



HAYAT

Toolkit for Local Socio-Economic Development

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Abbreviations

BDS	Business Development Services
CDA	Community Development Organisation
IOM	(United Nations) International Organization for Migration
ILO	(United Nations) International Labor Organization
LARU	Government of Egypt Local Administrative Reform Unit
LAU	Local Administrative Unit
LED	Local Economic Development
MALR	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoLD	Ministry of Local Development
MoTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MSEs	Micro and Small Enterprises
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Program
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association (savings groups)

Introduction

About the Hayat toolkit

This toolkit is a collation of information, experiences, success stories and lessons learned from a project titled “Human security through inclusive socio-economic development in Upper Egypt” (the **Hayat project**) that promoted local economic development in the Upper Egyptian governorate of Minya between 2013 and 2017. Designed as a succinct, user friendly and practical guide for replicating any or all of the project components, the toolkit documents the project, simplifies the business models proposed and emphasizes the elements that are essential to successful implementation.

The guiding principles of the Hayat approach stem from the notion that the human security threats that challenge the prosperity, livelihood, and well-being of people should be addressed through an integrated and comprehensive approach that address both economic and social dimensions. Besides clear economic development models, the project places significant emphasis on endogenous growth created through a positive community environment based on trust and on the capacity of individuals and communities to solve common problems.

Any intervention based on the Hayat approach to local economic development should be customized to suit the local context and specific needs of the selected target area. In this way, this first edition of the toolkit is a “living document” that will benefit from review and updating.

Who should use the toolkit

The toolkit is intended for use by government, development and research partners who are interested in promoting local economic development in a rural context. As a framework for implementation based on best practices and lessons learned from the field, the toolkit is designed to orient practitioners, policymakers and decision-makers on the challenges and possibilities that can be expected from community-led local economic development in rural areas.

Toolkit Structure

The toolkit outlines the economic and social components to project implementation. It is divided into four sections covering the steps needed to implement the **Hayat** approach.

Overall, the toolkit aims to guide user as to the:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| ➤ Objectives of the interventions | THE WHY |
| ➤ Human, financial and technological inputs and models | THE HOW |
| ➤ Activities and implementation steps | THE WHAT |
| ➤ Timing of implementation and duration of the activities | THE WHEN |

Section 1 Setting the scene for local economic development

This section sets the context for implementation by covering the background to the **Hayat** approach, the key elements to successful implementation and foundational steps needed to move forward local economic development in rural areas. It outlines the origins of the Hayat project in Minya and outlines how to secure community approval.

Section 2 Local Economic Development

This part outlines practical ways to promote local economic development projects with a focus on:

- (i) SMEs, clusters and value chains: how innovation, value addition and business links can enhance

- economic outcomes.
- (ii) Skills and entrepreneurship: how building skills can support access to the job market and entrepreneurship.
- (iii) Jobs / career support services: how building links between job seekers, employers and support systems enables career pathways.

Techniques described include improving the productivity of local enterprises by promoting expertise and technology transfer, identifying and developing productive clusters, adding value, and promoting women’s economic empowerment. Given its predominance in Upper Egypt and in rural areas more generally, the focus is on the agribusiness sector, but the principles could apply equally to other sectors. Guidance is also provided on enhancing employability through skill development and through creating links to jobs and entrepreneurship, including social enterprises.

Section 3 Building social capital and community participation

Community-led local economic development supports endogenous growth. This section outlines participatory community forums and the potential benefits that stem from communities identifying their needs and priorities and contributing to solutions that improve well-being and productivity. The section provides guidance on how to support communities move from identification of common problems to prioritization and implementation of interventions such as life skills development, health awareness and neighbourhood upgrading. It also outlines how to harness the volunteering potential of communities to further the aims of the project.

Section 4 Final considerations

The final section provides guidance on the estimated timing and duration of activities, process mapping, other key considerations and overall recommendations to support implementation.

Getting the most out of the toolkit

Implementation steps, key takeaways, achievements, success stories and lessons learned to support implementation are listed throughout the toolkit. An online resource www.toolkit.hayat-eg.org contains supplementary material including case studies and further reading. In addition, **symbols** are used throughout the toolkit, as listed below:



Disclaimer: Carefully consider the local context before moving forward



Lessons Learned: Summary of key learnings



Success Story: Documented inspiration from the field



Gender Lens: Interventions that can target women



Tools and References: Further reading relevant to the component.



Replication and Scaling: Can be multiplied; can apply to other sectors or locations

1 Setting the scene for local socio-economic development

This section gives the background to the emergence of the Hayat approach to local economic development and its foundations. It covers the basic principles of the Hayat project, key components for success and the

needed steps to lay the groundwork for implementation.

1.1 Background

The **Hayat approach for local socio-economic development** grew out of the “Human security through inclusive socio-economic development in Upper Egypt” project that was jointly implemented by the Ministry of Local Development and five UN agencies in Egypt: UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organization) as team leader, ILO (International Labor Organization), UN Women (UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women), UN-Habitat (United Nations Human Settlements Program), and the IOM (International Organization for Migration). The project was implemented the governorate of Minya and was funded by contributions from the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Japan from 2013 to 2017.

The project design was based on an extensive consultative process between the implementing partners, government institutions and non-governmental organisations. The involvement of the Ministry of Local Development (MoLD) in the project design process ensured the project’s objectives and anticipated results were in line with the Government of Egypt’s vision for local development, poverty reduction and employment generation.

The project employed a **community-led approach to local development**. It worked from the bottom-up to prioritize community needs, create jobs, and promote socio-economic development. Communities were targeted through context-based, people-centred interventions that protect from threats and increase resilience. The twin objectives were:

1. Strengthen economic security in target communities through the creation of more and better employment opportunities and increase employability of the local labour force, and
2. Enhance community social capital, cohesion and inclusiveness.

The project resulted in improved **economic, social and environmental outcomes** for target beneficiaries in Minya governorate including:

- The adoption of innovative and higher value added approaches by local businesses
- 100-300% increase in productivity of vegetables, meat and milk products
- Over 1,000 MSMEs with improved performance
- 28 million EGP increase in turnover per year in the target communities
- Creation of 2000 employment opportunities
- Referral of 2,500 youth to jobs
- 10,000 women saved 2 million EGP for productive projects
- 150,000 people gained access to potable water
- 40,000 people reached through health awareness
- 4,000 youth volunteering in the community

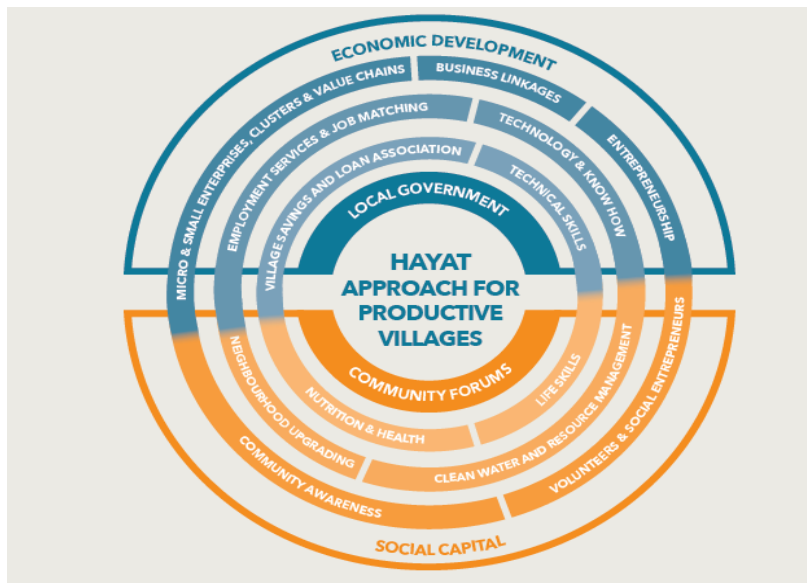
To enable practitioners to implement similar projects in future, stakeholders requested that the techniques and processes used in the Hayat project be documented and thereby offer the opportunity to implement similar projects in future.

1.2 Hayat approach for local economic development

The Hayat project aimed to address community challenges such as persistent poverty, environmental degradation and lack of sufficient food and nutrition by promoting economic initiatives that enable communities to become self-reliant. In responding to these challenges, the project introduces activities that stimulate economic development and build social capital:

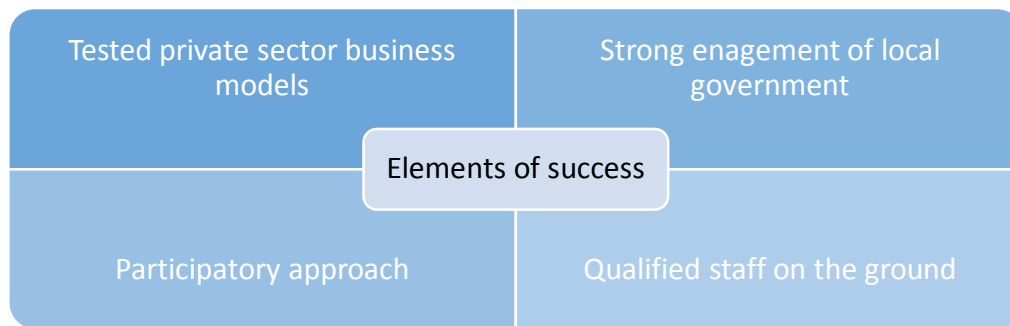
- **Economic development** is fostered through support to micro and small enterprises, forward and backward business linkages, adding value to economic activities, providing technical support to improve agribusiness practices and promoting women’s economic empowerment.
- To support endogenous growth, the project promotes **social capital**, which is rooted local community groups that identify solutions to community needs such as core skills development and awareness raising, neighbourhood upgrading, volunteering and social entrepreneurship.

Some aspects of the approach naturally overlap and synergise with other project components. For example, economic empowerment measures such as Village Savings and Loan Associations (savings groups) are platforms for developing financial literacy amongst group members, who can also use group capital to support micro enterprises. The same savings groups also offer an entry point to raise awareness on pressing social issues such as health and nutrition in communities. Community volunteers can support delivery of numerous project components, while volunteers themselves can launch enterprises that respond to community needs and may become profitable. In a similar way, adopting technological innovations such as greenhouses can significantly reduce the volume of water used in horticulture, leading to reduced costs for the farmer and better management of water resources. Together, the economic and the social components form the heart of the Hayat approach to local economic development in rural areas, as illustrated in the diagram below:



1.3 Elements of success

There are four key elements to successful implementation of the Hayat approach: tested private sector business models, strong engagement of local government, a participatory approach and qualified staff on the ground.



1.3.1 Tested private sector business models

A private-sector approach encourages competition and cooperation. Based on previous experience and results, this includes the identification and development of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and productive clusters; improving the value chain by promoting know-how and technology transfer; and promoting women’s economic empowerment through increased access to finance and life skills. See [section 2 Local economic development](#).

1.3.2 Participatory approach

Engaging the community from the start builds trust; raises awareness among community members of their rights and obligations as citizens; and ensures local buy-in and ownership – all preconditions for sustainability. Most clearly the project does this through community forums as discussed in more detail in [section 3 Building social capital and community participation](#). Participation of the private sector is also vital to success of the project.

1.3.3 Strong engagement of local government actors

The involvement of the **Ministry of Local Development (MoLD)** at national and governorate level as a key partner is also a significant factor for success of the Hayat approach and a prerequisite for implementation. Other government institutions ensure the program’s activities are aligned with local investment strategies, national objectives and contribute to the government of Egypt’s macro-policy objectives including Egypt’s Vision 2030.

