LANDSCAPE STRATEGY FOR BUILDING SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

LANDSCAPE WEST DELTA (ALEXANDRIA AND BEHAIRA GOVERNORATES)

SGP EGYPT

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Summary:

While the poverty is less pronounced in Alexandria and Beheira governorates than in the governorates of the Upper Egyptian Landscape and Fayoum; there are deep pockets of poverty in these two governorates resulting in unequal access to basic services and negative social outcomes for the most vulnerable groups. Both governorates face some serious environmental issues that needs immediate attention.

Egypt has been recently giving more attention to the climate change and emerging needs. GOE efforts in this regard is clear from the launch of the National Climate Change Strategy – 2050 (NCCS) by the Ministry of Environment in May 2022 and Egypt hosting the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) 27 in November 2022.

In order to prepare this landscape strategy, a multiphase approach was adopted starting with reviewing relevant documents on country and landscape levels. One of the key reference documents is the OP7 Project document that was developed after a set of consultations on landscape levels concluding the key identified gaps and potential opportunities. The desk review phase was followed by a consultation meeting conducted in Alexandria in 2nd of February 2023, under the auspices of the Governor and attended by the governor, governor deputy, and 47 participants representing relevant stakeholders; directorate of education, directorate of social solidarity, Alexandria Government technical and media offices, national agencies such as the National Council for Women (NCW), educational institutions such as Alexandria University and Delta University for Science and Technology, CSOs/CBOs representatives from Alexandria and Behaira, employers representation such as Businessmen and Investors Association of Beheira Governorate in addition to the SGP Program Management Team and National Steering Committee chair. Input from the consultation meeting along with the data gathered from the desk review were analyzed and guided the drafting of this landscape strategy.

The baseline survey provides the material to develop strategies to improve community resilience in Upper Egypt Landscape. Based on the community resilience's scores assessment, in general

the participants provided high scores for the “Governance and social equity” and “Biodiversity (including agriculture biodiversity”.

Based on the baseline survey and consultation with the community, issues such as the climate-induced rising sea levels, the poor solid waste management system and unsafe disposal of agriculture waste, Land degradation and the rising levels of salinity and drought, Lack of awareness among community members, inefficient energy use, The excessive use of chemical fertilizers in agricultural lands and the agricultural and industrial sewage unsafe treatment and disposal have been identified. Based on the community resilience scoring and identified issues by community members, potential community-based projects may include: (1) enhancement of agriculture practices by enabling farmers to replace chemical fertilizers with organic fertilizers and biocides, (2) Adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions in public places and household consumption practises, (3) The recycle of agriculture waste into other in demand industries such innovative handicrafts (e.g., horticultural crops waste), fodder and compost., (4) Use of creative tools and methods to raise the awareness of community members on different environmental issues, consequences and offered alternatives, (5) Recycle of sewage waste into cultivating special crops (e.g., Khaya trees), or production of organic compost, (6) Work on boosting agriculture lands conditions through sustainable environmentally friendly practices (e.g., Breeding crops facing salinity) , and (7) Establishment of a sustainable solid waste management system, and (8) Recycle of seagrass (e.g., Posidonia) into fodder and organic compost, (9) Introducing water efficient use techniques in cultivated lands and public places (e.g., schools) and water conserve techniques (e.g., rain harvesting).

The four targeted landscapes showed common issues that need immediate attention such as excessive use of chemical fertilizers, lack of awareness of the community members of key environmental threats and alternatives, inefficient energy use, and agriculture waste management. Additionally, each targeted landscape showed special needs based on the nature of the landscape. Implementing partners shall capitalize on the learnings from the previous phase addressing the identified needs and linking their projects to GEF full size projects to maximize the benefits generated from the implemented intervensions. Gender and youth were highlighted across the four landscapes as the two main targets to benefit from the proposed interventions and creation of livelihood opportunities is a cross cutting approach to be adopted by implementing partners.

Introduction:

The Seventh Phase of the Egypt Small Grants Programme (SGP) seeks to build socio-ecological resilience in Greater Cairo, Fayoum, Delta, and Upper Egypt landscapes through community-based activities for global environmental benefits and sustainable development. As such, the

project will support community-based organizations, which are the driving force in rural development strategies, to take the lead in role managing natural resources sustainably for social and ecological resilience and global environmental benefits, and in concert with other stakeholders and communities to multiply results. The landscape approach integrated into the project strategy is predicated on strengthening socio-ecological resilience. Involving multiple stakeholders in the landscapes-seascape in identifying priority issues and developing strategies for addressing these increases the overall social capital of the local communities. SGP Egypt has used a COMDEKS driven approach to formulate its landscape strategy for OP-7.

The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) was launched in 2011 as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative, and is implemented by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Environment of Japan, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies. The Project is designed to support local community activities to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS) and to collect and disseminate knowledge and experiences from successful actions for replication and up-scaling in other parts of the world. The project aims to develop sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities by providing direct and flexible funding opportunities to willing communities.

The developed landscape strategy is contributing to the GEF SGP OP7 Component 2: Durable landscape resilience through participatory governance and strengthened capacities for upscaling, Outcome 2.1: Strengthened community institutions for participatory governance to enhance socio-ecological resilience, Indicator 10: Participatory landscape management, as indicated by the number of landscape strategies developed or strengthened through participatory consultation and based on the socio-ecological resilience landscape baseline assessments endorsed by multi-stakeholder landscape platforms.

A landscape-wide baseline assessment of the Socio-Ecological Production Landscape (SEPL) was conducted to assess the overall performance of SEPL. The set of indicators for resilience in SEPL developed by the Satoyama initiative was used during the assessment. The resilience indicators of the scorecard exercise were developed in line with the five major goals, namely landscape/seascape diversity and ecosystem protection, Biodiversity (including agriculture biodiversity), Knowledge and innovation, governance and social equality and livelihood and wellbeing. Participants covering a diversified group of stakeholders in targeted landscapes, including local authorities, CSOs/CBOs , media, academia, etc. have participated in this exercise, which was performed as per the guidelines provided by the COMDEKS project by rating (scoring) with a scale between 1 to 5.

1- Priority Area: The Landscape, Issues and Assets, Boundaries and Biodiversity

One of the targeted landscapes for the Seventh Operational Phase of the Small Grants Program is the West Delta Landscape (Alexandria and Behaira governorates). The rationale for the selection of this landscape is based on a number of factors; the richness of natural and cultural assets, threats and opportunities in the area, unique and diverse biodiversity and the willingness of communities and other stakeholders for long-term engagement and to facilitate the collaborative landscape management effort.

