Coops with each other and coaching them to work on advocacy programs related to their constituencies especially the Coops law and the fishing laws enforcement.

1.1.1.5. Zero Interest Loans - Cooperatives

To date, 10 Coops received zero interest loans with a total value of LE 1.1 million to finance different business projects. 5 out of the 10 coops are using or plan to use the money as micro credit loan capital, of which 4 coops are targeting sheep/ goat and poultry breeders and one is targeting women who produce hand made products from palm trees.

The Coops needed an incentive to start investing their available resources to implement new interventions or expand existing ones. The zero-interest loans mechanism was the project's tool to incentivize Coops to take the risk of going into business. The zero interest loans are effective in building businesses related to value added activities of the target VCs via working with the cooperatives because of their available dormant capital and their business capacities.

The efficiency of the zero-interest loan requires both technical and financial management to set clear rules and systems to be applied on all recipients and documented in manuals. The fact that the loans are at zero-interest rate results in depreciation of the capital; thus affecting sustainability.

1.1.1.6. Cross Cutting - Gender

Empowering women and integrating them as active participants in the economy is essential to promote economic growth in Egypt. The 2015 Global Gender Gap Index, which measures disparities between men and women across countries, ranks Egypt at 136 out of 145 countries worldwide. Unemployment rate is 24% among females compared to 9.6% among males.

Aswan Governorate is no different than the rest of Egypt. Women are highly involved in household and animal breeding as well as agriculture related activities, and although contribute to their families' economies they are not considered income earners.

The interventions that contributed the most, by virtue of its nature, to the involvement of women were the VSLA followed by micro credit (49% of the borrowers to date). The project dedicated some activities and interventions as well as a Specialist to promote the concepts and culture of Gender type. In spite of the challenges, the project team attempted to overcome some of the challenges through establishing youth committees within the Coops that includes women representatives with the hope that some of the women can be encouraged to run for the board elections in the future.

1.5.4. Monitoring and Evaluation/MIS

An M&E consultant was commissioned early July 2015 for the development of the M&E system. The system has 4 levels: 1) Monthly reports to monitor project progress toward activities as detailed in the project action plan and output level indicators and determine if targets are being met in a timely manner; 2) Annual surveys to collect quantitative and qualitative information regarding stakeholders' satisfaction and feedback; 3) Annual consultation to come up with qualitative information to monitor outcome and output level indicators; and 4) Midterm review/evaluation to measure longer-term impact and provide actionable recommendations to improve the quality of the project in the remaining time.

Starting April 2016, a new tabular excel reports system was used that included most of the information in the previous template but with more details on beneficiaries for each activity. Data entry into the M&E system is the second stage that allows for preparing reports. Data entry started just few months before the evaluation approximately in July 2016 entering new and old data as available.

Reporting on job creation is not quite accurate, for example counting all recipients of micro-credit as new job opportunities, counting the 15 sheep breeders who received good breed lambs to improve sheep varieties as new jobs. It is essential to have clear criteria for counting jobs. Also the project has problems reporting on income increase and the evaluation team believes that one reason is lack of follow-up, for example, recipients of training on best practices are not monitored to know whether they adopted these practices or not and how it affected their income.

It is worth noting that the project could not report on indicators for output 2.1 "The ASDF facilitates the access of stakeholders along the selected value chains to technical and market

information” as well as indicator related to advocacy “NGOs and Cooperatives jointly develop advocacy strategies including policy recommendations” under output 2.4.

In general, the information available in the M&E system mainly focuses on activities, while the process is not described. The reports to date hardly support management in decision making as the linkage between the activities and the output level indicators has not been adequately filled in.

1.5.5. Project Management/Organizational Structure

The program intended that all interventions will be implemented by the Agricultural Services Development Foundation (ASDF), referred to in the proposal as Agriculture Services Center (ASC), with the technical support of CARE. It was anticipated that ASDF will act as a catalyst for change, a facilitator and a technical support center for all stakeholders along selected value chains.

The role of ASDF as a model social enterprise that will eventually provide services for a fee in order to achieve financial sustainability is not clear. All of the positions are serving a specific development intervention with no overall VC/Market related approach. The current personnel are development personnel with very limited private sector/business management. Marketing support is provided through a part time employee.

The current set up is also lacking any field level personnel at the target areas/districts level. The setup consists of specialists in different areas related to the interventions but with no community outreach arms. This resulted in very limited follow up of the project beneficiaries and community mobilization abilities. The components, however, that were implemented through NGOs/Cooperatives namely micro credit, VSLA and zero interest loans were the most successful due to the dependence on local village based CDAs/Cooperatives who know their communities, an approach that CARE has traditionally used in most of its projects in Egypt. Interventions that were implemented directly by CARE/ASDF personnel were less successful in terms of monitoring and outreach abilities.

ASDF is still weak as an institution as it has no effective Board of Trustees (BOT). The capacities of the staff are limited with respect to private/business approach. The roles of CARE and ASDF are entangled which confuses project personnel. In addition, since limited or no funds were disbursed through the Foundation, the financial and administrative systems of ASDF have not been tested.

The project official start date was July 2014 but effectively started September 2014. During the past period, staff turnover in the different positions was high. Certain positions remained empty 8 months such as ASDF Manager.

ASDF needs to have a strong Executive Director who comes from a Private sector/business background in order to be able to play an active role in turning ASDF into a truly business oriented social enterprise. Currently, this position does not exist. The Executive Director should be accountable to a strong BOT that includes representatives from the private sector. The first task of the Executive Director should be to finalize and present to the BOT a viable business plan for the Foundation.

Immediate actions should be taken to build the financial, administrative and technical capacities of ASDF. A new BOT has to be appointed to fully represent the stakeholders.

Coordination is lacking in the project. CARE and WF work separately. There is no mechanism for communication among different CARE/ASDF project components; therefore coordination is on individual basis. To facilitate communication and strengthen coordination between WF and other components of the project, self-evaluation workshop participants suggested that ASDF would second a coordinator to WF who has experience in marketing and community development to assist WF in these areas.

Coordination exists between certain project components such as micro-finance and capacity building. However, according to project staff, coordination among the project components is weak and not planned due to the absence of a communication mechanism and the absence of ASDF manager for a long period. They emphasized that complementarities and coordination among project components is an important strategy to reduce effort and speed up achievements.

1.5.6. YEP Financial Status as of June 2016 (in CHF)

The approved project budget over a three year period is CHF 4.77 million of which CHF 2.55 million was transferred to CARE as the lead organization. After two years of actual implementation, total expenses as of June 2016 amounts to CHF 1,328,649 (including CHF 202,058 commitments) representing only 27.9% of the approved total YEP budget. The understanding is a consequence of the slow implementation of activities.

1.6. Evaluation Recommendations

1.6.1. Overall Recommendations

- The evaluation team realized, from the literature review and later from meetings, that the project design is overly ambitious and complicated. The implemented project activities were sporadic and lack focus. Setting the ultimate indicator for achieving the project's goal as number of new jobs and persons with increased income resulted in project management and staff fixation on these specific indicators regardless whether they fit within the project's main strategy which is value chain. Hence it is recommended that the project management and the donor revisit the following 4 issues:
 - Revise the overall goal to reflect the uniqueness of this project lying in its VCs strategy. The current implementation approach was focusing on any activity that would generate a job regardless of whether it fits within the VC strategy. In order to remedy this distraction, all project resources should be directed to achieve the final goal via the VC approach. One suggestion is to modify the overall goal to be "Sustainable income and employment in Aswan via enhancement of value chains".
 - Review the logical framework to clearly indicate that both outcomes are under the umbrella of the value chain strategy: Outcome (1) reflects direct interventions in the VCs and Outcome (2) reflects initiatives supporting the VC (Enabling Environment). All project initiatives should as of the coming period focus their activities only on the selected VCs. First, the ASDF initiative/component should concentrate on building a knowledge database and implementing a social enterprise

related to the selected VCs as a model. Second, micro finance should continue to target with its micro-loans and VSLA groups the stakeholders of the selected VCs which is the case now where almost all loans are directed to goat/sheep and poultry VCs. Third, the entrepreneurship initiative should concentrate its efforts on detecting potential entrepreneurs within the VCs stakeholders and providing them with the necessary information, generic and specialized training, mentoring, marketing support and possibly finance.

- Concentrate on 4 VCs namely: fish, palm dates, goat/ sheep and poultry. Fish, palm dates and the sheep/goat value chains are from the most popular VCs in Aswan due to Aswan's comparative advantage in these chains as well as their significant contributions to employment and the economy. The poultry value chain, though not popular, targets the poor and specifically women; in addition, the project has invested efforts in this chain over the past period.
 - Focus on specific villages or districts where the selected VCs are predominant.
- Expand the target beneficiaries' age bracket to 18 – 50 years, due to reduction in tourism activities and the current recession.
 - Reduce the job creation and increased income total target by 25% from 6,500 to approximately 4,800, since actual achievements to date are: 595 new jobs by CARE/ASDF and 29 by WF. (There are difficulties in tracking increased income levels).
 - Merge between new job opportunities and increased income targets into one. Accordingly, the overall intended target indicator for the project should be 4,800 new jobs/increased income to avoid duplication in tracking the achieved results and the confusion in the definitions.
 - Review the project organizational structure to address organizational and management issues discussed earlier in the report. Below is the evaluation team suggested structure including WF staffing. Main features of this structure are:
 - CARE has to play a strong role as the overall manager of the project which was foreseen as indicated by the project budget. It's role should include: overall supervision of the project, quality control, M&E at the project level incorporating WF work, marketing support, capacity building support mainly for ASDF as an institution as well as human resources, financial support, and any other specialized expertise needed by the project and available at CARE.
 - Institutionalization of ASDF to help it attain its independence by the end of the project. This is done via: restructuring of the BOT to be effective, and moving current ASDF staff from CARE's payroll to ASDF. ASDF should invest in building the staff capacities; and establishing the social enterprise.
 - Add field promoters to the project structure under ASDF to ensure better community outreach
 - Add technical/community staff to WF field operation to support WF in implementing immediate interventions that are felt by the stakeholders which has not taken place to date.
 - Extend the project life time (at no cost increase) to end December 2018, to be able to fulfill its goals and build on the investments done until date; this allows the project management to deal with suggested adjustments.

- Establish a platform to unify understanding among all staff and develop a mechanism to guarantee the transfer of the project's concepts, approaches and methodologies to new staff members via an Arabic brief on project design after adjustments.
- Develop a detailed implementation plan with specific tasks and time line. The plan should take into consideration the outcomes from the self-evaluation workshop and the seasonality aspects of all VCs. (All the workshop detailed notes are available in Arabic upon request.)
- Develop an operational and financial policy for the zero interest loans program and documenting it in a manual. These policies need to cover: the duration of the loan, repayment rules, CDAs and Coops' contribution, implementation period and rescheduling criteria, verification of results...etc. This will improve the program efficiency and financial accountability.
- Strengthen the community outreach and participation in the project by building systemized communication channels (the employment of field promoters in the new recommended organization can help achieve this). This will develop the community's sense of ownership toward the project as well as making project management and staff accountable to the community.

1.6.2. Specific Recommendations for Project Organization and Management:

- Define job descriptions for all positions to avoid overlaps and identify authority lines.
- Quality control for project systems, mechanisms and documentation, one of CARE's major roles.
- Develop a prompt decision making mechanism particularly as the project is related to agriculture and livestock seasonality. Any delays may result in losing the season and having to wait for next year.
- Establish well defined communication mechanism to facilitate work flow and efficient linkages between interventions which is essential for achieving the intended results. Following are some of the specific communication channels that must be addressed:
 - CARE and WF Cairo
 - CARE Agriculture Director and all required CARE support staff from inside and outside the Agriculture program
 - CARE and ASDF (board of trustees, management and staff)
 - ASDF and WF Aswan
 - ASDF board trustees and management
 - ASDF and advisory committee
 - ASDF and relevant government agencies
 - ASDF staff with each other at the horizontal level
 - ASDF management and ASDF staff
 - ASDF M&E and all other officers in particular
 - ASDF and partner NGOs
 - ASDF and VCs beneficiaries

- Capitalize on the long experience and vast knowledge base of Dr. Olfat Anwar , WF manager in Aswan by providing her with needed human resources and equipment to support fishermen directly and have a wide impact on them.
- Build a cadre of technical persons related to fish VC under the supervision of Dr. Olfat .

1.6.3. Specific Recommendations for ASDF Organization and Management:

- Restructure the board of trustees to include representatives of farmers, breeders, fishers, aquaculture owners, private sector business, marketing experts and whoever the foundation sees as useful in activating the board and setting ASDF's policies and values and guarantee good governance.
- Clarify the role of ASDF in the project versus CARE
- Formulate a business plan as soon as possible
- Establish a social enterprise to fulfill one of ASDF's major roles which requires hiring a qualified person with a private sector background. The evaluation team strongly emphasizes that the social enterprise manager have significant expertise in the private sector management even though this may be costly.
- Team building to boost interpersonal relationships and raise morale
- Refine the M&E system to produce the needed managerial and donor reports and provide the M&E officer with delegated authority to request all other staff collaboration in filling in monitoring tools on a timely manner
- Prepare monthly detailed progress reports by officers to be compiled at the level of Aswan. A quarterly report should be raised by ASDF manager to the board of trustees and Care Egypt.
- Ensure that new hiring be from Aswan as much as possible for sustainability, upgrading of local expertise and community linkages.
- Organize a workshop to explain the project to all staff and partners, build a common understanding, mechanisms for collaboration and discuss beneficiaries' selection criteria. An Arabic summary of the proposal and notes of the self-evaluation workshop can be a reference to this workshop
- Organize a self-evaluation process biannually to identify accomplishments and encourage the staff to produce high quality outputs.
- Fill in all vacant positions.
- Promote ASDF's values, mission and objectives among all staff members.
- Build a network with similar organizations for exchange of expertise.
- Cooperate with the employment observatory established by Aswan governorate with the assistance of GIZ.

1.6.4. Specific Recommendations for the Advisory Committee:

- Review and restructure the advisory committee membership to include 3 representatives from the fish VC (fisherman, fish manufacturer/trader and aquaculture farms' representative), prominent farmers and breeders from the selected VCs stakeholders, ABA representative, SDF representative, ex. Director of the Agriculture Directorate in Aswan Ms. Mofida and more private business persons to act as a knowledge resource.

- Incorporate a delegate of Aswan's governor in the advisory committee to impact government policies and decisions to the benefit of the project.
- Reach a common understanding of the committee's role among its members and project staff and ASDF representative leading role.
- Organize a regular meeting place that can be reached by project beneficiaries if needed and set a specific schedule for meetings.
- Report on all meetings and specify tasks to be done and responsible persons for follow-up.

2. Context and Objectives

2.1. Background

Aswan is one of the governorates of South Upper Egypt region. It is the southern gate of Egypt and the liaison between northern and southern parts of the Nile Valley and between Egypt and Africa as well. Aswan boundaries include Luxor in the North, the Red Sea in the East, New Valley and the Western Desert in the West. It is situated 880 km south of Cairo, with a total area of 62,726 km², and a total population of 1.49 million people (2016 estimates). The Governorate extends some 480 km from north to south. Accordingly, Aswan is considered one of the longest Governorates in Egypt. The Governorate provides the link between Egypt and Sudan, and further on to the African continent. As such, Aswan has been an important trade centre over the centuries. Population density is 19.3 people per Km². It includes 5 districts known as Markaz, comprising around 98 villages, and 357 hamlets.

Agriculture is the main activity in the governorate, which is famous for growing sugar-cane, hibiscus, wheat, henna, and dates. Total cultivated lands cover 175.7 thousand feddans. Sugar-cane cultivation covers 50% of this area, followed by palm trees, then hibiscus. The governorate contributes as well in industry through many industries such as: sugar, chemicals fertilizers, phosphate, and fish preparing and packing.

Aswan, unlike most other Governorates in Egypt, includes several ethnic groups and different tribes. The most common ethnic groups are Nubians and Saaydis (Upper Egyptians). The two groups have different cultural background and accordingly comingling and marriage among them is very limited. Even within the resettled Nubians, there are variations and cultural differences that represent a challenge for any development effort. On one hand, Nubians are tribes that were forced to migrate from their home lands due to the construction of the Dam on the Nile in 1960. The majority of Nubians who were forced to give up their homes and land more than 50 years ago were mostly resettled among 46 villages in Nasr el-Nuba and Kom Ombo districts. However, instead of their highly fertile land that needed limited effort, Nubians were compensated with newly reclaimed land. Aswan is one of the poorer governorates in Egypt, ranked 12th among 22 governorates on the human development index with general unemployment higher and GDP per capita lower than the national average¹.

Aswan is one of the most important tourist sites that tremendously contribute to the tourism sector and the national economy. Having a great heritage of temples and archeological highlights made historical and cultural tourism in the governorate to top the governorate's activities. The governorate hosts different historical eras; Pharoanic, Roman, Coptic, and Islamic. This is in addition to the natural protectorates namely: Wadi el-Alaky, Salouga and Gazal Islands that have a wealth of plants, birds, animals and natural resources.

UNDP Human Development Report for 2010 stated unemployment rate among youth (age 15 – 29 both sexes) is 22.6% (16.1% among males and 42.8% among females) based on 2009 survey an increase from the 19.1% in 2006. Unemployment is highest among the post secondary institute graduates followed by university graduates for men and technical secondary graduates for women. UNDP HD Report 2010 states, that the reality is that neither higher education nor

¹ GDP in Aswan per capita in 2007/2008 is estimated at EGP 7059.4 annually (approximately USD 800) compared to EGP 10,246 (USD 1'160) at the national average.

technical and vocational training have offered a critical level of skill enhancement that qualify young people in search for jobs in the formal sector.

The political and economic unrest in Egypt since January 2011 have resulted in major pressure on the already fragile economy with tourism sector coming to a complete halt, factories reducing their production and accordingly laying off laborers, daily laborers suffering greatly from the general unrest in the economy at large. This resulted in an increase in unemployment levels.

2.2. Swiss Programme in Egypt

In order to support the transition to democracy and the economic development in Egypt, the Swiss Federal Council decided on March 11th, 2011 to considerably increase Switzerland's activities in Egypt in the medium term.

The Swiss programme for Egypt for the period 2011-2016 responds to the priorities on the ground and concentrates on three domains:

- Domain 1 - Transition towards democracy and human rights;
- Domain 2 - Economic development and employment;
- Domain 3 - Migration and protection.

For the past four years, Switzerland has been engaged in diverse projects within Domain 2 of the Programme North Africa: job creation and strengthening of the private sectors, improvement of investment in climate and competitiveness as well as access to basic public infrastructure and services. More specifically, the programme is responding to the considerable economic challenges, particularly in terms of youth employment. It aims to provide young women and men with the economic perspectives through pro-employment market growth and entrepreneurship promotion in high-growth value chains.

2.3. Youth Employment in Aswan Project

The “Youth employment in Aswan project” funded by Swiss program under domain 2 was proposed by CARE and WF in response to a tender. According to the approved proposal, CARE and WF believed that despite the moment of transition and crisis in Egypt, during the post 2011 revolution period, there are also tremendous opportunities for increased income and employment for youth in the agricultural sector (defined in its broadest sense to encompass farming, animal production and fisheries). Accordingly, the goal of the program was that there be increased and sustainable income and employment for disadvantaged youth, women and men in Aswan. The project aims to provide increased and sustainable income for 2,500 disadvantaged youth and employment for a further 4,000 youth. The program will be implemented in the districts of Edfu, Kom Ombo, Nasr El Noba and Daraw.

The total funding for the project over a three years period is CHF 4.77 million. The project effectively started July 1, 2014 and is currently scheduled to be completed June 1, 2017.

2.4. The implementing Partners:

CARE is an international non-government organization mandated to work with the most marginalized communities. Though starting as a relief organization, CARE shifted to rural community development in the early 1980's, and in 2009, CARE evolved from implementing project to a program approach to achieve greater and more sustainable impact. CARE has progressively built its experience and is continuously developing its approach, having shifted from direct service provision to building the capacity of farmers and agricultural cooperatives on integrated farming techniques, to introducing best practices for climate change adaptation and mitigation, to organizing farmers in farmer organizations to supporting farmers in gaining better access to markets, including export markets and most recently creating links with the private sector and adopting the value chain approach. In addition to its headquarters based in Cairo, CARE has five field offices in Upper Egypt. This geographical focus has allowed CARE to continuously build on achievements and work with partners to reach more ambitious objectives.

WF is an international, non-profit research organization, with its headquarters in Penang, Malaysia. It is a member of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) Consortium, a global partnership of 15 research centers dedicated to reducing poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition and ensuring more sustainable use of natural resources. WF has had a major presence in Egypt since 1998.

The intended partnership between CARE and WF is based on a complementary relationship. CARE brings its strength in understanding poverty in the Egyptian context and in reaching out to communities while WF brings not only its expertise in fish and research but also in documentation, rendering a partnership in this project ideal by bridging and linking technical with social solutions.

2.5. Assignment Mandate

DBA was contracted to perform a mid-term evaluation of the project covering the period from January 2013 to June 2016 in addition to an initial six months inception phase. The aim of the mid-term evaluation is to assess whether the project is on course compared to its original design. The evaluation team will assess the effectiveness of the approaches and the progress of the project against the stated outputs and outcomes. The evaluation team, through a participatory process that involves all stakeholders, should identify the issues and challenges affecting the efficient implementation of the project and provide recommendations for the remaining period of the project.