1.3.4 Qualified staff on the ground

Competent staff on the ground are required to achieve the project’s objectives, especially as imparting **technical expertise** underpins the Hayat approach. Projects must invest in the selection of qualified staff and technical consultants operating in the field and monitor their day-to-day activities. All activities in the toolkit presume appropriately qualified staff with a local presence.

1.4 Preparatory steps: inception phase

A well-planned inception phase lays the foundation for good implementation. The inception phase begins after the project has been approved by the relevant government authorities and can last 4 - 6 months. A key step in this phase is to gain an understanding of the local context through a baseline analysis. In addition to mapping the economic, social, and environmental conditions in the proposed location (especially existing and potential productive activities) the baseline should also map in needs, government commitment, and existing level of support from the community. The assessment should identify available resources, infrastructure, economic activities, social and cultural capital, climatic conditions, skills and education level of target beneficiaries, and identify the stakeholders.

Step 1: **In-depth consultations with Government and all key stakeholders** to select the target Governorate/s and districts, taking into account:

- Funds available
- Anticipated impact
- High numbers of beneficiaries
- Potential for scaling-up and replication
- Capacity of youth volunteer services to implement (with support)
- Potential for cost-sharing with beneficiaries

Step 2:



Undertake a **baseline analysis** to identify the main challenges and opportunities in the selected governorate(s); key characteristics of the target population and productive sectors; key players; the role of women in the labour market, and social and economic barriers to their participation.

Step 4

Develop a work plan to guide timely implementation. The plan should include a plan for phasing out the project in a sustainable way, as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework.

Step 5:

For effective delivery, **maintain strong local presence** and links to stakeholders, for instance through establishing a field office in the target area.

Step 6:

Promote “**quick win**” interventions to build rapport with the community (see section 1.5 [Early community buy-in: Quick Wins](#))

“Quick wins” – the why and the how

An early footprint in the community can be established through quick wins. “Quick-win” projects should be undertaken during the inception phase to **secure buy-in and build trust** with the community and to kick start project activities. Additional objectives of quick wins include:

1. Sensitizing target beneficiaries to project aims.
2. Understanding communities’ conditions, needs, and challenges.
3. Enhancing the capacity of local civil society organisations (CSOs) to implement interventions.
4. Addressing immediate community needs by rapidly and tangibly contributing to improvements.

In Minya, the project team arranged capacity building sessions with local CSOs in targeted villages to coach them on:

- Community needs assessments through rapid participatory appraisals
- Identifying priority needs
- Designing short-term projects to address productive and community needs

Guidelines and criteria were then developed to guide design of the “quick-win” proposals. In Minya the proposals were required to be:

1. Labour-intensive by design
2. Aligned with the Hayat project planned outputs (i.e. neighbourhood upgrading, economic development, job creation)
3. Within the budget ceiling
4. Impact a substantial number of community members

Some of the quick wins implemented in Minya included:

- Supporting local workshops to refurbish homes of poor female-headed households
- Refurbishing schools with local NGOs (Non-Government Organisations).
- Setting-up water drainage outlets and installing drinking water connections in collaboration with local providers.
- Observational study tours of key knowledge agents such as farmers to view technological gains in other districts / governorates.

2 Local economic development

This section focuses on strengthening economic security through the creation of more and better employment opportunities and increasing the employability and productivity of the local labour force. It covers practical ways to promote economic development projects in rural Upper Egypt focusing on:

- *SMEs, productive clusters and value chains*
- *Skills and entrepreneurship*
- *Career support services*

Contained within this section is how innovation, value addition and business links can enhance economic outcomes; and how building skills (including financial literacy and access to finance) can support access to the job market and entrepreneurship, including for women. Ways in which volunteerism can lead to social enterprises are also explored. In addition, the section explores how building links between job seekers, employers and support systems can enable career pathways that promote improved livelihoods and increase growth.



Key takeaways: Local Economic Development

- *A **private-sector approach** encourages competition and cooperation. It is the best way to maximize value, reduce costs and enhance sustainability.*
- *Pursuing **simultaneous interventions** can create symbiotic benefits that promote shared prosperity, advance economic competitiveness through and safeguard the environment. For example: improved productivity can reduce environmental wastage at the same time as creating jobs, which in turn contributed to reductions in poverty. In the same way, the cost of inputs can be funded through membership of village savings and loan associations, if other forms of finance are not available.*
- *The Hayat approach focuses primarily on **technical support to the agribusiness** sector, but the core principles can equally apply to other sectors.*

2.1 MSEs, productive clusters and value chains

Improving MSEs (micro and small enterprises), value chain links and cluster development are key tools to promote economic growth and reduce poverty. Introducing affordable, sustainable productive technologies, and expanding these across existing SMEs, clusters and value chains can increase the economic security of target communities. Developing value chains creates business links, employment opportunities and increases access to markets. Clusters are promising environments for SME development. Due to their small size, MSEs are often unable to realize economies of scale and find it difficult to take advantage of market opportunities, such as those that require the delivery of large stocks of standardized products or comply with international standards. They also have limited bargaining power, cannot afford specialized support services, and have little influence in how policies and services are formed.

The techniques introduced by Hayat can be used to introduce youth, women and farmers to affordable, sustainable productive technologies to promote economic security for the whole community. Detailed technical information generated through Hayat activities are documented in manuals and guidelines with links at the end of this section.

2.1.1 Know-how and technology transfer

Knowhow and technology transfer are potential ways to address local economic development challenges such as productivity, resource efficiency, employment creation or access to markets. Elaborated here is a practical example of promoting vertical cultivation through greenhouses. The intended impact is to promote an innovation that reduces poverty, increases sustainable job creation and income generation through greater crop yield, and improves environmental conditions through more efficient natural resource management.

The promotion of protected agriculture as a business model is supported through on-site training for local workers on greenhouse construction, training for farmers on the process of vertical and protected agricultural production, value chain finance through actors such as traders and input suppliers, as well as capacity building and set up of local extension to assure sustainability. The intervention targets farmers, workers, agricultural extension officers, graduates of agricultural schools and universities, and traders and suppliers of agricultural inputs and products.

Vertical cultivation in protected greenhouses is one of the most successful solutions introduced by the Hayat project in Minya Governorate. The success of the model can be measured by the fact that it has achieved its intended objectives and has been organically replicated since across Minya Governorate. The model has proven to be both relevant and effective, which augments the chances of successful scale up on a national level. The model is encouraged by the Government of Egypt, given that approximately 80% of farmers are small landholders with agricultural plots comprising less than five feddans in a country where water is an increasingly scarce resource.

Close review of the [Greenhouse technical manual](#) supports the construction and management of small-scale greenhouses for farmers in Upper Egypt.

2.1.1.1 *How to promote enhanced productivity through greenhouses*

Step 1 **Awareness raising sessions** on vertical cultivation and protected agriculture using practical examples. Highlight **benefits of the technology** including higher yield, improved quality of produce, and quicker cultivation cycles.

- Step 2** Organize field visits for farmers to **demonstration greenhouses** in the other locations to support farmer-to-farmer transfer of knowledge and sharing of experiences.
- Step 3** If necessary, **construct and manage pilot** greenhouses in nearby localities for further demonstration and on-the-ground training. Cooperate with an NGO or CDA (Community Development Association) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation's (MALR) Agricultural Extension Services Unit to achieve desired result.
- Step 4** **Build the capacity** of local workers to construct and maintain greenhouses through pilot projects. Follow up with technical support, illustrated in the greenhouse manual (see link at the end of the section).
- Step 5** Identify and establish **links** between farmers and private companies, input suppliers and financial services providers to support the financing and construction of greenhouses and vertical cultivation.
- Step 6** Support **value chain actors** such as nurseries, input suppliers and traders so they can respond to emerging needs of farmers using vertical cultivation in greenhouses.
- Step 7** Provide intensive and regular **technical assistance** to farmers on:
- greenhouse maintenance
 - irrigation techniques
 - soil management
 - fertilization
 - pest management
 - harvesting techniques
- Step 8** Link farmers to **markets** to sell their produce.
- Step 9** For sustainability and to encourage employment opportunities, train appropriate qualified local youth to **encourage business start-ups** providing agricultural extension services. Be sure to coordinate with the MALR's agricultural department extension officers.
- Step 10** Organize an international study tour for selected MALR agricultural extension officers to exchange knowledge and technology.
- Step 11** Update the [technical manual on the Construction and Management of Small-Scale Greenhouses for farmers in Upper Egypt](#) to inform future implementation. [Online tools](#) can also be effective for roll out and scale up.
- Step 12** Carry out regular M&E to collect data on objectives achieved.

2.1.1.2 *Achievements of vertical cultivation through greenhouses in Minya*



- **Collaboration amongst farmers and young agronomists** to build their own greenhouses.
- **Reduced costs** of production.

- Crop **productivity increase** of 300% following greenhouse construction.
- **Reduced consumption of water** – greenhouses require approximately 70% less water compared to traditional horizontal / open field cultivation.
- Improved **pest control**.
- **Reduction in fertilizer use** by around 25%.
- Doubling farmers' **income** and employment opportunities on small landholdings.
- Increase in **sustainable and seasonal employment opportunities**. Each feddan created 3 permanent agricultural employment opportunities in addition to 10 – 15 seasonal direct and indirect employment opportunities in agriculture, construction, and other related activities.
- Increase in the **supply of crops** to the market all year round, particularly cucumbers, peppers, and tomatoes.
- Trained **agricultural extension officers provide paid technical services** to farmers, as evidenced by the growth in the number of greenhouses constructed.
- A new form of funding emerged through **input suppliers and traders co-funding greenhouses** in-kind by providing inputs and agreeing on forward purchasing.
- Potential for rapid **replication of greenhouses**: 70 greenhouses were constructed by farmers in two districts of Minya during project implementation.

Greenhouse success stories:

Innovation, proactivity and diligence



With the help of the Hayat Project in Minya, twenty-three year-old Yassir was the first farmer in the rural area of El-Edwa, Minya governorate to construct a greenhouse. He became an agricultural entrepreneur in the process. After attending extensive field-based agricultural extension training and visiting demonstration greenhouse models constructed under the Hayat project, Yassir was inspired by the results and decided to build his own greenhouse. He persuaded two friends to put funds toward the idea and join his enterprise.



With technical support, Yassir constructed a greenhouse, put an irrigation system in place and began their first season of cultivating cucumbers in the greenhouse. Yassir's greenhouse attracted the attention of the local public and marked the beginning of Hayat project's expansion of the greenhouse model in El-Edwa. Two large-scale greenhouse pilot projects were built, and offering a practical demonstration of the benefits and best practices of vertical agriculture to the wider communities.

Persistence pays off: realising an ambition

Born into an economically challenged farming family, Manal studied to become a nurse, married at a young age and had two children. Divorced soon after her marriage, she returned to live with her parents, increasing the economic burden of the family and feeling a need to contribute to the family. Manal joined her father at an awareness session on greenhouses and immediately understood the potential for income and employment generation.

Without recourse to traditional sources of funding, Manal she joined a village savings and loans association and took out a loan to transform their one feddan plot of into land to a greenhouse. With technical support Manal has tripled the productivity of her family's land and secured a job for herself in addition to four other agricultural workers.

Not only does she contribute to the income of her family, she has increased the prospects and is a pioneer among 70 other greenhouse owners in Edwa, Minya.



2.1.1.3 Lessons learned from vertical cultivation using greenhouses



- To increase economic benefits and promote integration of farmers in the value chain, efforts should focus on access to markets, marketing and sales services to link farmers with buyers.
- The project does not provide finance for greenhouse purchase or construction. Therefore, engaging financial services providers from the beginning to build their understanding of the greenhouse model enables them to offer financing models customised to the specific needs of farmers and other value chain producers.