Figure (1): Alexandria and Behaira governorates maps

The two governorates representing the West Delta Landscape are Alexandria and Beheira. Alexandria is the second capital in Egypt. It has a population of approximately 5.3 million, most of whom 3.8 million are living in the urban city area. 1 It is an industrial governorate housing around 40% of Egyptian industries. Alexandria's industrial and commercial activities include shipping, warehousing, banking, food processing, and the production of petrochemicals and cement steel and manufacturing industries (textiles, fertilizers, plastics and chemicals). A large proportion of Egypt's foreign trade passes through Alexandria's two main commercial harbours, Alexandria and Al-Dekhayla, through which most of the country's oil, gas, cotton, fruits, vegetables, perfumes, and a variety of finished goods are exported.

The Beheira Governorate is located to the east of Alexandria and covers an area of 9,826 km2. Beheira on the other hand is a predominantly agricultural governorate with a population of 6.2 million, over 80% of whom are living in rural areas. 2 The governorate hosts 648,330 feddans (272,299 ha) of cultivated area and is home to 554 agricultural associations and cooperatives. Agriculture in Beheira primarily depends on flood irrigation from the Al Mahmoudeya Canal and new water projects at Al Nubaria, with only a minority of farmed lands on the North West Coast

[1] https://populationstat.com/egypt/alexandria
[2] Egypt National Report
Addis Ababa Declaration on Population &Development in Africa Beyond 2014 (AADPD +5)
https://egypt.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Egypt%20National%20%28AADPD%2B5%29%20Report%20MidNov18%20%281%29.pdf

dependent on rain. While most (77-99%3) of the Alexandria Governorate, apart from the peri-urban and informal settlements, is serviced with potable water supply and sewerage, only 12-33% of El Beheira's households are connected to sewerage.

The poverty is less pronounced in Alexandria and Beheira governorates than in the governorates of the Upper Egyptian Landscape and Fayoum; however, there are deep pockets of poverty in these two governorates resulting in unequal access to basic services and negative social outcomes for the most vulnerable groups. In Alexandria 11.6% of the population lives below the poverty line, and in the rural governorate of Beheira, 23.7% live below the poverty line. [4]

Despite Alexandria being an industrial hub, female labour force participation is low at 19%. [5] The gender gap in employment is high in both governorates. In Alexandria, male unemployment is 9.6% and 31.9% for females. Such a significant gender gap in an urban governorate where the levels of education including among females is high, confirms the conclusion of the 2018 World Bank (WB) report on Women's Economic Empowerment, regarding the disproportionate rate of unemployment among graduate females compared to males.[6] Possible reasons include, the continued preference of females for public sector employment despite its retrenchment, the bias of many industries towards males, and the loss of jobs following the events of 2011 and Covid-19. In Beheira, the rate of male unemployment is 7% compared to 21.6% for females; however, female labour force participation is the highest of all Egyptian governorates at 40%, followed by 31% in the New Valley and 30% in Menoufiya.[7] The operational definition of labour force participation includes individuals working or actively searching for work, which means that in these particular governorates, women feel that there is potential for their participation, whereas in other governorates where their labour force participation is weak, women who are not working, have either stopped searching for work or are refraining from doing so because they feel that they have no chance of landing what they consider are 'suitable' jobs.

The illiteracy rate in the rural governorate of Beheira is higher than in the urban governorate of Alexandria. In both governorates, the illiteracy rate is higher for females than it is for males; however, the gap is steeper in Beheira at 26.7% for males and 39.4 % for females than in Alexandria where it is 16.3% for males and 21. 8% for females.[8] The lower level of education in Beheira might explain the higher labour force participation as the expectation of what constitutes a 'suitable' job is probably lower than in Alexandria.

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Localizing the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals at Governorate Level, January 2018
Report Prepared by Baseera, UNRCO and The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, Egypt)
[5] Ibid
[6] International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Women Economic Empowerment Study, 2018.
[7] Localizing the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals at Governorate Level, January 2018
[8] Ibid

The West Delta landscape comprises large stretches of the Nile delta coastline that is highly prone to flooding due to climate-induced rising sea levels. Sea level rise is anticipated to further exacerbate the currently high shoreline erosion rates, accompanied by soil subsidence at varying rates and rising levels of salinity[9]. Pollution and increased salinity also further limit the availability of safe water supply, which is already in decline. The pollution of the Mahmoudeya Canal poses another threat to the landscape's scarce water resources and has led to deteriorated quality of potable and irrigation water. The canal's pollution is mainly caused by untreated effluents from villages and towns that lack proper sanitation, in addition to inadequately treated agricultural and industrial wastewater discharged into agricultural drains[10]. In Alexandria, Lake Maryut suffers extensive pollution due to untreated and primary treated municipal sewage and prevalent untreated industrial wastewater discharge.

Limited access to water resources, rising salinity and the anticipated increase in extreme weather events will have direct impacts on the agriculture sector across the landscape. The El Beheira Governorate is particularly vulnerable to detrimental impacts of climate change to its agricultural sector, largely due to poor infrastructure[11], whereas agricultural output from Alexandria is threatened by reduced crop yields and net value.

As is the case across many regions in Egypt, poor solid waste management is a major problem in rural areas of Alexandria and El Beheira governorates, and there are increasing concerns regarding the impacts of marine litter on coastal and marine ecosystems. El Beheira has a waste collection coverage of only 50%, one of the lowest in Egypt, whereas Alexandria fares better in this respect with a collection coverage of 65% (2012 estimates)[12]. This poor collection coverage and the absence of adequate disposal sites lead to the accumulation of an estimated total of 945,000 m3 in open dumps in the two governorates. The West Delta landscape also suffers from significant air pollution, which results from burning of agricultural waste and emissions from the transportation sector.

The biodiversity in both governorates is highly diverse, due to the wider range of habitats, including agriculture and arid habitats, as well as fresh and marine waters habitats. Moreover, the Egyptian northern coastal desert receives the highest rainfall in the country (up to 200 mm annually) and has a fair amount of vegetative cover and the greatest national floral diversity. The influence of coastal rains extends up to 60 km inland. The Mediterranean coast of Egypt is one of the richest areas in biodiversity in the entire country.