Following are the details of the assignment mandate that the mid-term evaluation team covered:

Effectiveness of the approaches of the project:

- The appropriateness and effectiveness of the project intervention approaches to achieve the target of increased and sustainable income for 2,500 disadvantaged youth and employment for a further 4,000 youth
- Evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the project strategies and interventions (i.e. value chains selected)
- The value chain assessment and the identification of the market gaps
- The effectiveness and appropriateness of the project current management systems and tools
- The capacity to establish a sound relation to local communities
- Local capacity being built according to the targets/ goals
- The effectiveness of the communication and promotion of the project's main activities and results
- The utilization of the project funding as per the agreed work plan to achieve the projected targets.
- The manuals of procedure, mechanisms of utilization, monitoring systems, the set-up of the credit components during the project and the sustainability past the project's lifetime.

Achievement of the outputs and the outcomes of the project:

- The degree to which the project outputs are achieved – analyzing successes, failures and efficiency.
- The target group who actually benefited from the project compared to the target group defined in the technical proposal.
- Assess the feasibility and the robustness of the monitoring system
- Assess the interventions used to stimulate job creation (the business model and the cost per job created)

Evaluation of the organizations:

- The capacity of the implementing organizations to achieve the target results (current organizational set up, human resources, capacity to achieve the planned outcomes etc...)
- The governance structure in the implementing agencies
- The capacity and organizational structure of the Agricultural Services Development Foundation (ASDF), the effectiveness of the relationship with both implementing partners, and the preliminary indications of this entity to carry on activities past the project's life.
- Partnerships and collaborations: evaluate the agreements, arrangements, and working mechanisms between CARE and WF, and other local partners.

3. General Conditions of the Project Location:

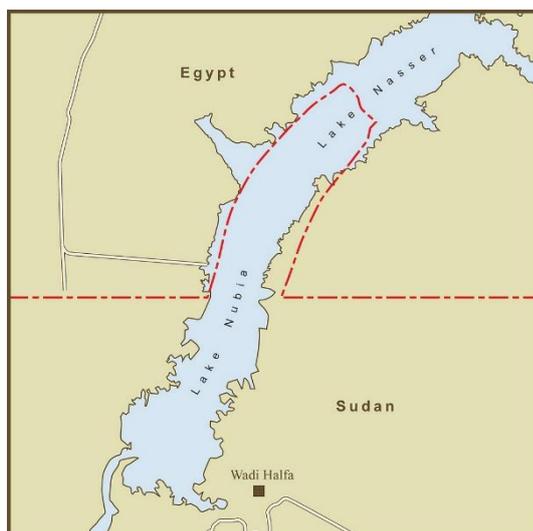
The program is implemented in the districts of Edfu, Kom Ombo, Nasr El Noba and Daraw in Aswan Governorate.



As indicated in the map, Kom Ombo, Nasr El Noba and Daraw are close to each other while Edfu is in the northern part of Aswan about 54 Km away from Kom Ombo where ASDF premise is located.

The total population of the target areas amounts to over 1 million (not including Lake Nasser area which is administratively not part of the four districts) with an estimated 232,300 families. Total population is predominantly rural (74%) while the split between male and female is 49%/51% respectively.

However, the Fisheries interventions are concentrated around Lake Nasser area. Lake Nasser is an artificial lake, one of the largest in the World, that was established as a result of the construction of the High Dam in Aswan in the 1960s. The Lake is located in southern Egypt and northern Sudan. The name “Nasser” only refers to 83% of the Lake’s territory within the Egyptian borders. The remaining 17% falls within the Sudanese borders and is usually referred to as “Lake Nubia”. The lake extends for more than 300 kilometers inside Egypt’s southern border with a shore line of over 7000 Km. The Lake has become an important source of fish for Egypt.



Several Egyptian Authorities are involved in the different aspects of the Lake. However, the General Authority for Fishery Resources Development (GAFRD) is the main Management Authority for the Lake's fish resources and is responsible for monitoring and controlling the fishery and issuance of fishing licenses starting May 2010. The High Dam authority was the formal Management Authority prior to 2010. Lake Nasser, geographically and administratively speaking, does not fall within the four target districts of the project. However, this is the main location of all the planned Fisheries interventions under the project.

The YEP program, as indicated in the approved YEP document, intended to focus on the agriculture sector, the main source of employment in Aswan. Agriculture sector was defined in the broadest sense to include farm agriculture, animal production and fisheries. This sector, broadly defined, was considered the sector with the greatest potential to provide large numbers of jobs through pro-employment market driven development.

Fisheries, on the other hand, is concentrated in Lake Nasser area with an estimated annual production of 26,000 tons. According to WF, fishing represents the main source of income for about 13,000 fishermen, 90 wholesalers and 450 retailers in addition to indirect employment opportunities. On the other hand, fish processing is one of important activities in Aswan as there are 50 centers for packing and sale of salted fish as well as 7 to 10 places for primary processing of fish. 400 people are estimated to work in fish processing. However, there are limited activities in the aquaculture area.

4. Mid Term Evaluation Technical Approach and Methodology

4.1. Literature Review

Upon the selection of DBA to undertake the mid-term evaluation of the “Youth Employment in Aswan Project”, DBA evaluation team reviewed the basic available documents provided by the Swiss program Office in order to gain an initial understanding of the project objectives and implemented activities. Simultaneously, members of the evaluation team namely Ms. Mervat Tawfik, Ms. Aziza Shal and Mr. Mohamed Abdel Hafiz, contacted the two implementing organizations namely CARE and WF and meetings were arranged with the key Cairo based personnel. The purpose of the meetings were as follows:

- gain an in depth understanding of the project;
- request additional documentation and reports that would allow the evaluation team to better understand the actual implementation level status;
- better understanding of the project from the perspective of the implementing organizations and meet the personnel directly involved in the project.

During the initial stage of the assignment, the evaluation team reviewed all of the project documents made available by the Office of International Cooperation – Swiss Embassy, CARE and WF.

Following is a summary of the reviewed project documents:

	Document Name	Date Prepared	Prepared By
General Documents			
1	Project Proposal	May-14	CARE/WF
2	Credit Proposal	Jun-14	Office of International Cooperation (OIC)
3	Action Plan at outcomes and Outputs level	Mar-16	CARE/WF
4	Annual Report	Aug-15	CARE/WF
5	High Level Assessment of the Project	Jun-16	CARE Enterprise - Francois Jung-Rozenfarb
6	Suggested Future Plan after Francois' Assessment	Jun-16	CARE
Agriculture development and Services Foundation			
7	ASDF Charter	Apr-15	CARE
8	ASDF By Laws	2016	CARE
9	ASDF Draft Plan	2015	CARE Enterprise - Francois Jung-Rozenfarb
10	ASDF Internal regulations for Funding اللائحة الداخلية للتمويل		CARE
11	ASDF Regulations for Micro		CARE

	Document Name	Date Prepared	Prepared By
	Finance		
Monitoring and Evaluation			
12	M&E System Work Plan		CARE
	Monthly Progress Reports Formats		CARE
	Semi Annual Progress Report format		CARE
	Customer and Stakeholders Satisfaction formats		CARE
	External Monitoring Arrangement		CARE
Presentations of Progress to Date			
13	Presentation of Project Progress, Challenges and Opportunities	18-Jul-16	CARE
14	Presentation of Project Progress – WF	18-Jul-16	WF
Technical Documents			
World Fish			
15	Lake Nasser Fisheries - Situation Analysis	2015	WF
16	Lake Nasser Fisheries; Recommendations for management, including monitoring and stock assessment	2015	WF
17	Study on Lake Nasser Culture Based Fisheries (First Draft)	Sept. 2015	WF
18	Aquaculture in Aswan, Upper Egypt	Jan. 2016	WF
19	Research opportunities in Fisheries Value Chain	April 2016	WF
20	Draft Review of Licensing Options and Licensing Arrangements	Sept. 2015	WF
21	Training materials prepared by WF		
Value Chain - WF			
22	Value Chain – Fisheries	2016	WF
CARE			
23	CARE Micro Finance Strategy		CARE
Value Chains - CARE			
24	Value Chain - Goats and Sheep in Aswan		CARE
25	Value Chain - Palm Dates in Aswan		CARE
26	Value Chain - Dairy Products	May 2015	CARE
27	Value Chain - Aromatic and Medicinal Plants		CARE
28	Value Chain - Dried Tomatoes		CARE
29	Value Chain – Poultry		CARE

	Document Name	Date Prepared	Prepared By
Best Practices			
27	Best Practices - Agriculture trading		CARE
28	Best Practices - Palm Dates		CARE
29	Best Practices – Poultry		CARE
30	Job Opportunites in Palm Trees and poultry		CARE
31	Black Honey Feasibility Study		CARE
32	Cooling Rooms Study	June 2016	CARE
Other Documents			
33	Contract and Annexes Between CARE and WF	Feb. 2015	
34	Financial Report (CARE and WF)	Aug. 2016	CARE

4.2. Mid Term Evaluation Methodology

Experience has shown that participatory evaluation improves project performance. Listening to and learning from project beneficiaries, field staff, and other stakeholders who know why a project is or is not working is critical to confirm the information gathered through external information sources and the views of the technical expertise involved in the evaluation. Accordingly, the evaluation team involved project staff of CARE and WF during evaluation. Advantages of the participatory process include:

- Examining relevant issues by involving key stakeholders in the mid-term review
- Fostering participants learning about the project and its effects and enhancing their understanding of other stakeholders points of view;
- Mobilizing stakeholders, enhancing teamwork and building shared commitment to act on mid-term evaluation recommendations for the second part of the project duration.
- Increasing the likelihood that the mid-term evaluation information will be used to improve program impact.

In order to achieve the required mid-term mandate as specified by the Swiss Program Office, different evaluation tools and techniques were used. Given the complexity of the project and the major challenges facing the achievement of the intended goal and outcomes, the evaluation team decided to combine an external evaluation, through an initial field visit to Aswan with a self-evaluation workshop in a second visit to the field. The participatory review was supported with active involvement of those with a stake in the project, beneficiaries, and other interested parties. A different set of tools were developed for each type of evaluation. For the external evaluation, tools included focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, while the self evaluation was undertaken through a stakeholder workshop. All stakeholders were represented and a different set of tools and activities were prepared to manage the workshop. Following are the approaches utilized, the tools used and the attendees:

4.2.1. External Evaluation – Cairo Based and Field Visit No. One (July 13 to 19, 2016):

The external evaluation is an external view of the project, its achievements to date, how those achievements were reached through the eyes of the evaluation team. The evaluation team, through review of the project documents and analysis of the project reports, followed by interviews and meetings with all the partners, stakeholders, beneficiaries and personnel involved in the project, formulated an opinion about the project outcomes and progress to date. The purpose of the interviews and meetings



were to understand the implementation mechanisms used, the results achieved as well as understand the effectiveness and efficiency of the project management.

To achieve this objective, the evaluation team developed a set of evaluation questions (main questions and sub-questions). This was followed by identification of the source of information to answer each of the identified questions and preparation of qualitative evaluation tools. The tools took into consideration the analyses and deductions obtained from all of the project documents performed by the evaluation team. Following are the steps undertaken:

- Understanding the project, its achievements and challenges through meetings and discussions with the involved personnel in CARE and ASDF as well as WF.

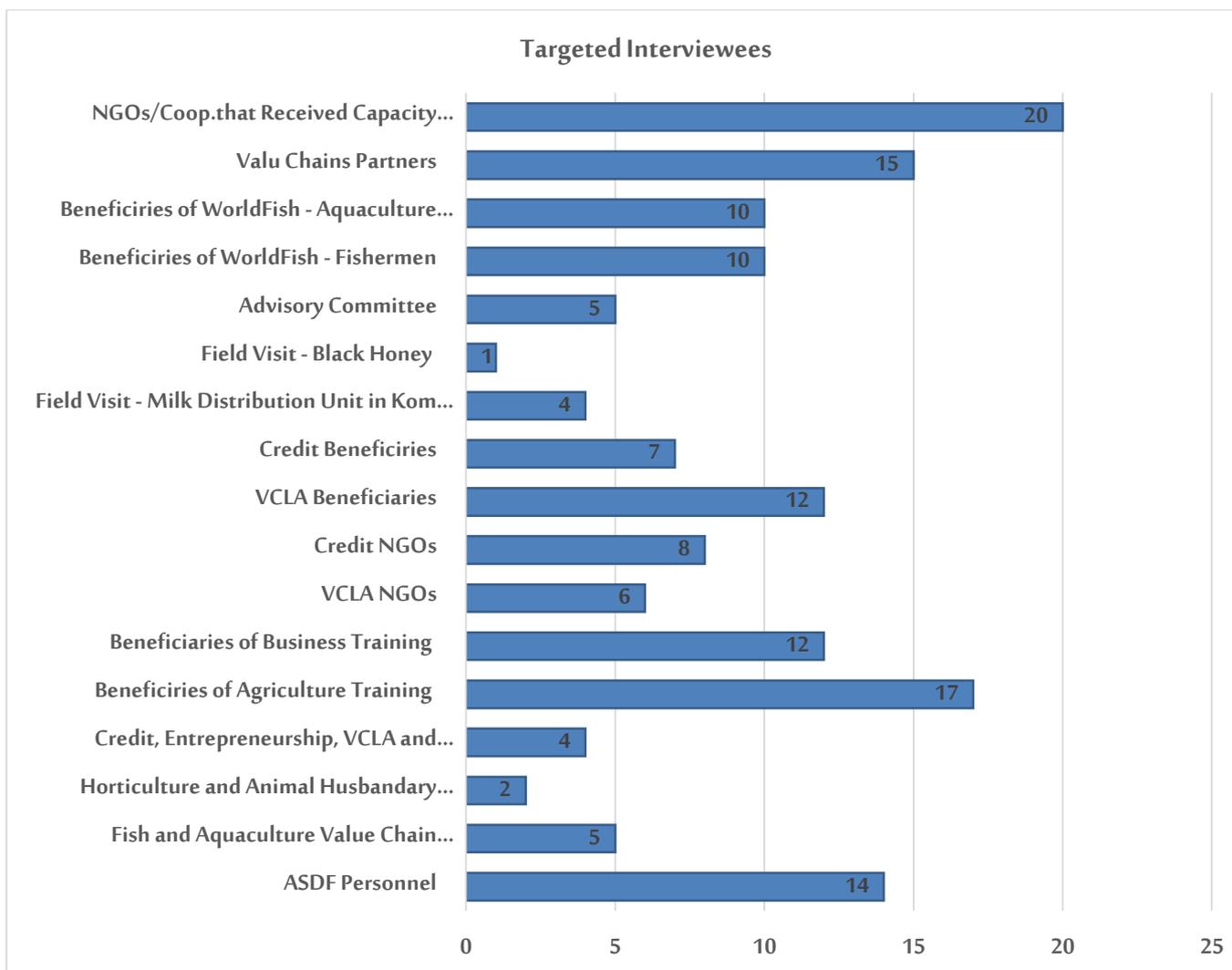
Following are the Cairo Based meetings undertaken and personnel met:

Meeting date	Personnel Attending
July 13, 2016	Office of International Cooperation, Noha Abdel Ghani
July 18, 2016	CARE Cairo Personnel, Samir Sedky, Nancy Shaker, Alaa Mostafa
	WF, Dr. Ahmed NasrAllah and Dr. Gamal Nagar

- In depth reading of the project proposal to gain a full understanding of the project's goal and outcomes that will be achieved through the implementation of a set of interventions as well as gain an understanding of the interlinking between the different interventions;
- Identifying the evaluation questions;
- Brainstorming with the project personnel on what they hope to gain from the evaluation process and their expectations about the outcomes. This exercise resulted in additional set of questions;
- Gaining an understanding of the project partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders who should participate in the evaluation process. This was followed by a categorization process in order to identify who has answers to which questions;
- Fine tuning the questions to be appropriate for addressing all of the midterm evaluation identified categories of people; and
- Preparing tools including an explanation for each tool and its intended objective, duration, target and repetitiveness of its use.

A total of 15 qualitative tools were prepared and used. (Annex I provides the detailed tools in Arabic)

The evaluation team conducted 17 focus groups/interviews attended by 152 people as follows:



The evaluation team attempted to take into consideration the gender balance. However, taking into consideration the norms and culture of the target areas, women representation was only 32.2% of the participants (49 participants out of a total of 152). Given the nature of the VSLA, VSLA beneficiaries represented the highest number among the female participants.

4.2.2. Self-Evaluation – Workshop Field Visit No. 2 (August 19 to August 24, 2016):

a) Self-Evaluation Objectives:

- Review the implementation mechanisms in order to reach an understanding about the efficiency of the project management system as well as understand the monitoring and evaluation system and its effectiveness in following up project and personnel performance;



- Identify the main challenges facing the project implementation and the used mechanisms to overcome those challenges;
- Identify the weaknesses and the strengths of the project;
- Identify the direct and indirect effects on the project beneficiaries;
- Determine the ability of the project to continue in the future;
- Come-up with lessons learnt and discuss future suggestions and vision to develop the project as well as similar interventions;

b) Self-Evaluation Approach:

During the workshop, the self-evaluation was based on several basic approaches aiming at identifying the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project as well as the effects related to the implementation of the project and its ability to be sustainable. Finally, identifying immediate actions. Following is the methodology for such approach:

Evaluation of Relevance

The participants were divided into groups (6 groups) to obtain their perception of:

- the relevance of the project to the community needs;
- how well the project design took into consideration the target beneficiaries' needs;
- whether the project represented a real need in the target communities; and
- how did the project personnel identify those needs.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

The quantitative and qualitative achievements of the project were identified compared to the planned targets. In addition, the challenges and problems that faced the implementation process were identified and how did the project overcome them through a comparison of actual versus planned targets.

Evaluation of Efficiency

Through group work, the perception of the participants by category were identified and the inputs of the project were compared to the outputs. In addition, implemented procedures and implementation steps taken to achieve the intended outputs were analyzed taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses and how to deal with them in the future.

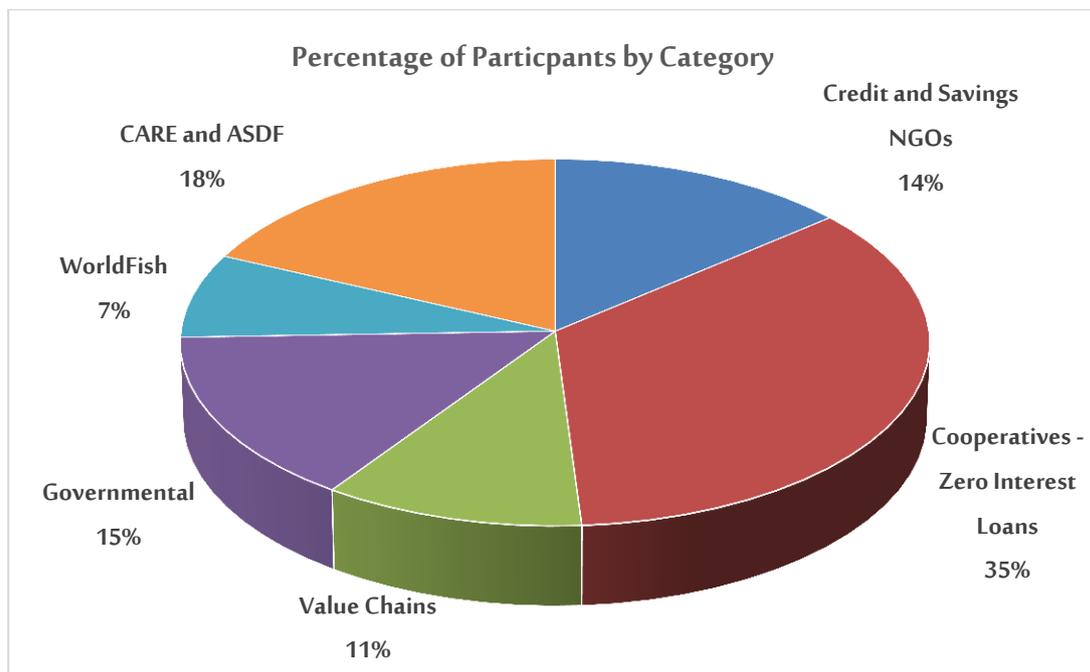
Evaluation of Sustainability

Sustainability was handled through discussions about two types of sustainability namely sustainability of impact and sustainability of inputs after completion of the project.