- Strong buy-in by farmers is a prerequisite for the success of the model. The Hayat project in Minya was able to secure farmer endorsement through:
 - (a) Construction of demonstration projects
 - (b) Requiring that interested farmers finance the construction of the greenhouses entirely through private sources.
- Ongoing technical assistance, access to finance, and business development services (BDS) are necessary to ensure the sustainability and success of the greenhouse model.
- Collaboration with the Government of Egypt on both local and national levels can help in scaling-up and replicating the approach in other districts and governorates.

2.1.2 Enhancing productive clusters

The objective of enhancing productive clusters is to identify and organize MSEs in the selected locations into effective collaborative groupings to help them overcome fragmentation and reach higher value markets and leverage economies of scale.

Within clusters, MSEs can realize shared gains through joint actions between cluster enterprises (e.g. joint bulk inputs purchases, joint advertising or shared use of equipment) and between cluster enterprises and support institutions (e.g.: technical assistance or business development services provided by business associations or investments in infrastructure by the public sector that benefits the cluster as a whole). These advantages are referred to as “collective efficiencies”. Hayat follows the [UNIDO approach to cluster development](#) which builds on the governorate’s existing resources and potential, and is closely linked to value-chain development.

2.1.2.1 How to promote and develop clusters

- Step 1** Review the results of baseline to **identify and select clusters** with potential. Indicators for assessing and prioritizing opportunities for further investigation include: evidence of forward and backward links; demand and supply considerations; economic potential; competitive, technological and capital barriers to entry; social impact (including labour intensity and ability to absorb female and unemployed workers).
- Step 2** Conduct a **cluster diagnostic** to better understand dynamics, actors, value chains, relative strengths and weaknesses of the cluster. This can provide a baseline for impact evaluation.
- Step 3** Identify and orient key stakeholders and knowledge agents on the cluster development approach. This includes government actors as well as potential beneficiaries. The process can take the form of workshops as well as field visits.
- Step 4** Draft a **cluster development** plan which should include founding elements such as fostering cooperation, joint learning, value chain business links, developing economies of scale, joint procurement and creating links with suppliers and buyers. Underpinning the plan is developing an understanding that taken together working together is better than enterprises working in isolation.

Step 5

Provide tailored **technical support** to the cluster through a value chain management programme. This could include:

- Study tours with knowledge agents to state-of-the-art facilities to promote knowledge sharing.
- Networking amongst informal groups of associated enterprises. Provide information to support formation of clusters as legal entities.
- Training cluster members on negotiation, sales and marketing, particularly branding and display of products / services.
- Identify and provide opportunities for business-to-business meetings and open opportunities that support improved access to markets. This can be through facilitating participation in regional and international fairs and exhibitions through a cost-sharing mechanism.
- Develop a manual on lessons learned from cluster development.
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to the cluster to improve management, production, logistics, and exporting capacities.
- Coach able entrepreneurs on how to start and operate a business in the cluster (including links to suppliers, equipment, and sources of skilled labour). Youth and women could be targeted for greater social impact.

Step 6

Carry out regular M&E to collect data to understand the impact of the interventions and extent to which the objectives have been achieved.

2.1.2.2 *Achievements: date palm and furniture clusters in Minya*



The baseline conducted under the Hayat project in Minya revealed two clusters in the palm trees (dates) and furniture industries. The sections below provide a summary of the key features, achievements and successes of developing the two clusters that could guide implementation in other governorates. Short stories highlighting individual instances of success are provided.

Date palm cluster

Based on field observations and needs assessments, the Hayat Minya project identified the potential for developing the palm trees cluster (dates) in the area of Edwa, which is home to more than 100,000 palm trees. The starting point for the intervention was to address a key challenge to the date industry that lies at the beginning of the value chain; namely, the infection of at least 30% of the trees with the red weevil. The project designed a red palm weevil management program. Following a private-sector promotion of the intervention, a young agronomist from the community started his own business manufacturing and renting / selling a pesticide applicator. Using simple hydraulic technology, the machine successfully cured the infected palm trees of the red palm weevil. This business is likely to be sustained because farmers will continue to pay for a service they benefit from. At the same time, sustainable job opportunities for the date palm workers and their families were created. Further down the value-chain, the intervention supported date producers in improving their post-harvest practices, branding, and marketing their produce. Date producers formed a cluster to leverage economies of scale, encourage larger sales volumes and add value through new varieties and products. The project integrated women into the value-chain by training them on producing palm crates. There is possibility for scale up of the red-weevil treatment programme into other date producing areas in consultation with the government and date producers.

Other achievements from developing the date palm cluster in Minya included:

- Change in farmers' agricultural habits (including improved pest management and better post-harvest practices) led to a considerable **increase in productivity**.
- **Reduction in costs, increase in production (sale of more than 50,000 tons of dates by companies to local markets), and improvement in the market value** of the date products due to the economies of scale achieved from the cluster.
- New SME opportunity created by a project beneficiary starting his own **business manufacturing and selling palm tree red weevil management applicators**.
- **The Agricultural Directorate in Minya** requested the expansion of the red weevil management program on a national level.
- **Formal registration of Edwa's date cluster as a company with a total paid-in capital of EGP 120,000** distributed equally amongst 30 cluster members.
- **Establishment of a second date company** in Edwa.
- **Sale of the clusters date brand *Tomoor Al-Hayat*, for the first time, to a large clientele outside Minya Governorate** in Cairo.
- Generation of at least **70 permanent and seasonal employment opportunities** primarily for women by the two palm dates companies.
- **New links with international buyers resulted in increased production and a tenfold increase in revenues** following date companies' participation in a regional date festival in Abu Dhabi.
- **Change in cultural perceptions enabled women to work outside the home with** an increasing number of young women working in the two new date companies on packaging.
- **Allocation of land by Minya Governorate land to Edwa's date cluster** to build a date packaging house.
- **Cluster expanded its range of products to include locally produced honey**, resulting in the development of the honey value chain as well as creation of new employment opportunities.



Date cluster success stories

Creating opportunity with cheaper pest control machine

Following private sector promotion amongst interested parties, Gamal, a date farmer from the village of Bortobat, in Minya governorate, took the initiative to manufacture a hydrological pesticide applicator to combat the red weevil. By purchasing the applicator through a metal workshop in Cairo, Gamal paid a much lower price than if purchased on the local market. He is now running his own business by renting the machine to neighboring farmers with infected trees for 50 EGP/day. At the governorate level, the Minya Agricultural Directorate has ordered the manufacture of 10 machines to enable its own agronomists to provide extension services to date farmers across all districts and villages across the governorate

Clustering leads to greater income

Formalization into a cluster resulted an increase in prices as Ashraf a date farmer and one of the founders of the first date palm cluster in his region attests: "Exactly one year ago we used to sell our dates to local merchants for just EGP 2/kg. Having improved our production, processing, and marketing techniques, we are now selling our newly designed half-kilo date box for up to EGP 20." In addition, registration of a date palm cluster in Edwa enabled the producers to participate in one of the world's largest palm date exhibitions in Abu Dhabi, which offered a platform to sell local Egyptian products to an international market.



Using natural resources for income generation

Mahmoud financially supports his family by working as a school supervisor in a small village in Minya. In order to increase his monthly income, he learned how to make boxes and other products out of discarded date palm fronds. Today, he has a small business with his daughter Zeinab selling their hand-made frond products to bread, poultry, vegetables, and fruit traders in and around their village.

Investing training increases production

To expand his business, Khamees worked with Hayat project to train 24 women in his district on producing the frond boxes for local merchants, which has had the dual benefit of allowing him to grow his business by meeting more orders, in addition to and generating income for the trained women. Mahmoud says: "Our big aspiration is to impart the skill of frond production to as many small producers as possible and to form a cluster of frond producers that receives recognition beyond our village and governorate."

Furniture Cluster

The cluster diagnostic found local furniture making in Minya have significant economic potential but to be inefficient, being comprised of scattered small and medium scale workshops. The project supported moving 10 furniture makers into a cluster, providing practical training on product design by manufacturing experts, and participation in a major furniture expo in Cairo. Exploratory missions took place to advance furniture workshops in Damietta governorate, Egypt's largest and most developed furniture cluster. In partnership with the Furniture Technology Centre the aim of these activities was to demonstrate the potential of the craft and enhance skills in the cluster (in technical such as drying wood and painting) to improve the final product and increase access to markets. Training took place on the upgrading of workshops. Ten 10 master furniture manufacturers were trained on management, quality control,

negotiations and marketing. Overall 25 workshops displayed their wares at Egypt's largest furniture fair (Furnex) with many receiving large orders or securing deals with clients, requiring a further upgrade of productive capacities and staff.

Other **achievements** from development of the furniture cluster in Minya include:

- New production techniques helped **reduce production time** from 3 weeks to an average of 1 week.
- Cost savings from localisation of production: workshops are now able to **produce furniture entirely in-house**. Previously different pieces of wood were produced outside the village.
- **Improved quality of furniture** produced by the 10 selected master trainers and 30 youth using new production skills.
- **Increased profitability of c. 20% and better access to markets** for furniture producers due to organization into clusters, overcoming fragmentation and enabling them collectively to reach higher value markets through retail (as opposed to wholesale).
- **Creation of more than 50 new employment opportunities.**
- **Gaps in the value chain have been filled or further developed:** new wood traders are now established (importing wood from Alexandria) and new painting workshops opened.
- **Change in cultural perceptions** about collaboration with competitors to achieve greater efficiency.

Furniture cluster success stories

Furniture that is “Made in Edwa”

Ahmed, the owner of a small carpentry business, is one of 25 craftsmen that benefited from Hayat’s cluster upgrading program following UNIDO’s value chain approach. Through the Hayat project, and in cooperation with the Furniture Technology Center (FTC), Ahmed and his peers received intensive practical training on product design and quality improvement and participated in exploratory missions to advanced furniture workshops in Damietta. The techniques Ahmed acquired and linkages generated under Hayat, enabled him to exhibit at Furnex, Egypt’s largest annual furniture exhibition held in Cairo.



Ahmed says: “The training we received helped us improve our designs to better access new markets outside El-Minya Governorate. The master trainers taught us the skills and techniques needed to enhance the quality of varnishing and finishing our products. Our next challenge will be to increase our productive capacities and recruit and train additional workers to meet a much larger amount of client requests this year. “This is the first time for us to participate in such a fair [Furnex]. We succeeded in selling all of our items. I received so many orders from clients that it would keep me busy for the entire year”, he added.

Cluster: a segway into new markets

Awlad Sharaf, a furniture workshop was one of 25 workshops that joined Hayat project’s furniture cluster development program in Minya. Workshop owner Mohamed Sharaf benefited from theoretical and hands-on trainings and participated in observational study tours to Damietta – Egypt’s largest and most developed furniture cluster. Following participation in the project activities, the workshop improved its skills, designs and productivity. The workshop exhibited at Egypt’s largest annual furniture exhibition - Furnex. At the fair, Mohamed sealed a deal for the construction of 35 huts for an eco-resort by Red Sea for a total value of EGP 1.5 million. The workshop has since upgraded its machinery and increased the number of workers to cope with increasing market demand.



2.1.2.3 Lessons learned from cluster development

- Developing a proper diagnostic is an important step to understand the challenges facing the different stakeholders within the cluster and identifying solutions. For example, in the date palm cluster the diagnostic identified a source of low quality / quantity crops – the red weevil – and a

stakeholder group key to correcting the quality of the product – date palm tree climbers.

- Promoting private sector business models enhances the chances of sustainability. For example, in the date cluster the development of a long-term fee-based solution for treatment of the red weevil; in the furniture cluster business links to workshops encouraged craftsmen to adopt new production methods.