[9] Egypt's first Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC, 2019
[10] Behira Environmental Action Plan, EEAA and DANIDA, 2010
[11] Climate Change Impacts on Agriculture and Food Security in Egypt Land and Water Resources—Smart Farming—Livestock, Fishery, and Aquaculture (Book), 2020
[12] NSWMP, Annual report for solid waste management in Egypt 2013

The northern coast contains numerous habitats including coastal dunes, tidal flats, sand formations, part of the Sallum Plateau, salt marshes, saline depressions, non-saline depressions, inland ridges, inland plateaus, wadis, cultivated lands, road sides, and summer resorts. The West Delta landscape includes three important coastal lakes and wetlands, namely Lake Burullus, Lake Idku, and Lake Maryut, each of which are designated as KBAs.

Lake Burullus is a large, shallow, fresh-to-brackish coastal lagoon located between the two Nile branches forming the delta. The lake is elongate in shape, extending approximately 54 km east to west. The north shores are dominated by salt marshes and mudflats and the southern shore is bordered by extensive reed-swamps. Lake Burullus is a national protected area and was designated in 1988 as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands. The lake is one of Egypt's most important wetlands for wintering waterfowl, including Anas penelope, Anas clypeata, Aythya nyroca, Aythya ferina, Fulica atra and Tringa totanus. Because of its relative isolation, Burullus is also an important breeding site for several water birds and wetland species. About 35 species of birds are known to breed, of which the most prominent are Tachybaptus ruficollis, Ixobrychus minutus, Porphyrio, Sterna albifrons, Charadrius alexandrinus, Vanellus spinosus, Glareola pratincola, Caprimulgus aegyptius, Ceryle rudis, Centropus senegalensis and Acrocephalus stentoreus. The endemic delta subspecies of Calandrella rufescens (Calandrella rufescens nicolli) probably has its largest population in the vicinity of Burullus. With respect to non-bird biodiversity, the Mediterranean shore of the lake is a potential breeding site for endangered marine turtles—Caretta (EN), and the reed cat - Felis chaus (LC) is known to occur in important numbers13.

Large swathes of the open-water area of the lake and marsh areas have been lost over the past 40 years due to ongoing drainage and reclamation at the eastern, western, and southern margins. Moreover, landward migration of coastal sandbars at the northern side of the lake is a consequence of severe coastal erosion. The lake receives increasing quantities of agriculture drainage water laden with pesticides and fertilizer, contributing to the eutrophication and pollution of the lake ecosystem. Fisheries have also been impacted from agricultural pollution, fluctuating salinity levels, and expansion of reed-swamps. The high level of fishing activity on the lake, as well as water bird poaching have affected birdlife. There have also been infrastructure threats to the ecosystem, including the highway that runs through the sandbar north of the lake, which has significantly increased accessibility and development pressures.

[13] BirdLife International. n.d. *Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)*. Accessed May 15, 2020. https://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/programme-additional-info/important-bird-and-biodiversity-areas-ibas.

Lake Idku is a shallow wetland located west of the Rosetta Nile branch, at the western part of the Nile Delta. The lake is situated approximately 30 km east of Alexandria. The area of the lake has decreased from 28,500 feddans (11,970 ha) to about 12,000 feddans (5,040 ha) as a result of agricultural reclamation. The lake can be divided into three well-defined basins: eastern, central, and western. Most of the lake margins are covered with dense growths of emergent plants, including Typha latifolia and Phragmites australis, which cover about 50% of the lake's area. Saltmarshes and high dunes, as well as some orchards, are found on the sandbar separating the lake from the Mediterranean. Three main drains discharge into the lake, while the Bughaz El Maadia Canal provides a connection with the sea. The water in the lake is mainly fresh but increases in salinity towards the Bughaz and during the summer. The drainage water contains inputs of domestic, industrial, and agricultural wastewater discharged from the El Beheira Governorate and beyond. The lake is surrounded by dense urban, agriculture, and fish farming activities. Lake Idku supports a fishery of modest importance; total fish production of the lake was 6,206 tons in 2009, constituting 3.9% of fish production from the Egyptian lakes or 5.2% from the production of the northern lakes. Lake Idku is facing the same threats as other delta wetlands, including drainage and reclamation, pollution, water bird poaching, and infrastructure encroachment.

Lake Maryut is the westernmost of the northern delta wetlands, forming the southern border of the city of Alexandria. The lake was formerly fairly large, but late in the nineteenth century the western half was cut off by a railway embankment and transformed into an extensive salina, now known as Malahet Maryut, which is seasonally flooded (usually during winter). The remaining part of this lake is made up of several fragments, dissected by roads and embankments. What remains of the lake proper is brackish, receiving agricultural drainage water through several drains (the most important of these is the Qala Drain), as well as large quantities of municipal and industrial effluent from the city of Alexandria. The lake has no direct connection with the Mediterranean, and is maintained at a level of approximately 2.8 m below sea level by a pumping station at El Max. Much of the lake shore is fringed by extensive Typha/Phragmites marshes. The lake still supports a fishery, with Tilapia sp. making up most of the production.14 In recent years, approximately 1,000 feddans (420 ha) were separated from the lake and reclaimed as fish ponds. Like other delta lakes, Lake Maryut is impacted by anthropogenic pollution, urban encroachment, and solid waste dumping. The lake is eutrophic and considered one of the most polluted wetland ecosystems in the country. The level of disturbance is particularly high because of the close proximity of Alexandria's urban and industrial sprawl.

[14] Alexandria Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (AICZMP): http://www.eeaa.gov.eg/portals/0/eeaaReports/N-EIA/AICZMP/ACZMP-ESIA.pdf

Wadi El-Natrun is another important ecosystem in the landscape, located in the Western (Libyan) Desert adjacent to the Nile Delta (23 m below sea level), approximately 90 km south of Alexandria and 110 km northwest of Cairo. The wadi is about 50 km long, narrow at both ends (2.6 km in the north and 1.24 km in the south) and wider in the middle, about 8 km. The depression contains several alkaline lakes, natron-rich salt deposits, salt marshes, and freshwater marshes.