Target Participants for the Self Evaluation Workshop:

The self-evaluation intended to include all Project Partners in the process. Accordingly, 94 people participated in the self-evaluation workshop representing all the target categories of stakeholders including government representatives and project

personnel. Current and potential project partners were also included such as the Social Fund for Development (SFD). 6 categories participated in the workshop represented as follows:



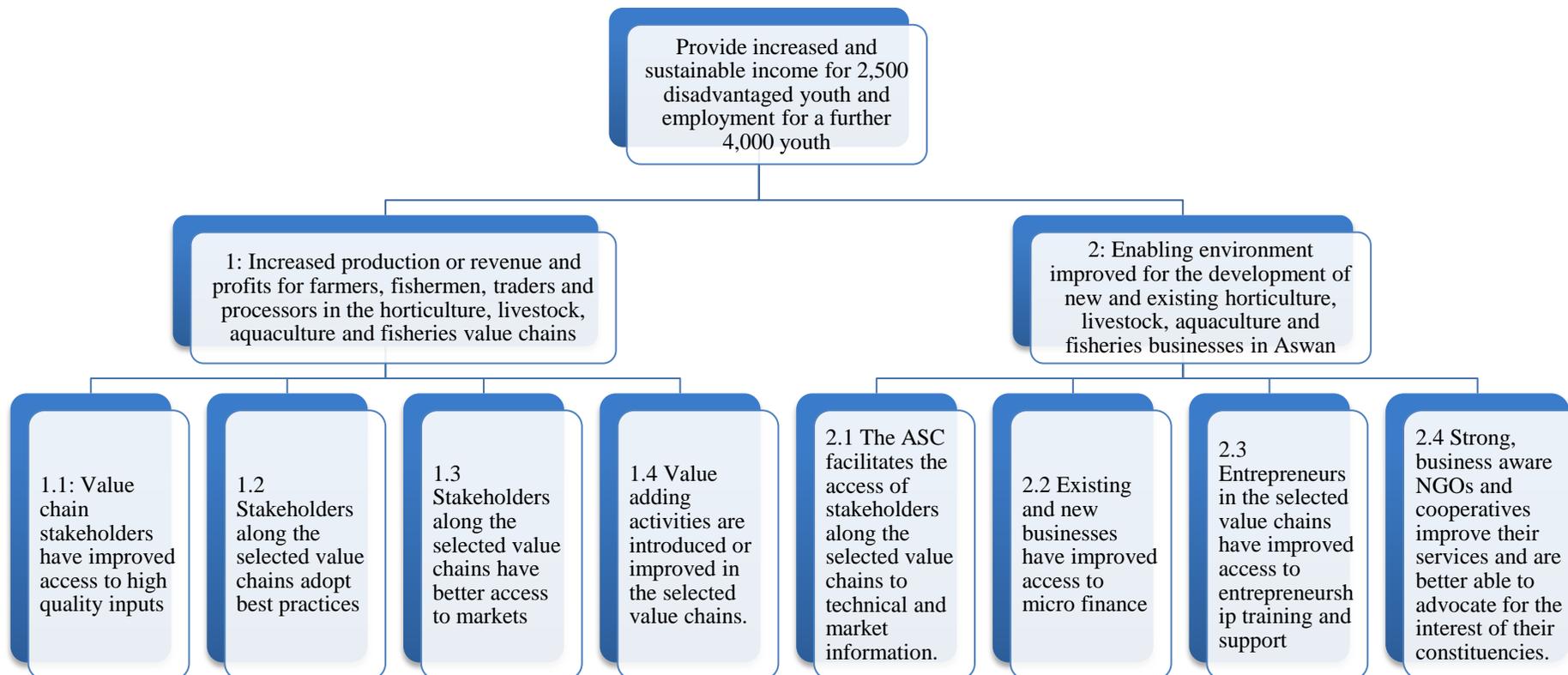
Gender balance was also taken into consideration within the participants of each category. Female representation reached 32%.

5. Mid-Term Evaluation Findings

5.1. Project Design

The goal of the program is "Increased and sustainable income and employment for youth, women and men in Aswan". The project aims to provide increased and sustainable income for 2,500 disadvantaged youth and employment for a further 4,000 youth. The program is implemented in the districts of Edfu, Kom Ombo, Nasr El Noba and Daraw.

Bellow is Project Goal, Outcomes and Outputs Chart



Relevance to Community Needs

Statistics clearly indicates that Aswan is suffering from high levels of unemployment among youth as well as high levels of poverty particularly after the drop in tourism; hence any interventions related to job creation and increased income are highly needed by Aswan communities. The fact that Aswan is predominantly an agriculture governorate, justifies that such interventions be focused on the agriculture sector at large which includes both farming and animal livestock. To activate the agriculture sector in Aswan, there is a need for all community stakeholders namely: farmers, private sector, civil society, government agencies and donors to collaborate.

The project is targeting the poor youth from age 18 – 40 years, while taking into consideration gender streamlining. The evaluation team observed that due to the tourism recession, there is a need for employment generation and income increase for people who are over the maximum age limit of 40 years. Furthermore, a significant number of the targeted value chain stakeholders who are the main target beneficiaries are older than this age bracket.

Effectiveness

The value chain selected strategy, is an effective approach, which researches all stages of a product from the inputs to production practices, value added activities through any form of processing and marketing potentials. The strategy identifies the gaps at each stage and possible interventions. The value chain mobilizes all sectors of the society from farmers, animal breeders, existing and new private sector and cooperatives, as suppliers of inputs, processors or manufacturers and whole sale and retail traders in existing or new markets as well as NGOs as providers of knowledge and technical support, finance and acting by themselves as business centers. The government role with the support of the civil society is to provide the enabling environment for value chain interventions to take place and succeed in providing job opportunities and increase income of those working in the targeted value chains.

The project concept is divided basically into two outcomes with corresponding results and activities: 1) direct VCs interventions and 2) Enabling environment, or in other words VCs Support functions. The enabling environment includes: 1) establishment of Agriculture Services and Development (ASDF) Foundation as the main implementing arm and sponsor of all VCs' activities (organizational/management function) ; 2) micro-finance to VCs stakeholders (funding intervention); 3) entrepreneurship; and 4) NGOs capacity building aiming at establishing businesses related to the VCs (using the zero interest loans) and strengthening NGOs advocacy capabilities. However, for implementation purposes, the Enabling Environment outcome was not fully linked to the VC strategy and intervention. CARE's management and staff decided to divide the project into components; however, this resulted in the loss of the overall strategy of the project which is based on the VC approach.

The project aims at achieving developmental goal not only through the traditional development work via civil societies but also through linkages with the private sector as well as building business models within the civil society. Hence, one of the main implementing arms for the project namely the Agriculture Foundation is expected to be act as a Social Enterprise. The Centre for Community Enterprise describes social enterprise as “A revenue-generating businesses with a twist. Whether operated by a non-profit organization or by a for-profit company, a social enterprise has two goals: to achieve social, cultural, community economic and/or environmental outcomes; and, to earn revenue. On the surface, many social enterprises look, feel, and even operate like traditional businesses. But looking more deeply, one discovers the defining characteristics of the social enterprise: mission is at the centre of business, with income generation playing an important supporting role”. This model attempts to combine the benefits of both the developmental and business worlds to achieve the goal in a more effective, efficient and sustainable manner building on CARE previous experience working with the private sector. However it constitutes a challenge in implementation particularly within the time limits.

Linking the project with the government agencies especially the Ministry of Agriculture, Aswan Directorate and the Ministry of Social Solidarity was an asset in collecting information about agriculture cooperatives and in the prompt registration of ASDF respectively.

Having noted that the project planned strategy is effective in creating jobs and increasing income in general, yet creating 4000 jobs and increasing the income of another 2500, is not attainable as articulated by the main partner agencies (CARE and WF). The question whether the 4000 and 2500 in job creation and increased income targets respectively are achievable was posed in one of the working groups of the self-evaluation and later by all the participants and as a result both agencies suggested cutting these targets by 25%. The evaluation team finds this suggestion valid.

Efficiency

The project aims at achieving the target of creating 4000 new job opportunities and increase the income of another 2500 for Aswani youth over a 3 years period starting September 2014 through working in 11 VCs (actual implementation was focused on 7VCs). It is noticeable that the project was very ambitious and spreading itself too thin by planning to work directly with the stakeholders of 11 VCs and indirectly through support of community agents to implement VC interventions through different funding mechanisms. Furthermore, the geographical scope is 4 districts of Aswan which is a lot in terms of how spacious Aswan governorate is. The evaluation team also considers the 3 years project life time a constraint in terms of implementation and requires planning and promptness in decision making and implementation particularly that all VCs are seasonal. Both the scope of work and geography poses a great challenge and may impact negatively performance quality in other words efficiency.

The approved budget split between activities and personnel/administration costs is 44.5% and 55.5% respectively which is quite reasonable in development projects.

Sustainability

The project sustainability in the design is based on establishing a legally registered Foundation specialized in agriculture services, which will continue beyond the project's date. CARE's experience in creating NGOs is a point of strength. The proposal has a five-year plan for an agriculture foundation to achieve financial sustainability. Building the technical, operational and financial capacities Of the Foundation within the short lifetime of the project requires CARE's strong support through human resources, capacity building as well as establishing the relevant systems (financial, internal controls, administrative, monitoring and evaluation, etc)

Capacity building of grass root community agencies whether CDAs and Cooperatives during the project period strengthens their abilities to serve their communities beyond the project. Furthermore, the project aims at supporting CDAs and Cooperatives to adopt businesses models which will help them to become financially stable and increase their linkages with their constituencies.

In Summary: the project design fulfills a significant need within the Aswan community for employment generation and increased especially with the heavy drop in tourism. The VC strategy is effective in achieving the intended goal of creating jobs and increasing income but not at the 6500 target. Hence, the evaluation team suggests reducing the target to approximately 4,800 beneficiaries. The evaluation team is also concerned about the large geographical scope and the extensive number of interventions which may affect the quality of implementation.

The sustainability of project interventions is planned for via Aswan Agriculture Services Center (later titled Agriculture Services and Development Foundation, ASDF). Nonetheless, for ASDF to become a strong institution requires that CARE uses its vast experience in capacity building to support in building its systems as well as building a cadre of qualified personnel. Furthermore, CARE efforts should help strengthen this new entity to be institutionally independent while continuing to have overall supervision and provide specialized support to the project. CARE should also ensure the pass over of WF technical expertise to the foundation.

5.2. Value Chains Interventions (Outcome 1)

Relevance

Out of the originally planned 11 VCs, 7 VCs were selected namely: 1) palm dates, 2) tomatoes, 3) medicinal and aromatic plants, 4) goats and sheep, 5) poultry, 6) milk, and 7) fish are relevant in terms of responding to direct farmers and breeders' needs. In addition, the VCs have the ability to contribute to the achievement of the project's goal, which proved relevant to the needs in Aswan for employment generation and increased income. These VCs represent some of the famous products in Aswan (Fish, Palm Trees, and Aromatic Plants) or value chains that are important for the consumers (milk, poultry, Goats and Sheep and Vegetables). Furthermore, Aswan has a natural

comparative advantage geographically in three particular VCs: fish, date palms, and goat and sheep value chains.

During the self – evaluation, farmers and breeders in Aswan expressed need for support in the seven value chains but at different levels. They complained from problems related to VCs inputs such as: absence of palm seedling, low quality of vaccinations for poultry, sheep and goat; relatively high prices of inputs like fertilizers and animal feed; limited availability of pesticides to protect the vegetables. They also expressed need for technical support in issues like palm seedlings separation, dealing with pest infections in agriculture and viruses attacking poultry, packing and packaging (post-harvest) interventions, specifications for establishing aquaculture farms.

Following are the main findings of CARE conducted VC studies:

Fish Value Chain: Although Lake Nasser is the source of only 6% of Egypt’s production of fish, it remains the main source of Fish for Upper Egypt Governorates (Aswan and neighbouring Governorates like Qena, Sohag and Assiut). Lake Nasser is divided into fishing zones allocated to particular fishing organizations and companies as follows:

- Aswan Sons Cooperative operating 615 boats involving 2,300 fishers
- Fishermen Cooperative Society operates 1,632 boats involving 7,880 fishers
- Nubian Cooperative Society operating 520 boats involving 2,230 fishers
- El Takamol Cooperative Society operating 61 boats involving 260 fishers
- Misr Aswan Company operating 218 boats involving 780 fishers

According to World Fish studies, fishing in Lake Nasser involves more than 13,400 fishers working through over 3,000 boats. In addition, it is a major source of income for 90 wholesalers and 450 retailers. On the other hand, there are 50 centers for repacking and sale of salted fish as well as 7 – 10 places for primary processing of Fish. 400 people are estimated to work in the fish processing industry.

As such, project intervention in the fish value chain is very relevant to the Aswani large fishers community who are mostly complaining from the environmental and managerial problems of Lake Nasser and its effect on their productivity and the sustainability of their jobs. Also, new lands in Aswan have a high potential in the field of aquaculture that remains to be utilized; thus investing in the fish value chain seems essential to provide job opportunities and increase income in general and particularly as an alternative to fishers at the closure of the lake. It is also worth noting that aquaculture water provides the new lands with natural fertilizers which helps cultivate these lands. Based on the Value Chain Analysis prepared by World Fish, the fisheries value chain generates 30 jobs per ton of fish .

Dates Palms VC: Total agriculture land in Aswan Governorate is 88,700 feddans with 55,880 land holders with an average land holdings of 1.6 feddan. Plantation of Palm trees reaches 11,000 feddans representing 12.4% of the total agriculture land.

Aswan has over than 1.97 million palm trees (official data as as of 1/1/2015), of which 58% are fruitful and is the 4th of Egypt’s governorates in the production. Total

number of Palm trees in the four target districts is 1.8 million Palm trees of which almost 1 million are fruitful trees. Egypt is number 7 as exporter of dates in the world.

CARE conducted study showed that each 50 palm trees provide one fulltime job opportunity.

Goat and Sheep VC: Egypt is number 18 worldwide in number of sheep reaching 5,450,000 in year 2013 (28% of Egypt's animal production) while Egypt is number 36 worldwide in number of goats totalling 4,350,000 in 2013 (23% of Egypt's animal production). Aswan's share of both sheep and goat is 48,739 heads in 2012, according to the VC study. Aswan inhabitants are very familiar with the breeding of goat and sheep as part of their agriculture land. Breeders expressed a need for improving their breeds to increase productivity and income. The number of micro-credit and VSLA loans directed to this value chain in particular as well as the waiting lists proves that goat/sheep are popular in Aswan. Based on the VC research, low productivity was attributed to using balady , which are not good enough and the absence of best practices in breeding. 10 Sheep or goats produce one full time job with a monthly salary of LE 650.

Poultry Value Chain: Poultry breeding in Aswan is practiced at a small scale in the houses for several reasons. The absence of hatcheries and automatic slaughter house in Aswan, the closure of chicken farms after the birds flue due to their presence within the domestic parts of the communities, their lack of knowledge about different varieties other than the "Baladi" are some of those reasons. Most and foremost, Aswani find it quite risky to breed poultry due to the high temperature. Hence, Aswan is a net importer of poultry from nearby governorates. Yet, it is important to note that particularly the poultry value chain affects the lowest income groups and women specifically; hence the project finds it very relevant to achieving its objectives though the communities may be reluctant to take the risk.

Medicinal and Aromatic Plants VC: According to the VC study conducted by CARE, the area planted by medicinal and aromatic plants in Egypt is quite small approximately 8000 feddans annually, yet Egypt exports of medicinal and aromatic plants in 2011 amounted to 12 million dollars. Aromatic and medicinal plantation in Aswan amounts to 4,460 feddans (10.7% of Egypt total cultivated land in medicinal and aromatic plants). These plants are quite profitable if contracted for prior to cultivation by exporters, which imply that the exporters provide quality seeds and guarantee marketing on one condition that there is a reasonable amount of land cultivated in the same product either via medium or large farms or clustering of farmers.

Tomatoes Value Chain: Based on the VC study, Egypt's total cultivated land in tomatoes in 2013 is 550,000 feddans and total production in 2012 amounted to 9,113,000 tons. Aswan cultivated land in tomatoes is 2,287 feddans. The project selected this value chain, though not widely known in Aswan communities, due to its potential in creating large number of job opportunities in the production as well as in post- harvest phases; in addition to increased income. For example; tomatoes grown by the vertical system results in almost double the yield of tomatoes grown in the traditional way and can be easily dried for Cairo or export markets. It is worth noting

that, at the beginning, communities did not express interest in tomatoes and aromatic and medicinal plants due to their lack of knowledge of these crops and their high cost of plantation.

Milk Value Chain: Egypt produces 8.8 million tons of milk annually, according to the VC study. Aswan produces 1,760 tons of milk annually, 0.097% share of Egypt's total production. Milk buying and selling and even milk processing are rare in Aswan due to traditional and cultural reasons. Aswan inhabitants consider that milk is only for the house consumption and otherwise it is not appropriate (Aib). However, during the research phase it was clear that milk was in shortage in some villages namely: El Hakma, Al Nokra and El Manshia. In addition, CARE has previous successful experience with the milk value chain in other governorates and project management wanted to build on this previous experience even though it does not pose itself as one of the highest needs by the communities as reported in the self- evaluation workshop.

Effectiveness

The value chain studies have an extensive knowledge base and identified needed interventions; however this was not translated into an implementation plan for the whole project. Translating the VCs studies' information into a database to provide VC stakeholders with knowledge and technical information is one of ASDF's performance indicators; however it has not been achieved. Furthermore, the participants in the self-evaluation workshop expressed a forceful need for such database.

The VC staff depends on the training and exchange visits as the main methodology to change farmers, fishers and manufacturers' practices. Model farms were used but on a limited scale though it is a very effective method in persuading farmers with best practices. To date, no advocacy interventions are planned because the capacity-building component is focused on improving NGOs/Cooperatives capacities to manage economical businesses more than building advocacy groups.

In general, the actual implementation of the value chains approach failed to go in depth in each VCs. The Project focused mainly on training on best practices yet follow up was limited. Access to good quality inputs and new markets is yet to take place. CARE management noted that the project's weakest interventions in the VCs are in the inputs stage. Based on the self-evaluation workshop findings, VCs stakeholders and project staff need to communicate more with the Ministry of Agriculture to provide technical and veterinarian support as well as using the Ministry's resources in accessing inputs such as fertilizers, seedlings,...etc.

To date, VCs interventions and accomplishments are sporadic.

Fish Value Chain: WF, the implementer of the fish value chain, studied the lake's situation thoroughly and detected the problems and concluded that the Lake Nasser is subject to overfishing and bad environmental conditions. As a result of the study, WF concluded that no new jobs can be created through the lake and what the project aims for is to sustain the existing fishermen. Potential jobs can be created through the establishment of aquaculture farms and fish processing, which are relatively new to

the Aswan community. WF has not taken any steps to advocate for the improvement of the lake's conditions through law enforcement.

On the other hand, WF responded to the needs of the manufactures to learn new techniques for processing fish and sent them for training on making fish kofta, vacuuming and smoking of fish but the demand for these products is not yet established. The project also trained potential or existing aquaculture owners and workers on best practices. The participants were highly involved in this training as it was mostly practical. Cooling of fish was also introduced, which at the beginning was highly resisted by the community, but was well received after it was actually implemented as it suits the fish production environment in Aswan.

“The idea of aquaculture was a dream and I did not have a farm. I decided to use my irrigation canal as aquaculture farm as I was a fisherman in the past. After the training I know now the whole process.” Nasser Sultan, Al Amal Village

With respect to the fish value chain, the following specific activities were implemented:

Lake Nasser Activities:

- Visits to Lake Nasser and meeting with Fishermen Association, relevant companies and agencies.
- Public meeting with stakeholders, government and research agencies
- Conducting fish value chain study
- Conducting a preliminary study on fish stock in Lake Nasser
- Conducting a study on Lake Nasser's management and recommendations were discussed in a meeting in Cairo
- Training 14 fishermen on fishing techniques to increase their income
- Studying the cost of repairing the medical boat and establishing suitable houses for fishermen in the lake
- Contracting researches to conduct a full study on Lake Nasser stock

Activities related to fish processing are:

- Organizing a workshop on fish salting and preserving
- Organizing a workshop on the standards for salted fish
- Training manufacturers for a week in the Food Technology Research Institute in Cairo
- Conducting 4 follow-up visits for fish manufacturers
- Following up new fish products examinations

Aquaculture Activities are:

- Studying the current situation of aquaculture farms
- Conducting a workshop on aquaculture
- Studying potential opportunities for aquaculture farms in the lake and potential production
- Visiting 4 aquaculture farms in South El Wady to raise awareness regarding the integrated agriculture – aquaculture farms.
- Training 20 in WF

- Providing technical support to 3 model aquaculture farms

As obvious from the above activities and as indicated by the fish VC participants (fishers and fish manufacturers), WF has focused on research studies and some training in the project past period. Self-evaluation participants added there is a need for direct interventions to be felt by the fish VC stakeholders. They also emphasized the role of ASDF in the fish VC mainly to assist the Associations in opening marketing outlets for new fish products and studying the market needs.

“Closing the lake is only on paper; however, unlicensed fishermen go fishing and smuggle the produce. There are no services or security for the fishermen”.
Fisherman

The self-evaluation participants suggested that the role of WF in the next period should be as follows:

- Providing technical and in-kind support to aquaculture farms
- Supporting compressive agro – aquaculture farms since the aquaculture water can be used in irrigation of agriculture land as it contains fertilizers, particularly useful to new reclaimed lands.
- Organizing exchange visits during the aquaculture production season. The challenge is the short time left in the project
- Participating in ASDF’s workshops to raise the community awareness of the fish VC, introducing investment opportunities and providing technical information related to aquaculture.
- Disseminating and implementing recommendations of previous studies regarding best practices
- Playing a role in advocacy with the participation of Fishermen Associations and Aswan parliamentary members to activate fishing laws and assist in the community management of Lake Nasser.
- Providing vocational training to fishermen during the lake’s closure to be able to work in aquaculture farms and hatcheries.
- Arranging meetings with the Governor, advisory committee and Lake Nasser Supreme Management committee to work on enforcing the fishing laws.
- Supervising the fish produce and penalizing fishers who catch small fish
- Raising awareness of fishermen to protect the lake’s stock
- Activating the Fishermen Association’s role in supervising the lake

“I don’t hope for my son to be a fisherman. The officials are working haphazardly and the production is decreasing, yet we have to work because we own the boats”. Mohamed Ahmed, Owner of a boat

Palm Dates VC: Some of the main challenges related to date palms is lack of trained labour on pruning, seedling separation, fertilization, and harvesting; in addition to bad quality packaging bags (شكاير), and whole sale traders buying at an unfair price. Furthermore, the Aswani believe that the varieties they plant are only suitable for drying which has limited duration of sale during Ramadan.

The project addressed some of these needs by conducting 10 workshops attended by 386 persons to train agriculture labor (Nakhala نخاله) on the technicalities of preparing the palms and conducting workshops for farmers to inform them of the effect of these preparations on productivity, quality of dates and life span of the palms.

In order to improve the Palms sector in Aswan, 25 researchers (9 women) were trained in the field of Palm dates in order to serve as technical expertise.

The project also trained women on hand made products of palms and the women expressed interest and satisfaction with the training. The project also attempted to open new markets for these handcrafts through exhibitions. The evaluation team is doubtful of the impact of this particular training on job creation or increased income due to market limitations in Aswan after the drop in Tourism. Furthermore, the project did not study markets outside Aswan and its absorptive capacity for these products and the needed quality specifications.