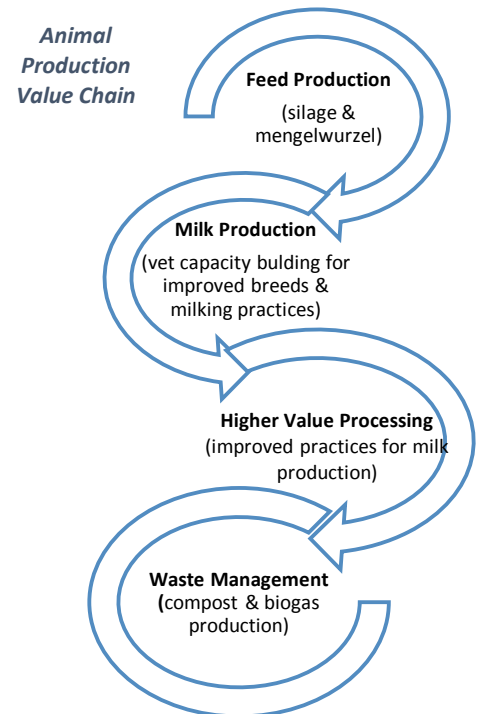
2.1.3 Developing value chains

Improving value chains brings significant benefits to all actors along the chain and improve local economies. Given the animal production value chain is widely found in rural communities, the Hayat project identified upgrading the dairy livestock value chain as a key priority. Livestock is considered a strategic asset and a unit of wealth for Egypt’s rural poor. Besides using livestock for food, it is also used as collateral in business.

The objective is to implement a series of interrelated initiatives to increase the income of small-scale cow breeders through a breed improvement program which include:

- the promotion of good feeding practices,
- capacity building for veterinarians, and
- cross-breeding and artificial insemination to produce a new generation of mixed breed cows with increased milk production capacities.

Taken together, these initiatives can add value to the animal production chain by introducing higher value processing methods, technology for waste management, enhancing efficiency and increasing sustainable production and economic gains for the target communities. The intervention can contribute to environmental sustainability, by transforming waste generated by livestock into a renewable energy (biogas). In addition, business opportunities exist in creating synergies with other agribusiness activities such as recycling low quality leftover dates to produce alternatives to traditional fodder.



2.1.3.1 How to develop an integrated livestock value chain

- Step 1** Undertake a **value chain analysis** through a bottom-up approach to identify the main components and weaknesses across the value chain. The analysis should pinpoint key stakeholders and entry points to generate most impact.
- Step 2** Design an integrated value chain **development strategy** and action plan that addresses the identified challenges.
- Step 3** Depending on the outcome of the value chain analysis, develop a program to promote **know-how and technology transfer** amongst value chain members:
 - Field visits for farmer representatives and community leaders to centres of excellence on animal production.

- Practical demonstration of breed improvement practices. Convey potential economic benefits through study tours for farmers, livestock breeders and potential youth entrepreneurs.

Step 4

Offer **capacity building** for farmers, vets and livestock breeders on:

- producing alternative forms of affordable animal feed (silage and compost) high in nutrients (farmers and livestock breeders)
- utilizing cattle waste in biogas production. Explain the environmental benefits and cost-savings from biogas units (farmers)
- genetic selection of cows, crossbreeding, proper artificial insemination techniques, ultrasonographic diagnosis of pregnancy, and infection control (local veterinarians)
- good milking practices and hygienic dairy value-added production, for example processing fresh milk into dairy products (farmers, including women).
- business and management skills to start a business across the value chain (farmers, potential youth entrepreneurs, and veterinarians).

See The [Hayat manual on value addition in dairy production](#)

Step 5

Pilot silage production units and biogas units to **demonstrate and promote high-quality non-traditional** animal feeds and alternative energy sources at the village level.

Step 6

Promote **self-sustaining** private sector models through which:

- veterinarians can continue to offer ongoing extension services to interested farmers in return for a fair price
- youth entrepreneurs and farmers can start profitable businesses in alternative feed (fodder mix, silage, compost) and dairy production

Step 7

Establish links and facilitate business meetings between the target beneficiaries and input suppliers, traders and buyers across the value chain.

Step 8

Carry out regular M&E to collect data on the impact of interventions.

2.1.3.2 Achievements of updating the dairy livestock value chain in Minya



- The local NGO **sold more than 60 tons of fodder mix** to the community at an affordable price.
- A group of **young entrepreneurs recognized the profitability of the fodder mix business and are setting up their own feeding mix company.**
- **Silage production reached 25 tons per feddan and more than 150 farmers began using silage** to improve animal feeding. The additional silage was easily stored or otherwise sold at EGP 3,000 per ton.
- **Increased milk production by 5% - 10%** on average due to improved feeding practices:
 - Farmers reported that the fodder increased milk productivity 3X within 10 days of feeding, and the weight of the cattle increased approximately 30kg a month.
 - Farmers reported that within 2 days animals were consuming large quantities of the silage which they were trained to produce and increased milk production.

- The introduction of maize silage brought about **cost savings, improved feeding practices, and higher income generation** for vulnerable households and contributed to the development of the animal production value chain.
- **With proper feeding, mixed breed cows began producing up to 18 kg/day of milk** as opposed to the 5 – 8 kg/day produced by local (*baladi*) breeds.
- Around **450 mixed breed calves were conceived through artificial insemination and cross-breeding** between local and high milk/meat producing cow breeds.
- Following the improvement in milk yield and training to women on milk processing, **60 families began processing their milk into dairy products for household consumption and sale** thereby optimizing value from their productive activities.
- **Change in the approach of the livestock breeders** from a focus on feeding and reproduction only to feeding, reproduction, and increasing the quality and quantity of meat and milk enhanced the volume and quality of product.
- **Change in the mind-set of the local vets** on the importance of artificial insemination for breed improvements.



Dairy value chain success stories

New cattle breeds heralds breakthrough

“My new baby calf is now 3 months old”, says Hajj a, small animal breeder a village in Edwa and one of the first farmers to artificially inseminate his cow in his village. Hajj is one of 48 farmers that benefited from Hayat’s breed improvement program. “If you compare its size and body with our local calves of the same age, you will easily discover that its physical appearance is much more robust. We are very optimistic about a significant improvement in our beef and daily milk production once our new breeds have matured.”



Modern techniques improves animal health and yield

“Local breeders are facing serious health problems in their cattle”, explains Mahmoud Taha, Hayat project’s Animal Production Consultant. “During our convoys, we treated a great number of cows suffering from blood parasite and sexually transmitted diseases arising from bad hygienic practices, lack of disinfection and traditional insemination techniques. We also distributed advanced veterinary medications to cure widespread udder and uterus inflammations.” “We are not used to having our animals examined with modern ultrasound devices”, says Nagi, a cattle breeder from a village Edwa district. “The vet discovered that one of my cows was pregnant and gave me some very useful feeding and vaccination advice to guarantee a successful delivery and healthy growth of the calf”.



From waste to wealth

Mahmoud, from a village Edwa, cultivates two feddans with his father. After attending an awareness session organized by the Hayat project on the agricultural, economic and environmental benefits of recycling agricultural waste into organic fertilizers, he saw an opportunity, given the abundant availability of agricultural waste and the steadily rising price of fertilizers. After attending a series of training workshops, and with follow up technical guidance, Mahmoud began producing his first pile of organic compost made of alfalfa hay. He used the organic compost to fertilize his own soil in preparation for cultivating maize which is subsequently converted into silage for animal feeding. “We are very happy with the final maize produced with organic compost. Using the recycled approach we managed to save more than EGP 800 in fertilize costs per feddan.”



Better feed supports healthier cows

Poor health conditions, low milk production levels, and the rising price of animal feed, led Gomaa one of 26 small-scale farmers from Edwa to seek support from Hayat’s activities to improve and increase silage production. “We have been suffering for a long time from the malnutrition of our cattle. Although we were feeding them regularly, we could rarely reach 6 kilograms of fresh milk per cow a day.” Today, following engagement with Hayat, his cows produce 25% more milk on a daily basis. He also saves more

than 30% on feed expenses.



2.1.3.3 Lessons learned from developing of the livestock value chain

- Leverage synergies and environmental **efficiencies** that generate business opportunities arising from the livestock value chain and other agribusiness activities. For example:
 - Waste generated by livestock can be transformed into a renewable energy (biogas);
 - Waste from low quality leftover dates is an alternative way of producing alternatives to traditional fodder.
- To properly resolve health-related problems in animals, a **calendar of veterinary treatment** should be established with initial diagnostic visits and follow up treatment, rather than only one-day treatment to ensure that diseases are treated appropriately.

2.2 Skills and Entrepreneurship

This section focuses on enhancing the employability of the local labour force to promote economic development, given the high levels of unemployment (particularly amongst youth and women) and the mismatch between market demand and the availability and location of jobs. Resources need to be dedicated to building the capacity of women and youth employment in the private sector and providing them with the skills needed to start their own businesses. Entrepreneurial and skill development activities aim to leverage existing training curricula, especially those developed by [UNIDO](#) and the [ILO](#), to support business start-up and should be followed by technical and business development support. Skill development activities can target beneficiaries that are involved in other project components through establishing synergies where possible.

Skills in this section include:

- **Core:** foundational skills including effective work habits, teamwork, financial literacy, financial decision making, how to save.
- **Technical:** based on market needs, local employers (including agribusinesses), available training resources and the capacities of existing local training providers.
- **Entrepreneurial:** market oriented training to support business idea generation and access to finance in addition to provision of follow up technical training and support, particularly for youth and women in rural areas.

2.2.1 Technical skills development

Skills development activities should be underpinned by a mapping of employment opportunities in the target areas in order to provide target groups with relevant skills for the job market and complement this with market-oriented trainings and support. Given the demographics of Egypt, target groups for these activities should be unemployed youth aged 18 – 35 years of age, especially women and other vulnerable

groups identified in the baseline.

2.2.1.1 How to support skills training

- Step 1:** Identify potential groups of trainees through **information sessions** to introduce the skills enhancement activities.
- Step 2:** **Select trainees** based on pre-identified criteria including willingness to participate and skill levels.
- Step 3:** Undertake a **capacity assessment** to determine the training needs of targeted beneficiaries. Develop a training plan which reflects their skills and supports skill enhancement towards employability or creating an enterprise, according to market opportunity.
- Step 4:** Train beneficiaries on life skills to promote **readiness for the careers** market. Modules include self-confidence, conflict management, anger management, career planning, job preparation, workplace readiness, cooperation and teamwork, and project planning. See for example the 30 hour [Passport to Success®](#) curriculum.
- Step 5:** Based on the outcome of Step 3 (capacity assessment), direct beneficiaries toward jobs via the employment service referred to in section 2.3 (Job/Careers Services)
- Step 6:** Alternatively, based on the outcome of the needs assessment offer training on entrepreneurship to the target group. For example:
- Entrepreneurial skills for women in rural areas using [GET Ahead](#).
 - Entrepreneurial skills for farmers using ESAB
 - Entrepreneurial skills for farmers in a cooperative using [My.COOP](#)
- Step 7:** Conduct post-training evaluations and link beneficiaries to other project activities to enhance synergies.



2.2.1.2 Achievements from enhancing core skills in Minya

- **1,000 youth acquired core and technical skills** to enhance chances of securing salaried or self-employment.
- **500 individuals found a job or started their own business** following the trainings, **75%** of whom were **women**.