2- Situation Analysis

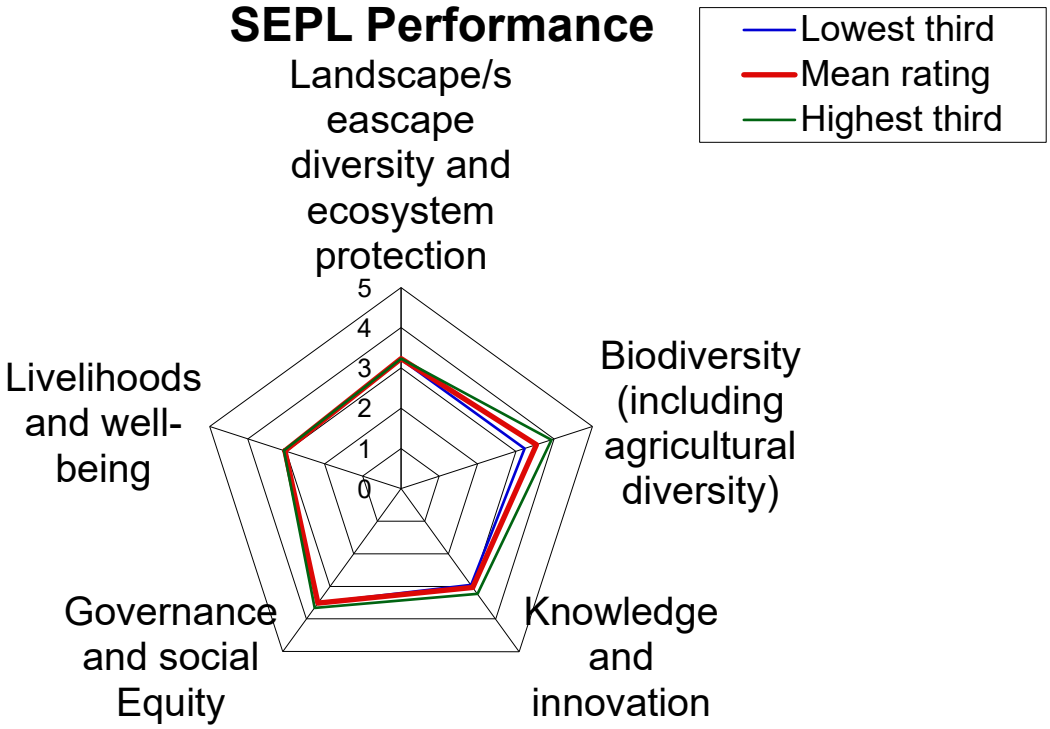
In order to build the landscape strategy a multiphase approach was adopted. First documents such as OP7 project doc, gender analysis action plan, stakeholder plan, Social and Environmental Screening Procedure, OP6 Delta landscape strategy, and the toolkit for the indicators of resilience in socioecological production landscape and seascapes were reviewed. OP7 project document is one of the key references guided the landscape strategy drafting. The landscape strategy integrates the key identified gaps and potential opportunities shared in the project document as a result of consultations conducted at a landscape level and the identified gaps and opportunities were further discussed and validated during the consultation meeting conducted in Fayoum in 2023.

Figure (2): Strategy methodology

Second, a consultive meeting was held in Alexandria governorate in 2nd of Feb 2023. The consultation has been organized at the Governorate building under the auspices of the Governor.

It was attended by the governor, governor deputy, and 47 participants representing relevant stakeholders; directorate of education, directorate of social solidarity, Alexandria Government technical and media offices, national agencies such as the National Council for Women (NCW), educational institutions such as Alexandria University and Delta University for Science and Technology, CSOs/CBOs representatives from Alexandria and Behaira, employers representation such as Businessmen and Investors Association of Beheira Governorate in addition to the SGP Program Management Team and National Steering Committee chair. Full details of the participants are provided in Annex II. During the consultive meeting, all participants were encouraged to share their thoughts on the actual needs and priorities of local communities within the areas of the program, the proposed practical and innovative solutions to address the challenges faced by local communities, the major projects (may be funded by other donors), local plans, or initiatives related to this matter, and the partnership opportunities that exist, whether at the governmental, civil or private sector levels, to maximize benefit. Besides the discussion they took place for 4 hours, all participants received a form to share their ideas about the four listed topics above and rate the SEPLS indicators using the Satoyama Indicators Scorecard.

The COMDEKS excel template was used to derive the SEPLS radar diagram. The results are given in the table below and the radar diagram:



	Landscape/seascape diversity and ecosystem protection	Biodiversity (including agricultural diversity)	Knowledge and innovation	Governance and social Equity	Livelihoods and well-being
Lowest third	3.22	3.22	2.96	3.50	3.03
Mean rating	3.24	3.54	3.03	3.51	3.03
Highest third	3.24	3.92	3.23	3.65	3.06
Standard dev.	0.689953026	0.952316917	0.795242772	0.850737183	0.742605178

As shown in the radar diagram, the West Delta stakeholders scored the Biodiversity (including agricultural diversity), Landscape/seascape diversity and ecosystem protection, Governance and social Equity with the highest scores, while Knowledge and innovation and livelihoods and well-being both scored the lowest in West Delta landscape.

During the consultation meeting the participants agreed on the following key identified problems the landscape is currently facing:

Climate- induced rising sea-level	Poor waste management (agriculture and domistic waste)	Marine litter and Plastic
Land degradation, salinity and drought	Lack of community members awareness	ineffiecient energy use
Excessive use of chemical fertilizers	Agriculture and industerial sewege management and disposal	Poor irrigation

1. Both the OP7 project document and the consultation meeting responses confirmed that one of the key challenges is that the coastal shores are highly prone to flooding due to climate-induced rising sea levels threatening touristic areas and monuments.
2. Both the OP7 project document and the consultation meeting responses highlighted the land degradation and the rising levels of salinity and drought.
3. Both the OP7 project document and the consultation meeting responses highlighted the agricultural and industrial sewage unsafe treatment and disposal.
4. The poor solid waste management system (poor collection coverage and the absence of adequate disposal sites) is a major problem in rural areas of Alexandria and El Beheira governorates as confirmed by the OP7 project document and the unsafe disposal of agriculture waste (horticultural crops) and domestic waste leading to air and water pollution.
5. The consultation meeting responses added Impacts of marine litter on coastal and marine ecosystems and the plastic use environmental hazards.
6. The consultation meeting responses added the lack of awareness among community members (especially young generations) on environment challenges and consequences and the absence of practice promoting positive environmental behavior.
7. The consultation meeting responses added the inefficient energy use leading to environmental and economic burdens.