The Aswani were opposed to dates cooling at the beginning as they were unfamiliar with the process. After ASDF piloted cooling 2 tons of dates and was able to open new markets in Cairo and Germany through the participation in three exhibitions (Siwa, Cairo international and Agribusiness exhibitions), many of those who used to work in drying expressed willingness to engage in a cooling enterprise. Furthermore, the project's pilot provided them with the know-how and the knowledge about the suitable varieties for cooling.

Goat/Sheep VC: Breeders expressed a need for improving their breeds to increase productivity and income. The project in response to the expressed need did several activities. First they bought at very small scale 15 lambs of the Zaraby variety for 15 breeders (3 from each district) for the cross fertilization of their own sheep as well as the sheep of another 50 breeders. The breeders contributed 50% of the cost of the lambs. The project also conducted training sessions to breeders on how to prepare the place for the sheep and their appropriate feed.

This VC, received financial support via the project funding mechanisms mainly micro-credit, VSLA and zero-interest loans. Usually cooperatives or NGOs providing credit for goat and sheep breeding also provide veterinarian services but breeders complained that these services were irregular.

Poultry VC: The project provided training to 21 veterinarians in the field of poultry and utilized five of them to follow those who received loans to breed poultry. Workshops were conducted to breeders to teach them best practices. Also, a poultry farm was established by five beneficiaries consisting of 400 – 1000 chicken. On the other hand, 38 youth were trained on poultry breeding and are hired in poultry farms.

We have raised poultry all our lives but in a random way. After the training, raising poultry became organized ..when to give it water, when to feed it, ..
Fatma, Adendan

Medicinal and Aromatic Plants VC: Farmers, except those who are already working on medicinal and aromatic plants, are not very familiar with this VC and are reluctant to take the risk to introduce such products. The project aimed at providing farmers a model through its contacts with Sekem. Sekem model consists of 14 new varieties of medicinal and aromatic plants where Sekem provided the seeds, all required inputs and technical support. Five varieties showed good results, farmers expressed their interest in following the model. There are no indications that farmers adopted the

cultivation of Sekem varieties to date. A small number of farmers expressed enthusiasm to grow exportable melokhia, which is considered a medicinal plant, and actually grew six feddans this year after visiting Fayoum and being introduced to exporters. Export Melokhia requires a delicate harvesting and drying process which yields significant jobs mainly for women in harvest and post-harvest stages.

Efficiency

Efficiency, as opposed to effectiveness (doing the right thing), is to do the things right and thus it means taking into consideration implementing the initiatives within the time and budget framework as well as following the process that maximizes return on investments.

Based on the above analysis of effectiveness, the project has not accomplished the full intended results. From the prospective of efficiency the project does not show equivalent results to the time spent (almost two years). The evaluation team and some of the staff and management attribute that to working on many VCs without focusing longitudinally on all phases of each value chain. Therefore, the evaluation team discussed this issue in depth in a workgroup within the self-evaluation workshop where participants were asked to answer the question whether the project is able and better off working on 7 VCs or focusing on a smaller number to have a tangible impact that can be measured?

The participants in general agreed that focusing on a smaller number of VCs will result in higher return on investments whether money or time. A committee was then established to decide on the priority VCs based on criteria that they set. The discussion did not include the fish value chain as it has its own budget and human resources through WF, its implementing partner. The committee came up with the following criteria:

- VCs with the highest number of job opportunities
- VCs with high turnover
- VCs most relevant to Aswan governorate
- VCs that corresponds to the highest needs
- VCs where models are replicable or can be scaled up
- VCs that more liable to succeed
- VCs where there is higher marketing opportunities
- VCs where efforts were exerted during the previous phase of the project
- VCs that are less costly to work in

Based on the above criteria, the priorities were as follows:

1. Palm dates
2. Poultry
3. Goat/Sheep
4. Medicinal and aromatic plants
5. Milk
6. Tomatoes

At the end, all workshop participants agreed to focus on the first four suggested VCs by the committee (excluding fish) which are: 1) palm trees, 2) poultry, 3) goat and sheep 4) medicinal and aromatic plants. The evaluation team, however, is of the opinion that five VCs are still too many. The project can continue to follow-up on the interventions that were implemented in the excluded VCs.

Sustainability:

It is very difficult to determine the potential sustainability of the value chains until they are fully implemented with all their interventions. In case the value chains interventions are successfully completed, there will be strong indications that there will be sustainability of impact.



In summary, all VCs are relevant to the needs of the community but at different levels relative to the importance of these VCs in their lives. From observation, the evaluation team can assert that fish, palm dates, goats/sheep and poultry are people's first priorities. The VCs initiatives to date are sporadic and do not cover all the stages of each VC which reduces the project's ability to achieve the intended performance indicators or outcomes. The focus was mostly on training as well as studies in the case of fish with limited interventions at the input, processing and marketing levels. In addition, it is the evaluation team's observation that not all project staff understands the VC approach. In daily management of the project, the VCs have become a project component with specific activities rather than the overall strategy. Hence, the evaluation team recommends that the staff be oriented on this approach and that a project organizational and functional structure corresponds to this understanding. For the VC approach to be efficient, the project has to reduce the number of VCs to 4- 5 VCs and concentrate on the areas where the selected value chains are predominant.

5.3. Enabling Environment (Value Chains Support Activities, Outcome 2):

This section will evaluate 2 main units or components as referred to in the project: 1) Micro-finance, and 2) Entrepreneurship. The evaluation will not deal with ASDF as an activity and therefore will evaluate it under the organizational and management section.

“Let's not work with the tomatoes VC because it is a very sensitive crop.” Nancy, Ahmed, and Amira, Project staff

5.3.1. Micro-Credit

Relevance to Community needs

VCs stakeholders after receiving the technical support needed always request financial support to implement what they learnt. The project predicted this need during the design and established a micro-finance unit to provide funding to VCs stakeholder as much as possible. The project left the micro-loans strategy, criteria and conditions for the implementing party to formulate based on community needs. It was decided to utilize local CDAs who are more aware of their communities' needs.

After selecting the 3 CDAs that will implement the micro-credit through the project funding and based on public discussions, two CDAs decided to provide the loans in-kind as the beneficiaries wanted to benefit from the technical support of the CDAs in purchasing their products and from reduced prices due to collective buying. On the other hand, the third CDA opted to provide loans in cash as this was more relevant to its experience. Also the CDAs realized that beneficiaries have different production cycles and therefore designed the loans to have flexible repayment periods.

Effectiveness

Most of the micro-credit loans are geared toward the goat and sheep and poultry value chains, allowing for collective buying to introduce better breeds and targeting the real poor. The NGOs have waiting lists of willing borrowers showing high demand on micro-credit. However, the project did not provide evidence of collective buying for the sake of micro-credit beneficiaries neither did it show regular follow-up by veterinarians' to all beneficiaries.

To date, according to CARE's presentation, the project provided LE 900,000 loans with 2 % interest rate to 3 CDAs and both kofour and Om Shalbiah CDAs contributed LE 55,000 and 45,000 respectively to increase the capital, an amount that is expected to increase over the life of the Project. It is expected that the 3 micro-credit grants will create 600 jobs. The three CDAs disbursed 137 loans with a total value of LE 568,000. The goat and sheep value chain received the highest number of loans equal to 103 loans, followed by 27 loans to poultry representing 75% and 20% respectively of the total number of loans.

Efficiency

The micro credit team went through several steps to ensure the transparency and efficiency of the CDAs selection process as well as improving the capacities of the selected CDAs to run the micro-credit program in an efficient manner as follows:

- 30 NGOs working in the area of micro credit were identified and visited
- 14 NGOs selected to be subject to the institutional evaluation tool
- 6 NGOs were selected of which 3 received financial and technical support while the other three will receive technical support only.

- Financial support include systems for grants, feasibility studies while technical support includes awareness about the value chain approach, management information systems, feasibility studies, etc.
- Selected NGOs received capacity building especially related to law 141 related to micro credit.
- Micro credit strategy was developed based on the project approach and the needs of youth.
- NGOs wrote proposals and received approval and funds were transferred in June 2015
- The intervention was promoted through advertisements in the villages and in workshops while Om Shebaya CDA took advantage of a Youth training implemented by the SFD in the CDA to advertise for the program as well as the arrangement of general meetings

Evidences of efficiency:

- Average cost of the job is LE 1,700 taking into consideration the LE 1,000,000 capital and the 2% interest only.
- The amount of disbursed loans as percentage of total capital is 56% since June 2016 the date the CDAs received the funds.
- The project as well as the 3 CDAs recipients of funds worked to ensure that borrowers too are running their projects efficiently. Hence, borrowers received non-financial services including training on best practices such as preparation of the breeding space and types of feed as well as providing irregular follow up on the beneficiaries by veterinarians which is highly needed but on regular basis.
- The conditions for the loans include that the potential borrower does not have an open loan at the same time, age between 18 – 40 years, electricity or water bill, valid identification card for the borrower and the guarantor, existing project location, signing a contract between the borrower and the CDA.

Weaknesses in the Micro-Credit Program that affects its future Efficiency:

- The administrative cost of the loan differ from one CDA to another (Shelbaya 12%, Kofor 10% and Balana 14%). **It is worth noting that the three CDAs fall in different districts.**
- Borrowers sign blank promissory notes (with no loan amount) which are against development and human rights principles. Accordingly, the borrower is subject to a lot of pressure until the loan is totally repaid
- Training for sheep breeding is provided after the loan is disbursed and the project is implemented.
- The beneficiaries are not aware of the importance of charging administrative cost and accordingly request the percentage is reduced although it is already low compared to the other loans provided in the area
- The loan amount is enough for just 4 heads of sheet/goats which is not enough to increase the income level which forces the borrower to raise additional capital to buy more heads
- The three days loan application review and disbursement period is in some cases not enough to thoroughly study the loan application with the applicant and disburse the loans.

Sustainability

The success of the Project in improving the capacity of the Partner CDAs and other CDAs in implementing the micro credit via training and technical help ensure that the CDAs can continue to operate micro-credit program with clear strategies and conditions that are known and accepted by borrowers. Furthermore, the project is in the process of buying an electronic loan tracking system which improves the CDAs ability to monitor the clients and take the right managerial decisions. The above are strong factors that support the sustainability of micro credit which in turn means sustainability in the creation of additional jobs and increased income levels.

The self-evaluation workshop participants suggested further ways to ensure not only sustainability but expansion of the program namely that: CDAs build on their developed capacities to attract funding from other sources and emphasize the linkages to the selected value chain to benefit from all direct VCs' interventions.

The evaluation team did not, however, verify the financial sustainability plan of each CDA.

In summary, the micro credit intervention though started disbursement of loans only as of June 2016; it is the most organized in terms of implementation steps. It also has the most clearly measured results due to its nature and the strategy implemented. It definitely caters to the poor needs of financing which is significant. Furthermore, it seems that micro-credit has strong linkages with the VCs since almost all borrowers are within the VCs stakeholders, yet the link between the VCs and micro-finance is unsystematic. Therefore, the evaluation team recommends strongly developing a mechanism to link both the VCs and micro – credit as the funding arm. Also beneficiaries have requested to increase the loan amount from LE 5,000 to LE 10,000. Micro-credit has also a relatively strong chance of sustainability as it is expected to cover its financial administrative cost and CDAs are eager to run micro-credit programs as a source of income to the CDAs itself.

5.3.2. Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA)

Relevance to Community Needs

A Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) is a group of people who save together and take small loans from those savings. The activities of the group run in cycles of an agreed upon duration, after which the accumulated savings and the loan profits are distributed back to members. The purpose of a VSLA is to provide simple savings and loan facilities in a community that does not have easy access to formal financial services. A VSLA is a transparent, structured and democratic version of the informal savings groups found in villages and slums in many parts of the developing world.

VSLA was not planned for in the project proposal and was resisted by the communities, at first, as they did not know its rules. In the Egyptian Society, VSLA is built on the idea of a “Gamea” (Social Solidarity Group).

Currently, there are 4 CDAs selected and trained to organize VSLA groups and were able to persuade beneficiaries to join the groups. During the meetings and the workshop both the CDAs and the beneficiaries expressed their appreciation of the VSLA as a financial product targeting the very poor and focusing on women. VSLA met a need in the target community as evidenced by the increase in the number of groups.

Evidence that VSLA is now an accepted intervention, the CDAs, when asked on how they benefited from the VSLA, they indicated the following:

- New information system
- Generation of employment opportunities and income improvements
- Enhancing the institutional capacity of the CDAs
- Enhancing the communities level of confidence in the CDAs
- Additional experience for the CDAs in the area of credit
- Support for existing projects

Effectiveness

The VSLA program aims at creating 300 jobs. After the project introduced VSLA to community members via four CDAs, 45 saving groups with an average of 15 members per group with total of 725 members were established. The 45 groups have LE 79,431 in savings and distributed 31 loans with the total value of LE 39,520. The VSLA helped utilize the communities’ resources and reduced the burden on the project finances. The VSLA approach proved that the poor can save and accordingly end up with a basic capital that can be invested.

Efficiency

The implementing team implemented an operational plan to ensure efficient selection of CDAs as well as providing them with the technical support to implement the VSLA efficiently

- Setting criteria for the selection of participating CDAs and the selection of 6 CDAS
- Arranging cross visits to similar program in Minia which is very valuable in promoting the idea and convincing the NGOs of its validity
- 30 people from the 6 CDAs were trained on VSLA concepts
- Three CDAs received financial and technical support while three others received technical support only
- Financial support included an operational grant of LE 18,200 for each CDA while the technical support included training on management of small businesses, principles of entrepreneurship and feasibility studies.

- The rules are that members of each Group select each other and manage the group themselves which reduces administrative cost.

Sustainability

The members of each VSLA group select each other and manage the group themselves. Accordingly, the VSLA is mostly run through mobilization of local resources and needs limited external support and accordingly is a sustainable system. VSLA is new to Aswan and hence the sustainability will depend on how much the communities are convinced with its benefits especially related to the social solidarity aspect as the main incentive for the groups. Evidence indicates local communities satisfaction with this new product as stated by the self-evaluation workshop participants including both CDAs and beneficiaries and the fact that the CDAs were able in approximately 3 months to establish 45 groups is also a sign of the communities' acceptance of VSLA.

“When it finishes we will continue on our own”
VSLA Beneficiaries

In Summary, VSLA intervention was not planned for in the project or in response to community. Nonetheless, the self- evaluation indicated that both the CDAs managing the initiative as well as the actual groups' members have benefited from it. Similar to the micro-credit, its accomplishments are clear, it benefits the poor and women in particular, it is highly linked to the VCs in unsystematic way and has high chance of sustainability due its low expenses. The self – evaluation also showed that there is an appetite among the communities and the CDAs to expand in this intervention.

5.3.3. Entrepreneurship

Relevance to Community Needs

In Egypt, in general entrepreneurship remains limited among the labor force and this can be partially contributed to the education system that does not encourage innovation. Historically the Egyptian culture does not value risk taking because it was mainly an agriculture culture until the 1952 revolution and after the revolution the socialist regime attracted people to the government and public sector jobs. This changed due to the unavailability of government jobs and the growth of the private sector with more lucrative jobs since the mid 70s.

Aswan community is no different from the rest of Egypt but it had one advantage which is having a strong tourism sector that absorbed a significant portion of Aswan labor force. With the tourism crash during 2011 revolution and maybe even before, youth and ex. tourism employees are in need of new employment opportunities.

Nonetheless, Aswan community is not familiar with the concept of entrepreneurship; hence it was not one of the expressed needs of the communities. Currently in Aswan,

a potential entrepreneur would rely on individual self-training rather than any external technical support.

Effectiveness

To date, the project has difficulty in identifying entrepreneurs to work with. The current definition for an entrepreneur in the project is “An owner or a manager of an income generating project through innovation, risk taking and start of new businesses. S/he should have the ability to innovate and respond to changing economic conditions and take advantage of any profitable niche”. Project management and staff believes that this definition is hardly applicable in Aswan governorate and more so in the agriculture sector. Hence, the project needs to find a more suitable definition of entrepreneurship relevant to Aswan and agriculture sector that would allow this component to achieve the planned results.

The project staff is under the pressure that the success of the entrepreneurship initiative is based on the number of jobs it can create. The evaluation team notices that the assumption that each potential entrepreneur is equivalent to a new job is overly ambitious.

Efficiency

The Entrepreneurship component faces major challenges, which affected its efficiency as follows:

- There is lack of clear mechanisms for the component. The implemented mechanism is ineffective as it depends on personal relations, theoretical training, limited or lack of follow-up of the trainees.
- There was no clear cooperation between this component and the other project interventions, which made it difficult to reach and communicate with the target community.
- Limited common understanding among the project team.
- Limited cooperation between the project and the educational institution.

Sustainability

At this phase of the project, the evaluation cannot foresee any sustainability possibilities for the entrepreneurship initiative as it has not yet been well grasped by Aswan community and even more problematic among the staff.

In Summary: the evaluation team is reluctant to consider the entrepreneurship component under the project as relevant to communities’ needs or as an approach for job creation within limited project duration. To date the entrepreneurship initiative was not effective in achieving the anticipated results as it is a new concept to Aswan community and requires more time to be absorbed. One of the reasons that contributed to its challenging situation is the definition and criteria of entrepreneurship adopted by the project which seems to be irrelevant to the Aswan

community and agriculture sector in particular. Hence, it is recommended that entrepreneurship component focuses on identifying entrepreneurs from the selected VCs as a cross cutting theme.

5.3.4. Capacity Building

Relevance to Community Needs

As mentioned earlier, the project's main strategy for achieving the needed job opportunities and increased income is the value chain approach which requires the mobilization of all social parties to expand community outreach. Also with the wide geographical scope and the desire to increase chances of sustainability, partnership with local CDAs becomes a must.

The capacity building of partner NGOs is essential for them to understand the project approach and to be able to manage profitable businesses related to the VCs which is new to almost all Aswan NGOs. The need for capacity building was not only detected by project staff members but was also an expressed need from CDAs and Coops who participated in the self- evaluation workshop. In addition, the results of NGOs evaluation proved that they are still at the very early stages of development. Based on the above, it is obvious that NGOs capacity building is highly relevant to the accomplishment of project's results.

Effectiveness

The objective of the capacity building interventions is to enhance the institutional capacity of the partner Cooperatives and NGOs to achieve the project's targeted results. Accordingly, these interventions served:

- The Partner CDAs for micro credit
- The Partner CDAs for VSLA
- The Partner Cooperatives for the zero interest loans

The process of selection of CDAs and Coops to partner with is the first step in achieving the project's output 2.4 " Strong, business aware NGOs and cooperatives improve their services and are better able to advocate for the interest of their constituencies". The identification of the partner NGOs/Cooperatives was through contacting the Government entities responsible for overseeing the two kinds of non-government organizations namely the Ministry of Social Solidarity for the CDAs and Ministry of Agriculture Department for the Cooperatives. The two government entities provided a list of potential NGOs/Cooperatives. Following the nomination stage, the capacity building team visited 65 CDAs of which 20 were selected to be subject to the institutional evaluation tool.

For the Cooperatives, the process was different. Instead of the initial visits, the Department of Agriculture invited 25 Cooperatives to a general conference for Cooperation in the Agriculture Sector. The Conference was attended by the heads of the Departments and the Cooperatives representatives. Each Cooperative presented

its activities and programs. Based on the application of initial criteria, 17 Cooperatives were selected to be subject to the institutional evaluation tool.

The capacity building team prepared an institutional evaluation tool to select the Partner CDAs and Cooperatives. The tool consists of several elements namely internal governance, management, design and implementation of projects, internal and external networking, management information systems, service provision and documentation. Each of these elements were evaluated based on a set of indicators and a scoring system. The score of the CDAs and the Cooperatives were added and they were categorized from 1 to 4 (where 1 resembles the lowest capacity and 4 is the highest).

All CDAs and Coops were categorized under stage 1 or 2. This meant that all CDAs and Cooperatives required an intensive Capacity Building program. Finally, a total of 22 CDAs and Cooperatives were selected to be Partners in the Project. Following the selection, further evaluation was undertaken to select the CDAs that are appropriate for the micro credit and VSLA interventions while the zero interest loans focused on the Cooperatives. This was followed by acquiring the needed government approvals whether from the Ministry of Social Solidarity for CDAs or the Department of Agriculture for the Cooperatives.

The project provided them with generic training on business management, good governance, proposal writing, gender issues and conducting simple feasibility studies. However, monitoring of the results of the training is missing which presents a doubt concerning the follow-up of the training and accessibility to hands on coaching.

The first tranche of 10 coops who signed zero-interest loans also received specialized training based on the type of business project to be implemented. They received training on best practices for milk collection and distribution, goat and sheep breeding best practices, techniques of molasses production. The capacity building interventions included awareness about the Coops law particularly the use of financial resources. The CDAs selected for the micro-credit and VSLA received relevant training particularly Law 141 for the year 2014 governing CDAs micro-credit activities.

It is worth noting that Capacity Building is one of CARE's strengths based on their previous experience over the past two decades. However, CARE's previous strong experience should be translated into specific capacity building plans for each type of organization. In addition, the Capacity Building intervention need a comprehensive advocacy strategy that involves all organizations and includes clear policy recommendations related to Cooperatives law, Fishers and Agriculture laws and policies.

Efficiency

The above undertaken steps for the selection process are an indication of the efficiency of the Capacity Building intervention which depended on clear and transparent process. Also involving the relevant government agencies in nominating the CDAs and Coops saved time for the project and facilitated the process since going

through all the CDAs in Aswan (1500 registered CDAs) would have been a tedious exercise and highly time consuming.

It is worth noting that acquiring the necessary approvals for the Cooperatives was faster than the approvals for the CDAs and accordingly working with the Cooperatives started first.