2.2.2 Volunteerism and social entrepreneurship

Volunteerism promotes inclusion and harnesses the productive potential, particularly of youth, to enable them to provide demand-driven solutions to community needs. Social entrepreneurship describes the techniques used by entrepreneurs to develop, fund and implement solutions to a range of social, cultural and environmental issues in target communities. The objective of volunteerism is to support youth in economically depressed environments to build enterprises to address social needs. Once the concept of social enterprises is understood by key stakeholders – youth, government, communities and civil society –

entrepreneurial skills are then developed and youth are supported with technical assistance to start and manage their own social enterprises. Financial support to start-ups can be provided via a competitive process and links to financial service providers forged. This section should be read in the wider context of promoting volunteerism in communities (section 3.1.2), which is central to the Hayat approach. The social entrepreneurship process is outlined below:

2.2.2.1 *How to generate social entrepreneurship*

Step 1: Youth awareness raising campaign on how to create more **sustainable impact** through social entrepreneurship using local news outlets, NGOs, youth volunteers and social media.

Step 2: Establish **partnerships** with government, financial service providers, NGOs and existing youth groups to identify areas of need in the community and promote sustainability.

Step 3: Prepare and distribute an application form for youth interested in joining the social entrepreneurship programme. The form should include an idea for a social enterprise.

Step 4: Select youth to participate in the programme based on criteria, for example:



- Key sectors
- Level of education
- Employment status
- Presentation social enterprise
- Aged between 20 – 35 years
- Passes the interview
- Gender balance and geographical distribution

Step 5: Conduct social business planning training for selected youth. Sample modules from an [existing curricula](#) include:

- Are you a social entrepreneur?
- Identifying problems in your community
- Finding good social business ideas
- Analysing and selecting social business ideas
- Writing up your business idea

Step 6 Announce a **competition** for partial funding for social enterprises with potential. Minimum information to be published should include the definition of social entrepreneurship, criteria for selection, how to apply and the deadline for application. Applications should include a description of the proposed social enterprise, location, total anticipated budget and requested contribution from the project. For more information see this [Guide to promoting social enterprises](#).

Step 7 Shortlist proposals for a social enterprise based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to community needs
- Innovation and creativity
- Practicality in technical implementation
- Impact on community
- Conformity with labour laws

(a) Environmental impact

- Step 8:** Award **seed funding** to a proportion of the finalists to support establishment of the social enterprise. Financial support should not exceed 50% of the proposed budget and should be disbursed in two tranches: 70% on signing the contract, 30% following technical monitoring or against invoices or in-kind contributions.
- Step 9:** Provide **follow up** technical support and coaching to social enterprises on business start-up, market information, sales and marketing, access to finance, legal advice, general operational management and organized exchange visits with similar existing businesses.
- Step 10:** Support youth in developing **business plans** for their social enterprises.
- Step 11:** Establish sustainable links with financial service providers and investors to support future social enterprises.

2.2.2.2 *Achievements: volunteerism and social entrepreneurship*



- Of the 10 social businesses established, 8 are **financially sustainable** and are currently providing **needed social services to their communities**.
- More than **50 new jobs were created by the 10 social businesses** that received technical and financial support.
- **Over 195 youth trained on how to start and run a social enterprise**

Social entrepreneur success story:

A social entrepreneur in the making

Hamed is from a village in Maghagha district, Minya governorate. He enrolled in the Hayat project's youth volunteer program and attended trainings that enabled him to plan a social initiative focused on facilitating access for rural children to cultural and educational opportunities. Hamed's goal was that all children should have the chance to discover themselves. Hamed found local volunteers to support his endeavour and, lacking funds of his own, mobilized financial support from business and community leaders to implement six culture trips to Minya city for a group of rural children.



After the success of the initial trips, Hamed generated the idea of establishing a permanent Children's Centre on part of his own land. He attended an awareness session on youth social entrepreneurship programme and submitted a proposal for the 'Children Center'. Hamed's project was selected as one of ten projects to receive financial and technical support.

2.2.2.3 *Lessons learned from social entrepreneurship*



- Be cautious of situations that may lead to a conflict of interest which may affect the project image, for example NGO staff hired as coordinators and then receiving funding under the youth social entrepreneurship programme. A conflict of interest statement should be developed and

included in the selection criteria.

- The source of social enterprise programme funds should be relayed at the outset to engender trust and community buy-in, and avoid any future misconceptions

2.2.3 Promoting women's economic empowerment



Endogenous growth is a potent means to generate productivity in a community. Interventions targeting vulnerable women who are excluded from the mainstream financial system enable them to save money and access finance thereby promoting financial independence and improving livelihoods. The vehicle through which this is achieved – community-based saving groups – offers a platform for promoting financial literacy and capacity building on social issues, as well as training and asset transfer to support business start-ups. The [Village Savings and Loans Association \(VSLA\)](#) model supports women forming self-managed savings groups at village level and building group financial capital from which all members can borrow small loans.

The savings group model is durable in rural communities in part due to its unique flexibility: groups determine the timing and location of meetings themselves to suit their schedule. Groups also determine whether an interest rate should be applied and at what level. Islamic finance models can be used if there are religious concerns over charging interest. To support productive activities in rural communities, the Hayat approach is to tweak the classic VSLA model to include the ability to transfer productive assets to group members.

Objectives of savings groups are to:

- Form and sustain a VSLA scheme in target communities that extends financial services to women breadwinners
- Promote social empowerment through capacity building of groups members on core business skills to support income generating activities and awareness raising on life skills such as nutrition and hygiene
- offer an entry point to encourage women's participation in other project activities
- offer productive asset transfer to group members aged between 16 and 30 based on a cost-sharing agreement

In addition, when trust has been established, savings groups can be a platform for social cohesion in communities through forming emergency funds which women can use to address urgent needs.

2.2.3.1 How to promote women's economic empowerment

Step 1 Identify **key actors** to engage in establishing VSLAs, including local organizations with prior experience in similar schemes and government entities. Consult with them, assess their capacity and determine their role in the project.

Step 2 **Consult** civil society and development partners on the VSLA model and proposed productive asset transfer criteria and conditions. Engage village-based NGOs and local administrative offices on the eligibility criteria and conditions for the productive asset transfer, the type and amount of assistance, as well as follow-up and monitoring procedures.

- Step 3** Advertise the VSLA groups and productive asset transfer intervention through NGOs, Churches, Mosques, Ministry of Social Affairs offices, City Council, dedicated awareness sessions, etc.
- Step 4** Identify **business opportunities** and training needs required to realize economic opportunities from information gathered (e.g. project baseline, market assessments conducted for the employability component and community action plans developed by the community-led mechanisms).
- Step 5** Organize observational **study tours** for coordinators to successful VSLA models in other rural areas to promote knowledge exchange.
- Step 6** Form savings groups and support **regular meetings** to engender trust amongst group members, promote savings and raise capital within the group structure. Vulnerable women headed households are the main target group (though men may be members).
- Step 7** Through the savings groups, **offer soft skills and technical trainings**. These could include:
- Public speaking and presentation skills
 - Awareness raising that promotes social empowerment e.g. personal and family health and nutrition
 - Financial literacy and financial management skills
 - Business coaching and technical assistance for business start-ups or those engaged in productive asset transfer
- Step 8** Support **productive asset transfer** amongst savings group members using set criteria on a cost sharing basis that is “not equal but fair”. Sample criteria could include:
- Female member of VSLA with no default history
 - Intermediate degree
 - National ID or application in process
 - Willingness to develop basic business idea into a plan
 - Extreme poverty and lack of available assets - this can be verified by house visits and the poverty scorecard from the baseline survey.
 - Priority given to productive assets with low investment cost and high returns
 - To be used for a business opportunity identified by the project
- Step 9** Establish **links between the female beneficiaries** and other beneficiaries in the project, especially local farmers.
- Step 10** Encourage VSLA members to participate in other project interventions, such as:
- Youth Social Entrepreneurship Program GET Ahead agricultural training (see section xx on enhancing employability)
 - Health awareness trainings on child nutrition and health issues (section 3.1.4 raising awareness on health [and](#) nutrition)
- Step 11** Establish links between VSLA group members and other relevant national or local projects, such as the national ID project (National Council for Women) and the Coca

Cola CSR project which supports women in retail through the provision of fridges and microloans.

2.2.3.2 Achievements of promoting women's economic empowerment in Minya



- Women were able to **save collectively more than EGP 2.8 million**.
- As of June 2016, there were **5,235 active members in VSLAs (91% women)**.
- As of June 2016, **174 loans were used to cope with emergencies**, in addition, *takaful* (social insurance) money was also provided to women in need.
- VSLA members **purchased productive assets worth around EGP 200,000 using their loans**. (NB excluding the asset transfer plan).
- **Productive assets generate an average annual income** for women of EGP 11,000 - 12,000.
- **Women from VSLA groups created two fodder mix companies** that entered competitive bids under the productive assets initiative and were awarded supplier contracts.
- Some women reported that their **relationship with their husbands and other family members (e.g. mother-in-law) improved** after being able to contribute to the household income.
- Women reported that the VSLAs have provided them with the **freedom to take decisions regarding their savings** as well as family issues. They reported they are more able to **move around and speak-up much confidently**. One young woman said her participation in the VSLA and in health awareness training "changed her character."

Women's economic empowerment success stories

Sewing to generate income

Zeinab is married with five children and has a secondary school diploma. The increasing cost of living led her to take action to supplement the household income, which is provided by her schoolteacher husband. Keen to make use of their skills in making curtains and home furnishings Zeinab and her daughter Ayat joined a Hayat project Village Savings and Loan Association in a village in Edwa. Together they receive EGP 550/month out of the group saving pot. On receiving their first micro loan EGP 500 EGP (EGP 250 each) Ayat and her mother Zeinab purchased curtain accessories, sheets and fabrics for their joint small business.



Out of the monthly savings pot and the small loan from the savings group, the two started furnishing the apartments of local newly-wed couples with handmade curtains and home accessories. Clients were happy with the quality of their products and helped them with marketing to others. "I am very happy that I am able to support my family financially. Our household budget is more or less balanced now and my husband is very pleased. He keeps supporting me and encourages me and Ayat to expand our small business to other villages around us." Ayat has even advanced to join the Hayat project team to help establish new savings and loan savings associations in and around her village. In addition, she regularly participates in delivering awareness sessions to her group members on health related matters.



Building up a beauty salon business

Through the local savings group, Warda, a married 35-year old mother of three, has become a success in home-based beauty salon services. With a low family income of 500 EGP earned by her husband from working at a local grocery shop and 450 EGP in pension, she is no stranger to financial struggle. To support her family, Warda started turning her hobby in hairdressing into a small business that generates additional income. After hearing of the Hayat Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), she decided to join a group in her village. Once her savings reached 150 EGP, she applied for micro loan worth 450 EGP to buy a new hair dryer and some creams and accessories. Because she managed to repay in full her first loan, she received a second and bigger loan (900 EGP) to buy and repair a used hairdressing chair for her clients. Today, Warda brings home a steady 500–800 EGP per month from her beauty services, and her husband has been motivated to join a VSLA himself.



2.2.3.3 Lessons learned: women's economic empowerment

- Savings groups are based on trust and built over time and should be introduced after the project has built its brand and reputation through quick-wins when the community's knowledge of the project is high.
- In the same way savings groups take time to materialise. VSLAs may have a slow start during the first year due to ethical concerns over charging interest on loans and mobility challenges.

Continuous community engagement and the introduction of productive asset transfer made VSLAs more attractive.

- An on-the-ground project coordinator ensures proper monitoring of the intervention and guarantees a sufficient number of field coordinators from the village to provide support to the VSLA groups.