8. The consultation meeting responses added the excessive use of chemical fertilizers in agricultural lands which negatively affects the cultivated land, crops and pollute water and the poor irrigation practices that waste water and harm the cultivated land.

3- Landscape Strategy (Outcomes and Impact indicators)

The overall long-term objective of the SGP Egypt Landscape Strategy during its Seventh Operational Phase is to "*to build social, economic, and ecological resilience in landscapes and seascapes through community-based activities*.". The landscape strategy is recognized as a living document, which will continue being refined in view of the experiences and lessons learnt over time. This Landscape Strategy for West Delta adopts the following five outcomes and defines key performance indicators for each outcome. These are consistent with and contribute towards the outcomes, indicators, and targets in the OP-7 Project Document. The targets, however, will be finalized after finalization of grantee proposals. The SGP projects selected within Upper Egypt Landscape will be expected to contribute to one or more of these outcomes along with relevant indicators.

Outcome 1.1: Strengthened conservation of biodiversity and protection of ecosystem services through participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood interventions.

One measure of socio-ecological resilience in the target landscapes is the genuine involvement of local communities in collaborative conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood interventions. Through additional grant support and leveraging of resources and engagement from enabling partners, as well as advocating for policy reform and expanded incentive mechanisms, landscape resilience will continue to be strengthened.

Indicator 6: Strengthened agroecological systems, as indicated by the number of households (gender disaggregated) gaining livelihood co-benefits from improved agroecological practices.

Indicator 7: Strengthening gender quality and women's empowerment in control of natural resources, as indicated by the number of projects that are contributing to equal access to and control of natural resources by women and men

Outcome 1.2: Increased adoption of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and mitigation solutions at community level

This outcome targets community projects that demonstrate and/or disseminate renewable energy or energy efficiency applications that have been solidly tested during previous phases of the SGP in Egypt (e.g. efficient lighting, bicycle transport systems, biogas) or which may benefit from demonstrations to enhance awareness or generate evidence for application.

Indicator 8: Livelihood co-benefits and strengthened resilience through low carbon agricultural practices, as indicated by (a) the amount of compost produced that displaces chemical fertilizer use and improves soil fertility (tons), and (b) the number of households benefitting from biogas cooking energy and digestate-sourced fertilizer (number of households, gender disaggregated)

Indicator 9: Strengthened resilience and increased energy security, as indicated by the number of solar PV agricultural pumping systems replacing diesel-powered units.

Outcome 2.1: Strengthened community institutions for participatory governance to enhance socio-ecological resilience

The landscape approach requires engagement by multiple stakeholders, with cross-sectoral representation from government, civil society, private sector, and academia-research. Multi-stakeholder collaboration will help leverage resources and facilitate impact at scale, and further strengthen mainstreaming of participatory conservation, restoration, and sustainable livelihood initiatives into local planning frameworks.

Indicator 11: Empowering women in natural resource governance, as indicated by the number of projects that improve the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance

Indicator 12: Strengthening socioeconomic benefits for women, as indicated by the number of projects that target socioeconomic benefits and services for women

Outcome 2.2: Upscaling enabled through capacity building and knowledge management.

The durability of the interventions implemented on the project will largely depend on building capacities of the CBOs/CSOs in the target landscapes, as well as generating and sharing knowledge on best practices and lessons learned.

Indicator 14: Knowledge shared, as indicated by the number of project and portfolio experiences and lessons systematized and codified into case studies produced and disseminated, and cumulative number of views of the case studies from the SGP website.

Indicator 15: Mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment, number of women-led projects supported.

Indicator 16: Upscaling initiated, as indicated by the number of instances of scaling up or replicating best project practices and/or the number of policy advances approved by local or central government entities.

Outcome 3.1: Sustainability of project results enhanced through participatory monitoring and evaluation.

The outcome focuses on delivering participatory and timely M&E feedback, consolidating inputs from the individual grantees and evaluating progress towards achievement of the overall project objective. The findings of the M&E activities will inform adaptive management measures, aimed at ensuring the durability of project results.

Upper Egypt landscape projects are also expected to contribute to the **GEF core indicators**:

Core Indicator 3: Area of land restored (hectares)

Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tons of CO2e)

Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment.

4- Typology of potential community-based projects and criteria for project selection

1- Enhancing the agriculture practises to benefit biodiversity, restoring degraded agricultural land, and enhancing water conservation.
   a. Improved agricultural practices (agriculture waste to animal feed and organic fertilizer). Increased utilization of organic fertilizers – and an associated decrease in chemical fertilizers – improve the diversity and integrity of soil biodiversity.
   b. The myriad of organisms that make up soil biodiversity contribute to a wide range of essential ecosystem services, such as nutrient cycling, regulating soil organic matter, soil carbon sequestration, etc.
   c. Through adoption of good agroecological practices, not only will the functioning of ecosystems be enhanced, but habitats for flora and fauna will be improved, generating biodiversity benefits.
   d. Enhancing water conservation by clearing of irrigation canals of aquatic invasive alien species (IAS), e.g., water hyacinth will result conservation of irrigation water, improvements in irrigation processes, and enhanced soil fertility.
   e. Restoring degraded agricultural land and boosting soil fertility through sustainable environmentally friendly practices
   f. Introduction of modern irrigation practices that can save water and reduce economic burden on farmers.
2- Expanding application of renewable energy solutions

a. Solar PV systems for surface and groundwater pumping for irrigation replacing diesel-powered units.
b. Solar PV for lighting (residential – schools – commercial).
c. Biogas for cooking and digestate to replace artificial fertilizer.
d. bike-sharing particularly within the urban parts of the targeted landscape.

3- The recycle of agriculture waste (horticultural crops waste) into other in-demand industries such as innovative handicrafts (e.g., Banana Trees waste), fodder, sawdust and compost.

4- Strengthen Participatory conservation arrangements between local communities and protected areas (e.g., community patrol) in Lake Burullus, Lake Idku, and Lake Maryut ecosystems and other reserved areas.

a. Participatory monitoring and management of reserved areas.
b. Community-supported ecotourism, e.g., including, but not limited to (a) promoting citizen science initiatives connected with ecotourism activities, thus providing direct support to the monitoring of globally significant biodiversity, as well as increasing the awareness of biodiversity values; (b) reducing damage to critical habitats by tourists through increasing awareness, e.g., through training of community biodiversity guides; (c) facilitating establishment of community-level business models that involve CBOs producing handicrafts for tourists that provides alternative livelihood options for local communities and reduces pressure associated with unsustainable activities in habitats of globally significant biodiversity.
c. Improved agroecological practices (beekeeping). Through promotion of agroecological practices, including diversifying on-farm production, pollination by bees can help facilitate diversity and provide improved and expanded habitats for fauna and flora, thus generating biodiversity benefits.