Sustainability

The efforts invested in building a cadre of personnel and setting appropriate administrative and financial systems in the Partner CDAs and Coops contribute to sustainability of the project interventions.

In Summary: the process of selecting the partner NGOs was transparent and efficient. Raising the capacity of local CDAs contributes to the sustainability of activities. The capacity building component is highly linked to the micro-finance and the zero-interest loans activities and that could be a result of having the same personnel in charge of micro-finance and zero-interest loans overseeing the capacity building tasks.

It is understandable that there is a significant need among NGOs for capacity building especially in the business management field which is new to most of them even agriculture Coops who are used to trading.

Though the project has adopted the value chain approach, there were no efforts exerted in explaining the concept to the NGOs to ensure that their projects work in the same line of thinking. To date, the project did not act on linking the CDAs or Coops with each other and coaching them to work on advocacy programs related to their constituencies especially the Coops law and the fishing laws enforcement.

5.3.5. Zero Interest Loans - Cooperatives

Relevance to Community Needs

Farmers are linked to their cooperatives as they are main providers of fertilizers and insecticides; as well as buyers of certain crops particularly sugar cane which is widely spread in Aswan. Coops' mandate includes providing agriculture extension services to inform farmers about best practice to improve their productivity; however, the implementation of this function is not well organized. Cooperatives are also more business oriented than CDAs due to their engagement in agriculture trading. Hence, cooperatives are an appropriate choice to act as an entry point in their communities for building business models such as collective buying and selling of good quality inputs, expanding or introducing value added activities and opening new marketing outlets. The Cooperatives needed an incentive to start investing their available resources to implement new interventions or expand existing ones and the zero-interest loan mechanism was the project's tool to incentivize Coops to take the risk of going into business. Therefore, the evaluation team and the self-evaluation

participants find that activating the Coops to operate business projects via zero-interest loan is relevant to the project's goal.

Effectiveness

To date, 10 Cooperatives received zero interest loans with a total value of LE 1.1 million to finance different business projects. 6 projects are 100% operative while the other 4 projects started but not fully operative. These projects are expected to provide 212 new job opportunities, of which 47% are women. Using zero interest loans was successful in motivating cooperatives to get into new businesses or expand existing ones and in taking the risk to mobilize their own resources to contribute to the project either in-cash or in-kind. Furthermore, cross visits were arranged to Danon financed Milk project in Beni Suif and Honey Factory in Minia and sheep/goats projects in Aswan to persuade Coops boards to take the risk on entering into profit making projects. This indicates that cooperatives were just waiting for a push to utilize their financial resources.

The following table shows the type of business projects, investments and estimated number of job to be created.

Name of Coop	Project Type	Value of the zero Interest Loan (LE)	Coop Cash Contribution	Duration of the loan (months)	Expected Job openings	Comments
Adendan	Black Honey	1100,000	70,000	9	21	Improving and expanding an old project. Season elapsed before operation, waiting for next year
Abu Simbel	Sheep and Poultry Breeding	96,000	24,000	20	17	Abu Simbel Coop used the money for establishing a micro-credit program that targets sheep and poultry breeders
Armana	Sheep / Poultry Breeding	104,00	0	20	13	Armana Coop used the money for establishing a micro-credit program that targets sheep and poultry breeders
Wadi Abady	Sheep Breeding	100,000	0	15	15	Wadi Abady Coop used the money for establishing a micro-credit program targeting sheep and poultry breeders
El Manshia	Milk Collection	70,000	10,000	10	11	Fully operative
Animal Resources	Manufacturing/ distribution of Animal Feed	157,300	0	21	25	Not operative as of the date of the evaluation
Komombo Almoshtarak	Milk Distribution/ Cooling Car	127,000	145,000	17 for the distribution unit / 23months for the car	13	Fully operative
Alaqab	Palm Hand made products	100,000	4000	11	40	Alaqab trained women on hand craft work using palm secondary products. Coop

Name of Coop	Project Type	Value of the zero Interest Loan (LE)	Coop Cash Contribution	Duration of the loan (months)	Expected Job openings	Comments
						management indicated that there plan is to provide micro-credit loans to these trainees. The trainees; however, expressed unwillingness to receive loans. They would rather have the CDA be the buyer of inputs and seller of their products.
Alamal	Sheep/goat Breeding	217,500	0	17	25	Alamal Coop used the money for establishing a micro-credit program that targets sheep breeders
Alhekma	Milk Distribution	46,500	15,000	15	17	Fully operative

The table above shows that 5 out of the 10 Coops has used or plan to use the money as micro-credit loan capital, of which 4 coops are targeting sheep/ goat and poultry breeders and one is targeting women who produce hand made products from Palm; thus overlapping with the micro credit initiative. Note that capital provided to CDAs to led as micro loans is at 2% interest, while the Coops are getting zero-interest loans for the same purpose. Some projects are not directly linked to the selected VCs for example molasses manufacturing.

Upon discussing the implemented interventions with the Cooperatives and how their organizations were affected, they indicated the following:

- The profits and revenues of the Cooperatives increased
- Cooperation with other organizations and cross visits were appreciated
- Enhanced institutional abilities of the Board members
- Creation of a cadre of personnel in new specializations within the organizations
- Increased community satisfaction of the Organization's activities.
- Achievement of some of the objectives of the Organizations (animal husbandry, availability of meat, etc.)
- Gaining back the farmers confidence in the Cooperatives
- Gaining Project management experience especially in investment projects

Efficiency

Administrative and financial specialists from the Department of Cooperatives in Aswan were mobilized to make sure that the discussed project ideas are within the pertinent law and to help the cooperatives in following the right procedures to implement profitable activities. This facilitated the governmental approval process. Also to guarantee higher success levels in the coops implemented projects, they were requested each to come up with three potential projects which resulted in a total of 30 projects. Then the most feasible projects were selected.

However, the evaluation team has some concerns related to the strategy and rules governing the zero- interest loan funding mechanism as such:

- The fact that loans are provided to Coops at zero-interest maybe acceptable at the beginning as a pilot, but currently with the demand on the loans and coops appetite to utilize their own resources management needs to reconsider the zero interest policy.
- Based on the information available in the above table for the 10 Coops that received the loans, it is apparent that there is no consistency regarding repayment conditions, percentage of contributions or even the size of the loans since similar projects receive different size loans. Furthermore, during our meetings, the evaluation team was told that most of the loans were rescheduled due to the delay in projects start up as a result of banks' resistance to opening new accounts for Coops. The procedures for rescheduling are not made clear and not documented.
- The contradiction between providing zero interest loans to cooperatives that will utilize these loans as a capital for micro-credit lending while providing loans to through the micro-finance component at 2% interest rate is not justifiable specially that they target the similar beneficiaries.
- Verification of the jobs created

Without manuals clarifying the financial and operational rules for the zero interest loans, efficiency cannot be evaluated.

Sustainability

Sustainability of impact is the highest level of sustainability, which is available in this intervention. The zero interest loans served to mobilize dormant capital in the Cooperatives that has accumulated over the years. However, repayment of initial capital only with no administrative expenses affects its operational and financial sustainability in a negative way.

In Summary:, the zero-interest loan mechanism has been effective in persuading Coops to take the risk of expanding or establishing new businesses with the aim of creating new jobs. It also encouraged them to utilize their dead resources. The efficiency of the zero-interest loan requires both technical and financial management to set clear rules and systems to be applied on all recipients and documented in manuals. The fact that the loans are at zero interest rate results in depreciation of the capital; thus affecting sustainability.

5.3.6. Cross Cutting - Gender

Gender type is a cultural and social concept that determines roles, responsibilities and rights of men and women in society. Since their birth, boys and girls are subject to those factors through their parents, family members, friends and organizations in the society like schools not to mention the impact of mass communication and media all of which affect their upbringing.

The concept of gender type promotes the rethinking of all the prevailing concepts and norms. Development efforts are expected to widen the choices for both men and women equally and support their living, social and personal development.

Relevance to community needs

Empowering women and integrating them as active participants in the economy is essential to promoting economic growth in Egypt. According to the IMF, raising the female labor force participation rate to the male level, coupled with access to employment opportunities, would increase GDP by approximately 34 percent.

In Egypt, gender relations are often designed to weaken women's role in the society in terms of their abilities to access education, equitable economic opportunities and their abilities to own economic resources assets and control over these resources. Egypt ranks low in gender equity compared to other countries worldwide. The 2015 Global Gender Gap Index, which measures disparities between men and women across countries, ranks Egypt at 136 out of 145 countries worldwide. According to CAPMAS statistics (2014), women have significantly lower participation in the labor force than men (24% vs 76%) and lower literacy (65% literacy for women vs 82% of males). Unemployment rate is 24% among females compared to 9.6% among males. In terms of years of education, according to the UN Human Development Report the mean years of schooling for females in Egypt is 5.4 years compared to 7.7 years for males. However, in developing countries and in especially in rural communities, gender balances and issues are not commonly expressed as a need by the community.

In the agriculture sector, women perform agriculture and farming related activities on family owned land as unpaid labour. Women also play a major role in harvest and post harvest activities. However, women have little control over land or productive resources, even if they own them. On the other hand, women's working conditions and the benefits that they receive from their labor are not equivalent to their role in the work force and their responsibilities at home and in their communities.

Aswan Governorate is no different than the rest of Egypt. The target four districts in Aswan are predominantly rural with more than 70% of the population living in rural areas. Women are highly involved in household and animal breeding as well as agriculture related activities which although contributing to their families' economies they are not considered income earners.



In Aswan due to culture and traditions, women play a limited role in decision making including in agriculture particularly that their ownership rights through inheritance are restricted. Furthermore, Aswan being a patriarchal society, like all of Egypt, gender mainstreaming is not expressed by the communities as a need because so often women themselves are unaware of such need. Although, gender mainstreaming is not an expressed communities' need, when addressed it has great impact on the empowerment of women and on the communities at large so the project should work on it as a cross cutting theme. Accordingly, although gender as a cross cutting theme is relevant to the community need from the development point of view, it is not referred to as a priority in the mind of community members. On the contrary, in many cases the word has a bad connotation among the male members of the society and the older generations of both sexes.

According to YEP Project document, CARE undertook a rapid assessment of gender issues in Aswan through a review of the literature, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders as well as a workshop involving 70 women from the rural areas. The findings of the assessment confirmed and highlighted the gender issues in Aswan and were summarized as follows:

- Resistance toward women empowerment especially among brothers and mothers in laws, who should be the main target for awareness raising without neglecting other members of the family (mothers, fathers, husbands);
- Women's decision making is high related to household matters like purchase of needed household items and goods while decisions related to purchase of land, cattle, plantations, etc.
- Income generating opportunities for women, as perceived by the participants, were considered the most appropriate and socially acceptable in the areas of dairy products, raising poultry, pigeons, goats and sheep, cattle as well as baking.

Effectiveness

The above mentioned assessment was the basis for a preliminary strategy identified in the project document that focused on the following:

- At the level of women's agency (interventions that target women's skills, knowledge, awareness and conditions):
 - Providing capacity building on technical skills, market knowledge, setting up and managing enterprises, etc
 - Providing women with necessary soft skills that underpin economic empowerment (leadership, self-confidence, negotiation skills).
 - Raising women's awareness on economic rights, participation in public life, etc.
 - Providing women mentors to accompany women as they set up their businesses or support groups of women
- At the level of relations (interventions that target the community and local organizations) in order to address the social barriers related to enhancing women's roles
 - Addressing women's rights through improving the economic situation of the household as a whole in order to reduce the sensitivity about women gaining new economic opportunities
 - Working with local media to present examples of role model women in a positive light as productive members of their families and if society as well as promote the role of women in the society and address negative attitudes toward women;
 - Work with organizations mandated to support farmers and rural communities through service provision, networking, to raise their awareness of the importance of gender issues and the inclusion of women in their organizational structures.
- At the level of structures (interventions addressing the enabling environment e.g. laws, strategies, etc. that prevent women from attaining their rights):
 - Document the challenges and obstacles
 - Work with specialized and mandated agencies like the National Council for Women in order to lobby with decision makers at various levels(from village to governorate to national level)
 - Integration of women in the private sector, markets and value chain of selected horticulture and animal production chains.
- At the level of implementation, the project will keep in mind gender considerations in all project phases as follows:
 - Research will use as much as possible gender disaggregated data
 - Women's involvement in project monitoring and evaluation
 - Women's involvement in steering committees
 - As employees and in management positions in the ASC

- While not all economic activities will be perceived as appropriate for women to be involved in, wherever possible the project will integrate women in various sections of the selected value chains.

It is worth noting that although Gender was originally considered in the project document as a cross cutting theme; however, in the progress report dated March 2016 and in the Monitoring and Evaluation Tool Kit, Gender was reported as an output (3.1) with two related indicators namely:

- Proportion of households where women who make decisions over the household assets such as types of crops to plan, types of animal to grow, or over social issue for issues marriage of the household's females, girl's education, et..
- Proportion of women in leadership positions of participating NGOs and cooperatives

The first indicator is a difficult indicator to measure with a reasonable level of certainty, while the second indicator is quantitative and easy to confirm.

However looking at the original gender strategy and proposed interventions, the following observations can be deducted:

- The strategy as such was a reasonable strategy. However, actual interventions in the field did not rise up to the needed and planned level;
- The originally proposed indicators and the current indicators concentrated on women's household role and their role in the agriculture sector (mostly horticulture and animal husbandry value chains) while the role of women in the Fish value chain did not receive any attention.
- The interventions that contributed the most, by virtue of its nature, to the involvement of women was the VSLA followed by micro credit (49% of the borrowers to date).
- The project dedicated some activities and interventions as well as a specialist to promote the concepts and culture of Gender type. However, there are major challenges that face the participation of women as follows:
 - Traditions and community spread habits and lack of awareness about the important role that women can play
 - The nature of some projects that does not suit women.
 - Some existing laws like the Cooperatives law that requires ownership of agriculture land in order to be eligible to be members in the Cooperative. Since agriculture land holdings is usually by men, women are not represented in the general assembly and accordingly are not represented in the Board.
 - The participation of women in Fishery is very limited. Fishing in Aswan is mostly in Lake Nasser while fish processing is in the industrial zone both of which are not conducive to the participation of women.

"I suggest that an NGO is selected and trained on gender issues to work as an umbrella for other NGOs and Cooperatives in order to spread the culture of gender balance."
Amira, Gender Specialist in the Project

In spite of the challenges, the project team attempted to overcome some of the challenges through establishing youth committees within the Cooperatives that include women representatives with the hope that some of the women can be encouraged to run for the board elections in the future.

Efficiency

The issue of gender is very challenging in the target communities. To improve the efficiency of this cross cutting theme, the following is needed:

- Improve the cooperation and coordination with the different project interventions
- Work with a cross cutting approach in order to achieve the intended outputs.
- Develop a clear and announced gender strategy for the project as well as a practical action plan that all interventions and components contribute to its successful.
- Design and implement direct awareness raising programs that address the members of the society with the highest resistance to the empowerment of women namely mothers in law and brothers.
- Design and implement awareness raising messages directed at the different members of the society and the use of local media and natural leaders in the target communities to promote the messages and address the misconceptions prevailing in the society (e.g use of trained Sheikhs and priests to spread the true essence of the role of women in the different religions not the misconceptions affected by cultural beliefs)

Sustainability

Sustainability of gender interventions will depend on how convinced the community is of the importance of gender balance and adopting it as one of the inputs in any economic and social development efforts. During the workshop, the following suggestions were presented by the participants:

- Having internal team meetings within ASDF to understand and emphasize gender issues.
- Work on making gender part of the existing culture within all of the implemented interventions.
- Selection of a Partner CDA that is keen at implementing gender and promoting it among other CDAs in Aswan.
- Economic empowerment of women and increasing its project management and decision making abilities.
- Establishing a Specialized Union from CDAs that are interested in women related issues at the Governorate level.
- Cooperation with the National Council for Women and promoting its role and activities among the CDAs in order to ask for the Council's assistance in gender issues.

However, in the end remains the impact of the actual change that the project succeeds in making within the local communities which ends up passing to younger generations through the mothers and the fathers, thus improving the future prospects of women in their communities.

In Summary: Gender mainstreaming is not expressed by the communities as a need because so often women themselves are unaware of such need. However, the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index, which measures disparities between men and women across countries, ranks Egypt at 136 out of 145 countries worldwide. In Egypt women perform agriculture and farming related activities on family owned land as unpaid labor.

In Aswan, due to culture and traditions, women play a limited role in decision making in agriculture particularly that their ownership rights through inheritance are restricted. The interventions that contribute the most, by virtue of its nature, to the involvement of women are the VSLA followed by micro credit (49% of the borrowers to date). The project team attempted to overcome some of the cultural and legal challenges through establishing youth committees within the Cooperatives that include women representatives with the hope that some of the women can be encouraged to run for the board elections in the future. Sustainability of gender interventions will depend on how convinced the community is of the importance of gender balance.

5.4. Monitoring and Evaluation/MIS

Any monitoring and evaluation system has four main objectives: document the implementation phases of the project, facilitate decision making process, measure project achievements, and learn from experience to assist in future planning. The current monitoring and evaluation system is relatively new in the project as it has passed by several developments and as a result it can be easily said that it is not yet tested.

An M&E consultant was commissioned early July 2015 for the development of the M&E system. According to the M& E guideline and toolkit, there are 4 levels as follows

1. Monthly reports: prepared by field staff to monitor project progress toward activities as detailed in the project action plan and output level indicators and determine if targets are being met in a timely manner. In specific, M&E monthly reports should cover:
 - Number of stakeholders served who were able to attain a job opportunity
 - Number of stakeholders served who were able to attain an increase income opportunity
 - Number of new comers/introductions through the different stages of value chains (i.e. new input providers, new markets, new value added activities)
 - Number of NGOs/cooperatives served through capacity development activities.
 - Number of potential entrepreneurs served
 - Number of microfinance clients served.
 - Progress updates on activity list per each project component with expected actual completion dates vis-à-vis planned dates
 - Flag any shortcomings or needs, thereby ensure timely implementation of necessary adjustments
2. Annual survey: conducted through a third party monitoring agent to collect quantitative and qualitative information regarding stakeholders' satisfaction and feedback. Information will be gathered through a designed questionnaire and focus group discussions with project stakeholders. Nine output indicators are monitored only through the Mid Term/Annual Survey, which did not take.

3. Annual consultation: performed by the steering committee through focus group discussions to come up with qualitative information to monitor outcome and output level indicators related to ASDF, NGOs and Coops business and gender.
4. Midterm review/evaluation: conducted through an external consulting firm to measure longer-term impact and provide actionable recommendations to improve the quality of the project in the remaining time.

Starting April 2016 they used a new tabular excel reports that include most of the information in the previous template but with more details on beneficiaries for each activity. The new monitoring system records activities via the designed tools filled by project component officers including income increase, jobs created, all training activities, exhibitions, exchange visits, model farms, micro-credit and seminars. All these tools have means of verification. Data entry into the M&E system is the second stage that allows for preparing reports. Data entry started just few months before the evaluation approximately in July 2016 entering new data and old data as available.

Effectiveness

In general, the information available in the M&E system mainly focuses on activities, while the process is not described. The reports to date hardly supports management in decision making as the linkage between the activities and the output level indicators has not been adequately filled in.

To date, no surveys or consultations (as indicated in the guidelines) were conducted.

Furthermore, while the guidelines cover WF indicators, yet in implementation CARE does not incorporate WF progress on a regular basis.

Efficiency

Monthly reports are simple. Nevertheless, the staff does not seem to designate the time for filling in the data collection tools, as a result most reports are missing. In general, monthly reports are poorly completed except for the microfinance.

The monitoring system prior to June 2016 is different from the new system. The old monitoring system did not provide a mechanism for archiving of the documents; hence, the gaps in the available data.

Below is a list of the reports the evaluation team received via the monitoring and evaluation system which are very limited:

Report	Months covered
Horticulture Component	• April-June 2016 (table)
Animal and Dairy Component	• Feb 2016 (incomplete) • July 2016 (table including information from start of project)

Entrepreneurship Component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2016 (incomplete) • April – June 2016 (tables)
Capacity Development Component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2015 (list of daily activities) • July 2015 (list of daily activities) • Dec 2015 (list of daily activities) • Feb 2016 (used template but lacks detailed information on accomplishments) • March 2016 (use template, includes information although some are replicated from previous reports)
Microfinance Component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb 2016 (use template, detailed information) • March 2016 (use template, detailed information) • April – June 2016 (tables include detailed information on # of loans)
Fisheries Component	Not available
Gender (No template)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2016 (table)

Reporting on job creation is not quite accurate, for example counting all recipients of micro-credit as new job opportunities, counting the 15 sheep breeders who received good breed lambs to improve sheep varieties as new jobs, seasonal workers, staff in partner CDAs running the micro-credit or VSLA programs. It is essential to have clear criteria for counting jobs. Also the project has problems reporting on income increase and the evaluation team believes that one reason is lack of follow-up, for example, recipients of training on best practices are not monitored to know whether they adopted these practices or not and how it affected their income.

It is worth noting that the project could not report on indicators for output 2.1 “The ASDF facilitates the access of stakeholders along the selected value chains to technical and market information” as well as indicator related to advocacy “NGOs ad Cooperatives jointly develop advocacy strategies including policy recommendations” under output 2.4.

M&E officer finds difficulty in collecting the information from the staff and has no authority to do so. Technical assistance is required in the M&E to refine management reports to be more beneficial in decision making.

In Summary: The M&E system includes 4 levels of monitoring and evaluation namely: monthly reports, annual surveys, consultations and external evaluations. The information available in the M&E system mainly focuses on activities, while the process is not described. To date, no surveys or consultations were conducted.