2.3 Employment services, job fairs and job matching

Employment services stimulate the job market. By reaching out to the unemployed in target governorates and connecting them with resources to increase access to employers, the chances of getting a job increase. Services target beneficiaries in poverty or at risk of poverty who are most at risk of negative coping mechanisms such as irregular migration. Establishing employment services provides an effective mechanism to increase links between targeted beneficiaries and salaried / self-employment opportunities. Services include screening, registering, and one-on-one counselling to determine the best options for an individual's qualifications and interests. Employment services provide a hub point via which beneficiaries can be referred to vacancies matching their skills or to service providers for further training. Other activities include holding job fairs, awareness raising toward changing the negative perception of blue collar jobs and the lack of willingness of youth to relocate to governorates with available jobs and provision of soft and technical skills trainings ([see section 2.2 skills and entrepreneurship](#)).

2.3.1 Services to support employment

Building on the skills and entrepreneurial development activities outlined in [section 2.2](#), employment services provide information, counselling, and skills and job matching facilities to improve employability to a job. The aim is to sustain a permanent mechanism for employment services in the targeted areas. Employment services should harness synergies with like-minded public or private sector efforts in the governorate and be in a convenient physical location. Engagement with the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration will be required.

Activities focus on promoting links to employment services such as job information counselling, referrals and matchmaking services (ICRS) for beneficiaries seeking employment in the private sector, and on entrepreneurship training and technical support for those with the aptitude and willingness to start their own business. Public, non-governmental and private sector trainers can implement employability activities including market driven skilled development.

2.3.1.1 How to set up an employment service

Step 1:



Map existing employment services and institutions, including government centres and NGOs. Build human capacity where necessary. Provide in-kind support to establish centres including management information systems, equipment procurement (computers, desks, chairs etc). Assess best options to upgrade existing services or establish new ones.

Step 2:

Assess labour market needs. Identify the sectors that need workers and the skills they require in the local area and in neighbouring governorates.

Step 3:

Map local vocational training centres and public technical schools in the target area and establish protocols for training referrals to facilitate core skills training ([as described in section 2.2.1 skills development](#)).

- Step 4:** Build relationships with potential employers willing to provide employment opportunities to job seekers in the targeted communities. Enter the employing sectors and needed worker attributes in the management information system.
- Step 5:** Undertake awareness raising activities including:
- (i) General campaigns promoting the centre's activities
 - (ii) Labour market orientation sessions to counteract the negative perception of blue-collar employment and encourage mobility toward the physical location of livelihood opportunities.
- Consider partnering with an NGO to support the awareness raising of target beneficiaries.
- Step 6:** Offer one-to-one counselling to identify whether job seekers are interested in and suitable for salaried or self-employment. This should take into account the individual's qualifications, skills and interests, and map these against existing job or enterprise opportunities. Enter the data from the counselling session in the management information system.
- Step 7:** Undertake sensitization sessions for HR staff of potential employers on the benefits of employing youth and best practices in human resources management.
- Step 8:** Depending on the outcome of the counselling, offer relevant soft and technical skills trainings and additional complementary skills training as required by the market ([see section 2.2.1](#)) e.g.:
- International Computer Drivers' License
 - Microsoft Windows and Office courses
 - English courses
- Step 9:** Depending on the outcome of the counselling refer assessed job seekers to:
- Vocational trainings run by external vocational training providers
 - Employment fairs which bring employers and job seekers together
 - Companies directly for an interview
- Step 10:** Design a web platform on which job opportunities, business contacts, job seekers' profiles, and training and coaching programs can be announced and exchanged.
- Step 11:** Secure financial contributions from employers to support employability centres in exchange for services provided.

2.3.1.2 Achievements of employment services



- **445 individuals using employment services** established by the project in Minya have either been placed in jobs or started their own business.
- **8,950 job seekers received counselling**

- **2,500 referred** to relevant employment opportunities



Employment services success story

Stability after return from Libya

Providing for five family members, 'Amm returned from Libya to Minya due to increasing terrorist attacks on Egyptian workers. Today, with support from the Hayat project's Information Counselling and Referral Service (ICRS), 'Amm has a job in Cairo preparing food at "Sayed Hanafi", one of the famous Koshari restaurants in downtown Cairo. "They offered me a contract based on a monthly salary of 1400 EGP, social and medical insurance and have also provided for my accommodation and transportation. I am about to finish my second month at work and have already received a salary increase. I think it is a good start and I hope that things will get even better, inshallah."



2.3.1.3 Lessons learned from employment services



- An employment service located more than an hour away from the target community has reduced chance of success. Establish employment services in a location central to your target population. If located a significant distance from target communities, consider running job fairs in the community areas.
- Training and sensitization as to the realities of the job market is important to give beneficiaries the best chance of securing employment, given the limited number of jobs available in rural communities, the mismatch between available jobs and skill mix, and personal and cultural preferences (cultural concerns have a particular impact on women).

2.4 Further reading on Local Economic Development

Click on the links below to find manuals, videos and other supporting resources:

- [UNIDO approach to cluster development](#)
- [Horticultural Production Guidelines, Manuals and Booklets](#)
- [Greenhouses manual](#)
- [Greenhouse Success Story](#)
- [Greenhouse Manual](#)
- [Video on Benefits of Greenhouses](#)
- [Video on the construction of Greenhouses](#)
- [Policy Brief on Greenhouses](#)

- [Date Palm production Technical Manual](#)
- [Date palm production sector video](#)
- [Red Weevil farmer to farmer video](#)
- [Dairy cow production manual](#)
- [Guide to promoting social enterprises in rural communities](#)
- [Life Skills Curriculum: Passport to success](#)
- [Managing Your Agricultural Cooperative](#)
- [Get Ahead for Women in Enterprises](#)
- [Village Savings and Loans Association Good practice guide](#)
- [VSLA life skills resource - Dawar El Ma'arefad \(House of Knowledge\)](#)

3 Building social capital and community participation

This section outlines the Hayat approach to building social capital in target communities by implementing interventions promoting growth and sustainability. It covers participatory community forums, ways to support identification of community needs and priorities, and volunteerism. Specific examples of building social capital to support growth include social enterprises, life skills development, raising health awareness and neighbourhood upgrading.



Key Takeaways: social capital and community participation

- Capitalise on the **link between the economy and social capital**. Investing in human capital, innovation, and knowledge are significant contributors to economic growth and promotes sustainability of project interventions.
- The **contribution of volunteers** to increasing social capital should not be underestimated. Fostering a culture of volunteerism can support the aims of many interventions at the same time as enhancing social cohesion.
- Community needs, generated through the participatory mechanism, should be reflected in **governorate level investment strategies and plans** to support sustainability and encourage achievement of large-scale neighbourhood upgrading projects by government and private sector partners.

3.1 Community led-local economic development

There is a clear link between the economy and social capital. Community cohesion is a driver for economic prosperity. In the context of Hayat social capital is understood to include trust, a positive social environment, the provision of social services, low social tension, dialogue, and the capacity to participate and solve common problems. The objective of community-led development is to empower community members collectively to identify and prioritize common problems and suggest solutions that achieve the desired social, economic, cultural or environmental goals. The process is as important as the output, because promoting dialogue and cooperation amongst community and institutional actors promotes resilience.

Interventions seek to build life skills and raise awareness on specific themes such as civic engagement, conflict mitigation, the protection of women and children, literacy, and nutrition. Projects build the resilience of vulnerable groups (women, youth, and children) by providing the knowledge and tools needed to enable effective participation in the betterment of their communities.

3.1.1 Participatory community mechanisms

Establishing a community-led economic development mechanism increases capacity to solve common problems and builds endogenous support that contributes to growth. In the Hayat approach community-led planning contributes to solutions that improves community well-being and productivity.

This bottom-up, participatory approach to local development is inclusive of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural interests of the community. A community led-approach also promotes local ownership and sustainability.

A participatory mechanism involves pulling together a diverse group of community members with a mandate to:

1. Develop a community action plan based on community needs
2. Prioritize and implement interventions at the village and district levels
3. Sustain a representative mechanism that allows for dialogue between local decision-makers and community representatives with the capacity to advocate for local community needs

The mechanism can take the form of a forum, a committee or a working group. Whatever the name, representatives should be drawn from a wide spectrum of the community including natural leaders, representatives of disadvantaged segments of the community, representatives of local NGOs, farmers, and active youth and women. Establishing a consultative forum and the process of mapping community needs and priority issues is key to the participatory approach.

3.1.1.1 *How to establish a community-led mechanism*

Step 1 Develop **terms of reference** for the community-led mechanism including structure, composition and criteria for electing community members and their tasks.

Step 2 **Raise local awareness** on the importance of community engagement in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of community projects. Highlight the role that community members can play in being *knowledge agents* and *catalysts for positive change* in the local community.

Step 3 **Identify forum members** using an inclusive and transparent procedure to promote diverse representation. To support a diverse, inclusive mechanism, selection criteria should include:

- Balanced representation of members in terms of age and gender
- Minimum education level
- Willingness to participate and / or volunteer in community activities
- Evidence of serving the community
- Standing / reputation in the community
- Good relationships with community members and a wide local network
- Communication and public speaking skills
- Lack of prejudice

Step 4 **Build capacity of forum members** for community-led local planning and development. Capacity building of community members should be practical and tangible e.g.:

- Planning, feasibility, budgeting, and project management
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Principles of local economic development
- Community participation and fundraising
- Voluntary work to promote the concept of human security
- Administrative and management skills such as decision making based on evidence, holding professional meetings and record keeping

Step 5 Produce a [Community Needs Assessment](#) Community Needs Assessment which frames the participatory discussion on priority needs and informs the development of a Community Action Plan. Be sure to engage women in the process.



Step 6 Develop a [Community Action Plan](#) based on priority projects that addresses the vulnerabilities in the needs assessment. The plan should include objectives, timelines, expected outcomes, roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.



Step 7 **Validate** the Community Action Plan with community and government stakeholders.

Step 8 Select **priority projects** from the action plan based on expected impact, high outreach, potential for scaling-up and replication, complementarities with other development efforts, cost sharing by beneficiaries and budget-limits. See section 4 Building Social Capital and Community Services for more information.

Step 9 Provide **technical support** to implement the priority projects. This can take the form of procurement, technical implementation support to forum members, NGOs and subcontractors. See section 5: *Community Development Projects* for more information.

Step 10 Support **monitoring and evaluation** of the projects and publicize **results and lessons learned** to community and government stakeholders, development partners and the private sector to support further resource mobilization.

3.1.1.2 Achievements of participatory community mechanisms

- The key outcome is that the community has a voice in local community development

Success story: participatory community mechanisms



3.1.1.3 Lessons learned: community-led mechanism

- Involvement with community led mechanisms is a responsibility, not an entitlement. Those that choose to engage with the process are accountable to the community.
- Managing the expectations of the community is critical. Hold sensitization sessions to answer questions and provide clarifications on (i) the expected role of community members (i.e. this is voluntary work, there is no financial compensation, members need to represent their communities and needs) and (ii) the budgetary and technical limitations of the mechanism.
- Community-led mechanisms should maintain independence from government structures to avoid misconceptions of being a parallel or alternative structure.
- Participatory planning takes time to embed in local institutions and it may be necessary to build



the capacity of local government representatives. All efforts to secure local government buy-in should be made to facilitate governorate level collaboration.

- The community development forum described is not the only way to promote community involvement in local development. The project team may choose to remodel the participatory mechanism when implementing the project – and this was indeed the case for expansion into new districts in Minya. Whichever mechanism is used, it must reflect a community-led approach to local development and be flexible enough to account for local realities and the community’s needs.