5- Use of creative tools and methods to raise the awareness of community members on different environmental issues, consequences and offered alternatives and induce positive practices.

6- Combatting desertification, sand fixation and wind breaks through construction of fencing-barriers made of woody plants cultivated with irrigation from recycled-reused wastewater.

7- Combatting soil salinization. Applying more efficient irrigation regime, improved organic fertilisation, and ecological restoration through planting and/or rehabilitation of salt-resistant vegetation.

8- Introducing water efficient use techniques in cultivated lands and public places (e.g., schools) and water conserve techniques (e.g., rain harvesting).

Table (1): Mapping of potential projects to the main outcomes:

#	Suggested SGP projects	Enhancing ecosystem service	Strengthening the sustainability of production systems	Developing and diversifying livelihoods and income generation	Strengthening institutions and governance	Women focused	Youth focused
1	Enhancing the agriculture practises to benefit biodiversity, restoring degraded agricultural land, and enhancing water conservation.	X	X	X	X		X
2	Expanding application of renewable energy solutions	X	X	X	X	X	X
3	The recycle of agriculture waste (horticultural crops waste) into other in-demand industries such as innovative handicrafts (e.g., Banana Trees waste), fodder, sawdust and compost.	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Use of creative tools and methods to raise the awareness of community members on different environmental				X	X	X

	issues, consequences and offered alternatives.						
5	Strengthen Participatory conservation arrangements between local communities and protected areas (e.g., community patrol) in Lake Burullus, Lake Idku, and Lake Maryut ecosystems and other reserved areas.	X	X	X	X		X
6	Combatting desertification, sand fixation and wind breaks through construction of fencing-barriers made of woody plants cultivated with irrigation from recycled-reused wastewater.	X	X	X	X		X
7	Combatting soil salinization. Applying more efficient irrigation regime, improved organic fertilisation, and ecological	X	X	X	X		X

	restoration through planting and/or rehabilitation of salt-resistant vegetation.						
8	Introducing water efficient use techniques in cultivated lands and public places (e.g., schools) and water conserve techniques (e.g., rain harvesting).	X	X		X		
Total		7	7	6	8	3	7

Criteria for project selection:

The selected projects under SGP OP7 Egypt will adhere to the defining aspects of the COMDEKS programme, i.e. the centrality of "community-based" organizations in rural development strategies and taking the lead role in project planning, landscape governance, execution and monitoring. This approach is also consistent with SGP's historical focus, organizational mandate, and the spirit of the Small Grants Programme philosophy. There is recognition, however, that partners will need additional orientation and support on landscape management-related issues and methodologies. This requirement would be addressed through increased focus on training, orientation, and on-going mentoring of grantees.

The call for proposals will be made through the SGP Egypt website, social media platforms, the steering committee networks, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Social Solidarity. The document will include background information and guidelines for submitting technical and financial proposals. The local social solidarity directorate and the governor team will approve the submitted proposals before sharing the proposals for screening by the National Steering Committee. Field visits by the SGP National team may be undertaken to actual sites/offices for validation and/or additional information.

NSC meeting(s) will be held for finalization of short-listed proposals. After receipt and short-listing of proposals, potential partners may be provided additional information and/or support to refine proposals, if needed.

Written scoring/rating criteria for proposals will be shared amongst all members of the proposal selection committee. The following criteria will be adhered to for reviewing and appraising the organizations and proposals for implementing SGP projects in West Delta landscape (which may differ from other SGP projects outside the landscape):

Eligibility Criteria for Partners/Organizations:

1. The community-based organization should be registered at the Ministry of Social Solidarity with an established presence within the boundaries of the landscape.
2. A permanent location/office at the project site will be an advantage, but not mandatory.
3. The organization proposing work related to the GEF SGP priorities or themes should demonstrate a strong ability to deliver such projects, which includes organization's profile which illustrates the CSOs/ CBOs capabilities and experience to deliver community projects
4. Possessing inclusive and broad-based membership/affiliation with community-based groups, youth groups/committees or indigenous groups will be an advantage.
5. The project team should include at least one technical staff proposed for implementation, who will also act as focal person and assume responsibility for reporting.
6. Adequate gender balance within the team will be desirable.

Criteria for project proposals:

1. Project proposals should be aligned with the Landscape Strategy and should directly contribute to one or more of the outcomes of the Landscape Strategy. The project proposal should be aligned to the National Climate Change Strategy – 2050 (NCCS), prepared by the Ministry of Environment and launched in May 2022.
2. Project proposals that respond to additional areas will be given preference such as those addressing multiple threats/needs, innovations, replication potential, and policy inputs.
3. The proposed project site should be within the target landscape and based on a documented community needs assessment.
4. Each project should allocate at least 10 percent of the budget to knowledge management products at the landscape level, e.g. case study, audio-video documentation, best practices.
5. Project proposals should include a time-bound work-plan, M&E section, sustainability plan, partnership plan and log- frame.
6. Project proposals need to include a section showing the project's alignment to the programme's areas of work and landscape outcomes.
7. Gender considerations should be mainstreamed as appropriate e.g. collection of and reporting on gender disaggregated data, gender analysis etc.
8. Project proposals should explicitly state any capacity development inputs/gaps/requirements pertaining to implementation.

9. In-kind and in-cash contribution must be met by CSOs/CBOs, local community members and/or other partners (government, local authority, private sector, academia, national or international agency, etc.)
10. Project cost must be no more than USD 50,000.
11. Project proposals should explain their partnership model and the key stakeholders identified to support the project's implementation and sustainability.
12. Project proposals shall demonstrate a new technology/innovations support and adoption to maximize the project's results and possesses scope of replication.
13. Project proposal should specify clearly any activities focused on women or youth (if any)

Strategic projects grants:

14. Resources have been allocated in the OP7 budget for strategic grants, to help facilitate durable impacts. The strategic grants are envisaged to be awarded to experienced CBOs/CSOs for delivering technical and strategic support, guiding local stakeholders in the implementation of landscape approaches and delivering advocacy for policy reform and upscaling.
15. Two to three strategic projects will be granted across the four landscapes.
16. Terms of reference will be developed for the strategic grants in consultation with the SGP National Steering Committee (NSC), Country Programme Management Unit (CPMU), the UCP Global Coordinator, and the UNDP Country Office (CO), and then awarded through competitive procurement and agreed by the NSC.