The staff does not seem to designate the time for filling in the data collection tools, as a result most reports are missing. It is worth noting that the project could not report on indicators for output 2.1 “The ASDF facilitates the access of stakeholders along the selected value chains to technical and market information” as well as indicator related to

advocacy “NGOs and Cooperatives jointly develop advocacy strategies including policy recommendations” under output 2.4. “NGOs and Cooperatives jointly develop advocacy strategies including policy recommendations” under output 2.4.

5.5. Project Management/Organizational Structure

Effectiveness

Partners Roles and Responsibilities as stated in Project Document

The following describes the main roles and responsibilities of each of the project partners.

CARE Planned roles are:

- Responsible for overall project management including financial and contract management, the coordination of all inputs from subcontractors to ensure smooth operations.
- Coordinate and liaise with all major partners and stakeholders to the project including but not limited to local government representatives, NGOs, international organizations, donors, projects and programs, cooperatives and unions, local smallholder farmers, women, communities and leaders, etc.
- Lead M&E overall project components.
- Lead communication and reporting to OIC.
- Lead the design of a business model for the ASC (eventually registered under the name Agriculture Services Development Foundation ASDF), including: mission and vision, core values and principles, accountability system, the departmental structure and functions and communication systems between them, the administrative system including procurement, management and staffing structure, functions, job descriptions, salary scale and financial management system with the inputs from project partners and stakeholders.
- Lead the creation of a system to support the financial sustainability of the ASC.
- Manage the day to day operation of the ASC including recruitment and training of management and staff and gradually phase out.
- Research the value chain of various horticultural and livestock products to identify challenges, employment and marketing opportunities.
- Conduct technical research on specific high value/drought resistant crops, livestock/breeding to increase production, enhance labor opportunities and increase incomes.
- Lead on the development and design of M4P interventions on specific value chains
- Implement models and interventions tried in other contexts after fine tuning them in accordance to the conditions in the target districts.
- Design microfinance systems specifically tailored for smallholder farmers, women and youth in business startups.
- Design and/or tailor existing loan tracking systems.

- Build the governance and capacity of local MFIs in the management of loans and insurance system and monitor their performance through regular qualitative and quantitative reporting on the impact of loans.
- Build the capacity of NGOs and coops in management and business administration and implement interventions to strengthen their governance structures.
- Responsible for overall gender mainstreaming throughout the project.
- Provide targeted soft skills training and financial education to women and youth.
- Promote entrepreneurship development, among youth.

WF Roles are:

- Research the value chain of fisheries to identify challenges, employment and marketing opportunities.
- Conduct technical research on specific issues to support fishermen and/or introduce aquaculture to determine best practices.
- Fisheries subcomponent activities are: stock assessment; fisheries value chain; socio economic survey; review of license procedure; use innovation platform for policy changes; and test community based fisheries management.
- Aquaculture subcomponent activities are: aquaculture situation analysis and review of previous experience; aquaculture in low lands/survey potential sites; pilot scale integrated aquaculture – agriculture; pilot scale enclosure; and possible pilot scale cage farming.
- Post-Harvest and processing subcomponent will focus on: value chain; test to improve fish handling; handling fish in ice in foam boxes; salting fish in plastic containers /devices; test of new processing technologies; processing fresh fish in the camp; and salted and smoked fish.

Aswan Agriculture Service Center (now titled Agriculture Services and Development Foundation, ASDF) Roles are:

- Establish an MIS and Labor database to connect persons to resources and opportunities. ASDF will develop, populate and regularly maintain and report on the agricultural database which will link between labor demand and supply. Thus, ASDF will have a list of the agricultural workers and another list of the needed jobs so that it can fill the employment gaps with the available labors. It is expected that the ASDF will be able to successfully make 500 job placements over the life of the project with the support of this system.
- Mobilize the Business Model Fund. ASDF will support local stakeholders in setting up new businesses with promising prospects (as identified by the value chain analyses) by investing as a shareholder. ASDF share/contribution will not exceed 10% of the total capital while the rest will be in the form of shares from individual farmers, businesses and other stakeholders.
- Mobilize the Innovation Fund. ASDF will provide promising pilots that attempt to introduce innovation in agriculture with grants to enable new ideas that facilitate work processes, reduce costs, improve productivity or profits or reduce environmental

impacts to see the light. The fund may also cover research and essential selection criteria will include the potential to create employment opportunities or increase incomes.

- Mobilize the Government Fund. Governmental entities often have good ideas/ initiatives to boost agribusiness but which do not see the light for need of good management capacity and initial funding. ASDF will seek to utilize such ideas by providing the government with the opportunity to submit their best three concept papers which fall in line with the program's goal and outcomes.

The program intended that, through CARE's technical assistance and support ASDF will be the implementing arm for all interventions. It was anticipated that ASDF will act as a catalyst for change, a facilitator, a technical support center for all stakeholders along selected value chains and a social enterprise.

The Advisory Committee roles are:

- Raise problems to government executive entities which are difficult to reach through the project as the committee members have wide relationships with governmental and non-governmental agencies.
- Raise awareness regarding regulating laws that are known to the decision makers but not known to those who are affected by these laws.
- Raise awareness regarding gender mainstreaming in coops.
- Identify policies that obstruct the work in Lake Nasser and the coops.
- Open communication channels with the local communities and media.

Actual Roles of Project Partners

CARE/ASDF: In terms of effectiveness in achieving the planned roles for the different parties, it is hard to try to differentiate between what CARE achieved versus ASDF for staffing and organizational reasons that will be discussed later. In actual project execution, CARE has been involved in the following:

- Overall technical and financial management role.
- Reporting to the donor.
- Technical support of M&E while the actual data gathering is done by ASDF. However, it is important to note that CARE did not take action to implement the planned surveys or consultations.
- Researching the VCs.
- Designing microfinance system.

However, its engagement in the development of ASDF is limited to the legal registration. The business model and the institutional systems are still missing. Furthermore its coordination role is also weak.

ASDF was registered with the Ministry of Social Solidarity in April 2015, 11 months after the start date of the project, as a central Egyptian Foundation in accordance with law 84. Although the original project plan was for the BOT to consist of CARE and WF representatives as well as 2 to 3 members from the local communities, ASDF was registered with a board of trustees (BOT) that consists of three CARE personnel who are not related to the Project and were chosen only to facilitate the registration process. The BOT current members do not play any significant role, so far, in the internal governance and management of the Foundation. However, it seems that CARE directly disbursed needed funds so as not to go through the BOT. According to the proposal ASDF is the main implementing arm of CARE; however, the division of roles between CARE and ASDF is very ambiguous.

ASDF was registered as a central Foundation i.e able to work in any governorate in Egypt. Its headquarters is in down town Cairo while Aswan office is considered a branch. The sectors cited in the approved Ministry of Social Solidarity Charter are all related to the agriculture sector and are wide enough for the Foundation to expand its activities in the future. However, **the Foundation Charter, as it stands, does not envision any role for the Foundation in the Fisheries/Aquaculture VC although the self-evaluation participants emphasized the role of ASDF in the fish VC mainly to assist the associations in opening marketing outlets for new fish products and studying the market needs.**

The internal by laws for the Foundation was drafted by CARE in 2016. The by-laws are comprehensive and meet the required Ministry of Social Solidarity financial and administrative requirements. However, it is worth noting that in many instances the articles instead of referring to the Foundation, they refer to the Agency الهيئة , which is a common name traditionally used to refer to CARE in the communities where it worked.

The absence of an ASDF manager for a long period weakened ASDF's role particularly in decision making. The CARE dominated BOT does not have any role in the decision making process. The staff is not empowered due to their limited knowledge of the project and unclear mechanisms of communication and decision making. Some of the positions were either vacant for several months or have part time staff such as the Business Development and Marketing Consultancy positions. The high turn-over among staff members resulted was the natural result of confusing work responsibilities, unstable organization and as it stands with limited future prospects for sustainability. With these terms, it is almost impossible to achieve any of the intended results related to ASDF.

In June 2016, Mr. Francois Jung-Rozenfarb, CARE Enterprises assessed the YEP current challenges and obstacles. Mr. Jung-Rozenfarb indicated that one of the root causes of the problems facing YEP is that it is two projects in one; a traditional development approach with ambitious targets in terms of employment creation and a more entrepreneurial approach under the umbrella of ASDF seeking real and scalable business opportunities as a social enterprise entity. He concluded that this requires a "solid infrastructure" in place: the legal framework for the ASDF, the right local leader in Aswan, a solid team combining the right mix of expertise and the business acumen and decision making processes to quickly uncover and invest in untapped opportunities." The evaluation team concurs with the diagnosis of Mr. Jung-Rosenfarb. ASDF and the Project for the past two years have mostly been concerned with the development side. There is a need to strongly emphasize and accelerate the business side especially that the financial sustainability of ASDF is currently at stake. (ASDF should be 30% financially sustainable by the third year, 100% by year six). In order to do so, the

Executive Director (new position) of the organization needs to be a business oriented person with strong ties to the private sector.



World Fish: is a very strong technical organization and Aswan staff namely: Dr Olfat Anwar is highly experienced in her field; however the organization is more geared towards research. Also the fact that WF Aswan has only Dr. Olfat on board limits WF's community outreach. Hence immediate interventions with the targeted beneficiaries are limited.

There is very limited communication channels between CARE and ASDF on one hand and WF on the other. Some communication started with the hiring of ASDF Aswan Branch Manager namely: Mr. Awny Makeel.

Advisory Committee: The committee consists of representatives from farmers, private sector, women, youth, ASDF and the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture in Aswan. Currently there is no one representing youth. The plan is that the committee meets every 3 months. Until date the committee met 5 times during a year and half of the actual project implementation.

The Advisory Committee plays its role in providing marketing and human resources management advice effectively. However, the missing role is advocacy in relationship to enforcement of Lake Nasser's laws and regulations due to the absence of governorate representative.

“The private sector representative in the advisory committee monitors activities and provides an objective opinion, why don't we have more than on businessman representing the private sector”. Samir, CARE Agriculture Program Director

Based on discussions with the Advisory Committee members regarding their roles, they recommended the following:

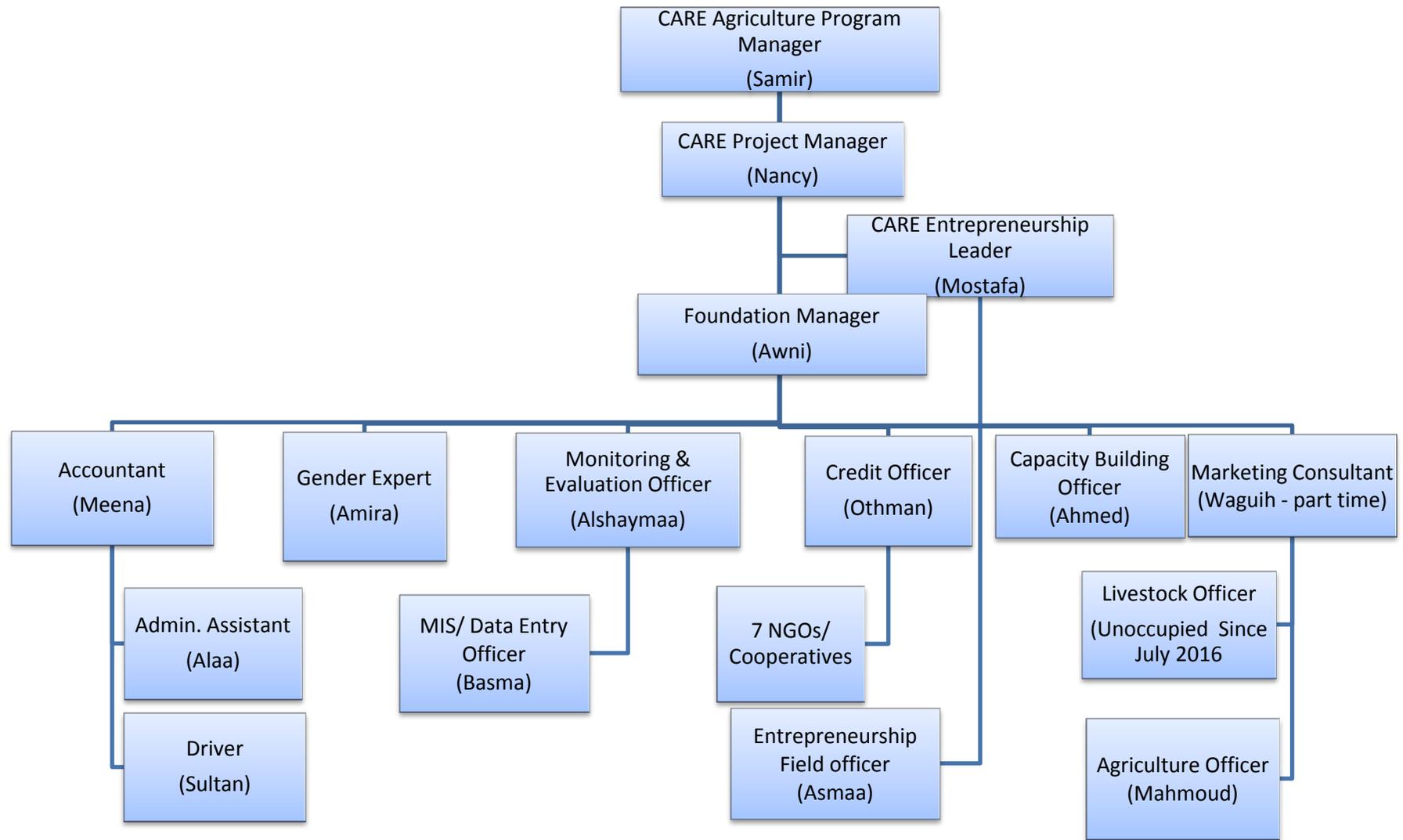
- Including 3 representatives of the fish value chain in the committee (fishermen, aquaculture farms' owners and manufacturers/ traders).

- Deciding on a regular day, time and place for meetings in order to make it easy for people to reach the members if they have complaints or problems.

Efficiency

Current Organizational Structure for CARE/ASDF Managed Interventions

In order to carry out its roles and responsibilities, CARE managed the interventions over the last two years through the following management structure. It is noted that the organizational chart provided by CARE does not include WF structure.



The current structure does not reflect the overall financial and management support provided by CARE to the Project through an agreed upon time allocation by the Country Director, the Finance, Administration, Human Resources and IT personnel.

Looking at the current structure, it reflects the project structure rather than the ASDF structure i.e the role of the Board of trustees is missing and the current Foundation Manager reports to CARE Agriculture Program Manager. This resulted in confusion related to the intended independence of the Foundation as a separately registered entity. All personnel consider themselves CARE personnel as opposed to ASDF personnel who should report to an active Board. There are 13 approved positions for the Foundation, all of whom should report to the Executive Director of the Foundation while the Executive Director should report to the Board of Trustees. CARE should invest time and effort in the building the internal systems of ASDF and in establishing internal control measures and internal governance as well as building the capacity of the ASDF personnel to effectively manage the Foundation beyond the project duration.

The role of ASDF as a model social enterprise that will eventually provide services for a fee in order to achieve financial sustainability is not clear. All positions are serving a specific development intervention with an overall VC/Market related approach. The current personnel are development personnel with very limited private sector/business management expertise. Marketing support is provided through a part time employee.

The current structure also lacks any field level personnel at the target areas/districts level. It consists of Specialists in different areas related to the interventions but with no community outreach arms. This resulted in very limited follow up of the project beneficiaries and very limited community mobilization abilities. The components, however, that were implemented through NGOs/Cooperatives namely micro credit, VSLA and zero interest loans were the most successful due to the dependence on local village based CDAs/Cooperatives who know their communities, an approach that CARE has traditionally used in most of its projects in Egypt as a means to reach the target communities. Interventions that were implemented directly by CARE/ASDF personnel were less successful in terms of monitoring and outreach abilities.

The project official start date was July 2014 but effectively started September 2014. During the past period (over 2 years), staff turnover in the different positions was high. Certain positions remained empty for 8 months such as ASDF manager. The livestock VC officer position has been empty since July 2016.

Following is a table describing the project staffing and the level of turnover:

	Project Employees Based on Original Structure	Current Employees	Employees Remaining from Beginning of the Project	Employees who Started 6 months into the Project and are still Employed	Employees Since Beginning of 2016	Employees since June 2016	Current Vacant Positions
No. of Personnel	16	15	5	3	3	4	1
% of Planned		93.75	31.25	18.75	18.75	25	6.25

Based on the above, 25% of the staff have been hired over the last two months, 18.75% started work after six months from the project start up and are still with the project and those who were hired from the beginning of the project and are continuing till now don't exceed one-third the total staff. This resulted in the following:

1. The organizational structure was completed only recently (3 months prior to the evaluation). Certain positions like ASDF manager stayed empty for a long period resulting in delayed decision making and implementation.
2. Transfer of information among individuals who filled the same position did not take place resulting in the loss of information and data.
3. The lack of continuity in activities and loss of community outreach in some instances.
4. Communication gap between staff due to the absence of ASDF Manager. Furthermore, there was a problem in the promptness and accuracy of the decision making process.

*Monitoring of beneficiaries is an important part of the work; however, we face difficulties in reaching them. If the project has local leaders, it will impact the work positively as they will know the beneficiaries and will know all the details and whether the beneficiary is working or not.
Mostafa, Entrepreneurship Advisor*

Upon discussing the current organizational chart with the staff, it was apparent that there are other challenges confronting project management as follows:

- Absence of a communication mechanism among staff at the same level.
- Lack of qualified personnel willing to work in Aswan especially at the managerial levels.

- Overlapping of responsibilities among staff.
- Lack of coordination in services provided to the same target group. Duplication of efforts to communicate with CDAs and beneficiaries.
- Delay in decision making which affects negatively the implementation of project's activities. Some activities were delayed to the next season or implemented late resulting in production losses or infection of crops.
- Monitoring project activities is irregular and progress reports are also inadequate.
- The roles of CARE and ASDF staff are mixed up.
- The project organizational structure does not have:
 - Field staff to communicate with the communities on regular basis. The project officers utilize community leaders in an irregular manner or attempt to communicate with the communities by themselves which impacts follow-up of VCs' beneficiaries.
 - A staff person in charge of advocacy.
 - A quality control person.
 - ASDF's Executive Director and Social Enterprise Manager. The right candidates for these positions should have private sector experience.
- The evaluation team sensed from the individual meetings with staff their need for validation and feedback on their work.
- The role of the Management Committee consisting of OIC, CARE and WF representatives should be clarified.
- The role of the Advisory Committee needs to be understood by all members. It has to play an effective role in policy advocacy related to Lake Nasser and Coops.
- WF needs technical and field staff to assist the existing WF Manager in Aswan to implement direct interventions with target beneficiaries.

At the beginning of the project, work was flowing smoothly among staff; however, since the absence of an Aswan Manager, a gap began. Osman, Micro-Finance Officer.

I work with 30 NGOs which is a work pressure. I need assistance to follow-up all these NGOs distributed all-over Aswan. Ahmed, Zero Interest Loan Officer

Outreach/Promotion of YEP

As presented in the project's organizational structure, the evaluation team detected difficulties in community and beneficiaries outreach due to the absence of field staff. Communication mechanism with beneficiaries is not clear where in some activities the project depends on CDAs but not in a planned manner.

The promotion of project activities took place through the following:

- CARE and ASDF Facebook pages (however, upon asking the participants in the self –evaluation, most were not aware of these pages).
- ASDF’s logo and project’s banners.
- Information sessions for potential entrepreneurs.
- Project flyer briefly describing the project and it was disseminated in the exhibitions that the project attended.
- Two public conferences with the presence of Aswan Governor and Swiss Ambassador at the beginning of the project.
- A conference for disseminating the checks to the zero interest loan recipient coops.
- Aswan local T.V. channel (the name of the implementing agencies were not mentioned).
- CDAs, coops, mosques and churches.
- Natural leaders and community events.
- Agriculture extension services.
- Youth committees

Communication/Coordination

ASDF and WF: There is weakness in the communication and coordination between WF and ASDF. WF Aswan based person explained that at the beginning of the project, both entities cooperated; however, as the ASDF Manager position was empty for a long period, communication deteriorated. With the employment of a new Manager recently, communication restarted.

To facilitate communication and strengthen coordination between WF and other components of the project, self-evaluation workshop participants suggested that ASDF would second a coordinator to WF who has experience in marketing and community development to assist WF in these areas. S/he will also identify existing aquaculture farms and potential job opportunities. The participants added the following suggestions:

- Organizing a regular meeting between WF and ASDF.
- Employing junior technical officer and training him/her by WF to be hired after the project end by ASDF to ensure sustainability of work in the fish VC.
- Preparing a regular bulletin on project’s achievements including achievements related to the fish VC.

Coordination among Staff: Coordination exists between certain project components such as micro-finance and capacity building. However, according to project staff and workshop participants, in general coordination among the project components is weak and not planned due to the absence of a communication mechanism and the absence of ASDF Manager for a long period. They emphasized that complementarity and coordination among project components is an important strategy to reduce effort and speed up achievements.

In Summary: The project's organizational structure and management is well defined in the project proposal, yet in implementation roles and responsibilities were mixed up between CARE and ASDF. CARE's role has been muted though its technical, managerial and financial support is highly needed particularly that ASDF is still an immature institution with limited infra-structure.

ASDF is still weak as an institution as it has no effective board of trustees and BOT currently consists of CARE personnel. The capacities of the staff are limited and the sense of private/business approach and strategy is missing. ASDF personnel are still on CARE's payroll and occupying part of a CARE premise in down town Cairo. This leads to confusion among both CARE and ASDF personnel. In addition, since limited or no funds were disbursed through the Foundation, the financial and administrative systems of ASDF has not been tested.