3.1.2 Volunteerism

Empowering youth to take an active role in the development of their communities and their own self-development can bring enormous benefits to the individual and society at large. This is especially the case when youth are marginalized through a lack of economic opportunity. The objective of this component is to provide a channel through which youth are sensitized toward volunteerism and mobilized to work collectively for the betterment of their communities. The Hayat vision is to promote volunteerism as a means of bringing youth together and building their capacity to implement community-driven activities that enhance cohesion and inclusion.

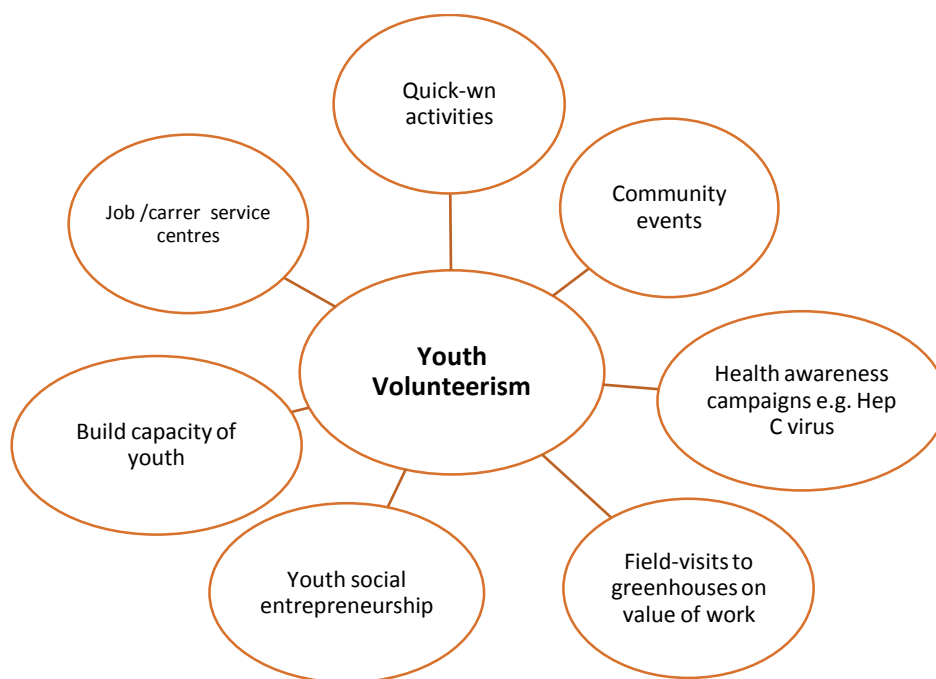
Volunteerism plays a key role in the development of social capital, whether it be participation in a community forum, inputting into a needs assessment, supporting awareness raising on social issues or undertaking a social enterprise. Depending on the size of the target communities, youth volunteer groups can be mobilized or established around villages.

Lead youth volunteers from target villages are trained and supported to organize community events that:

- Contribute to mitigating intergenerational conflict
- Develop a sense of engagement and solidarity in the local community
- Encourage partnerships and mutual understanding
- Provide opportunities for community members to express themselves
- Encourage other youth to become engaged in volunteerism

To make the most of the trained youth, the Hayat project approach is to link these volunteers to the different project interventions to ensure their contribution to the entire project. Volunteers can be engaged in the implementation of quick wins, the employability service, youth social entrepreneurship, site visits to selected business models and community development initiatives.

Potential for volunteerism in the project: Hayat crosscutting Interventions



3.1.2.1 *How to promote volunteerism in Hayat communities*

- Step 1** Orient relevant **governmental and non-governmental entities** regarding the benefits of volunteerism and the aims of the project. Engaging the Ministry of Youth and Sports is essential.
- Step 2** Determine which organization to partner with by assessing partnership modalities and venues for hosting a youth volunteer mechanism (including NGOs, youth organizations, government run youth centres etc). Select a youth organization to physically host activities.
- Step 3** Together with key stakeholders determine appropriate incentives and schedule training for volunteers. Develop terms of reference for engaging youth volunteers. Identify or develop training manuals.
- Step 4** Following interview, select around 20 lead volunteers aged 18 - 30 to receive training, keeping an eye on gender balance. Undertake training of trainers for this group. Topics can include: the concept of human security, volunteerism, cascading knowledge, decision-making in a group and implementing community-based projects.
- Step 5** Establish a link between the trained youth volunteers and the locally administered youth centres and NGOs.
- Step 6** Mobilize youth volunteers in groups from target villages, maintaining gender balance. Aim for a minimum of ten volunteers per village. Conduct training by the

lead volunteers to raise the capacity of youth groups on rapid participatory assessment and implementing community-based projects.

- Step 7** Support the volunteer group to review the priority development issues identified in the community led-mechanism ([see section 3.1.1](#)). This could include skills development, neighbourhood upgrading, civic engagement, conflict mitigation, literacy classes, and good nutritional practices for children.
- Step 8** Select “quick-impact” priority activities proposed by the youth volunteers based on:
- Anticipated impact
 - High numbers of beneficiaries
 - Potential for scaling-up and replication
 - Capacity of youth volunteer services to implement (with support)
 - Potential for cost-sharing with beneficiaries
- Step 9** Support youth volunteers to identify the physical and financial resources available to implement community projects. Develop plans, resources and timelines for goals.
- Step 10** Provide a grant to the youth volunteer groups to implement (with NGOs if needed) to implemented multiple events and development initiatives in villages, as determined by the community. These could include theatre and competitions aimed at promoting community inclusiveness, cohesion, and collective action.
- Step 11** After implementation support the youth volunteers to:
- Identify initiatives perceived to have had the most positive impact (by the communities themselves)
 - Identify lessons learned and good practices
 - Highlight possible prospects for future scalability and replication
- Step 12** Develop a resource mobilization strategy to raise additional funds to help fund future youth volunteer activities.
- Step 13** Disseminate success stories about youth volunteers’ engagements in neighbouring communities and encourage a cross-learning process.

3.1.2.2 *Achievements from youth volunteerism*

1. Prior to Hayat, youth centres were not always open to youth and if so, were mostly used for young males to play soccer. Following the Minya project, centres have become multiuse venues places for youth activities and events, including those accessible to women
2. **Improved intergenerational relations** within target communities.
3. Increase in **self-confidence** amongst participating youth.
4. Volunteers have acquired **fundraising skills** for future events.

5. Improvement in reading skills from initiatives targeting schoolchildren and teachers.
6. Increased willingness of community members to participate in and contribute to community events.
7. Volunteers continue to organize community **initiatives after the closing of the intervention**. One village they raised funds to plant 100 trees.



Volunteerism success stories

Mobilized to engage in the community

“I had returned from Libya, and I saw no opportunities”, explained Hamed, “then I joined the youth volunteer groups and saw hope”. Among 4000 other volunteers, Hamed participated in various youth activities and capacity building programmes supporting youth volunteerism and graduation to social entrepreneurship. In the process, Hamed’s wife also began to participate and together they founded a nursery, serving the children of the community.



On stage: for the people by the people

After his father passed away, as is customary, Mohamed became responsible for their younger siblings. Facing difficulties finding jobs locally. Mohamed joined Hayat sponsored local youth initiatives and social entrepreneurship training, out of which he hatched a creative idea – to found a theater group. Though uncommon to Edwa, young men and women started writing scripts and performing to local audiences with messages on health awareness, technological opportunities such as greenhouses or biogas and the perils of irregular migration. With the support of the project, Mohamed’s group reached over 4000 people raising awareness in a fun an entertaining way.



3.1.2.3 *Lessons learned from youth volunteerism*



- Bureaucratic impediments can create obstacles to accessing funds provided to youth centres. A more effective and sustainable funding channel should be developed for future interventions.
- Developing the resource mobilization capacities of youth volunteers should also be

considered.



3.1.3 Life skills development

Life skills can help individuals and communities face everyday challenges and withstand shocks. The objective of this intervention is to identify priority topics in a community and introduce relevant knowledge to empower vulnerable groups (particularly women) using the “house of knowledge” concept – in Arabic *Dawar El Ma’arefah* – which takes its name from the local tradition of organizing meetings at the village leader’s home.

Depending on the audience, topics can include intra- and inter-family communications, child rearing and basic first aid. Sessions for young people can include cooperation, peace, respect, modesty, tolerance, love, responsibility, freedom, happiness, unity and honesty. Specific topics for vulnerable women and youth can include dealing with teenagers, inter-family relations, leadership, public speaking and civic education.

Innovative methods are required to reach some community members, primarily women, and promote absorption of information. Informal meetings are best moderated by experts (i.e. first aid trainings by paramedics). Extensive use is made of short plays to illustrate common issues and a comic book summarizing learned skills can be developed.

3.1.3.1 *How to promote life skills in a community*

- Step 1** Conduct focus groups with women in different villages to identify some of the challenges women face in their everyday lives. Hold similar groups for men.
- Step 2** Develop a list of topics of concern and determine priorities to be publicized as key messages through outreach awareness campaigns.
- Step 3** Develop materials on priority socio-economic issues.
- Step 4** Organize training of trainer workshop for local leaders about awareness-raising on priority subjects such as reproductive health, first aid, and life-values.
- Step 5** Organize innovative capacity-building programs through the *house of knowledge* to community members on their specific needs (i.e. comic books, theatrical illustration).
- Step 6** Organize life-value sessions for school students and community members on cooperation, peace, respect, modesty, tolerance, love, responsibility, freedom, happiness, unity, and honesty.
- Step 7** Disseminate materials widely within target community.

3.1.3.2 *Achievements of increasing life skills*

- Schoolchildren reflect life values in their daily lives.
- Positive behavioural changes related to inter-family relations observed (especially related to communicating with their husbands and interacting with their mothers-in-law).



3.1.4 Raising awareness on health and nutrition

Threats to health stemming from poor health choices and insufficient nutritional intake are addressed through health awareness interventions leveraging youth volunteerism and women's economic empowerment interventions (namely, the savings groups) to reach community members within the targeted areas. This intervention aims at raising the awareness of community members on health and nutrition to improve lives and sustain long-term impact.

Initiatives targeting women and children are undertaken to raise awareness in three areas:

- child and mother nutrition and health,
- prevalent infectious diseases, specifically Hepatitis C, and
- health awareness campaign targeting children.

3.1.4.1 How to raise awareness on health in target communities

- Step 1:** Undertake focus group discussions with women in the target villages to **identify key health-related** issues. Consider information in the baseline survey and any health information held at the governorate level.
- Step 2** Develop **training material**, manuals and technical flyers to support awareness raising including technical manuals and age appropriate material for children (e.g. comics).
- Step 3** Train women (teachers, youth volunteers, NGO staff etc) to impart positive health messages on Hepatitis, nutrition and hygiene.
- Step 4** Disseminate the main health awareness messages identified through campaigns via
- Savings groups ([section 2.2.3](#))
 - Volunteers ([section 3.1.2](#))
 - Community-led consultative groups ([section 3.1.1](#))
 - at community events including those plays/theatre in schools, NGOs and other public spaces
- NB:** Children should be a target group for a major health awareness campaigns.
- Step 5** Train medical service providers, community leaders and NGOs on **disease prevention**.
- Step 6** In collaboration with local NGOs, organize **groups of medical professionals** to address the target community for example about eyewear, basic surgery, drug prescriptions. Clinics can take place inside local NGOs.
- Step 7** Link critical hepatitis C cases to the **national support program**.
- Step 8** Establish links with local or international organizations operating in target areas in the field of health and **encourage them to extend their services** to the project's targeted villages.