Table (2): Scoring Matrix for project's proposals.

Criteria	Evaluation Elements	Score
Organization	- Registered local organisation with no known conflicts/risks - Maintains some local presence. - Holds required technical expertise to deliver the proposed project	20
Technical Approach	- Aligned and responsive to OP-7 Prodoc and LS - Contributes to more than 1 outcome of the LS	25
Budget/ M&E Arrangement	- Within permissible budget - Includes SMART KPIs - Includes Knowledge Management products - Includes co-financing (cash/in-kind)	15
Scope/Innovation	- Demonstration of new technology/innovations - Possesses scope of replication	20
Team composition	- Technical focal person	5

	- Gender-balanced team	
Partnerships	- Stakeholders mapping and analysis - Partnerships plan	15
Note: - Total score of 50 and above – shortlisted and recommended for NSC consideration - Total score below 50 points – not recommended for NSC consideration		

5- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan at the Landscape Level

The method employed during the consultation process in the baseline survey is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. A list of SEPLS indicators and scores for each indicator is used as a guideline.

SGP will continue such interactions in the future with the relevant key stakeholders to update partners on the landscape strategy and on M&E aspects for grantees. More specifically, at this early stage, participants were more forthcoming on discussing key issues, sectoral and thematic thrusts, and typology of projects. The section below on the M&E plan is indicative and will be refined at the stage of project proposal submission and approval.

The regular on-going M&E for SGP Egypt will be conducted in accordance with UNDP requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP and UNDP Evaluation Policy procedures. Additional mandatory GEF-specific M&E requirements will be undertaken in accordance with the GEF Monitoring Policy and the GEF Evaluation Policy and other relevant GEF policies[15].

Each SGP grantee will indicate the specific Landscape Outcome(s) that it is contributing towards, and the M&E plan will be tailored according to the outcomes and KPIs in the Strategy thereby making explicit which of the key performance indicators it is contributing towards and how in the final approved proposals.

The schedule and frequency of the individual SGP projects monitoring activities will be defined in the proposals. A key lesson learnt for SGP is that the M&E plan at the project level must adhere to the SMART standards. The applicants will require additional guidance and details for this purpose, and it is expected that short-listed partners will be coached accordingly. SGP will build the capacities and provide adequate institutional support to SGP grantees to enable them to fulfill their role in serving their local communities, assessing their needs, and successfully designing, implementing, and monitoring SGP-funded projects. Besides the SGP support to grantees, the formal multi-stakeholder groups and partnerships established and formalized on landscape levels to provide strategic advice and policy guidance on landscape management will

[15] See https://www.thegef.org/gef/policies_guidelines

also ensure ongoing monitoring of projects and of their results and exchange knowledge across grantees.

SGP grantees are requested to submit semi-annual progress reports (including KPIs progress) along with a financial report as a requirement for disbursement of next installment, besides, periodic monitoring visits will be carried out by the SGP Egypt National Programme Manager and members of the NSC, as needed. SGP grantees will also submit a final report summarizing global benefits and other results achieved, outputs produced, and lessons learned. The final report should also include a final financial statement. Partner submitted progress reports will be used to track progress against overall outcomes and identify gaps. Partners will also be required to document best practices, case studies and lessons learnt as relevant, which will be compiled at the end for the entire SGP portfolio.

SGP will also build on and promote innovations in monitoring and effective reporting through use of new technologies (e.g., tablets and online surveys). The overall M&E report of SGP will aggregate results at the level of the overall outcomes and indicators specified in the Prodoc.

Table (3): M&E plan at the individual project level:

Activity	Responsible party	Timeframe
Proposed M&E plan indicating outcomes, activities and KPIs	Grantee	At time of proposal submission
Project work-plan	Grantees, CPM, NSC	Project duration (quarterly)
Baseline data collection	Grantees, CPM	At project's proposal/ early stage
On-site monitoring visits	CPM, NSC	At-least once per year and as-needed
Participatory project monitoring/review and capacity building	Grantees, CPM, NSC and other stakeholders	At least once per year (can include partners' meetings, network exchanges)
Project progress reports (technical and financial)	Grantees, CPM	As per the project proposal and with each disbursement request
Project final report	Grantees, CPM	At project completion
Project evaluation report	CPM, NSC, External party	One Month prior to project completion
Lessons learnt and knowledge generated	CPM, NSC, External party	Mid-term and end-term of the project life.

Moreover, a multi-stakeholder landscape platform will be formed to provide guidance and support to all grantees. The multi-stakeholder landscape platform will include local government units, CBOs/CSOs received grants, MoSS representative and MoE representative, NCW among other relevant stakeholders at local level. The multi-stakeholder landscape platforms will provide

direct linkages with local government development planning mechanisms and opportunities for funding upscaling and replication. Involving multiple stakeholders in the landscape platforms will enhance the likelihood that project results will be sustained after GEF funding ceases. Representatives of local government entities are important members of the multi-stakeholder landscape platforms, helping to foster linkages with complementary government programmes and to identify incentives for upscaling project interventions.

The plan above provides a basis for continuous improvement and refinement of the planning and management of individual projects as well as helping communities to assess and adapt their approaches for rebuilding SEPLS, and in identifying gaps and collecting and disseminating experiences in target areas through periodic reviews. In line with COMDEKS guidelines, it is also proposed that at least two partner organizations – who are identified as "lead" partners for capacity building on COMDEKS – can be given a proactive role in mentoring and steering the M&E and knowledge management processes.

6- Knowledge Management Plan at the Landscape level

In Egypt OP6, a stand-alone Capacity Development project supported the production of case studies and disseminated them at national and local levels through different knowledge channels. It produced factsheets, newsletters, knowledge management and audio-visual materials. These knowledge products along with the individual case studies make up a "living" knowledge platform, which can be further strengthened and expanded during Egypt OP7.
At the broader landscape level, the SGP Egypt Country Programme has been producing case studies of the landscape planning and management experience. These case studies highlight the processes of stakeholder participation, as well as the progress toward the targets selected during landscape planning. The results of these studies are planned to be published and disseminated throughout landscapes through print and digital media and SGP's institutional partners, SGP-supported CSOs/CBOs networks, universities and others.