ASDF needs to have a strong Executive Director (new position) who comes from a Private sector/business background in order to be able to play an active role in turning ASDF into a truly business oriented social enterprise. The Executive Director should be accountable to a strong BOT that includes representatives from the private sector. The first task of the Executive Director should be to finalize and present to the BOT a viable business plan for the Foundation.

With respect to WF, the organization has a strong technical capacity. During the implementation of the project, its focus was on research and training. Its Aswan staff is limited to one highly experienced person which limits WF's ability to reach out to its beneficiaries. For the next period, WF needs to focus on its role in advocacy related to enforcement of fishing laws as well as the encouragement of aquaculture farms and fish processing as a means of creating jobs.

The project organizational structure needs to be changed to create linkages to be discussed later in the recommendations. Also, mechanisms for efficient coordination and community outreach are needed.

Project sustainability depends highly on the institutional building of ASDF and the establishment of its social enterprise.

5.6. YEP Financial Status as of June 2016 (in CHF)

The approved project budget over a three year period is CHF 4.77 million of which CHF 2.55 million was transferred to CARE as the lead organization. After two years of actual implementation, total expenses as of June 2016 amounts to CHF 1,328,649

(including CHF 202,058 commitments) representing only 27.9% of the approved total YEP budget.

There is an under-utilization of the project funding as per the agreed work plan to achieve the projected targets:

- Funds are underutilized as the project activities to date are limited and mainly concentrating on training. Funding of NGOs to provide micro credit was disbursed very recently. While the 10 agreements with Cooperatives for the zero interest loans took place 2015, disbursement of funds was delayed approximately 7 months due to banks' unwillingness to open new accounts for the cooperatives.
- It hasn't mobilized the available funding mechanisms namely: Business Model, Innovative and Government Funds. Furthermore, ASDF as a social enterprise has not decided on the type of business to enter in.

Actual project expenses per line item as provided by CARE is as follows:

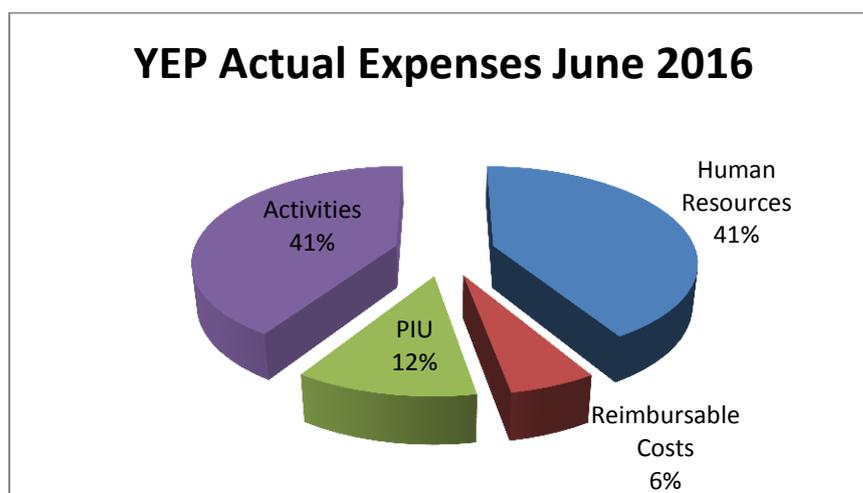
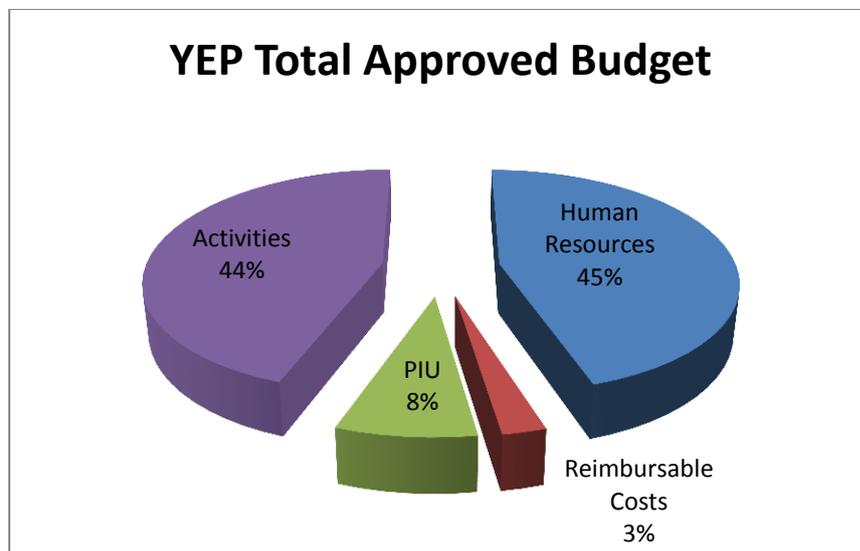
Budget Item	Total LOP Budget as Provided By CARE CHF	% of LOP Budget	Actual Expenses (CHF)		Total Expenses CHF	% of LOP Budget Item	Remaining balance CHF
			CARE	WF			
<u>Human Resources</u>							
- Fees HQ	449,162		16,690	0	16,690	3.7%	432,472
- Fees Local office Staff	742,300		143,566	0	143,566	19.3%	598,734
- Fees International and national Short term Experts	25,500		12,095	0	12,095	47.4%	13,405
- National Support Staff	932,770		269,717	108,064	377,781	40.5%	554,989
Sub-Total	2,149,732	45.1%	442,068	108,064	550,132	25.6%	1,599,600
<u>Reimbursable Costs</u>							
- HQ Staff	26,144		1,199	0	1,199	4.6%	24,945
- Local Office Staff	49,041		43,007	2,796	45,803	93.4%	3,238
- Short Term Experts	0		6,450	0	6,450		-6,450
- National Staff	44,408		22,546	356	22,902	51.6%	21,506
Sub-Total	119,593	2.5%	73,202	3,152	76,354	63.8%	43,239
<u>PIU</u>							
- Equipment	82,064		63,717	1,626	65,343	79.6%	16,721

Budget Item	Total LOP Budget as Provided By CARE CHF	% of LOP Budget	Actual Expenses (CHF)		Total Expenses CHF	% of LOP Budget Item	Remaining balance CHF
			CARE	WF			
- Operating Expenses	296,621		82,553	10,619	93,172	31.4%	203,449
Sub-Total	378,685	7.9%	146,270	12,245	158,515	41.9%	220,170
<u>Activities CARE/ASC</u>	-						
- Workshops/Training	198,107		86,598		86,598	43.7%	111,509
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	43,652		7,952		7,952	18.2%	35,700
- Model, Innovation and Government Funds	194,952		32,443		32,443	16.6%	162,509
- Activities to be Implemented by FAO	190,000		2,395		2,395	1.3%	187,605
- Activities to be implemented by ILO	130,000		1,190		1,190	0.9%	128,810
- ASC Program Activities	81,424		7,507		7,507	9.2%	73,917
- ASC - Agriculture Cooperatives Job Creation Funds	450,000		300,183		300,183	66.7%	149,817
- Grants to micro finance NGOs	400,000		67,317		67,317	16.8%	332,683
<u>Activities WF</u>	-				0		0

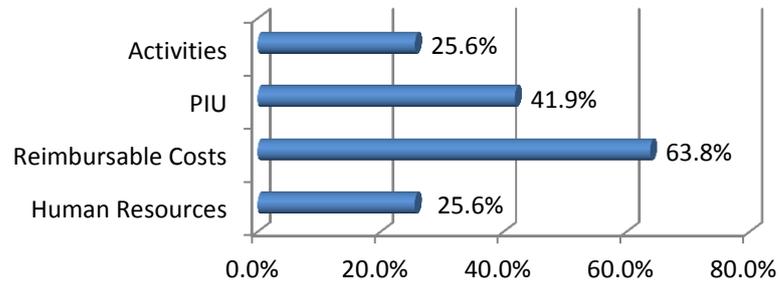
Budget Item	Total LOP Budget as Provided By CARE CHF	% of LOP Budget	Actual Expenses (CHF)		Total Expenses CHF	% of LOP Budget Item	Remaining balance CHF
			CARE	WF			
- Fisheries Management	159,026			23,300	23,300	14.7%	135,726
- Aquaculture and Culture Based Fisheries	183,174			10,434	10,434	5.7%	172,740
- Fish Handling Processing & Marketing	91,655		1,344	2,985	4,329	4.7%	,87,326
Sub-Total	2,121,990	44.5%	506,929	36,719	543,648	25.6%	1,578,342
Total YEP	4,770,000	100.0%	1,168,469	160,180	1,328,649	27.9%	3,441,351

Upon review of the above aggregated Financial Report provided by CARE budget indications are as follows:

- Total expenses to date represents 28% of the approved total budget for the project while the time that elapsed from the project duration is 50%. This is consistent with the achievements to date which is also behind target.
- The approved budget split between activities and personnel/administration costs is 44.5% and 55.5% respectively.
- Project activities' expenses to date are only 25.6% of the total approved life of project budget, a clear reflection of the delays facing the achievement of project outputs.
- Reimbursable cost, on the other hand, during the two years period consumed 63.8% of the approved total Project budget.
- Although the original credit proposal provided estimated expenses by output and outcome, financial reporting is by activity/intervention.



Expenses to Date as % of Approved Budget



6. Evaluation Recommendations

Generally, the project does not show equivalent results to the time spent from the project (almost two years). Reasons for lack of results include working on seven VCs without focusing longitudinally on all phases of each VC; organizational/management weaknesses; lack of coordination among the Partners and within project components; and limited community outreach. As a result, only 28% of the approved budget has been utilized to date. The evaluation covers the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of all aspects of the project.

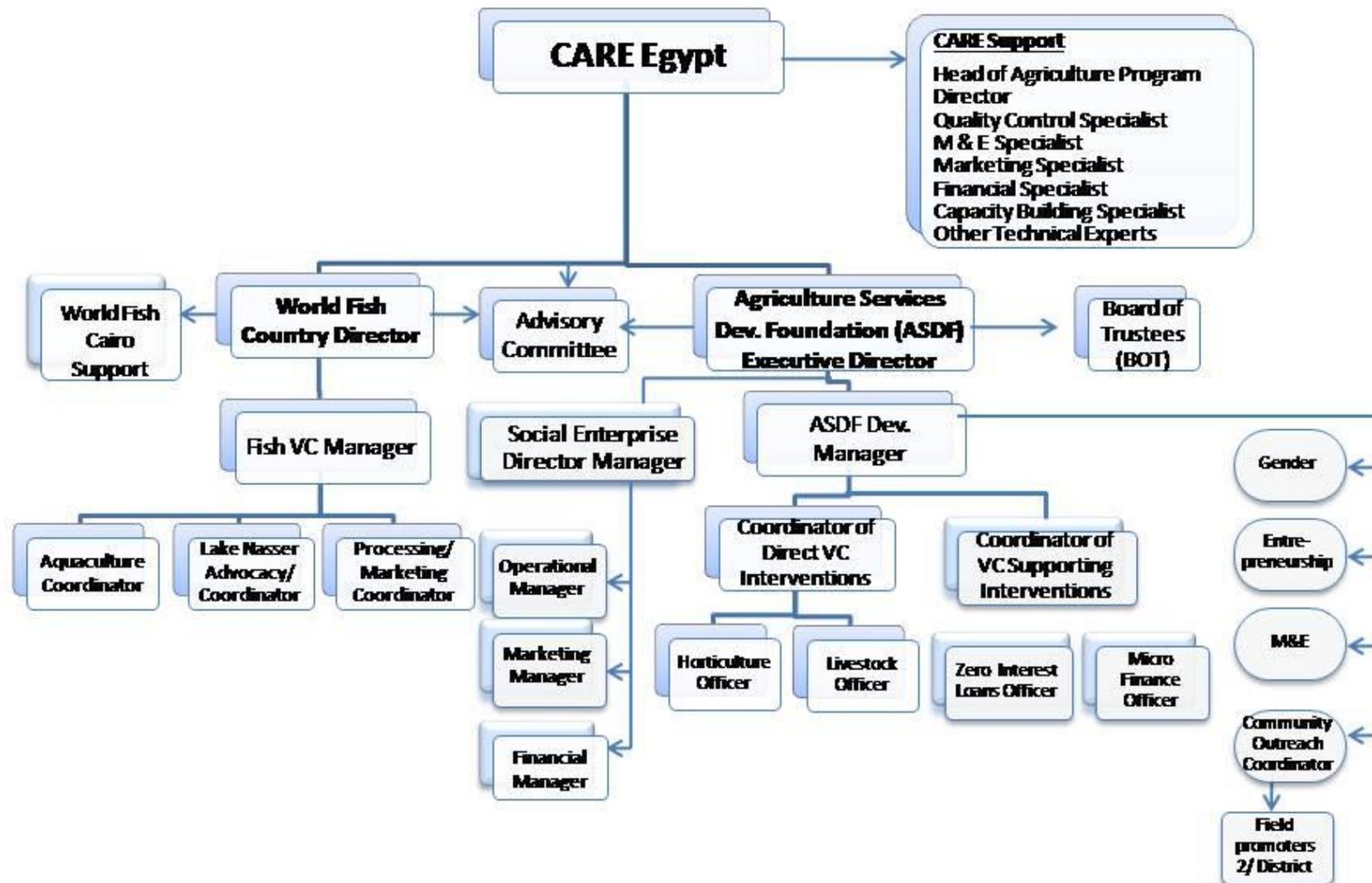
6.1. Overall Recommendations

- The evaluation team realized, from the literature review and later from meetings, that the project design is overly ambitious and complicated. The implemented project activities were sporadic and lack focus. Setting the ultimate indicator for achieving the project's goal as number of new jobs and persons with increased income resulted in project management and staff fixation on these specific indicators regardless whether they fit within the project's main strategy which is value chain. Hence it is recommended that the project management and the donor revisit the following 4 issues:
 - Revise the overall goal to reflect the uniqueness of this project lying in its VCs strategy. The current implementation approach was focusing on any activity that would generate a job regardless of whether it fits within the VC strategy. In order to remedy this distraction, all project resources should be directed to achieve the final goal via the VC approach. One suggestion is to modify the overall goal to be "Sustainable income and employment in Aswan via enhancement of value chains".
 - Review the logical framework to clearly indicate that both outcomes are under the umbrella of the value chain strategy: Outcome (1) reflects direct interventions in the VCs and Outcome (2) reflects initiatives supporting the VC (Enabling Environment). All project initiatives should as of the coming period focus their activities only on the selected VCs. First, the ASDF initiative/component should concentrate on building a knowledge database and implementing a social enterprise related to the selected VCs as a model. Second, micro finance should continue to target with its micro-loans and VSLA groups the stakeholders of the selected VCs which is the case now where almost all loans are directed to goat/sheep and poultry VCs. Third, the entrepreneurship initiative should concentrate its efforts on detecting potential entrepreneurs within the VCs stakeholders and providing them with the necessary information, generic and specialized training, mentoring, marketing support and possibly finance.
 - Concentrate on 4 VCs namely: fish, palm dates, goat/ sheep and poultry. Fish, palm dates and the sheep/goat value chains are from the most popular VCs in Aswan due to Aswan's comparative advantage in these chains as well as their significant contributions to employment and the economy. The poultry value chain, though not popular, targets the poor and

specifically women; in addition, the project has invested efforts in this chain over the past period.

- Focus on specific villages or districts where the selected VCs are predominant.
- Expand the target beneficiaries' age bracket to 18 – 50 years, due to reduction in tourism activities and the current recession.
- Reduce the job creation and increased income total target by 25% from 6,500 to approximately 4,800, since actual achievements to date are: 595 new jobs by CARE/ASDF and 29 by WF.
- Merge between new job opportunities and increased income targets into one. Accordingly, the overall intended target indicator for the project should be 4,800 new jobs/increased income to avoid duplication in tracking the achieved results and the confusion in the definitions
- Review the project organizational structure to address organizational and management issues discussed earlier in the report. Below is the evaluation team suggested structure including WF staffing. Main features of this structure are:
 - CARE has to play a strong role as the overall manager of the project which was foreseen as indicated by the project budget. It's role should include: overall supervision of the project, quality control, M&E at the project level incorporating WF work, marketing support, capacity building support mainly for ASDF as an institution as well as human resources, financial support, and any other specialized expertise needed by the project and available at CARE.
 - Institutionalization of ASDF to help it attain its independence by the end of the project. This is done via: restructuring of the BOT to be effective, and moving current ASDF staff from CARE's payroll to ASDF. ASDF should invest in building the staff capacities; and establishing the social enterprise.
 - Add field promoters to the project structure under ASDF to ensure better community outreach
 - Add technical/community staff to WF field operation to support WF in implementing immediate interventions that are felt by the stakeholders which has not taken place to date.

Following is the recommended organizational chart for the project:



- Extend the project life time (at no cost increase) to end December 2018, to be able to fulfill its goals and build on the investments done until date; this allows the project management to deal with suggested adjustments.
- Establish a platform to unify understanding among all staff and develop a mechanism to guarantee the transfer of the project's concepts, approaches and methodologies to new staff members via an Arabic brief on project design after adjustments.
- Develop a detailed implementation plan with specific tasks and time line. The plan should take into consideration the outcomes from the self-evaluation workshop and the seasonality aspects of all VCs. (All the workshop detailed notes are available in Arabic upon request.)
- Develop an operational and financial policy for the zero interest loans program and documenting it in a manual. These policies need to cover: the duration of the loan, repayment rules, Coops' contribution, implementation period and rescheduling criteria, verification of results...etc. This will improve the program efficiency and financial accountability.
- Strengthen the community outreach and participation in the project by building systemized communication channels (the employment of field promoters in the new recommended organization can help achieve this). This will develop the community's sense of ownership toward the project as well as making project management and staff accountable to the community.

6.2. Specific Recommendations for Project Organization and Management:

- Define job descriptions for all positions to avoid overlaps and identify authority lines.
- Quality control for project systems, mechanisms and documentation, one of CARE's major roles.
- Develop a prompt decision making mechanism particularly as the project is related to agriculture and livestock seasonality. Any delays may result in losing the season and having to wait for next year.
- Establish well defined communication mechanism to facilitate work flow and efficient linkages between interventions which is essential for achieving the intended results. Following are some of the specific communication channels that must be addressed:
 - o CARE and WF Cairo
 - o CARE Agriculture Director and all required CARE support staff from inside and outside the Agriculture program
 - o CARE and ASDF (board of trustees, management and staff)
 - o ASDF and WF Aswan
 - o ASDF board trustees and management
 - o ASDF and advisory committee
 - o ASDF and relevant government agencies
 - o ASDF staff with each other at the horizontal level
 - o ASDF management and ASDF staff
 - o ASDF M&E and all other officers in particular
 - o ASDF and partner NGOs
 - o ASDF and VCs beneficiaries
- Capitalize on the long experience and vast knowledge base of Dr. Olfat Anwar , WF manager in Aswan by providing her with needed human resources and equipment to support fishermen directly and have a wide impact on them.

- Build a cadre of technical persons related to fish VC under the supervision of Dr. Olfat .

6.3. Specific Recommendations for ASDF Organization and Management:

- Restructure the board of trustees to include representatives of farmers, breeders, fishers, aquaculture owners, private sector business, marketing experts and whoever the foundation sees as useful in activating the board and setting ASDF's policies and values and guarantee good governance.
- Clarify the role of ASDF in the project versus CARE
- Formulate a business plan as soon as possible
- Establish a social enterprise to fulfill one of ASDF's major roles which requires hiring a qualified person with a private sector background. The evaluation team strongly emphasizes that the social enterprise manager have significant expertise in the private sector management even though this may be costly.
- Team building to boost interpersonal relationships and raise morale
- Refine the M&E system to produce the needed managerial and donor reports and provide the M&E officer with delegated authority to request all other staff collaboration in filling in monitoring tools on a timely manner
- Prepare monthly detailed progress reports by officers to be compiled at the level of Aswan. A quarterly report should be raised by ASDF manager to the board of trustees and Care Egypt.
- Ensure that new hiring be from Aswan as much as possible for sustainability, upgrading of local expertise and community linkages.
- Organize a workshop to explain the project to all staff and partners, build a common understanding, mechanisms for collaboration and discuss beneficiaries' selection criteria. An Arabic summary of the proposal and notes of the self-evaluation workshop can be a reference to this workshop
- Organize a self-evaluation process biannually to identify accomplishments and encourage the staff to produce high quality outputs.
- Fill in all vacant positions.
- Promote ASDF's values, mission and objectives among all staff members.
- Build a network with similar organizations for exchange of expertise.
- Cooperate with the employment observatory established by Aswan governorate with the assistance of GIZ.

6.4. Specific Recommendations for the Advisory Committee:

- Review and restructure the advisory committee membership to include 3 representatives from the fish VC (fisherman, fish manufacturer/trader and aquaculture farms' representative), prominent farmers and breeders from the selected VCs stakeholders, ABA representative, SDF representative, ex. Director of the Agriculture Directorate in Aswan Ms. Mofida and more private business persons to act as a knowledge resource.
- Incorporate a delegate of Aswan's governor in the advisory committee to impact government policies and decisions to the benefit of the project.

- Reach a common understanding of the committee's role among its members and project staff and ASDF representative leading role.
- Organize a regular meeting place that can be reached by project beneficiaries if needed and set a specific schedule for meetings.
- Report on all meetings and specify tasks to be done and responsible persons for follow-up.