3.1.4.2 Achievements from health awareness campaigns

- Women reported **positive changes in their behaviour (safer practices related to hygiene and child rearing)** after participating in awareness raising sessions
- **Mothers reported an improvement in their children's health** after applying knowledge learned.
- **Breastfeeding mothers reported improvements in their second child's health when compared to their first thanks to information learned** at trainings about breastfeeding and baby care.
- **A link to health service providers has been established**, as women continue to revert to trainers on health and hygiene questions and trainers continue to spread health and hygiene awareness to their neighbours, new mothers, etc. even after the intervention ended.
- Raised **awareness of how to avoid the Hepatitis C virus** among more than 36,000 students and their teachers in most public schools in the target areas, using WHO guidelines and publications.

Success stories of raising awareness

Stronger immunity

"I have two children, but the second one's immune system is so much stronger", reflects Hala Mohamed, who along with 3500 other women has attended awareness session on children health and nutrition, acknowledging the value of colostrum. "The information we learnt is precious, I feel confident about knowing how to react if my children choke for instance", she adds. The project used the village savings and loans groups as a vehicle to deliver different capacities and awareness to rural women, who have in turn reported improvement not only in their own and their families health, but also more confidence in themselves.



3.1.4.3 Lessons learned from implementing health awareness campaigns

- Absorption of health messaging is increased by sharing technical information in user friendly modes of delivery (e.g. visual illustrations, toolkits with laminated plastic cards, flip charts, theatrical presentations), input from a nutrition / hygiene expert with extensive experience in rural communities and complementary giveaways that reiterate key health messages
- Local NGOs, youth volunteers, and female members of VSLA groups are important target groups and agents for spreading awareness on health issues.
- Links between the trained medical service providers and local NGOs can maximize benefit and ensure long-term impact.

3.1.5 Neighbourhood upgrading

The community-led mechanism outlined in section 3.1.1 and related action plans identifies additional job creation and needed infrastructure projects. Given that the Hayat Project primarily targets poor rural villages, and since many poor villages lack access to clean and uninterrupted water sources, target communities may well identify water and sanitation amongst the priority neighbourhood upgrading interventions via the community-led mechanism. The intervention would then focus on enhancing public awareness on health-related issues to ground water and sanitation including on-the-job training and the implementation of a low-cost demonstration intervention to minimise the negative effects of high ground water and lack of readily accessible.

Other options can be installing rooftops, refurbishing homes of poor female-headed households, refurbishing schools, setting-up water drainage outlets, and installing drinking water connections.

3.1.5.1 How to upgrade neighbourhoods

Step 1 Reference the rapid community needs assessment and Community Action Plan developed through the community-led approach for local development outlined in [Section 3.1.1](#).

Step 2 Identify feasible priority projects that can be implemented jointly with the governorate, NGOs, and other local stakeholders, given resources available.

Step 3 Train representative local stakeholders to **monitor the implementation** of the neighbourhood upgrading priority projects identified in the Community Action Plan.

Step 4 Implement the selected **labour-intensive** neighbourhood upgrading priority projects benefiting target beneficiaries in disadvantaged areas.

Step 5 If water is selected, conduct a **study on water and sanitation needs**, priorities and costs, and communicate the results to:



- the Holding Company for Water and Wastewater for national budgeting and in the national program for poor villages sanitation
- the local water company for implementation prioritization

Step 6 Support the governor and local departments in **drafting fundraising proposals** for scaling-up water and sanitation projects on a governorate-level, based on the water and sanitation feasibility study.

Step 7 Increase **awareness of the link between ground water**, sanitation and health effects within target communities.

Step 8 Select an intervention location in the village based on needs, budget, and best contribution to a pilot project from the community.

Step 9 Implement a demonstration of a low-cost intervention that minimizes the negative health effects of high ground water and a lack of sanitation. It should be low technology and utilize local materials. See for example: [Riverbank Filtration Manual](#)



Step 10 Implement on-the-job training for youth on the low cost solution (and fundraising techniques), aimed at minimizing the negative health impacts of contaminated and high level ground water.

Step 11 Share the results of the study on priority water and sanitation needs with the **relevant public utilities and lobby for the recommendations** to be funded and implemented. Present this as a new, affordable, and environmentally-friendly model for water and sanitation with potential for national scale-up with the following benefits:



- save the national budget millions of pounds
- leverage participatory local mechanisms for implementation
- support national targets for clean water accessibility, especially in vulnerable rural communities

Step 12 Follow-up other priority projects in governorate level annual local socio-economic plans and community action plans, depending on the level of resources available.

Step 13 Organize a final event to share knowledge on the technology used and disseminate technical manuals to all relevant stakeholders to highlight scaling-up potential. Use this as an opportunity to **develop a strategy** to upscale the completed infrastructure projects including resource mobilization.



3.1.5.2 Achievements: Neighbourhood upgrading



- **Improved knowledge** on water and sanitation.
- **Community members reported increased accessibility to improved water resources in the target areas** following the construction of seven riverbank filtration systems, across the district of Edwa and Maghaha benefitting more than 120,000.
- Construction of an additional three riverbank filtration systems by the **Minya Drinking Water and Sanitation Company** using its own funds, based on the same low cost technology. These are expected to serve an additional 45,000 inhabitants.
- Community members **reported increased accessibility to improved water resources in the target areas** following the construction of the riverbank filtration wells.

Success story: neighbourhood upgrading

[Water for life](#)

Ever since Fayza moved with her husband to the village of Beni Amer, she has been struggling to get potable water for her family. The situation sharpened with the birth of her baby daughter and she had to walk to the nearest irrigation channel to fetch water. This is not just the story of Fayza, but the story of over 150,000 people of this village. Addressing this challenge, the Hayat project worked together with the Minya Water Holding Company, to install 10 simple riverbank filtration units that supply potable water to Beni Amer and neighboring villages. Now Fayza and her neighbors do not need to walk and carry their water home, and they are happy to have clean drinking water for their children and their family.



3.1.5.3 *Lessons learned from neighbourhood upgrading*



- For sustainability purposes, transfer appropriate technology to local water companies.
- Establish a governance structure under which local companies can implement operate and maintain the units to support local accountability.
- The local Water Holding Company should provide technical support and quality control. Capacity building may be needed.

3.1.6 Further reading to build social capital through community development

[Community Needs Assessment](#)

[Community Action Plan](#)

[Resources on Health and Nutrition](#)

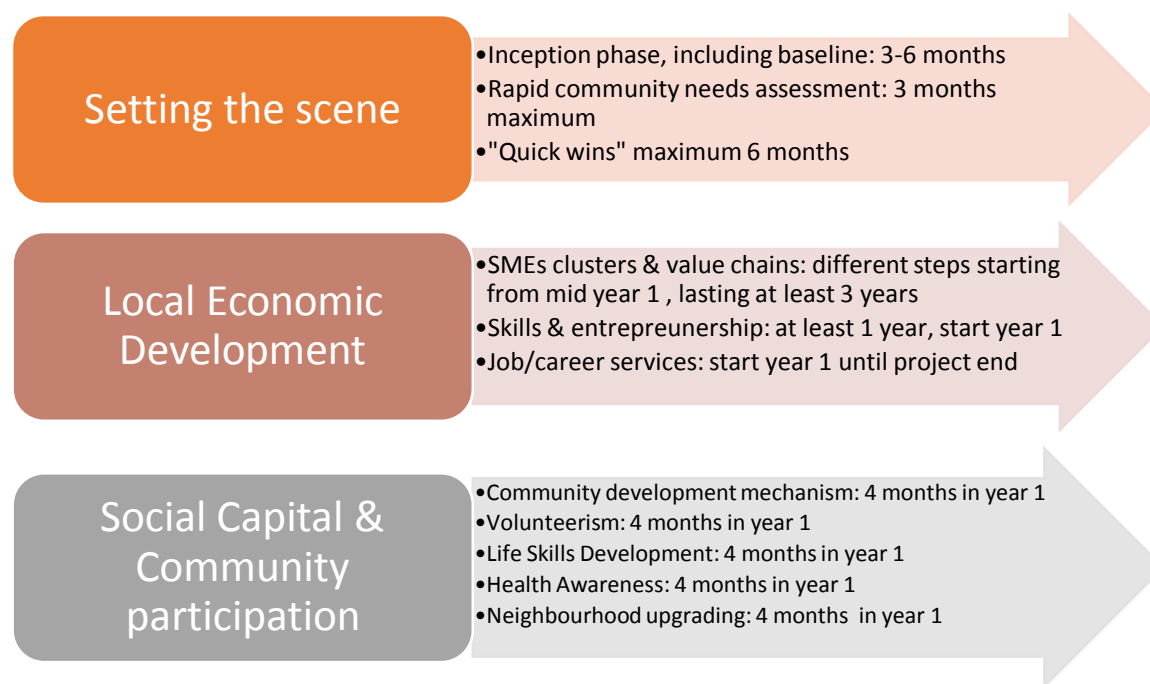
[House of Knowledge](#)

[Riverbank Filtration Manual](#)

4 Final considerations

4.1 Project phasing

The Hayat program can be realized in around five years. An outline of the timing and duration of the interventions covered in this toolkit is below:



4.2 Process mapping of the Hayat approach

The experience of implementing the Hayat project in Minya exposed clear project phases, as represented in the diagram below:



4.3 Important considerations

Implementing a project often takes place in a fluid operating environment and relies on the engagement of multiple stakeholders. Consider the following when implementing the Hayat approach:

- National-level interest and commitment to develop rural communities
- Degree of cooperation of local and governorate level authorities
- Project champions (structures or individuals)
- Donors
- Local culture, geographical context and level of engagement target communities
- Synergies between, number, quality and turnover of partners, staff and subcontractors
- Seasonality and climate considerations
- Availability and level of development of private sector

4.4 Recommendations

The Hayat approach presents viable models with the potential for expansion and replication. Below are some recommendations to guide the successful scaling up and replication of future Hayat initiatives:

1. All initiatives must be led by the **private sector, promote endogenous change and leverage local human and physical assets** as opposed to imposing roles, ideas and investments from the outside. Initiatives should be field-tested, have community buy and be underpinned by a clear, sustainable business model.
2. **Build on the experience, knowledge management and lessons learned from previous initiatives.** Develop a business model for each proposed intervention at the outset taking into account the planned process, financial physical and human resources available, target beneficiaries, partners, links to markets, cost and revenue structures.
3. **Focus on a few interventions at the beginning of the project to ensure effectiveness, but increase the level of ambition over time.** This may take the shape of a small number of strategically important initiatives or baseline physical upgrading, which can lead into local and central government carrying up out auxiliary interventions. Do not lost sight of local and national strategic priorities.
4. **Select and maintain a coherent group of implementing agencies** with relevant experience and clear, accountable leadership. Ensure sufficient field staff on the ground to accelerate administrative and operational decision-making.
5. Establish selection and other **criteria for interventions early, based on clear parameters.** Criteria should be reviewed and agreed upon at the implementing organizations' regional office level. It is not sufficient to approve at the field or subcontractor levels.
6. Provide **training and capacity building programs to relevant national staff** to prepare them for the new roles and responsibilities that will come with scaling-up and replication on a national level. Programs should be practical, realistic and empowering for staff.
7. Develop a **gender mainstreaming strategy** that places gender at the forefront in the design and implementation process, with clearly defined outcomes.

8. Develop an **M&E framework** to guide implementation, encompassing all proposed interventions. Integrate the framework as far as possible into existing government databases to ensure systematic follow-up on medium to long-term results. A robust M&E database that contains provides up-to-date information from the field is key.
9. Design a **sustainability strategy** linked to national programs and policies. Each intervention can have different sustainability goals, however common sustainability elements are developing a culture of cost sharing, self-help and accountability and own investment. In addition, promote the **replication and scaling-up** of the Hayat approach in local and national **development plans**.
10. Update the **toolkit** with lessons learned from the field so that information is documented for future replication.