The project will implement an inclusive knowledge management strategy across the four landscapes as a standalone project that is also linked with the Upgraded Country Programme (UCP) and Small Grants Programme (SGP) knowledge management priorities, facilitating collaborative interactions across local, national, regional, and global levels. The receptiveness of stakeholders to knowledge inputs is an important impact driver in this regard. The coordination, collaboration, and knowledge management strengthened by the project will foster systemic change and replication, thus maximising the effectiveness, durability, and scale of socio-ecological resilience.

Building on the OP6 efforts to document and share good practices and lessons learned, each grant project has as a primary product a case study, and each grant a summary of lessons learned based on evaluation of implementation results and their contributions to GEB, local development objectives and landscape level outcomes, including the development of social capital. The knowledge products will be disseminated using print media, social media, radio, or other communication approaches. At least one of the knowledge products is envisaged to highlight women's role in ensuring social and ecological resilience. This knowledge is being systematized and codified for dissemination at the landscape level through policy dialogue platforms, community landscape management networks and multi-stakeholder partnerships, and knowledge fairs and other exchanges. The individual grant project case studies are anticipated at project design and based on a participatory methodology, so that the production of the case studies strengthens the community organization's capacities for reflection and action through learning-by-doing.

To record and disseminate the knowledge gained through the implementation of the community small grants, the CBOs will be trained on collecting, recording and documenting knowledge and experiences on community development initiatives. The increased capacity of community-level stakeholders to generate, access and use information and knowledge is expected to increase the sustainability of project activities beyond the life of the grant funding. Knowledge sharing and replication will help ensure that the impacts of the project are sustained and expanded, generating additional environmental benefits over the longer-term. Another channel for knowledge sharing and dissemination is the multi-stakeholder landscape platform to be formed after the CBOs/CSOs proposals are approved. SGP team will put efforts to influence the multi-stakeholder landscape platform activeness and encourage participants to meet frequently and provide support whenever needed.

The knowledge obtained from project experiences and lessons learned will be socialized through SGP's well-established national network of stakeholders and SGP's global platform, and it will be used in upscaling successful initiatives. The project will facilitate dissemination through global ongoing South-South and global platforms, such as the UN South-South Galaxy knowledge sharing platform and PANORAMA[16]. Considering the mature UNDP country programme in Egypt and the long-standing experience of SGP in the country, Egypt is in a unique position to share experiences and lessons to younger, less experienced programmes in the region. The project will furthermore provide opportunities for regional cooperation with countries that are implementing initiatives on conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and

[16] https://panorama.solutions/en

community-level clean energy solutions in geopolitical, social and environmental contexts relevant to the proposed project in Egypt.

Annex

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20. Toolkit for the indicators of resilience in socioecological production landscape and seascapes (http://satoyama-initiative.org/)

Details of consultive meeting

No.	Name	Organization
1.	Araby Abu Zeid	Directorate of Education
2.	Hanaa El Sayed Abdo	Public Relations - Media - Alexandria Governorate
3.	Reda Ibrahim	Environmental Federation
4.	Jackline Magdy	Stem International
5.	Kholod Mohamed Hafez	Stem International
6.	Mohamed fahmy	Directorate of Education
7.	Walid Ahmed	Eqyptian Environmental Affairs Agency – Alexandria Branch
8.	Jegan Ibrahim Rabea	Nedaa El Kheir Association – Beheira
9.	Basant Mereika	Rotaract Pharos Light House Foundation
10.	Magda Al Shazly	National Council for Women
11.	Nada Thabet	El Amal Village Association for Development and Social Rehabilitation
12.	MG. Gamal Rashad	Central Administration for Tourism
13.	Niveen Hasan El Leithy	Alexandria Governorate
14.	Manal Ahmed	Alexandria University
15.	Rasha Mohamed	Women's Association for Health Improvement-Damanhour
16.	Hany Soliman	El Amal Village Association

No.	Name	Organization
17.	Hoda Mostafa Ibrahim	Eqyptian Environmental Affairs Agency – Alexandria Branch
18.	Amr El sammak	Alexandria University
19.	Fares Mahmoud	AlexBib
20.	Fayza Ismail	Directorate of Social Solidarity
21.	Shahira Assem	Delta University for Science and Technology
22.	Mohey El Din Mohamed	Islamic Charity in Nakhla Bahria – Beheira
23.	Ahmed Abdel Wakel Taha	Islamic Charity in Nakhla Bahria – Beheira
24.	Sara Mohamed Sabry Zakaria	Delta University for Science and Technology
25.	Maher Ibrahim Attia	Alexandria Governorate
26.	Reem Abdel Hamid Hussein	Alexandria University
27.	Riham Abdel Hamid	AlexBib
28.	Magda Hasan Galalah	Directorate of Social Solidarity
29.	Osama Saber	Eqyptian Environmental Affairs Agency – Beheira Branch
30.	Safaa El Shrief	Alexandria Governorate
31.	Ramadan Mohamed El Halaby	Charity At Ferhash
32.	Sameh Abd Allah	Alexandria Governorate
33.	Radwa Ahmed	Businessmen and Investors Association of Beheira Governorate

No.	Name	Organization
34.	Suhair Abdel Rahman Gabr	Al Qalaa Charity
35.	Marwa Abu El Abbas Gomaa	Al Qalaa Charity
36.	Ibrahim Gaber	Bahr el elm w al Olamaa Association
37.	Naglaa El Sayed	Bahr el elm w al Olamaa Association
38.	Soliman Dawoud	Shams Association
39.	Fatma Mamdouh	Afaq El Amal Lel Tanmia Association
40.	Ahmed Abdel Baqi	Ice Alex
41.	Sara Abdo	Ice Alex
42.	Adel Refaat	Al Khadamat Al Motakamla Association
43.	GM. Mohamed El Sherif	Governor of Alexandria
44.	Dr. Jaklin	Deputy Governor of Alexandria
45.	Dr. Hala Yousry	NSC Chair
46.	Dr. Emad Adly	GEF SGP CPM
47.	Ms. Ghada Ahmadein	GEF SGP Program Manager