6.5. Specific Recommendations for Horticulture and livestock VCs:

- Utilize specialized experts/consultants in all VCs activities preferably from Aswan (agriculture specialists, veterinarians and marketing specialists) to provide technical support to stakeholders and guarantee production quality.
- Develop partnership between ASDF and the stakeholders to build new business models for replication.
- Study marketing opportunities for all VCs
- Organize farmers and breeders to allow for bulk buying of good quality inputs from known suppliers.
- Expand model farms and exchange visits in all selected VCs.
- Develop a database/directory on the qualified input suppliers, best practices, opportunities for value added activities and market options at ASDF and disseminate information to VCs' stakeholders.
- Support the expansion of palm dates plantation particularly the semi dried good varieties that can be cooled through having a nursery for seedlings.
- Coordinate between farmers and agriculture directorate for collective prevention against dates' infection.
- Coordinate with Coops to enforce regulations related to pruning and preparation of palm dates and collect fees.
- Open communication channels with Aswan's palm tissue seedlings lab to provide good quality seedlings as expected next year.
- Expand in the cross breeding of sheep to improve varieties.
- Insure sheep livestock to ensure regular vet examination, which requires raising the awareness of breeders and supporting them financially at the beginning.

6.6. Specific Recommendations for Fish VC:

- Adopt an advocacy plan to stop overfishing and enforce laws and regulations related to Lake Nasser through the project's advisory committee and the support of Aswan's governor.
- Develop a coordination mechanism among various entities managing the lake to unify efforts to saving Lake Nasser and solve fishermen problems including:
 - Enforce lake closure and fighting fish smuggling during this period
 - Prevent poison and electrified fishing
 - Fight Crayfish /mudbugs that ruin the fishing environment.

- Operate Aswan's fish existing hatcheries and nurseries which are not operative to feed the lake and to be used in aquaculture farms
- Expand women engagement in fish retail and processing. Provide them with technical, as well public awareness to encourage them to work in this sector. Connect them to the micro-finance initiative.
- Implement services benefiting the lake's fishermen, such as bakery, ice factory, fishing net production, near Lake Nasser as well as establishing a health unit or first aid center.
- Support fishermen in Lake Nasser during the lake's closure to work in aquaculture farms.
- Engage and support Fishermen Association for the following reasons:
 - It is a centralized association covering all of Aswan.
 - It has previous experience in implementing developmental projects and managing grants.
 - It has a successful micro-credit program even after seven years from the completion of ESDF's funded project.
 - It managed the medical boat efficiently to benefit the lake's fishermen.

6.7. Specific Recommendations for Aquaculture:

- Organize awareness sessions for aquaculture farm owners to inform them of the laws and regulations related to their activities and provide them with technical support before and during implementation.
- Establish model farms but taking into consideration the seasonality of aquaculture activities in decision making, preparation, provision of inputs similar to agriculture products.
- Encourage new investors with the assistance of Aswan Fishermen Association to implement aquaculture farms.
- Communicate with the Agriculture Directorate via the project's committees to get exemptions to target farmers to establish aquaculture farms in barren lands with high salt levels. The water resulting from the aquaculture farms can help fertilize the land.
- Advocate the idea of allocating land within the reclaimed land to aquaculture farms, preferably 20 farms for economic reasons.
- Establish a structure or an association representing aquaculture farm owners and laborers to support the sector.
- Provide technical support and organize exchange visits for aquaculture farm owners to enhance their capacities in managing these farms.

6.8. Specific Recommendations for Micro-Credit:

- Increase the size of the micro-credit to LE 10,000.
- Organize micro-credit recipients related to each VC to receive specialized training and exchange expertise.
- Develop a way to guarantee repayment without using practices against development and against human rights like signing of blank promissory notes.
- Coordinate between the micro-finance component officer and the capacity building officer to ensure that beneficiaries receive adequate training prior to receiving the micro-credit.
- Train lending CDAs on how to determine interest rates and in turn the CDA should explain this to the beneficiaries.
- Link the micro-credit beneficiaries working on the same value chains together and link them to the VC database to enable them to reach inputs at good price and contact new markets.
- Monitor CDAs providing micro loans and ensure they are following the project's policies.

6.9. Specific Recommendations for VSLA:

- Expand the VSLA as the community finds it useful and substitutes micro-credit for people that oppose loans, as well as, mobilizing existing resources.
- Link VSLA groups together to exchange experiences and send them in exchange visits as well as providing them with hands-on training as needed.
- Monitor the groups and those who receive loans to increase the success rate of their projects.

6.10. Specific Recommendations for Entrepreneurship:

- Re-define and set criteria of entrepreneurship within the project taking into consideration educational and socio-economic levels of target beneficiaries as well the rural nature.
- Focus on the existing or potential entrepreneurs within the selected value chains (as stated in the main recommendation) to facilitate communication and have a tangible impact
- Concentrate on mentoring and hands-on training rather than theoretical training.

6.11. Specific Recommendations for Capacity Building:

- Attend to the capacity building needs of VCs stakeholders.
- Take note of the needed capacity building of NGOs in the area of advocacy.
- Emphasize the capacity building of project staff and establish long term capacity building plan with the full support and supervision of CARE.

6.12. Specific Recommendations for Zero interest loans:

- Limit this mechanism to Coops as they are better acquainted with business rules and have dormant capital that can be mobilized.
- Finance only business projects relevant to selected VCs to be implemented by the coops themselves and avoid utilizing zero-interest loans to fund micro-credit.
- Establish clear rules for the zero-interest loans to ensure efficiency and accountability (as mentioned in the main recommendations).

6.13. Specific Recommendations for Financial Management:

- Extend the project life time to end December 2018 since the remaining balance can cover a no cost extension.
- Develop a plan as to how to use the Innovative Fund, Business Model Fund, Government Fund and finances for the social enterprise.
- Revise and optimize the travel time and costs for all implementing partners.
- Report the expenses by outputs and outcomes as this will be beneficial when a final evaluation is undertaken for the project in order to determine the cost effectiveness of each output and accordingly the related outcome.

7. Immediate Actions:

During the self-evaluation workshop, participants were divided into 11 mixed groups representing 6 categories. Participants were given 8 questions to answer by providing immediate interventions required for the next phase of the project. The answers were to include 3-5 ideas, activities or mechanisms per question per group. Proposed ideas and activities reached on average 40 for each question which were then classified by merging the similarities. Discussion of the outcome of each question resulted in the following priorities.

First question: How can we activate the interventions of the selected value chains to increase income and generate job opportunities?

- Priority 1: Emphasize processing of VCs' products through training on manufacturing and packaging.
- Priority 2: Form a task force for each value chain with mechanisms to activate it.
- Priority 3: Intensify technical and skills training for all VCs' stakeholders with regular follow-up.
- Priority 4: Develop a mechanism for organizing exhibitions to promote marketing.
- Priority 5: Cross breeding of local goat and sheep with high quality breeds and provide healthy and suitable environment to improve meat and milk production.

Second Question: How can micro-credit, VSLA and zero interest loans programs support the VCs and other project's components to increase income and generate jobs?

- Priority 1: Organize exchange visits within the same village, within the governorate and among different governorates to exchange experience and learn and disseminate success stories.
- Priority 2: Establish partnerships among VCs' stakeholders and associations.
- Priority 3: Establish micro-projects to serve the VCs, such as chicken farm through partnership among existing VSLA groups.
- Priority 4: Bulk purchase of raw material from the source at wholesale price to cut expenses.
- Priority 5: Link loans with technical support to the VCs.

Third Question: What is the role of project's entrepreneurship component in providing support to entrepreneurs? (Answers should attempt to provide implementation mechanisms)

- Priority 1: Provide entrepreneurs with access to financial and technical support.
- Priority 2: Link the entrepreneurship and micro-credit components.
- Priority 3: Follow-up implemented projects and help solve problems and overcome obstacles faced by entrepreneurs.
- Priority 4: Support entrepreneurs with in-kind funding during the first phase of the projects.
- Priority 5: Establish successful entrepreneurship models and disseminate the information.

Fourth Question: How can we empower World Fish to support immediate interventions in 1) aquaculture, 2) community management and monitoring of Lake Nasser, and 3) create positive models in the lake?

- Priority 1: Develop scientific specifications on how to establish and manage aquaculture farms. Disseminate environmental awareness and provide fish offspring.
- Priority 2: Provide loans to the youth to establish aquaculture farms and provide technical training.
- Priority 3: Activate the role of the Lake's Supreme Supervisory Committee with the participation of World Fish.
- Priority 4: Monitoring the Lake's fishing by the community and not only the government agencies to control harvesting, avoid over fishing, reduce waste and increase productivity.
- Priority 5: Design promotional programs to create awareness of aquaculture and its importance.
- Priority 6: Market fish in the NGO's outlets with affordable prices as well as establishing specialized fish outlets.

Fifth Question: How can we activate communication mechanisms with: fishermen, producers and owners of aquaculture farms?

- Priority 1: Employ local workers through World Fish to be present where target beneficiaries are located.
- Priority 2: Develop a GSM application to be able to reach all fishermen in different places.
- Priority 3: Fix a regular meeting date and time with fishermen.
- Priority 4: Organize a meeting between fishermen associations and the General Authority for Fishery Resources Development (GAFFD).

Sixth Question: How can we activate access to markets in a systematic and effective way for the VCs' products?

- Priority 1: Organize seasonal exhibitions, participate in local and international exhibitions and establish marketing outlets in Aswan's districts to sell products at lower prices.
- Priority 2: Assess communities' needs in the local market as well as the regional and export markets and study forces of supply and demand.
- Priority 3: Establish centers for cooling and packaging VCs' products.
- Priority 4: Promote products via electronic sites.
- Priority 5: Prepare marketing contracts before production to guarantee the marketing process and develop local markets.
- Priority 6: Develop a directory with the names and telephone numbers of wholesale merchants, local markets and input suppliers. Disseminate the information among all stakeholders of the VCs.
- Priority 7: Focus on quality and packaging.
- Priority 8: Organize marketing groups from whole sale and retail merchants and technical workers in the VCs to open new markets.

Seventh Question: How can we activate access to inputs (raw material) in a systematic and effective manner for the VCs' products?

- Priority 1: Establish mobile markets for VCs' inputs to reach villages.
- Priority 2: Activate ASDF's role in bulk purchase and negotiations with suppliers to the benefit of small producers and merchants.
- Priority 3: Provide technical training on use of alternatives of animal feed and fertilizers.
- Priority 4: Attract sales' representatives for the large accredited companies to be present in Aswan.

- Priority 5: Make use of available resources for inputs and help beneficiaries to have access to these resources.
- Priority 6: Open markets and sales outlets for VCs' inputs in affordable prices inside the governorate.
- Priority 7: Promote contractual plantation where the buyer of the products provide inputs to guarantee quality.
- Priority 8: Provide information on input merchants and producers via ASDF's website (free or at nominal fee). Also provide information through news bulletins and documentary videos uploaded on the website while inserting a link on the Facebook page.
- Priority 9: Link producers with associations and NGOs through conferences, meetings and exhibitions.

Eighth Question: How to enforce fishing policies and laws in Lake Nasser so as to increase fish productivity?

- Priority 1: Create sources of income for fishermen during the closure period of the Lake to substitute the absence of income from fishing.
- Priority 2: Activate the advisory committee's role in convincing responsible government entities to enforce the laws.
- Priority 3: Review the fish pricing policy to reduce smuggling.
- Priority 4: Adopt an advocacy project to activate fishing laws governing Lake Nasser.
- Priority 5: Emphasize awareness of the Lake's fishing laws through seminars targeting fishermen and identify the negative effects of overfishing.

Annex I: Evaluation Tools (Arabic)

Annex II: SWOT Analysis Based on Self Evaluation Workshop (Arabic)

Annex III: Planned Life of Project Targets and Actual Project Achievements as of August 2016

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
Goal: increased and sustainable income and employment for young women and men in Aswan.				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,500 youth with increased income - 4,000 youth with new jobs - 25% women 	595 jobs created as such: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero interest loans 149 • Micro-credit/VSLA 263 • Entrepreneurship 24 • Horticulture 101 • Livestock 58 	14 jobs created in aquaculture and 15 new jobs in fish processing	
Outcome 1: Increased production or revenue and profits for farmers, fishermen, traders and processors in the horticulture, livestock, aquaculture and fisheries value chains.				Achievements on the outcome level were not reported
- No. of value chain stakeholders with increased revenue (25% are women)	To be determined based on results of value chain analysis			
- No. of value chain stakeholders with increased profitability (25% are women)	To be determined based on results of value chain analysis			

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
- value chain stakeholders have reduced environmental impacts through improved natural resources use	50% (to be confirmed based on value chains analysis)			
Output 1.1 - Value chain stakeholders have improved access to high quality inputs				
○ stakeholders confirm they are able to access better quality affordable inputs	1000 CARE: 900 WF: 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 264 trainees • 15 sheep breeders received better quality lambs at 50% of the cost 	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARE focused on training and not on providing inputs to VCs' stakeholders through bulk purchases. • WF reported that: increase in input prices, lack of liquidity to buy cash, fishermen cooperatives stopped buying inputs, reduction in fish catch affected the producers of inputs.
○ new input providers established in Aswan	5 CARE:4 WF: 1	2 (Soy Bean Producers as a main component in animal feed)	Zero	Due to the large number of VCs targeted, the project could not focus
The project team focuses on training and not creating suitable mechanisms to provide inputs (raw material and production supplies), such as: bulk buying or suppliers' contracts. Furthermore, there is no clear methodology to report on this output' indicators. Care management noted that the project's weakest interventions in the VCs is the inputs stage.				

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
Output 1.2 - Stakeholders along the selected value chains adopt best practices				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ reduction in post harvest losses in selected value chains (quantity and value) 	10%	58 farm workers received on hand training to improve crops' harvesting in Wady El Nokra		No activities or achievements were reported related to this indicator

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ of the trained stakeholders in the value chains adopting best practices 	70% of those participated in best practices training CARE: 630	241 were trained on best practices and follow-up of adoption of practices is in process. The trainings included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 trained on poultry breeding • 21 Vets trained to assist in the livestock VC • 10 training workshops on palm best practices • 25 researchers specialized in palm dates received capacity build to utilize them in the field. 	34%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices' program is in preparation by Care • Training on best practices for fishing is in preparation • 20 persons attended an aquaculture best management practices workshop in 2015 • 20 fish farmers attended training on aquaculture from 7-12 May. 2016 • 12 fish processors attended a workshop on preservation methods in December 2015 • 14 participants attended training on standard specifications in fish salting during December 2015. • 14 trainees attended training on the use of long line fishing for Nile persch during October 22015

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholders along the value chains report improved product quality based on market recognized quality standards. 	750 CARE: 650 WF: 100	264 benefited from the training	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project needs a clear methodology to improve product quality based on markets to be able to achieve this indicator. • With respect to the fish VC, it is reported that there is a need for financial support and a model whether in fresh or salted fish. There is a problem regarding low production and price increases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholders who have reduced environmental impacts through improved natural resources use (water efficiency, organic fertilizers, etc.) 	50% of the stakeholders	No interventions were reported in relation to this indicator		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WF is currently working on fish processing waste and recommends that the entrepreneurship component to cooperate in this field.
<p>The VC staff depends on the training and exchange visits as the main methodology to change farmer, fishermen and , manufacturers’ practices. Model farms were not used though it is a very effective method in persuading farmers with best practices. There is no clear mechanism to achieve this output indicators.</p>				
<p>Output 1.3 - Stakeholders along the selected value chains have better access to markets</p>				

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ markets which stakeholders along the value chains have access to 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project participated with the cooled dates and hand made products from palm in 3 marketing exhibitions • One of the cooperatives using zero interest loan established a milk distribution unit • Sekem will contract farmers of medicinal and aromatic plants in Wadi El Noqra village. 		

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ new crops cultivated based on market demand 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 crops were introduce but still at a small scale namely: Soya Beans (3 model farms), Cucumber (1 feddan), Export Melokha (6feddans) ● Sekem planted 14 medicinal and aromatic plants as a trial. 		
<p>Based on the indicators for OP 1.3, it is apparent that the project did not conduct an in depth studies for the VCS markets to be able to take the right marketing decisions for each product . Therefore, there is no clear mechanism to market crops and products which up to date depends on individualistic efforts to grab available opportunities.</p>				
<p>Output 1.4 - Value adding activities are introduced or improved in the selected value chains</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thsesse target was not divided between CARE and WF in the project proposal

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
○ new value adding activities introduced in the selected value chains	5	ASDF participated in 2 activities: cooling of 2 tons of date and hand crafts related to palm trees products.	With respect to fish VC, two activities were added including smoked fish experiment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 of the fish processors attended a week training program in the Food Technology Institute Research Institute during December 2015. Experiments on processing new products was followed-up. •
○ existing value adding activities that have improved the quality of their products	5		With respect to the fish value chain, 2 activities were improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This target was not divided between CARE and WF in the project proposal • A pilot experiment related to fresh fish or salted fish is expected.
<p>The project did not go in depth in the VCs to intervene in each step of production, processing and marketing of the products. Currently what is implemented is sporadic interventions rather than focusing on one VC and implementing all possible interventions from the supply of inputs to best practices, processing and marketing. The Project focused mainly on best practices. Furthermore, linkage between the VCs and other project components which are tools to develop the VCs such as micro finance is limited.</p>				
Outcome 2: Enabling environment improved for the development of new and existing horticulture, livestock, and aquaculture and fisheries businesses in Aswan.				Achievements on the outcome level were not reported
- increased value of new investments in the selected value chain	20%			

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
- of the supported institutions apply strategic development targets including the integration of environmental practices and gender mainstreaming	75%			
- policies influenced or enacted to promote the growth of the value chains by the institutions.	3			
Output 2.1 - The Agricultural Services Center facilitates the access of stakeholders along the selected value chains to technical and market information.				

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ stakeholders along the value chains with improved access to market information 	1,500			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASDF collected information related to dates' best practices, cooling, packaging and post-harvest losses via exhibitions and the experience of traders. • ASDF also collected information related to improving sheep breed, timing of breeding, best practices and marketing. • Dissemination of information needs to be expanded through conferences, bulletins, electronic marketing, documentary movies and networking between local traders and producers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ entrepreneurs/businesses use ASC's business development services 	200			The project has no mechanism to deal with the private sector

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
○ cooperatives use ASC business development services	30	93 persons from cooperatives were trained on business management, good governance, proposal writing , gender mainstreaming and feasibility studies.		10 coops received zero interest loans to implement business projects and received technical assistance but are counted under OP 2.4
○ quality business development services available for new and existing businesses	5			The project has no mechanism to deal with the private sector
○ satisfaction rate for the technical and business development outreach materials that are accessible and meet needs and expectations of stakeholders	75%			The project was able to reach CDAs and Cooperatives but not private sector. Project staff stated that the targeted age bracket limits the outreach to farmers.

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ASC is financially sustainable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30% by end of Year 3 ▪ 40% by end of year 4 ▪ 70% by end of year 5 ▪ 100% by end of year 6 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the delay in the VCs' activities, the project has no planned activities to achieve financial sustainability. • ASDF contracted Cargill Co. to provide soya beans and gained 75,000 Egyptian pounds in profit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ASC has completed an adequate business plan by mid of year 3 				Postponed
Output 2.2 - Existing and new businesses have improved access to micro finance				

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ new financial products designed to meet the needs of the selected value chains 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 CDAs in three districts of Aswan received loans to relent it in the form of micro-credit. Two CDAs provide in kind loans and one provide cash loans. As of date 137 loans were disbursed. • 4 CDAs received technical assistance to establish VSLA groups. As of date, 45 groups were established with a total of 725 members, and 61 loans were disbursed. 		The VSLA was not planned for in the proposal. It only started recently; however, it achieved success and their a large demand for it in the CDAs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MF strategy developed by end of year 1 based on findings of the value chain analysis 		A simple strategy was formulated and it includes the providers of micro –credit in Aswan, CDAs’ selection criteria and the component’s interventions.		

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
Output 2.2 related to micro –finance showed the most achievements. VSLA was introduced. However, the link between the VCs and micro-finance is unsystematic.				
Output 2.3 - Entrepreneurs in the selected value chains have improved access to entrepreneurship training and support				
○ youth completed entrepreneurs training	250 (of which 25% are women)	181, of which 36% are women, received training on entrepreneurship concept and skills.		
○ youth businesses supported by mentoring program	100 (25% women)	Did not take place yet		
○ stakeholders with existing businesses adopt good entrepreneurship practices	250 (25% are women)	19 of the existing business persons adopted entrepreneurship best practices, of which 7 are women		
The entrepreneurship component focused on training only until date. The mechanism to identify entrepreneurs is absent. Furthermore, empowerment and encouragement tools are not clear.				
Output 2.4 - Strong, business aware NGOs and cooperatives improve their services and are better able to advocate for the interest of their constituencies				The indicators for this OP is not divided between CARE and WF

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ businesses managed profitably by NGOs and cooperatives 	20	10 Cooperatives received zero interest loans with a total value of LE 1.1 million to finance different business projects. 6 projects are 100% operative while the other 4 projects started but not fully operative		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NGOs and cooperatives jointly develop advocacy strategies including policy recommendations for the agriculture cooperatives, fisheries and aquaculture laws and policies by end of year 2 	3	Not achieved	WF is currently preparing to work on this target	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 75% of performance targets achieved NGOS /coops evaluation demonstrate that they have made improvements in their governance structures and decision making in accordance to set targets 	75% of performance targets achieved	Governance training to NGOs and coops took place but performance targets were not reported.		Through the zero interest loans received by coops , signs of improvement in decision making are observed.

Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (CARE)	Actual Project Achievements as of Aug. 2016 (WF)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NGOs/coops evaluations demonstrate that they have mainstreamed gender in the programing. 	75% of performance targets	10 youth committees were established in 10 Coops , of which 47% of the members are women		
<p>To date, no advocacy interventions are planned because the capacity building component is focused on improving NGOs/coops in managing economical businesses.</p> <p>Gender theme is confronting many difficulties and challenges as a result of the targeted communities' culture. Furthermore, there is no clear strategy to incorporate the gender theme in the project. In addition, the capacity building component should have a clear methodology to improve NGOs/coops' governance.</p>				

